



Club Manual

Role of The Club Chairman

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GAA



Role of an Cathaoirleach – The Club Chairman

The Chairman is the principal officer of a GAA Club. As well as chairing Club Executive Committee and other Club meetings, the Chairman has prime responsibility for ensuring that the Club is a well organized, well managed and an active unit. The Chairman should be dedicated to the job, have good communication skills, have the ability to delegate key tasks and above all, be a person of integrity in the community. The contribution of the Club Chairman to the effective working of a Club can never be underestimated.

Main Duties:

The main duties of the Club Chairman are summarised as follows:

- **Provide leadership and management in the Club**
- **Hold effective Club meetings**
- **Uphold the Club constitution**
- **Plan ahead for the Club**
- **Delegate tasks to Club members**
- **Uphold the mission, vision and values of the GAA**

These duties are now discussed in greater detail.

1: Leadership and Management

“Clubs need to be organised in terms of administration, fundraising, coaching and games development etc. The Club Chairman plays a key role in making sure the correct structures are in place for the Club.”

The Chairman must be a leader and a manager, playing a key role in organising the Club in to a well structured unit.

The following definitions are important in terms of the role of the Club Chairman.

Management defined:

- Management is the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals and objectives.

Leadership defined:

- Leadership is about motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal.

Leadership involves:

- Having a clear picture of what you want to achieve
- Encouraging individuals to help in achieving objectives
- Having the ability and willingness to explain, listen and discuss i.e. communicate.

Clubs need to be organised in terms of administration, fundraising, coaching and games development etc. The Club Chairman plays a key role in making sure the correct structures are in place for the Club. It goes without saying that it is not possible for the Chairman to do everything in the Club, hence the importance of delegation, which is discussed later. However, the Chairman must ensure that people assigned to various tasks in the Club carry out their roles and that help and assistance is provided where required.

2. Games Development Structures in the Club

The most important activity in any Club is the playing of our games. All clubs should strive to be the best that they can in terms of the standard of coaching provided to Club players and in terms of participation in our games.

All clubs should endeavour to put in place the best possible coaching and games development structures, suitable to the needs of the Club. The Chairman, along with the Club Executive Committee, plays a key role in developing these structures. Amongst the topics to be considered in developing games development structures in the Club include:

- Go-Games being adopted as best practice in the Club
- Provision of a regular programme of games for child and youth players by participating in ‘blitzes’ with other clubs
- Club organising a Cúl Camp each summer

- Primary and post-primary Club-school link in place to promote participation
- All Club coaches receiving GAA Coach Education Training
- Using GAA resources, such as the GAA FUN-DO pack
- Appointing a Club Coaching Officer in place (see manual section on ‘other officer’ roles)

For more on this topic and for information on resources available to your Club, consult the **Games Development Section** of the Club manual and the **Games Development Section** of the GAA website.



3: Club Meetings

The Chairman's role at clubs meetings is by far the most important of his/her functions. The Chairman should ensure all meetings are conducted in an organised manner and that meetings achieve results.

He/she must guide the meeting but not lead it, encouraging open discussion amongst those present and involve as many people as possible. He/she must also ensure that the meeting is productive by 'managing' the discussion, not allowing people to make points that have already been made and not allowing people to talk for lengthy periods.

It is best to allow a controlled and productive discussion, take a decision and move on to the next topic on the agenda.

In general, a good meeting will:

- Motivate the committee and those present
- Ensure lively and productive discussion
- Promote sound decision making
- Start on time and finish on time

A poor meeting will:

- Waste peoples time and effort
- De-motivate those present
- Have no constructive outcome
- Diminish the importance of meetings and result in poor attendances

Main points to consider :

- Keep to the Agenda
- Keep control of the discussion
- Involve as many people as possible
- Reports, Discussions, Points of Order, Questions - all 'through the chair'
- Agree follow-up actions at each stage: i.e what, by who, and by when.
- Be clear that decisions are understood by everyone before moving on to the next topic.

For more information on this important duty, please consult the '**Effective Club Meetings**' section' of the manual.



4: The Club Constitution

Every Club must adopt the Club constitution in accordance with rule 3.5 of the GAA's Official Guide (Treoraí Oifigiúil). It is the duty of the Chairman to ensure that the Club constitution is upheld and adhered to.

The Club constitution provides a means whereby the GAA Club can be operated and managed by the Executive Committee of the Club. The Constitution provides for control of the assets of the Club and the operation of activities within the Club regarding membership, Club committee structure, Club property and the conducting of meetings etc.

If the Club has not already done so, the constitution should be adopted immediately. A Club can make certain amendments to the standard Club constitution, a copy of which is available in the Club Zone section of the GAA website, www.gaa.ie. However, all Club byelaws and additions or alterations must receive the approval of the

County Committee. The Club must convene a special general meeting of the Club and record the adoption of the constitution in the minutes of the meeting.

GAA Official Guide Rule 3.5: Club Constitution

The Official Club Constitution, as set out in Appendix 2 to these Rules, shall govern the affairs of all Clubs. Each Club shall adopt the appropriate form of the Official Club Constitution. Amendments or additions must be passed at a Club Annual General Meeting, and be submitted in writing to, and be approved by the County Committee.

5: Club Development – Planning Ahead

All clubs should have a development plan that is reviewed and renewed every three to five years. The advantage of having a plan is that the Club is actively planning ahead for its future and all the Club's members can see the direction that the Club is taking. A Club plan will also help put the correct structures in place and help organise the Club.

Planning ahead has never been more important. Many clubs have witnessed the population of their catchment area increase dramatically in recent years while others have experienced a serious decline in their local population base. In order to cater for this change and other changes in society, clubs need to put a development plan in place.

A Club development plan is a simple document that outlines the following:

- Where are we now?
- Where are we going?
- How are we going to get there?
- Who is responsible for getting us there?

The **GAA Club Planning Programme** provides a structured and simple process to allow clubs to develop such a plan.

For more on this important area, see the section in the manual on **'Club Planning'** for more details.



6: Delegation

The ability to delegate work is a key consideration in ensuring that the Club works effectively and operates as it should.

What is Delegation?

Delegation occurs when one person gives another the authority to undertake specific activities or decisions. Delegation helps to ensure that a few officers are not burdened with all the work and that people are not frightened away for fear of a heavy workload.

Advantages of Delegation

Positive aspects of delegation include:

1. Increased motivation of Club members and the Executive Committee
2. The skills of your team are developed
3. Better distribution of work through the group
4. Helps to develop potential successors in the Club

How to Delegate

The first step to take is to identify a suitable person or persons for the task. This may be a person who has expressed an interest in getting involved in the Club or may be someone who has experience in a particular area.

Explain the task clearly and make sure that they understand the amount of time and the commitment involved. It is important to ensure that the person has the necessary skills to do the job properly; otherwise they may be unsuccessful and feel that they have failed to make a contribution to the Club. Keep in touch with the person, offering your support to them. When the job is finished, praise and acknowledge a job well done!!

For more on the topic of volunteering and delegation, consult the **'Volunteering'** section of the Club manual.

Delegation Officer Roles in Club:

It is important that each officer understands their role in the Club and carries out their duties as required. Some Club officer roles are briefly outlined below.

Chairman:	Management of Club affairs
Secretary:	Manages the administration of the Club
Treasurer:	Records income and expenditure
PRO:	Promotes of the Club in local community
Registrar:	Registers players and members

For more on this, view the sections in the Club manual that deal with these roles.

7: Mission, Vision and Values of the GAA

The Mission and Vision and Values of the GAA are outlined in the Association's Strategic Vision and Action Plan. The Chairman should ensure that the Club 'lives' the mission, vision and values of the GAA. These statements define what we are all about as an organisation and describe our ethos as a sporting, cultural and community based organisation.

The GAA Mission states that;

"The GAA is a community based volunteer organisation promoting Gaelic games, culture and lifelong participation."

The Association's vision is;

"that everybody has the opportunity to be welcomed to take part in our games and culture, to participate fully, to grow and develop and to be inspired to keep a lifelong engagement with our Association."

The six values of the GAA are:

1. Community Identity
2. Amateur Status
3. Inclusiveness
4. Respect
5. Player Welfare
6. Teamwork

These are contained in full in the '**GAA Mission Vision and Values**' section of the Club manual.

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