



St. Patrick's GAA Club

## **Secretary's Report St Patricks GAA Club 2022**

### **Behind the Scenes**

As with every club there is a mountain of volunteers who work behind the scenes who keep the club running smoothly. We are extremely lucky to have a great grounds department who work morning, noon and night to keep our pitches in such good condition. So, a massive thank you goes to Mick, Terry, Paddy, Paul and Fintan. We are also grateful to Phil, Lily, Aisling, Amy and Jonathan for running the coffee dock at weekends and events throughout the year. Another thanks goes to Mary, Catherine and Suzanne who keep us kitted out in the latest fashionable Pats gear. A kudos needs to be handed out to Sharon Burke for her work as the Player Injury Fund Coordinator. Pitch Allocations is a massive job with nearly 30 squads to accommodate each week with training sessions, league/championship fixtures, challenge matches with traffic management thrown into the mix. This is kept on the straight and narrow by Fintan Delaney and his committee, so a big thank you to them.

### **Lotto**

Currently our lotto is €15,400. Tickets are available for purchase online using the Clubzap app as well as Grogan's shop in Portrane and our trusty ticket sellers Amanda Kavanagh, Paul Kiernan and their committee.

### **National Club Draw**

We will be running the National Club Draw again this year. Each cent goes back into our club. This is a great opportunity to generate some additional revenue.

### **Seniors**

After a successful 2021 the aims for the year were to consolidate ourselves in the senior championship and to get promoted in the leagues after being denied that opportunity in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid rules. We worked on building strength until March to try and get the squad prepared for a step up in levels to come. Despite our lack of pitch training, we won all our opening league games. We also won very competitive friendlies vs St Sylvesters, Whitehall and Naomh Mearnog. Our squad had been significantly impacted by players emigrating or choosing not to play and we were missing other players through injury and exams and J1s impacted us further in the summer. Despite this we still managed to win all our games. The biggest impact on the group was obviously the tragic loss of Eoghan Moloney and the group stayed together supporting each other through a very difficult time for everyone who knew Eoghan. Nobody felt like training or playing at that point but 10 days after the funeral the players mustered the strength to beat St Margarets and 3 days later beat Erins Isle. On the final matchday we beat Parnell's, narrowly, but would ultimately rue missed chances in the last 10 minutes to win by more. We also lost Dylan Knight to a significant injury on the night that ruled him out for the Championship. With just the back match vs Mary to play and the group had been stretched too far. The group had scheduled holidays this week to get them done before the championship started and we were not well prepared for the test of St Marys and the 5 point loss (our first loss of the season) saw us drop to 3rd in the final standings and into a playoff. The group took a break to allow players to return from holidays and refocus for the first senior championship



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campaign in St Pats history. The players performed excellently in the campaign. They left Portmarnock disappointed with a draw vs AFL1 opponents, beat Olaf's who have subsequently been promoted to AFL1 and lost by 1 away to Plunketts. This was enough to see us qualify for the quarterfinal where we were well beaten by eventual winners St Vincent's, but we got a chance that day to see the standard we are striving to achieve. With just the league playoff to go, the group struggled for energy and drive after a taxing year emotionally. It was also a taxing year for the players as the group struggled for competition for places after losing up to 11 players at times from the 2021 squad. These factors were evident on the pitch on a dismal afternoon where we never got going and were deservedly beaten by a much hungrier and more enthusiastic St Margarets team. Ultimately results were not bad as we won 14 of 15 league games and qualified from the toughest group in Senior B Championship but everyone's expectations, especially the players and management has been raised so in the end 2022 was a disappointing year on the pitch and a tragic one off the pitch. The group is already working to improve for 2023.

### **Juniors**

Having finished on such a high at the end of 2021, Junior B had big boots to fill in 2022, both in terms of the new management team and players. They started out this season with 2 members of the management team, Niall Franklin and Stephen Keegan and, as the year progressed, we were lucky enough to be joined by Johnny Fitzpatrick as a selector. Both Stephen and Johnny's experience and knowledge of the game has had a huge impact on the management team, the squad and the progression of the club as a whole.

Unfortunately, we lost some key senior players this year, all of whom we were very sorry to see go. Thankfully, we had enough depth in the team with the remaining senior players and also grew in strength thanks to St. Pat's player pathway development and the addition of 8 players from the Under 19s group transitioning up to senior football.

2022 was a successful year for Junior B and we finished the season just shy of the playoffs after jumping from division 7 to division 6 and we made it into the quarterfinal of the championship where we were unfortunately defeated by Olafs.

### **Hurling**

The adult hurlers had a solid season overall in 2022. The team finished mid-table in the league improving on our position of the previous year. After securing a home quarterfinal, the team was disappointed, losing to the eventual championship winners. We are now actively recruiting for next season and looking forward to continued progress into 2023.

### **U19s**

The U19's League format hasn't been a success in 2022, However, the lads focused on each game before them, showed and performed. Several teams dropped from Division 1 and 2 to Division 3 where the lads were placed. The lads performed strongly all season.

A tight head-to-head vs Thomas Ashe saw the lads being pipped by 1pt, ending the season in 2nd place. Equally the Championship has been disrupted negatively by the new U19's format.

A opening loss to Raheny (2 pts) and a win vs Castleknock (+5), saw the lads face up against Kilmacud Crokes in the final group Game. Winners will go on to face Ballymun Kickhams in the B Championship semi-finals.



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### **U17 Boys**

The Under 17s had a very successful year holding their own finishing mid table in a very competitive Division 1 league. They also competed in the Minor A championship and despite some gallant performances they were unlucky not to progress from their group after a loss to Thomas Davis away in difficult conditions on the final day. The lads showed great commitment and spirit all year, and they will benefit from the such a competitive year as they prepare to progress into Adult football.

### **U16 Boys**

U16 Boys finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in Division 4 Football in 2022. The team was graded in 'B' Football Championship and was knocked out in the Quarter Final.

### **U15 Boys**

The U15 Boys footballers entered two teams in the Dublin Feile with the first team losing out in the Cup competition on goals/points difference as 3 teams had finished on one win each in the group stage and subsequently lost their Shield Semi Final in extra time by 1 point. The second team played in the Division 9 competition going all the way to the final of the Cup competition in Parnell Park, beating Na Fianna in a well-deserved victory. Division 8 in the league proved to be a mixed bag for the second team, partly due to 4 players making to the move up to the first team. The first team were in Division 2 for the league and post summer went on a 4 game winning streak which brought them joint top entering their last game with a win needed to secure the league title, however a 1-point defeat again out paid to that. U16 football beckons and with currently 39 players on the panel the continued main aims are player development and retention.

### **U14 Boys**

This past season has been an enjoyable, though challenging season competing in a higher division this year. The team got to the quarter finals in both codes this year and the experience of competing against new A teams this year will drive them on in their Feile year next season. We finished the season competing at quarter final stage in both codes this year.

Our panel and coaching group is intact for next year, and they are wrapping up this season with our usual training in place with the valuable addition of Chippy's excellent S&C program. which the lads are loving.

### **U13 Boys**

The A-Team competed in Division 2 having come through the grading matches unbeaten, came up against some strong teams finishing down the table. The B-Team competed in Division 8 and ended up winning it by 2 points well done to them as it was half and half U 13 s, and the U 12 s who don't play Hurling. In Hurling it was Division 3 and despite being very close in a lot of matches ended up down the table. A couple of team building days were held. Thanks to the players and their mentors for their efforts throughout the year.

### **U11&12 Boys**

This was the first year of competitive football and hurling for this combined team (2010s/2011s Boys). The league grading games gave us an opportunity to test the skills of the team and get to see the playing style of a wider pool of clubs. In football, the first team narrowly missed out on winning their league while the second and third team came mid-table in their respective leagues. In hurling, the first team ended in the top half of the table.



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It has been decided to split the 2010 and 2011 football players back into their own age groups for 2023. The 2011s have grown to a squad of 23 and the 2010s have 28 so there are enough players to have a full team for both age groups for the 2023 leagues. There is not enough hurling players to have two teams so hurling will remain as a combined team.

There will be a change in the mentors for both age groups. Phil Bourke and Coman Goggins will take over as lead mentors while Niall Minto and Sarah Scott-Minto step back as their son, Daniel is taking time away from GAA.

### **U10 Boys**

The U10 Boys had another great year in 2022 playing all 22 of their CCC1 fixtures - 11 Football and 11 Hurling matches during the season. They played a number of Football and Hurling challenge matches. The players also took part in both MAI Football and Hurling tournaments and enjoyed a summer squad social in Flynn Park. Thanks to the squad of players who continue to make good progress and their parents. Thanks go to the coaches for their continued commitment of time and effort. They're already preparing for and looking forward to next season.

### **U9 Boys**

The U9 Boys have seen great development in 2022. Due to a slight drop of in numbers at the beginning of the year the decision was made to drop down to a two team league. Surprisingly this had a galvanising effect on the boys resulting in great attendance at both training and matches. The teams participation in the clubs Mini Hurling All Irelands in April was also very beneficial in developing their skills and love for the game. They definitely noticed the numbers attending hurling training increased to a point that they are almost on a par with football. The boys really enjoyed the GO Games during the year and following a brief break during the summer couldn't wait for the Football MAI to start. The MAI's proved a great success and they even managed to gain one or two new players. With the recommencement of the GO Games after the summer the boys have been living for the weekend eagerly inquiring who they are playing next. Overall the team had a successful year and is looking forward to stepping up to U10's. Great thanks to all the players, parents and coaches to all the hard work and support over the year.

### **U8 Boys**

It's been a fantastic first year out of the academy for the U8 Boys. They took to games very well and showed great skills and teamwork resulting in a great year. Numbers have stayed strong with a panel of 35 boys.

The team ended for the summer break with a 4 team blitz in Ballymastone with Skerries, Clontibret and Dunshaughlin travelling down to take part. With great support from the parents the day was a huge success and everyone enjoyed the friendly and fun atmosphere.

Everyone is already looking forward to next year and we hope to continue with the boys development and passion for the game.

### **U7 Boys**

The 2015 boys have had a barn-storming year. They have come out of the academy and taken to matches like ducks to water with memorable days out against Vincent's, Maur's, Fingallians, Finians, Colmcilles, Trinity Gaels, and O'Dwyers with great skills shown with both small and big ball, and a large measure of grit and determination.



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### **Academy**

The numbers in the academy continue to be strong, 150 approximately. Our current groups consist of the 2016's, '17's and '18's. They work across 3 separate timeslots on Saturday mornings to manage both their numbers and the traffic.

The Academy continues to promote both football and hurling/camogie on a 50:50 basis by alternating the code every second week, this has worked really well and will continue to be the model going forward.

This year for the oldest group (2016's) is working with Chippy once a month and getting the boys and girls into the gym and ball wall for a session. The ball wall has been a huge success to date. Brilliant progress has been made by all the kids in their general kicking (football) and striking (hurling / camogie). If the ball wall has been a success, then the gym has been a revelation!! The work they do in the gym is all based on functional movement i.e. running, jumping, squatting etc. The hope is that by getting exposure to this type of environment at such a young age, then it will remove any fears they may have about general exercise as they grow up - in addition to helping them on the field of play as they move through the age grades. The feedback from parents has been nothing but positive to date.

A word of thanks to Chippy for facilitating this - his sessions are nothing but fun, while also ensuing he is covering off what he needs from a development perspective. It is the intention of the Academy to build on this with the oldest academy group from cycle year on year.

### **U7 Girls**

The 2015 girls have made a good transition from the academy. Numbers have held steady during the year with a few new joiners coming on board since September. They are enjoying the mid-week training and have relished the challenge games we had against Fingalians, Finians, Erins Isle, Trinity Gaels and O'Dwyers with a number of additional games scheduled until the end of the year. The girls have more than held their own and in particular seem to have done well in camogie. We continue to focus on core skills while ensuring the girls have fun and build strong relationships with their team mate.

### **U8 Girls**

This past season saw the U8 2014 girls embark on their first season playing go games, in both football and camogie. With a total of 42 registered players, we entered into four team football and camogie playing against clubs mainly located in north county Dublin. The girls have had such an enjoyable season. Their skill levels have improved throughout the course of the season and they have embraced playing matches against other clubs, home and away. We have a group of dedicated mentors who are committed to providing an inclusive and fun atmosphere at training and at matches to allow them to enjoy their football and camogie. Along with the group of mentors, the girls' parents have been very supportive and have facilitated the travelling to matches in all sorts of weather - without this, the matches would not be possible. Finally to the group of players, they have been a joy to coach all season long and we are all already looking forward to the U9 season in 2023.

### **U9 Girls**

2022 has been another great year for the U9 girls team. They have increased in numbers of both players and mentors. They have made full use of the club's great facilities using the skill wall weekly and completed a 6-week-session in the gym with Chippy. This was thoroughly enjoyed by the girls and the mentors could see the benefit of these sessions on the pitch. The skills in



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both camogie and football have significantly improved for each girl and it has been great to see their confidence grow each week and see them playing together as a team.

### U10 Girls

It was another fun-filled adventure of a year for our U10 girl's teams. As always the girls gave it their all at training and during the many matches that were played throughout the year. Player retention was one of our main aims for the year and these numbers have remained strong which is a testament to the energy and determination of all the girls. A highlight of the year for both players and coaches was the extremely generous sponsorship from a parent who got a lovely club hoodie for everyone involved with the teams. They kept us snug during many a nippy training session/match. The mentors would like to thank the players for all the laughs they gave us this year and the parents especially, for all their support throughout the year, on the sideline and in getting the girl's to all training sessions, blitzes and matches (just in time for throw in in some cases!)

### U11's Girls

The girls U11's soon to be U12's have gone from strength to strength this year. They are now up to 37 girls training twice a week with Football & Camogie matches alternating each Saturday. The training changed throughout this year with the introduction of S & C sessions in our new gym. These quickly became a favourite night with the girls. The coaches asked for support from the parents on training nights and they responded brilliantly from the start and have become a welcome addition. Next year sees a big step up for the team with the introduction of streaming and grading in our league, a challenge we're looking forward to. The girls to do us proud as they have in all our previous age levels. Great news during the year with the continuation of our sponsorship from BDO and N2K which ensures our girls are superbly turned out and represent our club with style as well as ability, determination as well as team spirit.

### U12 Girls

The U12 girls began 2022 with great enthusiasm playing a whopping 32 games this year. They gained 4 new eager recruits who have slotted in with this determined bunch of ladies. We had some fun games and post-match treats with the fellow Pats teams including the U12 boys, U11 and U13 girls. In the autumn the girls were placed in group 3 for grading games where they have competed really well against seriously strong opposition. They look forward to some friendlies to finish out the year in preparation for an exciting 2023 in their first competitive league.

### U13 Girls

2022 was a fantastic year for the U13 Girls. They have 21 committed players, that show great camaraderie on and off the pitch. The girls are improving year on year. They enjoyed using the gym for introductory strength and conditioning. They had over 90% of the team playing this year's MAI. The girls loved taking ownership and enjoyed not being managed by a mentor for the first time in MAI's. They loved organising their team positions/tactics for themselves. In the first half of 2022, they came 3rd in division 5. They had some very challenging games which the girls learned a lot from. In the second half of 2022 they had a fantastic championship. Teams were knocked out week on week but the girls battled all the way to the final. They brought their positivity, strength and skill and managed to come out on top. The girls enjoyed a super home Final the end of October and enjoyed celebrating their 1st big win in Ballamastone. We have had lots of fun outside of games/training to encourage team bonding.



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### **U15 Girls**

The U15 girls had a mixed year with plenty of highs and lows from start to finish. They have trained twice a week all year and are combining Strength and Conditioning to their November schedule. The year started with a tough run in the Division 4 league with a couple of good wins but with some heavy losses too. During the summer break Shane Malone stepped away from coaching the team after taking them from U6s all the way up to U15s. We'd like to thank Shane for all he did for the team over the years and for his dedication, time and effort that he devoted to the team. Colm Mythen stepped in as lead coach in August with Sheelagh, Stephen, Joe and Robbie staying on as coaches and administrators. They were straight in to championship with a home defeat to Craobh Chiarain followed by defeat against a very good Peregrines side, who subsequently went on to win the Division 5 Cup easily enough. The last group game was away to Kilmacud Crokes and despite some missed chances they hung on for a 3 point win. This gave the team home advantage for the semi-final against Naomh Mearnog. With a slight breeze against the team in the first half of the semi-final they let them get an 11 point lead by half-time, but in the second half they put in a great performance and clawed them back slowly while keeping them scoreless in the second half. It took a last kick of the game goal for the team to win it by a point. The final against Parnells was a similar story. They got a five point lead on us early on and were looking strong before they got going, but they pulled them back and got ahead with a few minutes to go to win the U15 girls Division 5 Shield, a real team effort. We'd like to thank the U13s coaches and players that supported us across the year also. Finally, we'd like to thank all the players, parents and coaches for making this year a very enjoyable one for all the team.

### **U16 Girls**

Building on winning the Feile (Division 4) in 2021, the girls were promoted to Division 3 for the following league campaign. 2022 proved to be another superb year for this group as they continued their journey of growth and development. They won the Division 3 league with some fine performances and a comprehensive final league win against Clanna Gael. They played in Division 2 for the Autumn Championship culminating in a shield loss against St. Peter's. The progress from Division 4 to 2 over the 12 months and with the group retaining its player numbers shows that the future remains bright for this dedicated group.

### **Senior Ladies 1**

Following on from the disappointment of the torturous loss of the 2021 Championship Semi-Final, our Ladies squad put their all into the goal of reaching the 2022 Final. First to come though was the league campaign. Having achieved back-to-back promotions, the goal was to finish respectably in Division 4. However, the will-to-win wasn't just reserved for the Championship and win followed win followed win. In fact, the season ended with the girls in third place only narrowly missing out on yet another promotion. This set the squad up nicely for the Championship where our Ladies finished top of the table with a home Semi-Final as the reward. For the first time - but not the last - this Semi-Final saw huge home support at Ballymastone with the pitch lined in hopeful green and black. Many of the elder lemons of the Club questioned this anticipation when they saw the opposition was the black and orange of Ballinteer St Johns. But they hadn't reckoned on the courage and commitment of our crew who put in a ferocious display racking up a score of 10-13 to win the coveted final berth. The Final was set for the Naul and the Pats Faithful didn't disappoint with seemingly even greater support surrounding the



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sideline this time. The stage might've been set for an amazing Hallmark Movie but unfortunately Sylvesters didn't get the memo and ended up eventual winners. The squad said goodbye to Aidan Coppinger and Adrian Brophy who finished their contract with the Club having revitalised the LGFA game in Pats. Appointed to replace them were the crack-squad of Marius McGarrell, Conor Devlin and Jason Brady.

### **G4MAO**

2022 was another great year for G4MAO. Super coach Willie Cahill lead the way again - who by the way turned 70 this year along with completing a half marathon - how blessed is the teams to have such an inspirational role model as our coach!! 13 exciting matches were played and the team participated in 3 fun blitzes hosted by O'Mahonys , Erins Isle and O'Dywers.

They also organised our annual charity mixed match and raised over 2,000 euro for Ukraine. Half of the team is comprised of coaches who commit all week to coaching juvenile teams and then train and play matches themselves. The girls show serious commitment and demonstration of a love of GAA for the younger players highlighting that sport can be taken up at any age.

### **Conclusion**

I'd like to say a few final words as I'm stepping down from the role as Club secretary after nearly 5 years. It's been fun but also hard work, and we don't always agree. But to see our club growing and our great facilities being expanded is a great achievement by our Executive Committee, Rory, Shelia, Felim, Orlaith, Michael, Cormac, Coman, John, Mick alongside all our members and players.

I would like to acknowledge two final thank-yous: First to Niamh who took over as the LGFA secretary from myself at the beginning of the year, and second to Orlaith - our PRO - who is stepping down after too many years to mention. Orlaith really has been one of the backbones behind Pats from all areas of the club. Orlaith's knowledge of running of the club will be missed. I hear she will still be tweeting the games in the adult section, so she's not going too far.