

**Cumann Pheadair Naofa
(St. Peter's GAA Club, Warrenpoint)
www.warrenpointgaa.com**



**CUMANN PHEADAIR NAOFA C.L.G.
COISTE FORBARTHA**

REPORT BY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

TO CLUB AGM ON 5th December 2024

23rd November 2024

Sincere thanks to our club volunteers, who have ensured that the Cumann Pheadair Naofa CLG with membership of 1,200 plus members (49% female membership and 55.4% youth membership), 35 teams and 140 coaches / mentors continues to successfully develop and grow as a not-for-profit community organisation, operating at the heart of the growing Greater Warrenpoint Community, for whole of family for whole of life, as a fully integrated urban one club model for GAA, Camogie, Ladies Gaelic Football, including GAA4All, Gaelic4Mothers and Dads n Lads, with estimated voluntary social capital commitment in excess of £1.4m over the past 12 months, across sports games, cultural activities and a range of community initiatives.

Warrenpoint population is 9,100 (2021 Census), but the club serves a large hinterland providing camogie and Hurling for virtually all Crotlieve DEA (Burren, Mayobridge, Ballyholland and Rostrevor, 28,710 (2022) [Crotlieve Local Statistics Explorer](#)). Our GAA4All team provides recreation for children and young adults with disability across Warrenpoint, Newry and Crotlieve covering 56,000 people ([Newry Local Statistics Explorer](#)) and hosted the first Mixed Ability Cul Camp for all Down.

Membership has grown 28% in the last 4 years outstripping local population growth, specifically:

- Female playing membership grown by 34%;
- Male membership grown by 14%;
- GAA4All has grown by over 400%;
- Our team numbers have grown from 29 to 36 – 24% growth;
- Our coaches have grown from 125 to 145 - 16% growth; and
- Our Match Officials across 4 field sports has grown by 100% to 10

From a physical development perspective, the major club project over the past few years has been the evolvement of the Our Vision Capital Development Project at the Pony Field and Pairc Liam Uí Ír at Moygannon. With our Gift Aid claim now complete, we can confirm that the Phase 1 of the Our Vision Patrons Scheme launched in May 2019 with the objective of raising £400k from club members and supporters, actually raised the fantastic sum of £406,439, including Gift Aid of £75,807, during an economic challenging period, which included Covid-19 and a significant increase in Cost of Living.

St. Peter's GAA Club Warrenpoint were granted full Planning Permission on 26th November 2021 at the Newry Mourne & Down District Council (NM&DDC) Planning Committee Meeting in respect of its Planning Application (submitted March 2020) for the proposed development (of the Our Vision Project) comprising a new practice pitch with goals, ball stops and dugouts, on the former Pony Field, a walking track, amenity areas, internal road, improvements to the existing car park, boundary fencing, a two storey pavilion incorporating changing rooms, toilets with meeting rooms, improvements to existing entrance to the Rostrevor Road.

The limiting factor to proceeding with implementation of the Our Vision Capital Development in accordance with the full planning permission secured has been lack of funds and escalating inflationary building costs. As a result, the Our Vision Strategic Planning Group supported by the Senior Committee decided to proceed with the Our Vision Capital Development Project on a phased basis.

The first three phases developed to date, detailed below have cost £940,000.

- Phase 1: Land purchase of 5.54 acres at Pony Field and adjacent 0.44 acres;
- Phase 2: Essential site enabling works / new entrance; and
- Phase 3: provision of a full sized GAA sand carpet grass pitch at the Pony Field incorporating preparation and earthworks, pitch capping layer, pitch drainage, pitch surfacing, pitch maintenance (12 months from date of seeding), irrigation, ducting, fencing, ball stops, goal posts dug outs, internal roads and pathways, and scoreboards in accordance with approved Planning Permission. To allow adequate time for seeding to settle, we expect the new pitch to be available for club teams from 1 April 2026.

You may recall to fund the acquisition of the Pony Field and related land two capital loans were secured: a 5 year £100,000 loan from Croke Park (monthly payment £1,748.40) and a £235,000 15 year loan from the Community Finance Ireland Ltd (monthly payment £1,582.00). In addition, in order to assist the potential development of the Our Vision project, the club Senior Management Committee took the very significant decision to fund the monthly repayment of the loans out of club operational funds. The original £100k Croke Park loan has been now fully repaid and the most recent known balance of the original Community Finance Loan is £200,268.49 as at 1 October 2024.

During the past year, with authorised support from Down GAA, Ulster GAA and the National GAA Finance Committee, the club successfully negotiated a further £200k 15 year term loan with Community Finance Ireland (CFI) to facilitate the financing of Phase 3 as detailed above. The monthly repayments for this new £200k CFI loan commencing in November 2024 are £1,797.66. Thus, going forward, the combined monthly loan repayments to CFI are £3,379.66. The club has demonstrated over the past 5 years that it has the capacity to fund this level of monthly debt repayments from its annual operational funds.

The net effect of the current term debt to CFI of £400k approximately, confirms that the club has funded £540k (57.4%) of the total Our Vision Capital Project cost of £940k to date, with the balance being funded by debt. Club members should be very positive about this achievement. We would also like to acknowledge the support of the Down County Board and in particular the County Secretary Sean Og McAteer re the Our Vision project.

In order to facilitate proceeding with further phases of the Our Vision Capital Development Project, the club plans to embark upon an Our Vision Phase 2 Funding Programme in March / April 2025 and secure grants towards the project. In the context of grants, given its proven contribution to the local community and the Our Vision project clearly meeting a demonstrated need to facilitate growing participation, the club is disappointed to date in the lack of support from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, hopefully this position can be ratified shortly. The fact that there has been no SportNI Capital Sports Programme for clubs over the past 6 years has not helped the position.

This Strategic Facilities Alliance with St. Mark's High School which initially commenced on 7th October 2011 has played a pivotal role in the growth and development of club activities. This arrangement continues until 30th June 2026. With regard to the GAA pitch at Milltown Playing Fields, leased from NM&DDC, the club continues to lobby for improved field maintenance and dressing room facilities.

We have expanded our camps and participation within them from Easter Hurling / Camogie and Cul Camp to also include Club specific Football, LGFA, Hurling and Camogie Summer Camps and a Cultural / Scor camp. In addition, our Nursery Programme now starts at age 4. Our Referees continue to make great progress with Micheal Moore refereeing this year's Down SFC Final, Brendan Rice refereeing the Ulster LGFA Intermediate Final and Kieran Rice refereeing the Armagh Intermediate Camogie Final and the Armagh Junior Hurling Final Replay match.

Wider club participation continues to grow year on year through increased participation across a range of activities, including: Scor, Scor Na nOg, Health & Well Being initiatives (including fitness and dementia awareness courses) our Band, revamped initiatives like Dads N Lads and our Golf Society along with new community initiatives like the school uniform exchange initiative and the Green Club Initiative. In the past four weeks, the Club has won Down LGFA Junior Club of the Year and Down Scor Na nOg Club of the Year. It is encouraging under the leadership of Club Chairman Paul McKibben, the popularity of club merchandise continues to flourish.

All Club Policies (including a new Similar Access Policy) Individual Officer Portfolios and Terms of Reference for various Sub Committees were updated and approved during the year. In terms of transparency and communications, all this information, including the Club Organisation Chart and Roll of Honour is available for download from the club website www.warrenpointgaa.com. Sincere thanks to our former PRO Aisling McGivern, who as we all know died tragically earlier this month, and will be greatly missed, for her friendship and leadership re our various social media platforms:

- www.facebook.com/warrenpointgaa
- [Warrenpointgaa \(@warrenpoint_gaa\)](https://www.instagram.com/warrenpoint_gaa) • Instagram photos and videos
- [Warrenpoint GAA \(@WarrenpointGAA\)](https://twitter.com/WarrenpointGAA) / X

Club Officers and Coaches have participated in County, Ulster and National GAA Officer and Coaches training programmes. The club continues to place significant emphasis on protection of children and vulnerable adults. The club participated in the Ulster Club Audit 2024 Survey and club members held leadership roles at County, Ulster and National level. Congratulations to youth member Teagan Carvill, who represented youth and spoke at the national GAA Congress and addressed the GAA Youth Forum in Croke Park.

The club congratulates Down County Board on the recent announcement that SEUPB are willing to provide a grant of €15.4m under the PeacePlus Programme towards a new Down GAA Centre of Participation, Wellbeing & Shared Learning Hub. This is very exciting news in the context of the Down GAA Strategic Plan: "Moving Forward Together" and Cumann Pheadair Naofa looks forward to Down and the Club benefitting from this Centre of Participation in the future.

Cumann Pheadair Naofa is now approaching the end of its extended current 5 Year Development Plan and over the next 12 months, will complete the Ulster GAA Compass Accreditation process and prepare a new 3 Year Club Development Plan.

It has been a great honour to serve this club as Development Officer over the past 12 months and sincere thanks to all, especially to Club's Senior Officers, for their support.

Is mise le meas.

Fearghal MacCormaic
(Oifigeach Forbartha)