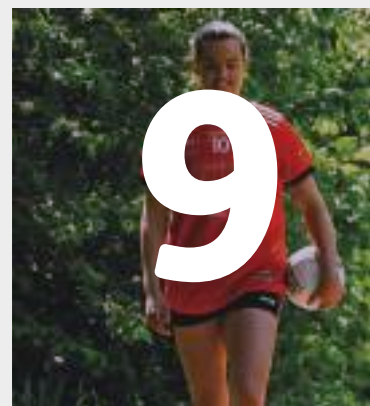


# Our Strategic Plan 2024 - 2029





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# 1. President's Message

It is a huge honour to present to you the new Strategic Plan for the Ladies Gaelic Football Association, which maps out and provides a roadmap for our sport over the next six years.

After months of exhaustive work and consultation, it is wonderful to be in a position to outline our vision for the future of our sport. Numerous meetings have taken place in an attempt to piece all of the pieces of the jigsaw together before publishing this plan, and we have sought the views of various stakeholders and members within our great Association, including players of all ages, administrators, supporters and LGFA staff. Each and every one of the participants in this process has played an invaluable role in bringing this plan to where it is now.

In the process of compiling this plan, the Strategic Plan Steering Group, chaired by Bronagh McGrane, met on several occasions and I wish to acknowledge the work of the Steering Group, which also comprised of Paul Donnelly, Richard Bowles, Orla Cullen, Eliza Downey, Michelle Healy, Jackie Cahill, Lyn Savage and Paula Prunty.

A huge word of thanks, also, to Eamonn Seydak and S3 Solutions, who partnered with us in the production of this plan.

A series of workshops were conducted and focus groups centred on the views of teenage players, the LGFA's National Development Committee, LGFA Management and staff. Frank views were exchanged at various times but all very much in the spirit of addressing key concerns of members as we move forward, while also focusing very much on what we have achieved to date and how we can build on that in the years to come.

At this juncture, I would like to thank those mentioned above for their dedication to the process and for giving so freely of their time. The feedback from the 2500 questionnaires that came back to us were vital in the compilation of this plan and when we look back on its implementation in time, I'm sure that we will be in a position where we can say that the objectives of the plan were very much fulfilled.

Our previous Strategic Roadmap, unveiled in 2018, has served us well but now we are pleased to unveil our new version. Our previous plan mapped out ambitious targets and goals and, in many cases, we hit those targets and fulfilled those goals, which is a source of great pride for us.

We now want to build on what we have achieved and the purpose of this plan is to ensure that the sport and culture of Ladies Gaelic Football thrives, empowering people, clubs and all our units to fulfil their potential and inspiring lifelong participation.

We want to continue to foster a culture of excellence in everything that we do, and we want to be bold in our decision-making and positive in our aspiration that Ladies Gaelic Football will be enjoyed in a fun, safe and welcoming environment. Our passion will shine through in everything that we do and we will remain engaged with and respectful to our members and stakeholders. We have set out five strategic themes and twelve ambitions that we aspire to achieve by the end of this strategy.

The five key themes are Supporting and Growing Volunteers, Leading and Innovating, Purposeful Engagements and Partnerships, The Playing Experience, and Implementing the Game Plan, while at all times being cognisant of the integrated approach with the wider Gaelic Games Family.

I now look forward to working closely alongside our CEO, Helen O'Rourke, and LGFA staff as we set about the implementation of our Strategic Plan. It is a plan that is ambitious and it is a plan that is achievable. It is also a plan that can come to fruition with your help and we urge all of our members to read the plan carefully and to digest the areas that are relevant to you. It is a plan that has been put together by people with the very best interests of Ladies Gaelic Football at heart – and we look forward to what the future hold.

**Mícheál Naughton**

Uachtarán

# CROKE PARK



WHERE WE ALL BELONG



## 2. CEO's Message

We are delighted to launch our new Ladies Gaelic Football Association Strategic Plan, which will serve us well over the next six years.

In recent years, our Association has witnessed unprecedented levels of growth, reflected in membership numbers, increased staffing levels, even greater visibility for our sport, and an incredible standard of football at all levels.

Our partners in the production of this plan, S3 Solutions, have been with us every step of the way and I wish to put on the record my thanks to Eamonn Seydak, Consultancy Director with S3 Solutions, for his input and guidance. From our very first meeting with Eamonn, right through to the publication of this plan, Eamonn has listened intently and provided specialist feedback, which has contributed hugely and helped to distil many, many views, conversations and opinions into the document which we are now proud to present to you.

At a time when we are embarking upon a period of great change in the wider Gaelic Games family, it is important that the Ladies Gaelic Football Association puts forward its aims and aspirations, while also rightly reflecting upon the huge strides forward we have taken since the publication of our report which covered 2017-2022.

Since the publication of our previous report, we have been through so much. We were so proud to welcome a record attendance of 56,114 to our 2019 TG4 All-Ireland Finals before all of our lives changed utterly with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Only now are we returning to some semblance of normality but so much of what we were used to previously is now so different and we have had to adapt and evolve.

I would like to think that we met every challenge that presented itself head on and we are now a stronger and more robust organisation. As we move towards an integrated Gaelic Games Family, we will face some challenges but also huge opportunities and we will embrace that process.

The Strategic plan which we now present to you contains our foundations as we prepare to move into an even bigger house. We are confident of scaling even higher heights, hitting the targets outlined and making more memories as an Association.

Recent years have seen us attract more sponsors and they have helped to elevate our profile even more, while also providing invaluable support to our main development initiatives, namely our Gaelic4Mothers&Others, Gaelic4Teens and Gaelic4Girls programmes, and our National Volunteer of the Year awards, which rightly acknowledge the sterling and selfless contributions of our members at grassroots level.

Our President, Mícheál Naughton, has acknowledged the contributions of various people in the compilation of this plan and I wish to echo those sentiments, while also thanking those involved for their time and input. We couldn't do any of this without you, our members, and we promise you that we will endeavour to fulfil the key objectives outlined in this Strategic Plan, which will take us up to 2029.

We want to strengthen, support and energise our volunteer base, and to continue to recognise, value and celebrate their immense contributions to our sport. We can't stress the importance of volunteers enough and we should shout about their achievements to the rooftops.

As leaders and innovators, we commit to continued improvement of standards in planning and governance, and we pledge to invest in and support the development of high quality, confident and skilled leaders.

Another of our key aims is to provide world class membership engagement and to use digital technology to enhance experiences across all levels of our Association, a process that was fast-tracked to a large degree during the Covid-19 pandemic when we had to adapt to new ways of working and learning. Our brand will capture the heritage and value of our game, a particularly apt ambition during 2024, as we head towards the 50th anniversary of our Association on July 18. We will also continue to build meaningful and valuable partnerships that enhance all aspects of our game and this has a knock-on effect in so many ways, with increased levels of player retention outlined as another key ambition for us. As we look to the future, we will embed the coach and match official pathways, thereby cultivating the next generation of coaches and match officials and equipping them with the necessary skills to succeed.

Yes, this plan is ambitious and yes, there will be lots of work to do to achieve what we set out to achieve but this roadmap now provides us with real and tangible goals.

Rest assured that we will do everything in our power to achieve them, while continuing to work alongside our colleagues within the wider Gaelic Games family and with Government departments and third-level institutions to remain very much on track.

The efforts of our volunteers will be central to everything we do and their efforts allow our brilliant players at various grades to flourish and fulfil their potential. The exploits of our players never cease to amaze me, from juvenile level to adult intercounty grades. We have an Association that's powerful, vibrant and brimming with potential.

Now, it's time to make that count and progress to the next level. We have so much more to do and now is a good time to turn the page and begin a new chapter.

**Helen O'Rourke**  
CEO





### 3. Introducing the Plan

This plan sets out the strategic direction of Ladies Gaelic Football for the period 2024-2029, it represents the agreed long-term vision and approach to growing and enhancing the game over the next six years.

This strategy builds on the successes and learns from the challenges of our previous Strategic Roadmap 2017-2022. Through our Strategic Planning Steering Group and the forthright contributions from our members, both here in Ireland and Internationally we set forward an ambitious plan underpinned by the principles of

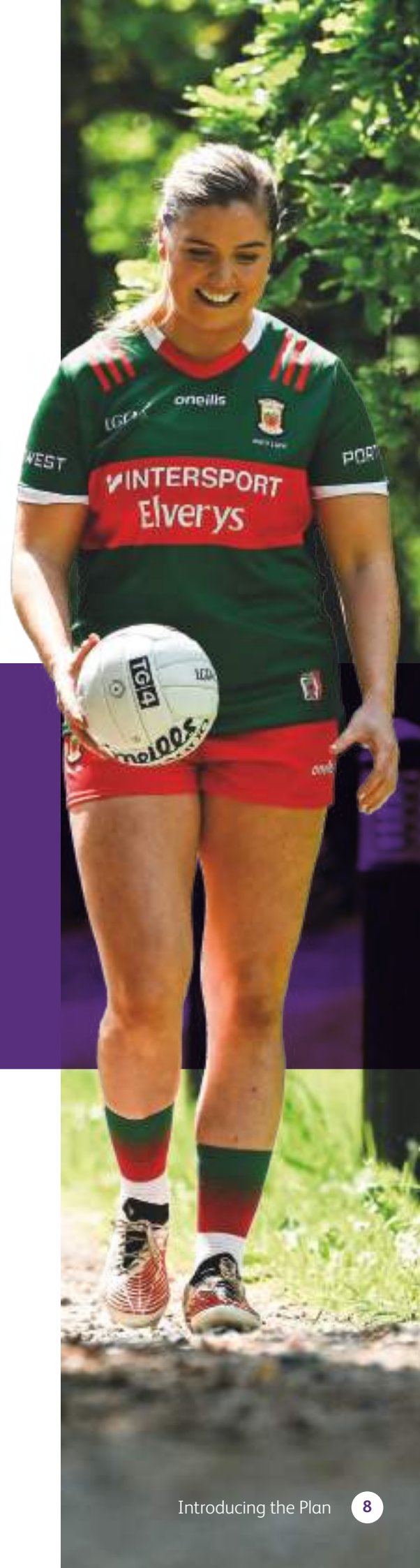
- > **Thrive**
- > **Empower**
- > **Inspire**

“That the sport and culture of Ladies Gaelic Football thrives, empowering people & clubs and inspiring lifelong participation”

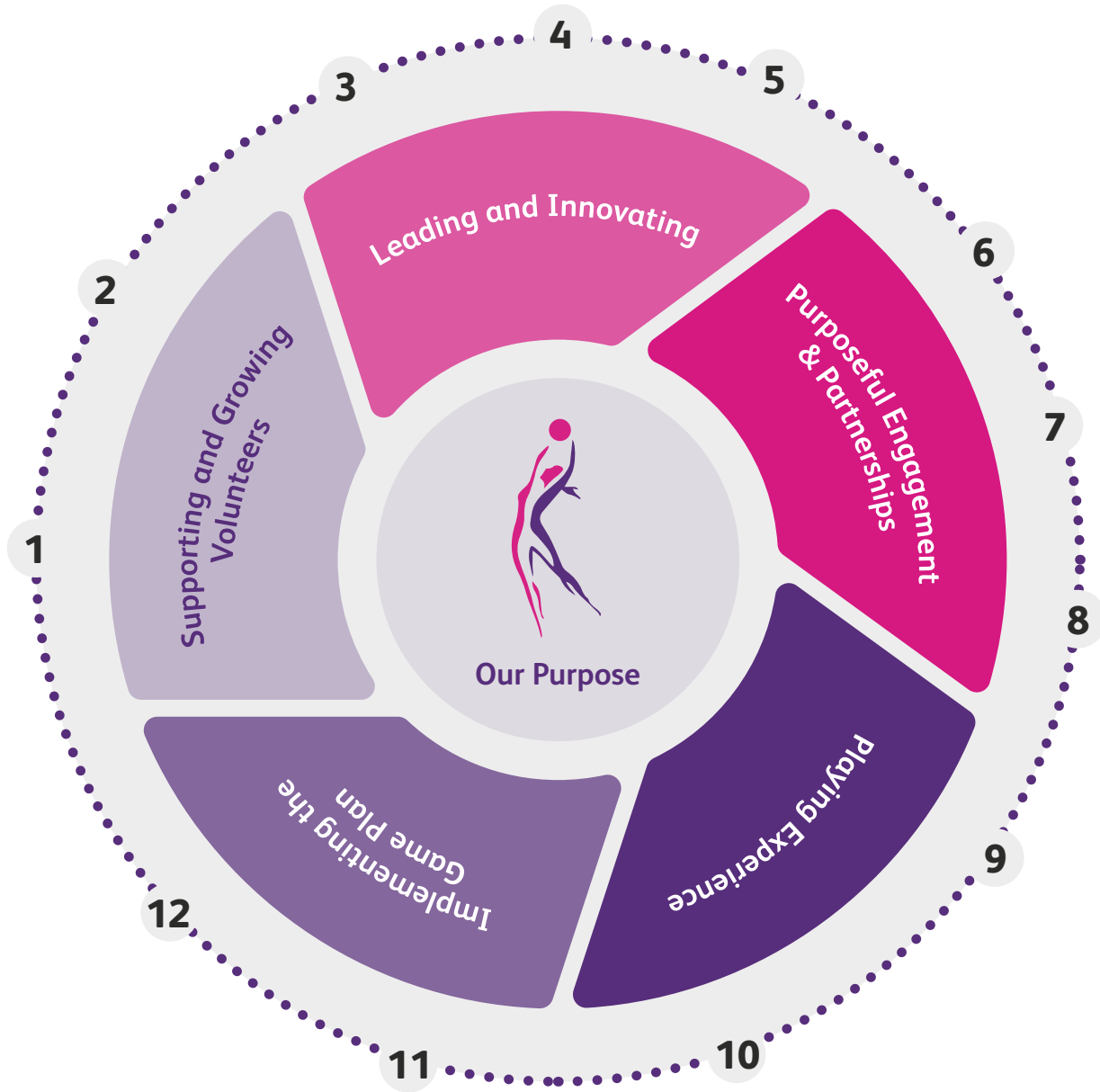
- Purpose Statement

Our Purpose Statement reflects who we are and why we are all involved, it will guide and drive the work of the Association.

The framework of the strategy is built on five Strategic Themes and twelve high level ambitions – highlighted overleaf. This framework is reinforced by thirty-nine strategic actions and twelve key success statements, against which we will measure the extent to which we have delivered all that we set out to deliver during the life course of the strategy.



# Our Strategic Themes



**“That the sport and culture of Ladies Gaelic Football thrives, empowering people & clubs and inspiring lifelong participation”**



## 1. Supporting and Growing Volunteers

- **Ambition 1:** To strengthen, support and energise the volunteer base.
- **Ambition 2:** To recognise, value and celebrate the immense contribution of volunteers to the development of the game.

## 2. Leading and Innovating

- **Ambition 3:** To continue to support improved standards in planning and governance.
- **Ambition 4:** To invest in and support the development of high quality, confident and skilled leaders.
- **Ambition 5:** Incorporate the continuous use of data and research across the Association.

## 3. Purposeful Engagement & Partnerships

- **Ambition 6:** To provide world class membership engagement and use digital technology to enhance experiences across all levels of the Association.
- **Ambition 7:** To provide and promote an attractive brand that captures the heritage and value of the game.
- **Ambition 8:** To build meaningful and valuable partnerships that enhance all aspects of the game and bring reciprocal value.

## 4. Playing Experience

- **Ambition 9:** To nurture the development of players prioritising retention.
- **Ambition 10:** To embed the coach and match official pathways.

## 5. Implementing the Game Plan

- **Ambition 11:** To agree and lead an integrated approach with the Gaelic Games Family.
- **Ambition 12:** To implement an effective operating model across the Association.



## 4. About Us

The Ladies Gaelic Football Association was founded in Hayes Hotel, Thurles, County Tipperary on 18th July 1974. Four counties, Offaly, Kerry, Tipperary and Galway attended the meeting. However, eight counties namely Cork, Kerry, Tipperary, Waterford, Galway, Roscommon, Laois and Offaly participated in the first official All-Ireland Senior Championship of that year, which was won by Tipperary.

Today, Ladies Gaelic Football is played in all counties in Ireland. It is also played in Africa, Asia, Australia, Britain, Canada, Europe, Middle East, New Zealand, South America and the USA on an organised basis.

The LGFA is a democratic organisation comprised of: Members, Clubs, County/International Boards (including Schools and Colleges Committees), Provincial Councils, Central Council and Annual Congress. We endeavour to reach into communities in Ireland and Internationally to promote Ladies Gaelic Football and whilst doing so, to support the Irish Language and other aspects of Irish culture.

### Our reach, as of January 2024 is:



**189,359**

Registered LGFA Members



**1,043**

Registered LGFA Clubs  
in Ireland



**1,087**

Registered LGFA Clubs  
in Ireland and Britain



**206**

Registered LGFA Clubs  
internationally



**45,326**

Attendance at the 2023 All Ireland  
Final

**491,000** Number of people viewing the All-Ireland Final on  
TG4 in 2023 from more than 50 countries

**22** Number of people employed by the LGFA in 2023

**750,000** Visits per annum to the LGFA website from more  
than 100 countries, more than 190,000 followers  
across social media platforms

**165,715** Number of girls and women playing Ladies  
Football in 2023



## 5. Developing the Plan

The strategic planning process took place over a 12 month period from Q4 2022 until Q4 2023.

The widespread consultation involved players, coaches, administrators, committee members and external partners. Alongside internal reflections which helped us to identify what we were doing well and what we needed to improve, in line with the local, regional and national picture.

The strategic planning process included the following four stages:



### Desk Review and Internal Reflection

Internal reflections on the previous strategic plan and early visioning on the new strategic plan. Establishment of our Strategic Planning Committee and planning for comprehensive consultation process.



### Consultation and Engagement

Mixed method consultation with LGFA stakeholders to identify challenges, priorities and opportunities to inform the strategic plan.



### Action Planning

Series of facilitated action planning workshops, both internally and with our strategic planning committee to bring the consultation findings to life in our Strategic Themes, Ambitions and Actions.



### Testing, Refining and Agreeing the Plan

Refining our new purpose statement, identifying measures of success and testing the plan through additional consultation with members.

The strategic themes, ambitions and actions in our strategic plan are directly informed by the consultation process.

<p><b>2,876</b> Responses received to the LGFA member survey</p> 	<p><b>10</b> Focus Groups</p> 
<p><b>25</b> One-to-one meetings with partners and stakeholders</p> 	<p><b>19</b> Planning Discussions</p> <p>facilitated with internal staff teams, strategic planning committee and LGFA Management Committee.</p> 



## 6. Our Strategic Plan 2024 - 2029

### Our Purpose

“That the sport and culture of Ladies Gaelic Football thrives, empowering people & clubs and inspiring lifelong participation”

Thrive. Empower. Inspire.

### Our Values

- **Integrity**  
We will foster a culture of excellence, accountability and transparency
- **Brave**  
We will be creative, dynamic and innovative, building on what we have, trying new things and tackling difficult issues head on
- **Inclusive**  
We will aspire to provide a safe, fun and positive environment for all regardless of their background
- **Passionate**  
We will foster our love for the game and our pride in the unique heritage and identity of our sport in everything we do
- **Responsive**  
We will ensure that our members voice informs our future direction, opportunities and collaboration with others in Ladies Gaelic Football
- **Sustainable**  
We will strive for sustainability in how we resource and finance our sport and in how we contribute to a greener and more environmentally friendly society





TG4



# Theme 1: Supporting and Growing Volunteers

Volunteers are at the heart of the sport. Ensuring a highly motivated, passionate and supported volunteer base is a key priority in this strategy.

We heard consistently during the consultation process that we need to continue to prioritise the recruitment and retention of volunteers across all levels of the association.

You told us that many of the existing programmes and volunteer supports are working well and we should build on and enhance what we have, as well as exploring new ways to enhance the volunteering experience.

This means supporting units with recruitment plans, inspiring new volunteers to engage through targeted campaigns and messaging as well as putting in place effective support programmes that build the capacity of volunteers.

**“We are pro-actively supporting and guiding our volunteers which has delivered an effective and enjoyable volunteer experience.”**

**- Success Statement One**

We are also committed to continuously improving volunteer retention rates and ensuring that the contribution of volunteers is publicly recognised.

This means that we need to monitor and maintain a volunteer database as well as continue to celebrate volunteers through annual awards and recognition initiatives.

**“Volunteers involved in Ladies Gaelic Football feel appreciated and valued for their contribution to the sport.”**

**- Success Statement Two**

We will measure success through regular engagements and conversations with volunteers at all levels of the association.



Strategic Theme	Ambition	Strategic Actions
<b>Supporting and Growing Volunteers</b>	<b>Ambition 1:</b> To strengthen, support and energise the volunteer base	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To develop and support the implementation of a targeted engagement recruitment plan for volunteer positions</li> <li>2. Deliver a campaign to promote volunteering</li> <li>3. Launch new Administrator Pathway and embedded support programme to support the capacity building of volunteers</li> <li>4. Maintain and monitor a volunteer database</li> </ol>
	<b>Ambition 2:</b> To recognise, value and celebrate the immense contribution of volunteers to our game	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Delivery of annual volunteer awards</li> <li>6. Roll out of a volunteer recognition initiative</li> </ol>

## Theme 2: Leading and Innovating

You told us that ensuring effective governance was a key priority and therefore this strategic plan should provide appropriate focus and resources to supporting the implementation of good governance at all levels of the association.

This means providing resources and practical support for units and where appropriate to challenge and set governance targets that help raise standards.

“There is a full awareness of governance procedures for all units in LGFA and they have a vision for the future.”

**- Success Statement One**

Having a vision for the future, both at the LGFA and within individual units and clubs requires leadership and we want to ensure that each unit is equipped with trained volunteers and leaders. We heard consistently during the consultation that we should support the development of leaders, with a particular focus on female leaders.

Initiatives such as the female leadership programmes have proven effective and we should further develop and enhance this type of support in pursuit of enhanced leadership across the association.

You also told us that providing supportive networks that enable shared learning, mentoring and connection can further enhance leadership across the sport.

“Leaders within LGFA feel empowered to make a positive impact on our sport, with a strong focus on the development of female leaders.”

**- Success Statement Two**

We are committed to investing in, contributing to, leading on and using research and data to inform how we make decisions. This means developing new research partnerships to investigate and explore emerging issues and opportunities, it means the effective use of data management systems and a focused effort to use data and evidence during conversations and debates about how we collectively improve the sport.

“The LGFA ensures an evidence-based approach is utilised for decision making and planning, meeting the needs of our members.”

**- Success Statement Three**

Strategic Theme	Ambition	Strategic Actions
<b>Leading and Innovating</b>	<b>Ambition 3:</b> To continue to support improved standards in planning and governance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and manage a portfolio of resources and education to support units in planning and governance</li> <li>2. Target clubs to actively engage in the Club Compass self-assessment tool to promote high standards of club governance and administration</li> <li>3. Develop, set and implement governance targets specific to all units</li> </ol>
	<b>Ambition 4:</b> To invest in and support the development of high quality, confident and skilled leaders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Upskill, empower and create stronger networks for leaders</li> <li>5. Developing leadership succession and inspiring innovative leadership opportunities</li> <li>6. Strengthen and expand the Female Leadership Programmes to deepen impact</li> </ol>
	<b>Ambition 5:</b> Incorporate the continuous use of data and research across the Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Identify and review existing management information datasets</li> <li>8. Set meaningful targets for the improvement of data collection and management systems</li> <li>9. Develop meaningful research partnerships to ensure evidence-based approaches to planning and decision making</li> </ol>

## Theme 3: Purposeful Engagements and Partnerships

Regular membership engagement emerged as a clear priority during the consultation process. The use of Foireann and other digital technology creates a unique opportunity to ensure an increased feeling of connectivity across LGFA units and members.

We commit through this strategy to embrace new ways of engaging across the association and to track, monitor and report on our progress as we strive to provide a world class membership engagement process.

**“A member engagement programme established which is valued and interacted with by our members.”**

**- Success Statement One**

There is a clear need to continue to promote the LGFA and Ladies Gaelic Football as an attractive and effective brand partner. We aspire that the brand will be recognised worldwide and that we can capitalise on an enhanced profile to secure attractive commercial partnerships for the benefit of the entire sport.

You also told us that we need to support individual units with their marketing and communications at a local level through practical support and the provision of training, resources and guidance.

**“There is increased LGFA brand recognition and commercial value.”**

**- Success Statement Two**

Through this strategy we will seek to secure and manage partnerships that deliver value for our members and units across all aspects of the game whether this is a sponsor or commercial partner, a government department, local authority or other stakeholder. Ongoing stakeholder mapping and localised support for clubs and units to build strong value driven partnerships will be a key function of this strategy.

**“There are meaningful and innovative strategic partnerships developed to support the achievement of LGFA ambitions.”**

**- Success Statement Three**

Strategic Theme	Ambition	Strategic Actions
<b>Purposeful Engagements &amp; Partnerships</b>	<b>Ambition 6:</b> To provide world class membership engagement and use digital technology to enhance experiences across all levels of the Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development and management of a membership engagement plan</li> <li>2. To regularly engage with volunteers and members through Foireann and other platforms to capture the volunteer voice</li> <li>3. Work to harness technology and innovation to attract new supporters and members</li> <li>4. Monitor, track and report on the engagement with members</li> </ol>
	<b>Ambition 7:</b> To provide and promote an attractive brand that captures the heritage and value of the game	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Implement a brand strategy that inspires players, supporters and members enriching the sports image</li> <li>6. To develop an effective marketing programme which will exploit the full commercial potential and social impact of our sport</li> <li>7. Support all units with the development and implementation of a communications plan</li> </ol>
	<b>Ambition 8:</b> To provide and promote an attractive brand that captures the heritage and value of the game	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Build effective relationships with sponsors and partners to positively impact the lives of our members</li> <li>9. Conduct a stakeholder mapping exercise to target valuable partnership arrangements and mutually beneficial projects</li> <li>10. Continue to optimise relationships with relevant stakeholders to achieve strategic ambitions</li> <li>11. Support clubs to develop links with schools leveraging access to increase participation of young girls</li> </ol>



## Theme 4: Playing Experience

The development of players is at the core of the Gaelic Games Player Pathway with supports and enriched age-appropriate participation opportunities available at all stages.

The need to nurture players and prioritise player retention was reinforced time and again during the consultation process, addressing in particular those concerns around teenage retention and the opportunity that exists to re-engage and re-energise former players into volunteering, coaching, officiating or playing.

Building on and providing support to implement the player pathway will be a key focus in this strategy, as will a commitment to ongoing analysis of competition structures from underage to adult, striving at all times for an enhanced player experience that promotes retention and lifelong engagement with the sport.

“Delivery of increased opportunities to play ladies football with an optimised playing experience by players at all levels.”

- **Success Statement One**

You told us consistently that there needs to be a successful programme in place at all levels for the recruitment and training of coaches and referees and that we can do this through education, mentoring and support programmes as well as providing resources and ongoing support for those volunteers.

“There are strengthened standards of coaching and officiating as a result of greater education, support, respect and appreciation.”

- **Success Statement Two**





Strategic Theme	Ambition	Strategic Actions
<b>Playing Experience</b>	<b>Ambition 9:</b> To nurture the development of players prioritising retention	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To create a suite of resources to support players at all levels of the Gaelic Games Player Pathway</li> <li>2. Analyse competition structures from under-age to adult to align to the player pathway</li> <li>3. Research and pilot new playing opportunities to increase teenage retention</li> <li>4. Explore and develop re-engagement opportunities for former players at club and county level</li> </ol>
	<b>Ambition 10:</b> To embed the coach and match official pathways	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. To create a suite of resources to support coaches and match officials at all levels of their respective pathways</li> <li>6. To increase the technical development of players to enhance the learning experience of players</li> <li>7. Grow the number of the female coaches and match officials through education, mentoring and support programmes</li> <li>8. Develop and deliver a match official retention and training programme to enhance standards</li> </ol>

## Theme 5: Implementing the Game Plan

The consultation process reinforced the immense pride we all share for the culture, heritage and history of our sport and we want to protect that as we continue to explore shared and collaborative initiatives with the wider Gaelic Games family and as we progress towards integration.

You told us that the Association should lead the way, represent the views of our members and ensure that the sport continues to thrive as this roadmap evolves.

This will be a fundamental element of our strategy.

**“Our sport continues to thrive within an agreed roadmap towards an integrated structure across Gaelic Games.”**

**- Success Statement One**

We know that to deliver on the ambition set out in this plan, we need to ensure we have the adequate resources in place within the association and across units.

We commit through this plan to strive for a fully functioning and resourced structure at all times which we believe is essential to cater for the needs of ladies football. As an association we will be compliant, meet our obligations and provide a great place to work and volunteer, ensuring that our members can have pride in the Association.

**“The LGFA has the capacity to implement the full game plan enabling the Association to accomplish our ambitions..”**

**- Success Statement Two**



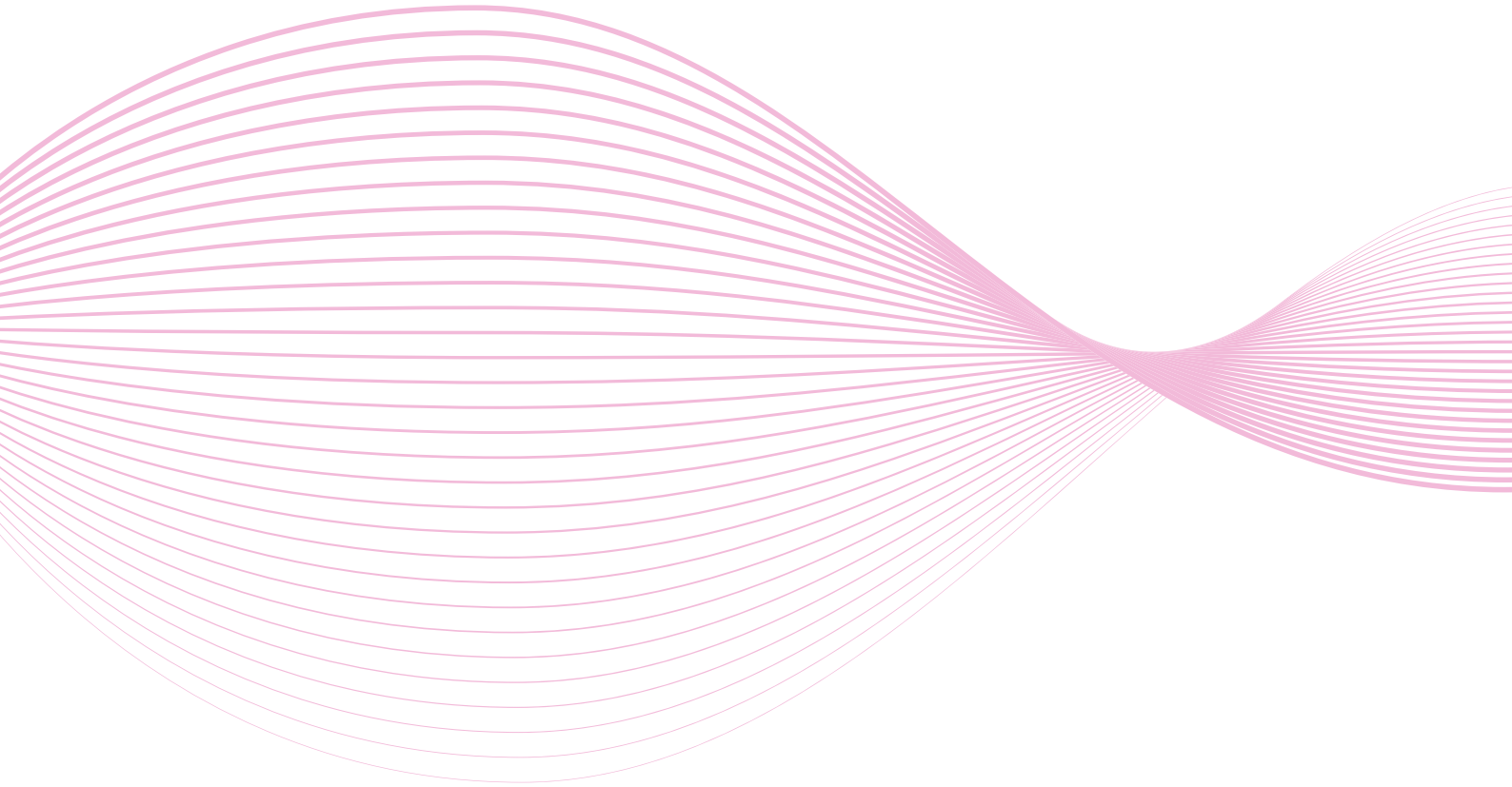
Strategic Theme	Ambition	Strategic Actions
<b>Implementing the Game Plan</b>	<b>Ambition 11:</b> To agree and lead an integrated approach with the Gaelic Games Family	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To protect the identity and strengths of ladies football whilst playing a leading role in progression to integration</li> <li>2. Promote and continue to develop shared initiatives across the Gaelic Games Family</li> </ol>
	<b>Ambition 12:</b> To implement an effective operating model across the Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. To strive for the optimum standards and regulations as a world leader for sport</li> <li>4. To establish required staffing infrastructure and capacity to support strategic ambitions</li> <li>5. To implement a programme of staff training for professional and personal development</li> </ol>











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