



**THE  
CAMOGIE  
ASSOCIATION**

# **COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

**2019-2021**



@CamogieAssociation





# INTRODUCTION

The Camogie Association and the sport of Camogie itself have experienced great change and growth in recent years both on and off the pitch. The Association now boasts over 100,000 members and 573 Clubs.

The environment in which our sport operates is also changing rapidly and becoming a more and more competitive space in a number of areas – participation, attendances, media coverage, sponsorship etc. These changes, coupled with the rapid changes in the world of communications in general, mean that it is of greater importance than ever before that the Association evaluates its communications activities and plan ahead accordingly through an effective and clear **Communications Strategy**.





## CONTEXT

**ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE** undoubtedly been great strides made in terms of Communications within the Association over the last number of years there are still many areas in which the Association can and must progress in order to best fulfil the ambitions of growing the sport. This mirrors the general great strides made by the Association in recent years as it has grown in terms of membership, supporter numbers, viewing figures, commercial revenue, professional staff team as well as many other areas. Likewise, there is still much room for growth for the sport to not only better service its current membership but to continue to expand and to reach out to new audiences and fulfil its full potential as one of the leading sports in Ireland.

The Association has successfully tackled many of the fundamentals of communications, but it is now time to build on this progress and to be more ambitious so as to truly fulfil the potential to raise the profile of our sport. This will require bold and strong decision making as well as investment in various resources to ensure that the Association not only keeps up with its counterparts but is also to lead the way for women's sport in Ireland and beyond. Furthermore, given the great change occurring within the world of Communications it is paramount that the Association is ahead of the curve so as to successfully adapt to this ever-changing environment and capitalise on the opportunities available to the sport through embracing new technologies and communication methods.

**THIS TIME OF GREAT CHANGE** not only puts a great expectation on the organisation to adapt so as to maintain the sport's status as one of the leading female sports in Ireland, but it also provides new and exciting opportunities for the sport to grow and develop even further.

In 2016 the Association launched its National Development Plan 'Our Sport, Our Future' which set out the objectives of the Association for 2016-2019. Key amongst these objectives was how the sport was viewed 'In the Public Eye' which focused on raising the profile of Camogie. The goal of this section is 'To promote the game of Camogie to a wider audience and to focus on the commercial development of the sport'.

This Communications Strategy aims to complement this goal its subsequent objectives and to enhance their progress so as to move the sport to a new level in terms of its profile and reach so as to complement the growth of the sport in general.

Recently the Camogie Association has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the GAA which will see greater levels of co-operation between both organisations in terms of working more closely together. Communications will play a key part in determining the success of this process and this strategy tackles some areas that will help to ensure as smooth a process as possible.

Camogie has also recently been granted, along with Hurling, UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage status in what was a tremendous recognition of the role which Gaelic Games play in Irish society.

Externally, several recent positive initiatives around women's sport in Ireland present many opportunities for our game to prosper. In particular the Federation of Irish Sport's '20x20' campaign and Sport Ireland's new policy 'Women in Sport' will help to keep women's sport to the forefront in Irish sport for the coming years and it is important that Camogie plays a key part in such initiatives. There is also great being work done by our sponsors and media partners in promoting Camogie and women's sport in general all of which have created great momentum behind our game.

## APPROACH

**IN ORDER TO DEVISE SUCH A STRATEGY** it was important that a wide consultation and research process was undertaken so as to assess the views of all key stakeholders, both internal and external, regarding the Association's Communications activities.

This research gathering was conducted in a number of ways ranging from anonymous survey-based feedback to one-on-one research with key stakeholders as well as several focus groups and other research methods.

In total, the opinions of over 600 stakeholders were gathered which provided a solid and wide-ranging foundation on which to build the analysis and ultimate outcome findings laid out in this strategy.

I would like to thank all who participated in this research process for their time and consideration in contributing to this work – it is greatly appreciated and crucial to the ultimate success of the entire strategy process.

In particular I would like to thank the Uachtarán Kathleen Woods as well as the Camogie Association Staff for their support of this project. I also wish to thank Lisa Clancy of Clansult Ltd. with whom I collaborated on this project for her guidance, dedication and support of this project.



## BENEFITS OF THE PROCESS

**There have been many benefits gained through carrying out the research gathering element of this process alone.**

Reaching out to all corners of our stakeholder community has revealed tremendous insights into various strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for the Association to assess and explore. This process has been successful in putting a finger on the pulse regarding how Camogie is viewed from a variety of viewpoints in particular in relation to how it communicates with various stakeholders. In doing so, this process has already helped to tackle a key component of effective Communications for any organisation by reaching out to its stakeholders and engaging with them to become involved in shaping the future direction of the Association's Communications plans as well as the overall direction of the Association.



## TÁBHACHT NA GAEILGE

**AITHNÍONN AN PRÓISÉAS** seo chomh maith go bhfuil ról lárnach agus speisialta ag ár dteanga dúchais i leith cúrsaí Camógaíochta. Go minic i rith an próiséas seo léiríodh go bhfuil suim ag muintir Camógaíochta i gcóir stair agus cultúr an spóirt a léiriú níos fearr agus mar cuid de sin, chun Gaeilge a chur chun cinn le linn an spóirt. Dá bhrí sin tá sé rí-thábhachtach go cuimhnimid i gcónaí ar ár dteanga agus go ndéanann muid iarracht speisialta chun an acmhainn iontach speisialta seo a úsáid chun na buntáistí go léir a baineann leis a úsáid chun an spóirt a chabhrú chun dul chun cinn níos fear arís a dhéanamh.



**CIAN NELSON**

Camogie Association  
Communications Manager



**THE  
CAMOGIE  
ASSOCIATION**



## BACKGROUND

### VISION

Inspire to play,  
empower to stay

### MISSION

To provide opportunities to enjoy and play Camogie as a vibrant part of the Gaelic Games Family

### VALUES

- Innovation
- Leadership
- Volunteerism
- Fun
- Integrity
- Excellence
- Inclusiveness



# CAMOGIE IN NUMBERS

**OVER 100,000 MEMBERS**

**21,467**

Attendees at the  
2018 All-Ireland  
Championship Finals

**28**

County Boards

**573**

Registered Clubs  
in Ireland

**289,000** AVERAGE

Watched the 2018 All-Ireland  
Championship Finals on RTÉ

**OVER 75,000  
REGISTERED PLAYERS**

**118,000**

Watched the 2018  
National League  
Div. 1 Final on TG4



# WHY WE NEED A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

It is important for any organisation to communicate clearly and effectively with its various stakeholders in a coherent and planned manner if it is to achieve many of its overall goals as well as achieving the fundamentals of servicing its members.

**ON A PRACTICAL LEVEL** it is crucial for the Association to go about its day-to-day operational communications activities with a clear direction that feeds into a wider process as opposed to driving its own direction on a reactionary and ad hoc basis as it has done so in the past to a large extent.

Although shorter-term plans have been utilised, in order to drive real change and benefit from the Association's communications activities it is key that a long-term Communications Strategy is utilised not only to shape

the Association's day-to-day Communications but also to provide guidance and leadership in this area to the Association's membership and various other stakeholders. Altogether it will help to unite the Association in its key message to best highlight what it stands for and the positive work that takes place throughout the Association.

Such a united front in terms of all of the Association's Communications will best place it to derive great benefits from a coherent and effective Communications Strategy that complements, amplifies and enhances the great work being done throughout the Association.





## TRENDS IN TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION

**THE TECHNOLOGICAL SIDE** of how all organisations conduct their communications activities is rapidly changing at a faster rate than ever before and Camogie needs to respond to these.

The importance of adapting to new technological platforms successfully is also of greater importance than ever before in order to service and inform our audiences, particularly for sporting organisations with key, large younger audiences.

There are 2.2million Facebook users in Ireland of which almost half use the platform on a daily basis, spending on average over 5 hours on the platform per week.

Twitter has over 835,000 Irish users and is a particularly strong resource for the sharing of news and information on a minute-by-minute basis.

Platforms such as Snapchat (650,000 Irish Users) and Instagram (720,000 Irish Users) are amongst the fastest growing platforms in Ireland amongst younger audiences.

These platforms are just a snapshot of a wider range of other popular online platforms used everyday by Irish audiences amongst the likes of Whatsapp, Skype, Pinterest etc.

The proliferation in use of such online platforms by Irish audiences presents Camogie with not just a great challenge to adapt to ever changing habits of Irish audiences but with a huge opportunity to grow and attract the vast and new audiences available through such platforms.

It is the principle of being forward-thinking and flexible enough to adapt to technological changes that is crucial as any analysis of such changes is only a moment in time and out of date immediately therefore the ability to adapt is particularly crucial.

The potential for Camogie to lead in this area is huge and the benefits which can be driven from it can play a key role in spreading our message and attracting greater audiences to our sport.





# WE LISTENED

A key part of this strategy was to listen and we undertook an extensive consultation process in 2018. Over 500 people responded to our online survey providing feedback on a broad range of areas on both internal and external communications within the Association. Over 100 people participated in our focus groups, one-to-one meetings and phone calls from all areas of our sport including: youth, players, Club & County Officers and volunteers, media, staff and communications experts to mention just a few.

**ALL GAVE HONEST** and objective feedback on how to move forward in improving our communications. You told us you wanted to modernise our brand to make it more relevant for today, you told us you wanted to build on the skills and entertainment value of the sport and engage more effectively with our younger people through how they communicate. Your wish is to be enabled to provide two-way feedback in a more structured way and to get the basics right – to know when and where our matches are being played etc.

We also looked at best practice in other sports and reviewed research completed by Sport Ireland and other overseas sporting bodies to ensure our Association moves forward in the communications area.

We now all need to work together and to build on all of the strengths that we have, utilise the resources in a more effective way and tell the Camogie story in a clear and impactful way.



## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM OUR SURVEY & CONSULTATION PROCESS

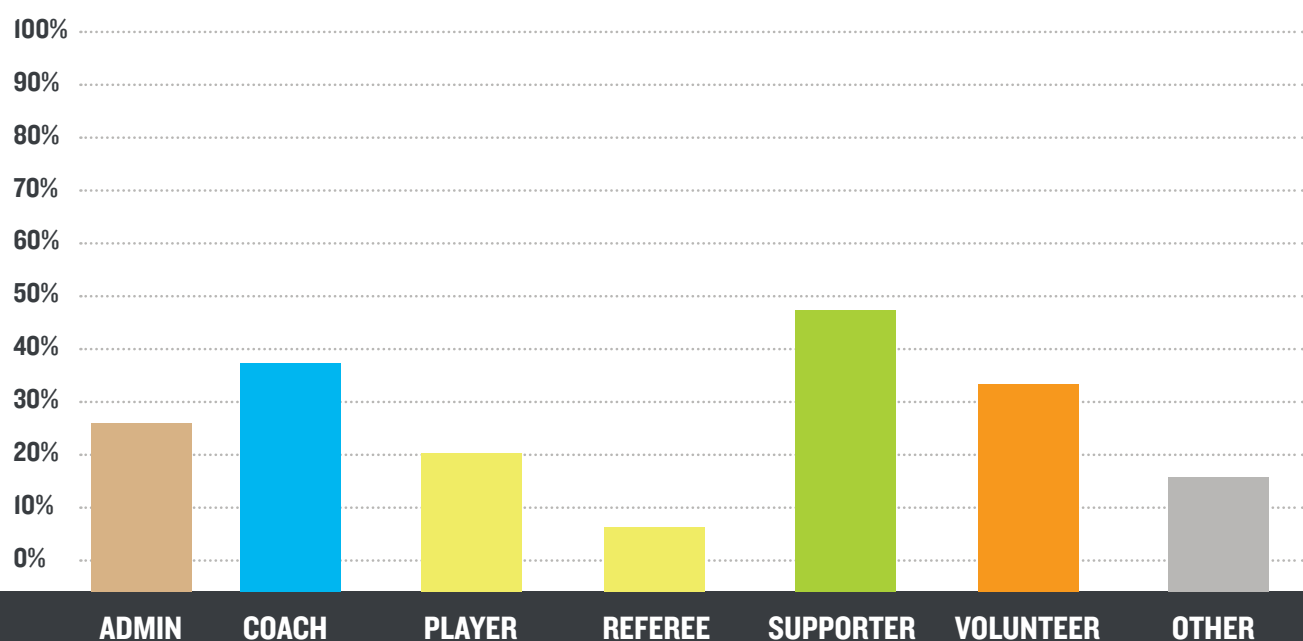
# SURVEY

500 PEOPLE RESPONDED TO OUR ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY

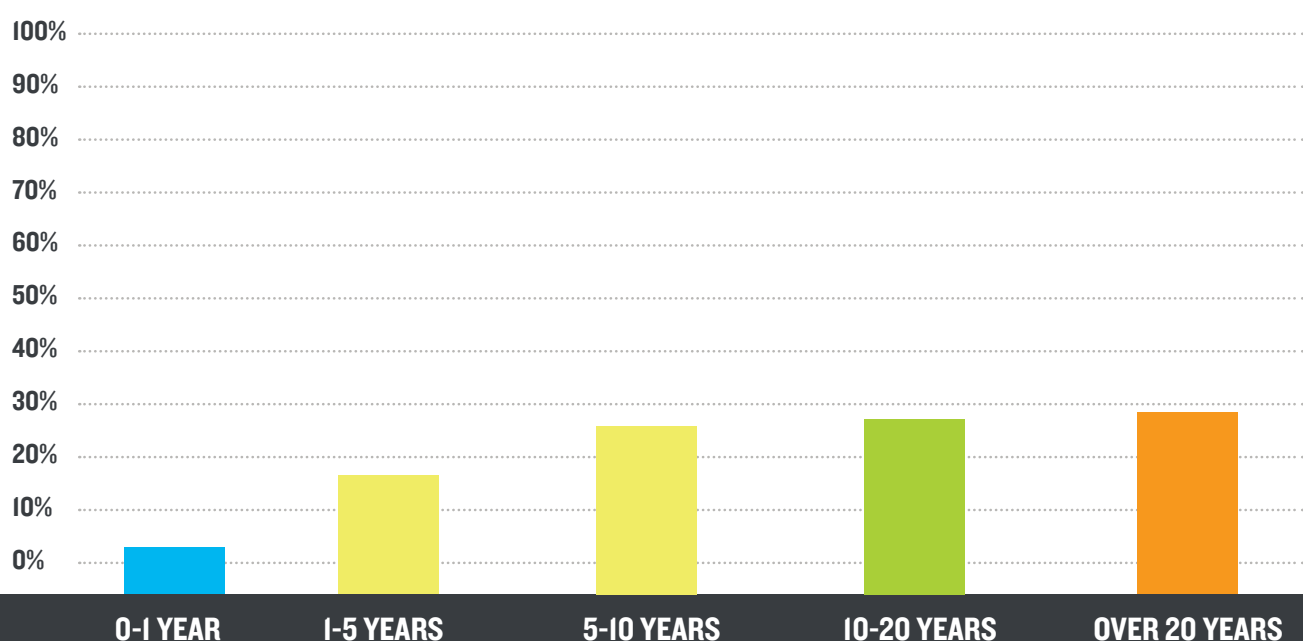
**66%** FEMALE

**34%** MALE

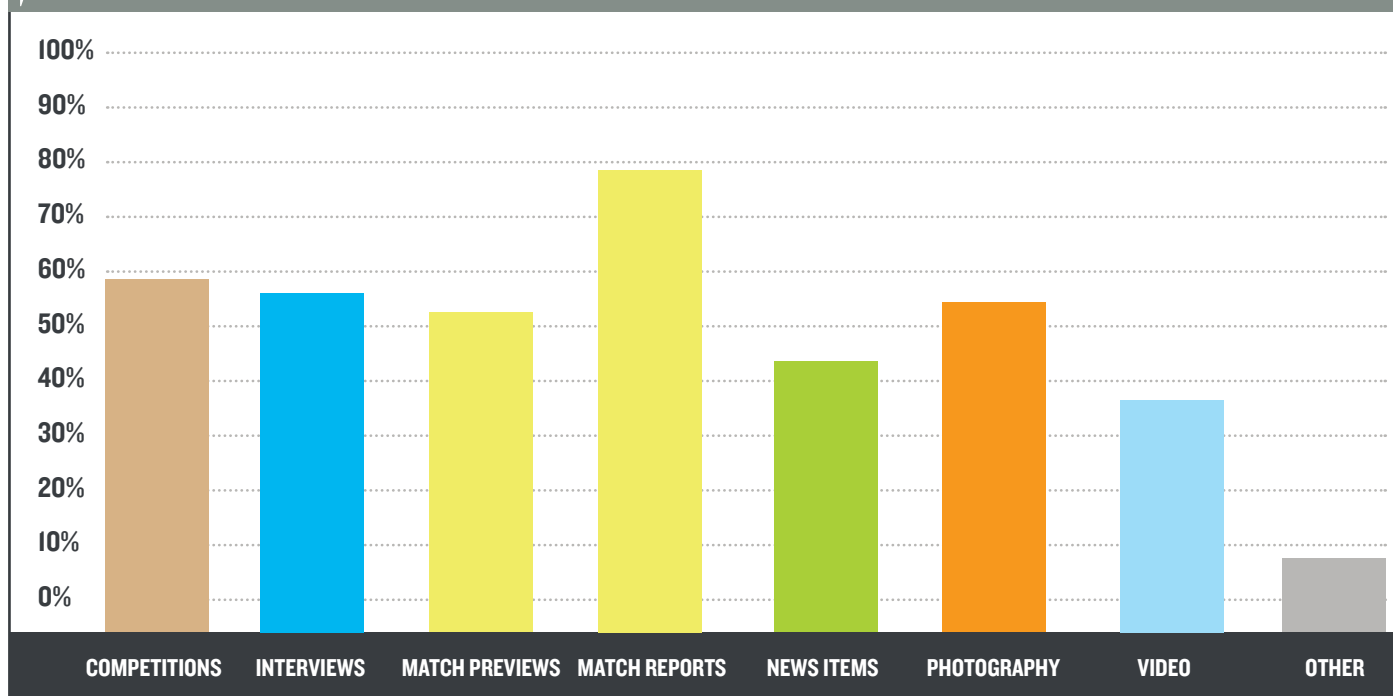
### RELATIONSHIP WITH CAMOGIE



### INVOLVEMENT IN CAMOGIE



## WHAT TYPE OF CAMOGIE CONTENT ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?



## MOST COMMON ISSUES & SUGGESTIONS IDENTIFIED

- **IMPROVE WEBSITE**
- **IMPROVED, MORE TIMELY FIXTURES AND RESULTS INFORMATION**
- **PROVIDE MORE LOCAL AND CLUB CONTENT**
- **HIGHLIGHT THE WORK OF VOLUNTEERS OFF THE PITCH**
- **CREATE MORE RICH MEDIA AND DIGITAL CONTENT**
- **ENGAGE BETTER WITH ONLINE AUDIENCES**





## WHAT PEOPLE SAID DURING THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

**“CAMOGIE IS IN OUR DNA WE WANT TO HEAR MORE ABOUT THE SKILLS OF OUR GAME”**

**“UPDATE OUR WEBSITE MAKE IT EASIER TO NAVIGATE “**

**“TELL US ABOUT OUR FIXTURES...WE DON'T EVER KNOW WHERE A MATCH IS OR WHERE IT IS ON”**

**“WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE NEWS ABOUT INTERNATIONAL UNITS”**

**“WARRIOR SPORT”**

**“WE WOULD LIKE TO BE PROUD OF OUR SPORT”**

**“WE ARE UNIQUE LETS NOW SHOW THE WORLD”**



## KEYWORDS MAP





# STRATEGY AIMS

The aim of this strategy is to assess the current status of the Camogie Association's Communications activities and its various strengths and weaknesses. From this information a clear strategy will be developed to guide the Association's Communications activities on a day-to-day basis as well as from a long-term, strategic point of view.



## COMMUNICATING CAMOGIE

Effective communication is vital to:

- Attract players and supporters
- Ensure all relevant people are informed about Camogie in timely manner
- Keep all members involved and to have a sense of ownership and belonging and pride
- Ensure consistent messaging around our sport
- Project strong image of our sport

## COMMUNICATIONS VISION

- **To be taken Seriously** - promote skill, dedication & uniqueness of the sport
- **Create a Demand** - to be there at matches, and to be involved in the sport
- **Make the sport Attractive** to be involved - health, skill and social benefits
- **Increase Our profile** – spread the word regarding the sport
- **Professional approach** across Camogie – high standards in Communications
- **Clear, Unified** messaging

## COMMUNICATIONS PRINCIPLES

- Ensure communications are clear and easily understood
- Produce consistent timely messaging
- Use simple language
- Use Irish where possible
- Be creative and engaging
- Be Inclusive

## KEY AUDIENCES



## PR CHANNELS



➞ MEDIA

➞ PRINT

➞ RADIO

➞ TV

➞ ONLINE

➞ SOCIAL

➞ INFLUENCERS



## OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

This document is supported by a full and more detailed Operational Communications Strategy which will provide the operational direction for the Camogie Association Communications Staff to carry out and fulfil the objectives of this strategy. The key goals and action areas which this Operational Communications Strategy covers are:

- Strengthening Engagement with our Key audiences:**  
Reaching out to stakeholder groups through networks, stakeholder planning and exploring new opportunities.
- Supporting and Empowering Officers and Volunteers:**  
Providing co-ordinated training, toolkits, resources and increased support to all Units.
- Utilising Latest Technology and Digital Media:**  
Leads the way in Camogie staying at the forefront of

new opportunities by embracing technology and the digital age.

- Building the Brand, Profile and Image of Camogie as a leader in Women's Sport:**  
Ensure that all of the positives of Camogie and the Association are promoted to all stakeholders.
- Re-structuring the Communications Department to ensure that it is modern and fit for purpose:**  
Ensure that the Association's staff structure is agile and resourced accordingly to implement this strategy and all demands of a modern Communications function.

The Operational Communications Strategy also details the Association's Crisis Communications Plan and tools to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Communications Strategy.

## KEY MESSAGES RECEIVED FROM RESEARCH

- LEARN AND DEVELOP THROUGH CAMOGIE**
- CAMOGIE IS BENEFICIAL FOR ALL ASPECTS OF HEALTH**
- CAMOGIE IS A KEY PART OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES**
- CAMOGIE IS HIGH-SKILLED AND A SERIOUS SPORT**
- ALL VOLUNTEERS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE AND SHOULD BE VALUED**
- COME AND WATCH OUR ENTERTAINING GAMES**
- CAMOGIE IS FAMILY-FRIENDLY**
- START PLAYING YOUNG**
- CLUBS ARE OUR CORNERSTONE**
- CAMOGIE IS A KEY PART OF THE GAELIC GAMES FAMILY**





# SUMMARY

Camogie is in a very competitive but growing environment. Re-aligning the Association's position now will enable further growth and attract players and supporters alike to our sport.

With the increase of technology members expect, quick turnaround, advice and engaging content. Internal communications also play an important role to utilise current resources in an efficient and effective way.

Implementation is key and this strategy should be expanded out to include the key overall corporate strategic goals of the Association. All actions should link back to these. All communications material should be professional in tone and clear in delivery.

It is imperative that the Association takes this area seriously and invests both resources and effort in addressing it accordingly so as that the sport can truly deliver on its great potential. Should this be achieved then Camogie will be in a strong position to continue to grow and attract new audiences to our sport.

