



ABOUT THE INCLUSION TOOLKIT

The GAA is committed to promoting Gaelic games, culture and lifelong participation as a community-based, volunteer-led organisation which enriches lives and communities.

GAA volunteers across the country bring this commitment to life every day in the management of their clubs. Inside the gates of our clubs, activity is by no means restricted to the pitch but extends to clubhouses, to walkways, to the sidelines and the stands, create opportunities to meet, to participate, to contribute, to feel part of.

This Green Club Inclusion Toolkit is based on learnings from both grassroots clubs and local and national experts in inclusion, well-being and community engagement. It is designed to support GAA clubs, ground and volunteers in identifying and implementing club-based sustainability actions that ensure that community members of all ages,

abilities and backgrounds can find in their local club a place to belong.

This Toolkit complements the GAA's Healthy Club Project and Green Club Programme in identifying simple approaches and actions that (i) benefit the well-being of club and community members, (ii) support local and national climate action efforts, and (iii) improve the robustness and resilience of our club facilities and operations. The Toolkit is designed to reach out to and include seldom heard communities in GAA activities, on-field and off, through club-based actions that that promote environmental sustainability and climate resilience in the Gaelic Games clubs.

About the Toolkit

In every community there are individuals or groups whose voices are absent from decision-making and planning, who are seldom part of the conversations that have an impact on them as individuals and as community members, who have difficulty accessing or benefitting from the services and supports in their community. These seldom heard groups can include socially-isolated older adults, members of migrant groups or ethnic communities, people with long-term physical and mental health impairments, people with learning disabilities or difficulties and individuals or groups otherwise marginalised or disadvantaged.

Many GAA clubs and community organisations across the country have undertaken fantastic initiatives and introduced simple but powerful programmes that identify and engage with the seldom heard groups in the community. Since the Green Club Programme was launched in 2020, clubs engaged in Green Club actions have highlighted how environmental and climate action initiatives – from tree-planting to sustainable transport, from gear swaps to energy upgrades – can also, and sometimes surprisingly!, have significant positive social engagement impacts. The Green Club Inclusion Toolkit brings the ideas and learnings developed by these clubs to the wider GAA community, making it easier for GAA clubs to take simple, practical actions to benefit their club, the community and the planet.

This Toolkit is not a definitive guide to sports and inclusion. Instead, it is designed to support existing initiatives and best practice nationally by identifying specific actions and approaches that contribute to social, environmental and sporting sustainability in GAA clubs



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THE RESOURCES IN THE TOOLKIT ARE DESIGNED TO:

- Increase the engagement of seldom heard groups in GAA club activities.
- Expand the reach and impact of local Green Club activities.
- Support the sustainable growth and physical and operational resilience of GAA clubs.

THIS TOOLKIT IS:

- Informed by national expertise and best practice.
- Composed of practical, straightforward actions.
- Designed for the specific context of GAA clubs and communities.
- Supported by examples and learning from GAA clubs, members and volunteers.

Each club and community know its members best. Therefore, this toolkit is intended as an adaptable guide to action and includes examples from a range of clubs and grounds to inspire and inform club decision-makers and volunteers.

WHAT IS IN THE TOOLKIT?

The Toolkit is structured around three main questions:

1. **WHO?** Reaching out to seldom heard groups in our community.
2. **WHAT?** Identifying the barriers to club and community engagement.
3. **HOW?** Promoting inclusion through climate action

The Toolkit includes examples and case study videos from clubs across the country who have taken actions that support inclusion, enhance their club and safeguard the environment as well as simple and practical tips and resources for clubs to get involved.

WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

This Toolkit is designed for Gaelic Games clubs of all sizes. The training guidance has been designed for all levels of Gaelic Games administration while the club-led toolkit resources will be of specific interest to Healthy Club and Green teams within Gaelic Games clubs as well as to club executives looking to grow their clubs and to strengthen community links. They may also be of interest to community groups and organisations interested in collaborating locally on inclusion and climate action initiatives.

While focused on practical action in GAA clubs and grounds, the approaches, actions and examples in this Toolkit can be easily transferred and adapted to other sporting and community contexts.

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This Toolkit was developed with the input of Gaelic Games clubs around the country who are putting community at the heart of all they do. While each club's situation is unique, many have shared experiences and common learnings, as captured in this Toolkit. For all the clubs involved, it has proven true that:

- Extending a hand and lending an ear can make a big difference to those less heard from within our communities
- There are considerable benefits for clubs in engaging the wider community in club activities, on and off the pitch, especially in terms of growing membership, expanding the volunteer base and enriching perspectives and expertise within the club
- Very often the most powerful engagement tool is a cup of tea in a warm environment!