



## **Wellington & Hutt Valley GAA Club Strategic Plan 2008 - 2010**

### **July 2008**

#### **Vision**

By 2010 the club will be NZ's leading Irish sporting and cultural body. When New Zealanders and those involved in Gaelic games or Irish culture in NZ think of sporting success, cultural enjoyment and a 'can do' attitude to life, they will think of Wellington and Hutt Valley GAA club.

#### **Background**

To date the achievements of this sporting group have been immense and give us solid foundations on which to build:

- Club has been in existence for more than 50 years.
- For the first time in a decade we now have a permanent home at Ian Galloway Park along with the training equipment, indoor facilities (Wellington weather has been a constant challenge) and regimes we need to make the club successful.
- Player numbers (particularly at men's level) have multiplied in the past 2 years (reversing a number of years of decline).
- Profile of the club in the community has risen exponentially in past year with regular radio and TV appearances, a revamped website and a relentless series of fund and profile raising events throughout the region.
- Our 2007 men's team was the first team from this club in a decade to attend the Australasian games. We will attend again this year.
- We are holders of the National men's 15-a-side title for two years running.
- We were runners up in the National men's 7-a-side tournament in March 2008. Our women's team were 7-a-side champions in 2007.
- We have a solid family of 100-200 of supporters and a handful of dedicated sponsors who ensure that the club is well funded.
- Our committee and governance structures are robust - we are unified around the simple vision above.

#### **What does this vision involve?**

The cornerstones of this vision are:

#### **1. A men's 15-a-side team to attend the Australasian Games every year. To qualify from the group stages in 2008 and to win the Australasian games by 2010.**

In an amateur sport we intend to bring a professional approach to preparations including confirming attendance early. Training hard and long (incl personal training plans), enhancing personal and team accountability for readiness and also relentlessly focusing on the logistical preparations will ensure we achieve this

*Owner - Donal Kavanagh*

**2. New Zealanders and NZ permanent residents to make up more than 50% of the club players by 2010.**

In order for the current fast pace of growth to continue and for us to spread the game amongst this nation of rugby lovers, the club needs to be integrated into the community and to run by a stable group of people who will be here for the long run. New Zealand born player numbers have been rapidly increasing and if we are to get to a steady playing population of 150+ players, achieving this goal is vital. A successful Nov-Dec corporate 7-a-side league will provide vital momentum here.

*Owner - Paul O'Hare*

**3. Women's teams to attend, and ideally win, all domestic 7-a-side tournaments. This will require a committed squad of c20 women players.**

The women's game at the club needs dedicated focus in order to grow participation and engagement. Only when we have a women's team up and running and have some balance in the adult versions of the game do we progress on the development of the underage game.

*Owner - Daithi O'Connor*

**4. Club to provide a social as well as sporting home for young Kiwis and Irish people (core demographic initially is 18-40 years old) interested in Gaelic games and Irish 'craic'. Success here will lead to us 'successfully' hosting the Australasian games by 2015.**

Outside sport, the club needs to present an inclusive and fun persona to the Irish and Kiwi communities in Wellington and Hutt Valley. This will take a professional and energetic approach to event management. We need to host regular events where are all invited enjoy themselves and spread the word about the club, its members and Irish Culture.

*Owner - Davie Rynne*

**5. Financially stable club with annual fund raising ability of \$30,000+ that is needed to achieve objectives above.**

The club needs c\$30,000 per annum to fund the activities above. With the majority of expenses coming from travel and accommodation to sporting events, standard funding sources like community trust grants are not typically available so main focus in on relentless fund raising events and generous sponsorship roster of 5-10 donators.

*Owner - Combie Cryan*

*Note owners will hold individual action plans with detailed performance metrics and areas of accountability.*

**What's assumed in the vision**

- A stable and driven committee structure.
- Adequate coaching resources, skills and equipment.
- Support from the regional Irish clubs, community, the Australasian board and the GAAs international development dept in Ireland.
- A home to call our own.

Assumptions do not mean that we take these issues for granted. The assumptions assist in the achievement of strategic objectives, rather than being ends in themselves. These assumptions will be tested and validated on an annual basis at an AGM (or an EGM if necessary).

### What's not in vision or related actions

- Permanent coaching or admin staff not envisaged for now.
- Club twinning outside of NZ not a current focus but always welcome.
- Underage game - this can only be developed when women's and men's games are strong.
- Hurling - a great game but to avoid dilution of efforts, should only focus of development resource when football is fully established.
- A national GAA sporting body (approved by Sparc) - a nice to have but not a core focus for now.
- Entry into the Asian Games - potential to execute this if games take place in NZ in 2009 AND we feel the squad is ready.
- Hosting of GAA All-Stars / Touring Irish County Teams - likely to escalate in priority as club grows in strength.

Note while this is three year vision and strategy plan it is also a living document. We will review the contents, emphasis and actions on a regular basis (at least annually).

### Risks

Risk	Action
Like all sporting clubs, player or administrator turnover is a risk.	Building player squad sizes and extending the spreadsheet of committee duties and members addresses this issue.
Economic downturn - the club's financial needs are not insignificant and a sustained economic downturn would affect our sponsors and supporters abilities to fund the club.	Having a range of sponsors and fund raising activities mitigates this risk. Outside Australasian games our financial needs are relatively modest so we can always cut our cloth to match financial strength.
On the cost side, the club is considerably exposed to air travel and accommodation costs (to Australasian games) and foreign exchange risks between Aus and NZ.	By advance planning and seeking clear player commitments we seek to reduce impact of escalating fuel costs and accommodation costs that inevitably come with late bookings.
Costs of running and administrating club are low and done on a voluntary basis. As club gets bigger this will place a greater strain on voluntary resource.	Spreading the load across 10 or more club stalwarts and continuing to develop a sense of a need to 'reinvest' by all club members into the health of the club should mean that current structure is sustainable through growth.

### Opportunities

Opportunity	Action
Irish community in Wellington is close-knit and well served, particularly by a very active HV Irish society and a resurgent Welly Irish club.	We now have representatives on both committees and ties are strong with these and our Auckland GAA peers. This must continue to grow.

NZers and Irish people living (permanently or temporarily) in Wellington or HV are open to new sporting experiences and GAA is accessible and easy to learn.	Development plan above to focus on how we get men and women to give the game a try and how we retain those that do.
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## **Conclusion**

Our club is growing rapidly by all financial, people and energy metrics. We are focused on continuing this rise in a stable and inclusive manner which will promote success on the field and happiness off it.

Regards

Columba Cryan  
Wellington and Hutt Valley GAA Club President