



AUSTRALASIA GAELIC GAMES

STRATEGIC PLAN

2026 – 2029

Fostering and promoting Gaelic games across Australia and New Zealand



FOREWORD

Gaelic games have thrived in Australasia for over 50 years. As a sport recognised by the Australian Sports Commission and Sport New Zealand, we have continued to develop and grow Gaelic games in Australia and New Zealand. This plan builds on that proud tradition and sets out a clear path for retention and growth over the three-year period, thereby ensuring Gaelic games remain vibrant, inclusive and sustainable. It reflects the voices of our volunteers, our administrators, our players and our club officers, and aligns with the Australian Sports Commission and Sport Integrity Australia.

This strategic plan is closely aligned with *Play Well – Australia's Sport Participation Strategy*, ensuring that Gaelic games in Australasia contribute to the broader vision of safe, welcoming, inclusive, and lifelong participation in sport. Our strategy is connected to the six *Play Well* priority areas:

- empowering people and organisations
- driving lifelong involvement
- activating places and spaces
- building connections
- ensuring equitable access and
- transforming culture

By linking directly to *Play Well*, Australasia Gaelic Games demonstrates its role as a partner in creating a stronger, more connected sporting ecosystem across Australia and New Zealand.



AUSTRALASIA GAELIC GAMES

Australasia Gaelic Games (AGG) is the recognised national governing body for Gaelic football, hurling, camogie, and ladies football across Australia and New Zealand. Established to unite the Irish diaspora and foster the growth of Gaelic games in the southern hemisphere, AGG now oversees nine regional boards and supports more than 60 clubs, serving thousands of players, coaches, referees, and volunteers.

Gaelic games have been played in Australasia for more than a century, with early competitions emerging through Irish community networks and cultural associations. Over time, formal structures evolved, leading to the establishment of regional boards and, ultimately, a coordinated governing body for the region.

Today, AGG is responsible for governance, competitions, youth development, safeguarding, coach and referee education, international representation, and the promotion of Irish culture through sport.

Driven by strong volunteerism and deep community roots, AGG continues to contribute to the sporting landscape of Australia and New Zealand. This strategic plan builds on that legacy - honouring the history and resilience of Gaelic games in the region while charting a clear, modern path for growth, sustainability, and national recognition in the years ahead.



FOOTPRINT IN 2025



**5,000
MEMBERS**

across Australia
& New Zealand



9

State/Regional
Boards



67

affiliated clubs



EVENTS

Australasia Championships,
Regional Games, Youth
Féile and many state
and club-run tournaments



OUR PURPOSE AND VISION



OUR PURPOSE

To strengthen, grow and promote Gaelic games throughout Australasia by empowering our volunteers, developing our players and supporting our clubs in their ongoing work in their communities.



OUR VISION

Australasia Gaelic Games is committed to developing and promoting Gaelic games across Australia and New Zealand. We create inclusive opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to participate, learn and thrive, while fostering pathways for players, coaches, administrators, referees, and volunteers.

OUR VALUES



COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

We are a community rooted in connection, belonging and shared identity. Gaelic games provide a home away from home, where people come together to play, celebrate and support one another. We proudly honour our Irish heritage and traditions while embracing the diversity of Australasia, ensuring our culture remains alive and relevant for future generations.



TEAMWORK AND VOLUNTEERISM

We believe success comes through working together on and off the field. Teamwork means supporting one another, sharing responsibilities, and recognising that we are stronger as a collective than as individuals. Collaboration across clubs, states and communities drives the growth of Gaelic games in Australasia.



GROWTH

We are dedicated to the growth and development of our people and our games. By providing clear pathways for players, coaches, referees and administrators, we help individuals realise their potential. Growth means not only expanding numbers but strengthening quality, skills and opportunities. This also includes actively engaging people from diverse cultural backgrounds and increasing the promotion of our games across local communities, ensuring Gaelic games are accessible, visible and welcoming to all.



AMATEUR ETHOS

At the heart of Gaelic games is our amateur spirit. Players, coaches, administrators, referees and volunteers give their time freely out of passion and commitment. This ethos keeps our games community-driven, accessible and deeply connected to their roots.

STRATEGIC PILLARS OVERVIEW

Four pillars supporting one vision.



People & Participation



Governance & Sustainability



Facilities & Resources



**Community, Culture
& Promotion**



STRATEGIC PILLAR ONE **PEOPLE & PARTICIPATION**

We will empower our people – players, coaches, administrators, referees, and volunteers, and grow and retain participation at all levels.



KEY ACTIONS

- Retain and support volunteers through recognition, training and mentoring.
- Grow underage participation via schools, Féile and youth development programmes, utilising all available stakeholders, including adult clubs.
- Partner with Sporting Schools (Australia) to deliver Gaelic games in schools nationwide.
- Strengthen coaching and referee pathways with training, accreditation and mentoring.
- Provide resources for new clubs, both urban and regionally based, including a Club Starter Toolkit with guides and ongoing support.
- Support and guide states/clubs that wish to increase longevity of participation.

PLAY WELL ALIGNMENT

Supports “Empowering people and organisations” and “Driving lifelong involvement” by developing volunteers, coaches, referees, and players, and by creating clear, inclusive pathways for lifelong participation.

SMART OUTCOMES (BY 2029)

- Role-specific Volunteer Induction Packs created and distributed nationally by 2026.
- Annual volunteer survey conducted with results published (tracking satisfaction, workload, burnout risk).
- Volunteer recognition programme launched in 2026 and sustained annually (minimum ten volunteers recognised nationally per year);
- Youth participation increased by 15% (approx. +200 players); based on online registration system.
- Every state and club delivers at least one dedicated youth programme per year. Programmes should incorporate opportunities for age-appropriate competition, including Go Games blitzes or in-house tournaments.
- Australasia delivers at least one youth-specific education or workshop annually (e.g., skills clinics, wellbeing sessions, leadership programmes), with participation recorded and reported by year-end.
- Gaelic games included in Sporting Schools with participation in fifteen schools nationally.
- 60% of states/regions to have at least one accredited referee tutor.
- 100% of states complete referee courses annually.
- Introduction to Coaching Gaelic games courses rolled out annually in each state/region, ensuring qualified coaches.
- Increase participation and playing numbers through:
 - New clubs forming;
 - Existing clubs demonstrating growth through the addition of a new team/code; and
 - Competition format expansion (e.g., from 7-a-side to 9- or 11-a-side games).
- Australasia to create and develop a 'how-to guide' to support states/clubs interested in supporting 'social' opportunities; for example, Gaelic 4 Mothers & Others, Dads and Lads and social camogie.



STRATEGIC PILLAR TWO

GOVERNANCE & SUSTAINABILITY

We will ensure Gaelic games in Australasia are governed transparently, safely and sustainably, with safeguarding at the core, officers supported through education and consistent systems to strengthen the long-term future of our organisation.



A) **SAFEGUARDING & COMPLIANCE**

KEY ACTIONS

- Ensure child safeguarding policies and standards are implemented at every level, aligned with local legislation and GAA policies.
- Appoint and train Children's Officers in every state and club that deliver youth programmes.
- Conduct annual safeguarding compliance checks to ensure best practice is maintained.
- Integrate safeguarding into Foireann for registration and record keeping.
- Ensure adult safeguarding policies and procedures are visible and shared, ensuring clubs and committees are equipped to recognise, respond and report concerns appropriately.

SMART OUTCOMES (BY 2029)

- 100% of youth clubs/states have a trained children's officer in place.
- Annual safeguarding compliance review completed in every state by 2027.
- 100% of clubs actively use Foireann for registration, transfers and safeguarding records by 2028.
- All safeguarding policies reviewed and updated in line with Sport Integrity Australia.

B) **GOVERNANCE & SUSTAINABILITY**

KEY ACTIONS

- Provide annual officer education and induction workshops for various roles.
- Strengthen governance through transparent annual reporting and compliance processes.
- Embed environmental and organisational sustainability planning into operations.

SMART OUTCOMES (BY 2029)

- At least one governance/leadership training workshop hosted annually for officers and committees.
- Director education completed by new directors to Australasia County Board in line with Australian Sports Commission.
- Annual officer training provided for club and state committee positions.
- Online supporting course developed and maintained.
- Annual audited financial statements shared with stakeholders by December each year.
- Volunteer induction framework created and rolled out nationally by 2027.

PLAY WELL ALIGNMENT

Links to 'Empowering people and organisations' by strengthening leadership and compliance systems, and to "Transforming culture" through safeguarding, integrity, and good governance practices.



STRATEGIC PILLAR THREE **FACILITIES & RESOURCES**

We will secure facilities, resources and financial supports at a national level to strengthen the foundations of Gaelic games across Australasia.



KEY ACTIONS

- Work collaboratively with state and regional Boards to advocate with councils, schools, governments, and the GAA to secure improved access to playing fields and sporting infrastructure.
- Secure national sponsorship agreements aligned with national competitions.
- Coordinate national grant applications and support local/state submissions.
- Establish national guidelines for transparent, fair resource distribution.

SMART OUTCOMES (BY 2029)

- At least one additional national sponsorship partner secured.
- At least one national grant-writing workshop delivered annually from 2026–2029 to support GAA/DFA and other grant submissions. This will be complemented by the development of practical document support tools (e.g., how-to guides, templates, infographics) to assist State and Regional Boards in preparing strong submissions for GAA, DFA, and other funding opportunities.
- At least 50% of states actively lodge grant applications supported by the Australasia County Board.
- A modest National Facilities Support Fund established by 2028.

PLAY WELL ALIGNMENT

Advances “Activating places and spaces” and “Equitable access” by securing playing fields, sustainable resources, and fair distribution of facilities for all participants.



STRATEGIC PILLAR FOUR COMMUNITY, CULTURE & PROMOTION

We will celebrate Irish culture, strengthen community connections and build visibility and recognition of Gaelic games across Australasia.



KEY ACTIONS

- Increase visibility through media, livestreaming, and digital promotion.
- Support cultural and community events alongside games (Irish language, music, Scór, multicultural festivals).
- Recognise and celebrate volunteers, players and clubs annually.
- Strengthen links with Irish networks, embassies, multicultural groups and councils.
- Advocate for formal recognition by Sport NZ as a national sport.

SMART OUTCOMES (BY 2029)

- Gaelic games featured in at least three national/regional media outlets annually.
- All state and New Zealand regional associations establish and maintain their own websites, each containing a direct link to the Australasia website, supporting an archiving strategy for Gaelic games in Australasia.
- Create and develop promotional videos for Gaelic games across Australasia.
- Each state engages in an annual cultural/community-linked event.
- At least one joint event annually hosted by the Australasia County board with embassies, councils or multicultural partners.
- Volunteer Recognition Awards launched in 2026 and delivered annually.
- Formal recognition achieved through Sport NZ acknowledgement.

PLAY WELL ALIGNMENT

Connects to “Building connections” and “Transforming culture” by celebrating Irish identity, engaging multicultural communities, promoting inclusivity, and raising the visibility of Gaelic games.

STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP

The development of the Australasia Gaelic Games Strategic Plan was undertaken through a comprehensive and collaborative process to ensure the final document reflects the needs, aspirations and realities of our entire community across Australia and New Zealand. The following steps outline how the plan was shaped and finalised.

EXTERNAL FEEDBACK

External feedback from the *Play Well* Advisor and World GAA.



REVIEW & ENDORSEMENT

A final review and endorsement to ensure the plan is relevant, achievable and aligned with national and international frameworks.



STEERING GROUP FORMED

Establishment of a steering group representing players, referees, coaches, club admins and safeguarding leaders.



PLANNING WORKSHOPS

A series of planning workshops to shape the strategic pillars and objectives.



MEMBER SURVEY

Open survey for all members and stakeholders across Australasia.



INITIAL SCOPING & REVIEW

Review of the previous plan and early scoping with the *Play Well* Advisor.

IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW

TIMELINE

ACTION PLANNING

Action plans drafted for each pillar.

FINAL EVALUATION

Final evaluation (2029) to shape next plan



GOVERNANCE & OVERSIGHT

Australasia Gaelic Games and Strategic Steering Group to oversee delivery and review; meeting at least quarterly to review progress.

ANNUAL REVIEW & REPORTING

Annual review to refine and update goals, then report on progress to AGM.

APPENDIX

CLUB LOCATIONS BY STATE/REGION

AUSTRALIA

NEW SOUTH WALES

Bondi Gaels
Central Coast
Clan na Gael
Cormac McAnallens
Craobh Phadraigh
Michael Cusacks
NSW GAA – Hunter
Penrith Gaels
Sydney Shamrocks
Young Irelands

VICTORIA

Ballarat Clovers
Garryowen
Geelong Gaels
Melbourne Shamrocks
Naarm Gaels
Padraig Pearses
Peninsula Harps
Sinn Féin
St Kevin's
Wolfe Tones
Young Melbourne

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Bunbury Gaels
Gaelic for Mothers and Others Perth
Gaelic Games Junior Academy of WA
Greenwood
Morley Gaels
Na Fianna Catalpa
Perth Shamrocks
Sarsfields
Southern Districts
St Finbarr's
St Gabriel's
Western Shamrocks
Western Swans

QUEENSLAND

Brisbane Harps
Brisbane Youths
Cairns Chieftains
East Celts
Emeralds
Four Mile
Gold Coast Gaels
John Mitchels
Na Fianna Brisbane
Queensland Masters
Brisbane Souths
Townsville Wolfhounds

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Adelaide Shamrocks
Celtic Flames
Flinders O'Neill
Irish Australians
Na Fianna
Onkaparinga
St Brendan's
Western Ireland

TASMANIA

Hobart Harps
Launceston Gaels

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Darwin Shamrocks

NEW ZEALAND

CANTERBURY

Christchurch Celtic Wolfhounds
Christchurch McKennas
Rakaia
Waimak Gaels

WELLINGTON

Wellington/Hutt Valley

AUCKLAND

St Pat's Emerald City
Celtic
Harps
Marist Rangers
Naomh Críostóir

STATE AFFILIATES



STRATEGIC PARTNERS





australasiangaelicgames.com