



GPA Annual Report 2025

CEO'S ADDRESS

As CEO of the Gaelic Players Association, it is a privilege to serve you, the inter-county players, and to represent your voice at a time of real progress and even greater opportunity for our games.

Everything we achieve as an organisation, we achieve together. It is driven by you, through your commitment, your standards, and your willingness to stand together to shape a better future for players. This year's report reflects that collective effort, and the progress outlined within it is a direct result of your voice being heard and acted upon.

Looking ahead, one of the most significant opportunities within Gaelic games is integration. This is not simply a structural change. It is a defining moment for our association and for the future of our games. It should not be forgotten that in February 2022, each of the three governing bodies voted to make integration a priority, over four years ago. The Integration Committee under the stewardship of former President of Ireland Mary McAleese has been working on this for over 3 years. This is not something that has emerged suddenly or without process.

In my submission to the Oireachtas Committee on Sport last year, I set out a clear case for a more integrated Gaelic games. One unified association would deliver equality in investment, recognition and opportunity, while strengthening the long-term sustainability of our games. Delivered correctly, integration provides the platform to achieve exactly that.

From a commercial perspective, integration represents a major opportunity to grow the overall value of Gaelic games. A unified structure allows us to present a stronger, more compelling proposition to partners, sponsors and broadcasters. That growth will benefit all within Gaelic games including you as players, through enhanced supports, increased investment and new opportunities that reflect your contribution to the success of our games.

Just as importantly, integration is about equality. It provides us with a real chance to address long-standing disparities and to ensure that all players are treated with the same respect and afforded the same opportunities, regardless of code. This is a fundamental step forward for our association and one that reflects the values we stand for as players.

More broadly, integration is an opportunity for Gaelic games to lead within Irish society. Our games have always represented more than sport. They reflect who we are as communities and as a nation. By embracing a more inclusive model, we can continue to set the standard for leadership and fairness across Irish society.

While we look to that future, 2025 has already been a landmark year for the GPA and for players across the country.

A major milestone was the agreement of a new four-year protocol with the GAA. Importantly, this agreement formally recognises that players own their Name, Image, Likeness and Personality, opening the door to new opportunities that we are now focused on developing for you. It also delivers increased supports for student players, strengthening our commitment to your development both on and off the field. I would like to acknowledge the GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association for their continued engagement and collaboration in progressing key initiatives that support players across our games.

I would also like to acknowledge the Government for their continued support and engagement, and for recognising the significant contribution of inter-county players through increased investment. Government funding for inter-county players has now reached €7.2 million, a significant increase from less than €2 million a decade ago.

Much of our work on your behalf does not generate headlines, but it is often this work that has the greatest day-to-day impact. In 2025, we strengthened our connection with players nationwide through the introduction of part-time Engagement and Development Officers. These roles are already making a real difference. The EDOs ensure better communication, stronger relationships and a more direct link between you and the GPA.

Player welfare remains at the core of everything we do. This year, over 500 players underwent cardiac screening which is an essential preventative measure that has already helped identify serious health issues in players. The importance of these programmes is clear, and we will continue to prioritise initiatives that protect your health and wellbeing.

All of this work is guided by our four pillars: Development, Welfare, Representation and Equality. These are not just strategic priorities. They are commitments to you, and they underpin every decision we make as an organisation.

Casting our eyes forward again, our recently published GPA Playbook provides a clear roadmap for the next phase of this journey. Covering the period from 2026 to 2028, it sets out our direction, our priorities and our ambition to continue building a fairer and more sustainable environment for players.

The progress we have made in 2025 shows what is possible when players are united and empowered. The opportunity ahead, particularly through integration, gives us the chance to go even further.

I am proud to represent you, and I look forward to continuing this work together.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Tom Parsons', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Tom Parsons
CEO