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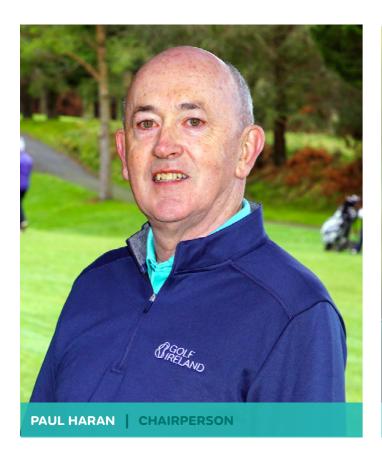
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A BRIGHT & VIBRANT FUTURE

This first Strategic Plan for Golf Ireland sets out the values, principles and objectives that will guide our organisation over the coming five years.





n early 2019, the member clubs of the Irish Ladies Golf Union and the Golfing Union of Ireland took the historic decision to create a single governing body for golf on the island of Ireland. Despite the many challenges posed by the pandemic, Golf Ireland came into being, on schedule, on 1 January 2021.

This Strategic Plan for the new organisation is rooted in the values that underpinned the Golf Ireland Proposal. It is the culmination of a deep and wide-ranging process of consultation and engagement between September and December 2021, a process that heard the views of several thousand people from both inside and outside the golf community. Overseen and guided by the Golf Ireland Board, it included an extensive golfer survey with over 10,000 respondents; a series of focus groups representing the many strands of our sport; consultation with our regional officers; and an island-wide quantitative survey of public opinion.

In addition, we consulted with key stakeholders within the golf sector including the PGA, Irish Golf Club Managers' Association and Association of Turfgrass Professionals Ireland. We also consulted with our main external governance and funding partners - Sport Ireland, Sport NI and the R&A.

All of the very valuable feedback, ideas and suggestions from the consultation process were considered in the preparation of this Strategic Plan.

The Vision Statement for our organisation captures the essence of our strategy:

'Golf is a game for everyone – for enjoyment, for health and for life.'

The fundamental values of Golf Ireland - Accessible, Collaborative, Inclusive and Progressive - support that vision. People of all ages and backgrounds are welcome in our sport.

The Strategy identifies five key focus areas to drive success:

- Securing the future of golf,
- Supporting our clubs and golfers,
- Leading our organisation,
- Delivering our Events and
- Nurturing our talent.

Through these focus areas, we have identified 18 objectives that we will progress through a total of 76 specific actions over the next five years. The delivery will be driven by annual Operational Plans which will be over seen by the Board of Golf Ireland.

It's an ambitious Plan for the sustainable growth of our sport. It places a special emphasis on the place of young people, women and girls in the future of golf in Ireland, and on excellent governance at all levels.

Over the past two years, the physical and mental health benefits of golf for women and men of all ages has been widely recognised. Both golf membership and participation have grown. Our challenge now is to build on that momentum and that's what this plan aims to do. We believe that Irish golf has a bright and vibrant future.

Over the next few years, many high-profile golf events will take place on the island of Ireland - The Open Championship, the Ryder Cup and the Men's and Women's Irish Opens. Ensuring there is a lasting positive impact from these events will be vital in achieving the aims of this

The creation of Golf Ireland was, at its core, the bringing together of women and men to work together for the betterment of our great sport. That spirit has been very evident in our first year of existence when our fantastic volunteers helped deliver an outstanding programme of top-class events.

That same spirit will be the key to the success of this first Strategic Plan. We invite the entire golf community -Board, Committees, Regional Executives, Clubs, Players, Volunteers, Staff and Partners - to help us make it a reality.

Finally, our sincere thanks to all those who took part in the consultation, or contributed in any way to the development of this Plan.

Paul Haran Chairperson

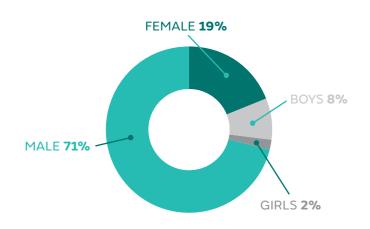
Mark Kennelly Chief Executive Officer



* GOLF IN IRELAND

205,679

Registered Club Members



540,000

Adults play on a full-length golf course more than once a year



Healthy

In an average 9 hole round, a golfer will take 5,000 steps and burn over 450 calories









40%

of adults are open to participation



1/3

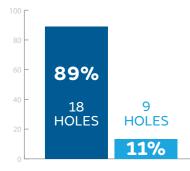
of adult golfers

who tried golf for the first time during the Covid-19 pandemic were under 25 years old



2.3 million

Competitive rounds played in 2021



Golf is in the top 4 participation sports on the island of Ireland



250+

Clubs have delivered Get into Golf programmes with 68% conversion rate from programme to membership



Over €540 million is spent annually on golf in Ireland providing direct employment for over 9,000 people

182

Clubs have formally committed to signing the Women in Golf Charter

Accessible:

Golf is open to players of all ages and abilities



Golf tourism contributes
€270 million annually in
the Republic of Ireland
and £52 million annually
in Northern Ireland



Sources:

Golf Ireland ClubHouse, Golf Ireland Affiliation billing 2021, Golf Ireland and R&A research May 2021, Golf Ireland programme data, R&A Golf and Health research 2021, Sports Industry Research Centre Sheffield Hallam University, Faitle Ireland, Tourism NI, Golf Ireland public participation and engagement research December 2021.





WHAT GOLFERS SAY



Source:

Golf Ireland Strategic Plan Survey Q27 What three words do you associate with golf? (most used words from 7641 respondents)



OUR VISION & VALUES



Golf is a game for everyone – for enjoyment, for health, for life



To be a modern, inclusive and cohesive governing body that untaps the immense potential of golf throughout the island of Ireland















We believe in a bright and vibrant future A shared vision



We know that we are stronger together
We are at our best when we are inclusive, open
and accessible.



We are all Golf Ireland

Golf is of and for the people of Ireland. Clubs, volunteers and golfers. Everyone with an interest in being involved





Our five focus areas, with 18 objectives, provide the broad aims that will drive the continued growth of golf

Our actions highlight how we will realise these objectives and the outcomes set out what we hope to achieve. This Strategic Plan will be supported by annual operational plans which will set out the timelines for the implementation of these actions.





"We will build a positive image of golf that inspires everyone to get involved"

SUPPORTING OUR CLUBS & GOLFERS

"We will support all Clubs to be strong, healthy, sustainable & maintain steady growth"

LEADING OUR ORGANISATION

"We will lead in a professional, effective & cohesive manner"



DELIVERING OUR EVENTS

"We will deliver Worldclass, inclusive and equitable Championships and events"



"We will provide access to a performance pathway which delivers success"







STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

SECURING THE FUTURE OF GOLF

"We will build a positive image of golf that inspires everyone to get involved"







STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS: **SECURING THE FUTURE OF GOLF**

Objectives	Actions	Desired Outcomes
1	Research, develop and promote programmes and initiatives that attract new audiences to play and enjoy golf.	✓ Retention of the 12% increase (2020-2021) in overall membership and foundations laid for further
	Encourage adoption of non-traditional formats of the game to new and current players.	sustainable growth. ✓ Measurable increase in the number of overall rounds played.
Innovate and	Collaborate with key stakeholders to capitalise on major golf events hosted in Ireland.	 Measurable increase in positive perceptions of golf. Measurable reduction in barriers to
Innovate and Promote Golf as an activity that everyone can enjoy.	Research and consider various playing and membership options, including existing and proposed schemes for independent golfers elsewhere.	 participation. ✓ Shortened formats of the game promoted and played. ✓ Increased awareness of the health benefits golf has to offer.
, ,	Utilise a mix of media platforms and content to educate and influence new golfers and create new fans.	√ 60% of clubs running GI participation initiatives/promotional campaigns.
	Leverage the success of leading professional and amateur golfers as ambassadors to inspire participants and promote the sport.	
2	Maintain and continue to develop the LevelPar initiative that focuses on promoting gender equality through four pillars – Leadership & Governance, Active Participation, Coaching & Officiating and Visibility.	 ✓ Clear pathways established for participation, membership and leadership roles within golf. ✓ At least a 5% increase in female membership leading to a measurable increase in the proportion of the
Grow	Collaborate with key stakeholders to ensure consistent messaging and increase opportunities for Women and Girls at all levels.	playing population that is female. Measurable increase in the number of junior girls with active handicaps within clubs. Measurable increase in the number of
participation of Women and Girls at all levels of the sport.	Showcase top level female professional golfers by supporting and promoting the annual staging of the Women's Irish Open.	rounds played by Women and Girls. Increase the number of females coaches and activators through collaboration with the PGA in Ireland.
		 ✓ Annual Women in Golf Leadership initiatives ✓ Substantial increase in the number of clubs committing to the Women in Golf Charter and to achieving gold standard.
		✓ A network of 400+ male and female Women in Golf Charter Champions

Objectives	Actions	Desired Outcomes
3	Lead and promote targeted support initiatives and awareness campaigns for underrepresented groups. Inspire a culture change that showcases	✓ Increased opportunities for people from all cultural backgrounds, people with disabilities, and other minority groups.
Lead and Advocate Inclusive and equitable activity across the Golf Industry	Golf Ireland & golf clubs as inclusive, equitable, safe and welcoming environments for people irrespective of their ability, gender, age or ambition.	 ✓ Improved inclusive access to facilities. ✓ Full implementation of the Golf Ireland Junior Policy.
	Promote young people being involved in decision making at all levels of the game.	 Measurable increase in the number of rounds played by junior golfers. Delivery of a club youth consultation programme. An active Golf Ireland Youth Council.
4	Conduct Irish specific research into the environmental impact of golf.	✓ Increased awareness of best practice at all levels of golf.
	Work in collaboration with key stakeholders including the R&A to develop a sustainability action and	 Strong club compliance with relevant legislation and public policy. Measurable increase in the number of
Lead the way	education plan.	clubs adopting sustainable practices. ✓ Measurable increase in the number
in protecting the environment, to play our part	Lead and promote purchasing policies that reduce the overall consumption of emissions, water, energy and	of clubs achieving sustainability certification.
in tackling climate	materials.	 An active sustainability hub that includes key resources for club staff
change and pro- moting sustain- ability across golf	Advising and supporting clubs in identifying and securing funding opportunities for sustainability projects.	and volunteers.
	Lead and collaborate within the global golf community on key issues including the	✓ Deeper collaboration with the R&A.
5	Rules of Golf, World Handicap System and	✓ Comprehensive schools programme.
	Rules of Amateur Status.	 Golf Ireland proactively contributing to relevant public policy.
Build strong	Collaborate with national and local government authorities and agencies.	 Active community and charitable partnerships.
partnerships with community,	Develop a commercial and community strategy to grow investment in	 Closer relationships between clubs and local communities.
government and commercial	the game, reach new audiences and have a positive impact on society.	✓ Increased commercial revenue.
stakeholders;	Work closely with other Irish sports	 Increased volume and range of funding for golf.
within golf and with other sports	organisations , both nationally and locally.	 Increased sharing of knowledge and resources.





STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

SUPPORTING OUR CLUBS & GOLFERS

"We will support all Clubs to be strong, healthy, sustainable & maintain steady growth"







STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS: **SUPPORTING OUR CLUBS AND GOLFERS**

Objectives	Actions	Desired Outcomes
6	Support clubs to recruit and retain members.	 Retention of the 12% increase (2020-2021) in overall membership and foundations laid for further
	Conduct a bi-annual club survey and deliver an associated club services action plan.	sustainable growth. ✓ Delivery of a bi-annual club survey. ✓ 80% of clubs engaging in Golf Ireland Club Services annually.
	Embed the function of zonal advisory services available to clubs, particularly in the area of handicapping and rules.	 Affiliated courses re-rated regularly in accordance with the requirements of the Rules of Handicapping.
Support clubs to be strong, vibrant and	Provide leadership and guidance on running of competitions for members of all ages and abilities.	 ✓ Inclusive playing and competition policies that accommodate golfers of all abilities promoted within clubs ✓ All club contacts included in CRM
sustainable by providing comprehensive education and	Implement robust club communication plans annually to ensure club committees are aware of resources and supports available to them.	 All club contacts included in CRIP system. Measurable increase in visibility of good practice case studies. 60% of clubs involved annually in an active club support network, which
support services.	Launch online resource and education hub, with content reviewed and refreshed annually.	provides opportunities for clubs to share ideas and collaborate on initiatives.
	Provide more opportunities for people to become part of the coaching landscape through the continued development of the Activator and Roving Pro initiatives in conjunction with the PGA.	 ✓ Online resource hub launched and utilised. ✓ Measurable increased in the workforce able to deliver grassroots activity within clubs.
Promote excellent, inclusive and equitable governance in clubs.	Advocate and promote the adoption of a single administrative structure (One Club Model) and the Golf Ireland Governance principals within clubs	 At least 80 clubs working towards implementation of a One Club Model. Club compliance with the relevant Safeguarding legislation and
	Ensure the adoption and implementation of the code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport and Golf Ireland's Safeguarding Policy	requirements. Launch and regular update to Golf Ireland's Safeguarding resource portal. Continued promotion of the Women
	Encourage clubs to take positive action to encourage the number of women in leadership positions within their governance structures.	 in Golf Charter. Measurable increase of the number of females that hold officer positions within clubs.
	Work with stakeholders to ensure clubs have sustainable models for the recruitment and retention of staff.	 Continued development of HR support resources and educational opportunities available to clubs.

Objectives	Actions	Desired Outcomes
8	Develop and promote a framework for clubs with effective volunteer recruitment and retention policies and practices.	 Launch of volunteer framework with a supporting education programme that clubs adapt and implement. Measurable increase in diversity amongst the club volunteer base. Annual Volunteer Award programme established and supported.
Support the recruitment	Launch a Volunteer Award programme whereby clubs are invited to nominate volunteers from within their clubs for Regional and National recognition.	
and retention of volunteers within clubs	Provide regular opportunities for education and training of club volunteers and officials.	
Provide high quality support and services to golfers	Maintain, develop and promote MyGolf and the Golf Ireland App for players.	Measurable increase in the frequency of use, and number of players using MyGolf and the
	Increase direct communication between Golf Ireland and golfers	Golf Ireland App. ✓ Continued advancement of the technology available to golfers
	Development of relevant educational programmes for golfers.	through the Golf Ireland App. Inhancement of direct support available to golfers through Golf
	Develop an app to support new golfers through the introductory stages of their journey into golf.	Ireland. ✓ Launch of new Get into Golf App.







LEADING OUR ORGANISATION

"We will lead in a professional, effective & cohesive manner"







STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS: **LEADING OUR ORGANISATION**

Objectives	Actions	Desired Outcomes
	Ensure strong cooperation and collaboration between the Board and Regional Executive Committees.	 Successful delivery of the Golf Ireland Strategic Plan and associated operational plans.
10	Maintain compliance with the Code of Governance for Sport by carrying out an annual-self assessment recommended in the Code.	 ✓ Ongoing compliance with Governance Code and all applicable legislative and regulatory obligations. ✓ High levels of awareness, adherence
Set and maintain	Ensure compliance with the Sports Action Plan 2021-2023, which includes maintaining 40% female representation at board level.	and ownership of Golf Ireland policies and procedures by all staff and volunteers. ✓ Robust financial procedures and controls to safeguard the
standards of excellence in all areas of operation,	Maintain strong and prudent budgeting and financial management procedures that deliver financial sustainability for the organisation.	organisation's assets. ✓ Progressive and action focused staff team. ✓ Measurable reduction of the use of single-use materials across all Golf
promoting professionalism, equality, use of technology and	Develop and implement annual operational plans with measurable outcomes across the organisation.	Ireland activity.
sustainability across all departments.	Introduce comprehensive staff development, training and performance management systems.	
	Implement purchasing policies that reduces the overall consumption of emissions, water, energy and materials.	
11	Create and implement an internal communication plan for all Golf Ireland staff and volunteers.	 ✓ Wider knowledge of Golf Ireland's messaging across the organisation. ✓ All staff and volunteers to have a
	Develop an effective customer interface for golf clubs.	measurably increased connection to Golf Ireland as an organisation. ✓ Greater opportunity for diverse views
Ensure effective communication at every level so there is clear understanding of what we do and why we do it.	Consistent implementation of Golf Ireland's services across the Regions, with agreed localised adaptions where required.	and collaboration on initiatives within the organisation. ✓ Consistent messaging and services for clubs.
	Consult regularly with users to ensure Golf Ireland's online services continue to meet the evolving needs of clubs and golfers	 Measurable increase in club and golfers understanding as to what G Ireland does for them. Improved user experience and inclusive access to online services fall prospective users

Objectives	Actions	Desired Outcomes
the organisation to be evaluated against the core values of Golf Ireland's Strategic Plan. the organisation to be evaluated against actioning the vision and Golf Ireland. ✓ Open application proces	 Staff and volunteers sharing and actioning the vision and values of Golf Ireland. Open application process for board, committee and volunteer vacancies 	
Develop a progressive, inclusive, equitable and	Develop a wide range of initiatives and events in our annual operational plans to imbed the values and culture of Golf Ireland on an ongoing basis.	✓ Heritage of the legacy organisations made accessible and cherished.
open culture while respecting tradition and preserving our history.	A project to preserve the history and heritage of the legacy unions, including a revamp of the Golf Ireland museum and the digitisation of photographs and other memorabilia.	
Support our volunteers and officials to excel in their roles	Undertake a Volunteer Impact Assessment with existing volunteers across the organisation.	 Recognition of the centrality of the role of volunteers within Golf Ireland. Strong retention rates in the existing
	Devise and deliver an annual induction programme for new volunteers.	volunteer workforce.Sustained growth in numbers and diversity in volunteer recruitment.
	Provide a visible development pathway for volunteers across all key areas.	 Regular tracking of volunteer satisfaction rates and sense of belonging within Golf Ireland.
	Introduce a structured process for two- way dialogue with volunteers	✓ Continual identification of opportunities for existing volunteers to contribute to Golf Ireland's activities in new ways, and for new volunteers to get involved in nontraditional volunteering roles within golf.
	Provide an annual volunteer appreciation event to recognise the contribution of Golf Ireland volunteers	





STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

DELIVERING OUR EVENTS

"We will deliver Worldclass, inclusive and equitable Championships and events"

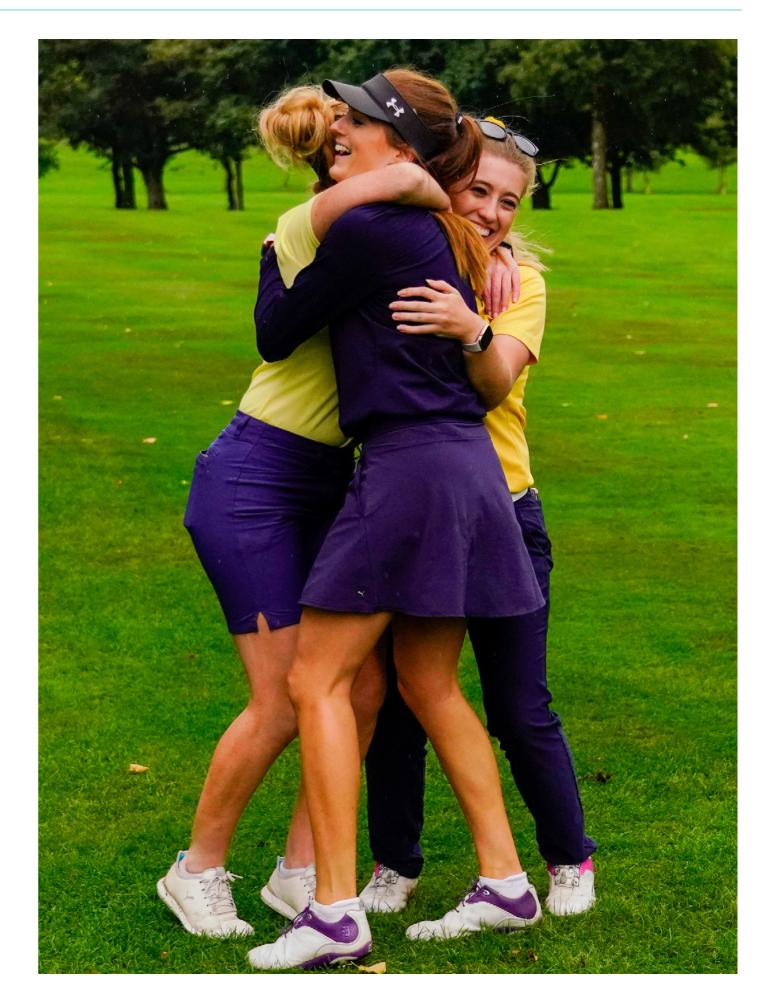




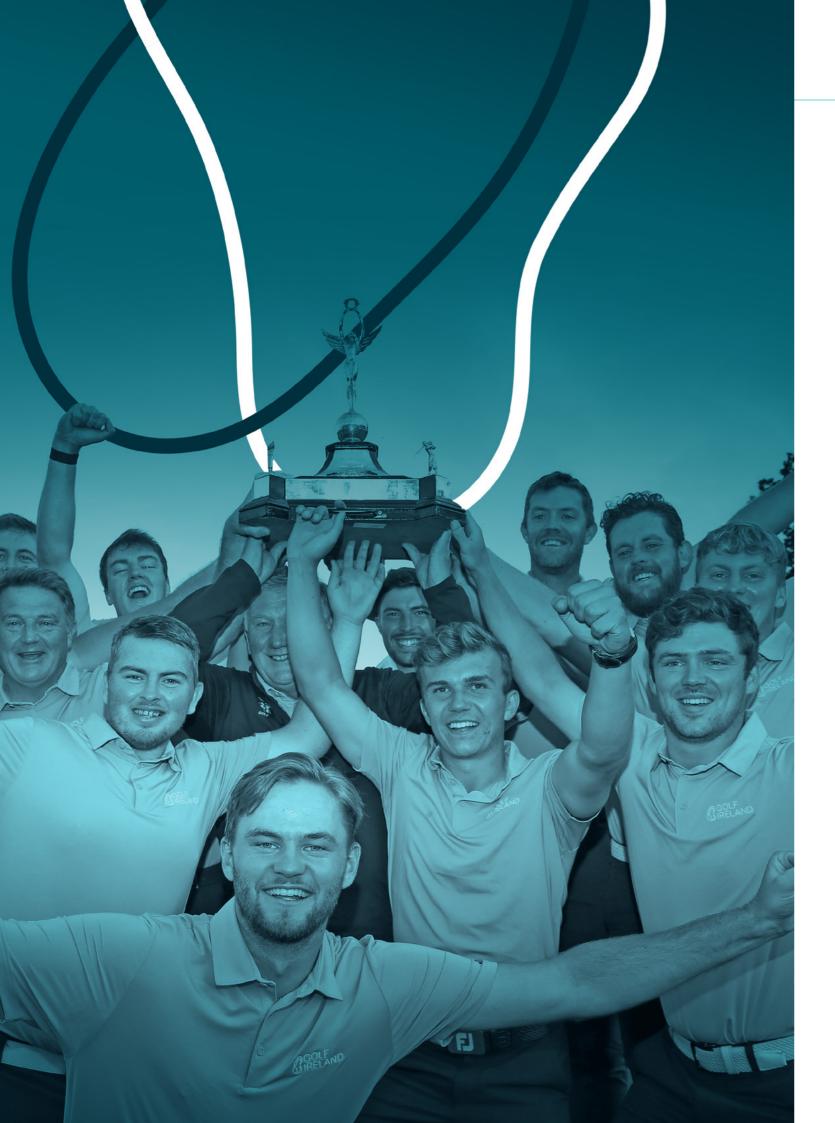


STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS: **DELIVERING OUR EVENTS**

Objectives	Actions	Desired Outcomes
14	Review defined operating standards annually in advance of annual and multi-annual training programmes for referees and volunteers.	 A sustainable pool of referees and competition volunteers driven to continually improve. A schedule which attracts top-class amateurs to elite events and enables Golf Ireland to deliver its suite of competitions for all ages, abilities and genders in a world-class manner. A player-focused approach to running competitions at all levels.
Stage World-class competitive events for	Continually engage with international counterparts to ensure optimal scheduling.	
golfers of all abilities at club, regional, national and international level	Distribute player surveys to measure satisfaction on key performance metrics for competitions (information distribution, pace of play, course setup, etc)	
15	Conduct rationalisation review called for in the Golf Ireland proposal to ensure the organisation's capacity to deliver objective 14 above is sustainable.	A streamlined competition programme at regional and national level which serves the playing population with a competition programme that is inclusive and relevant.
Deliver a clear, streamlined,	Effect change to the domestic competition calendar to embed a culture of mixed events.	 Joint showcases for male and female competition at National, Regional and grassroots level.
inclusive and equitable event calendar, including	Promote mixed-gender tournament Committees and volunteer teams.	Development of mixed-gender competitive formats. Equal opportunity and encouragement for men and women to be involved in
development events to promote and maximise inclusivity competition polici and participation. competition of new competition		
16	Bid to host male or female International Championship at least every two years.	 ✓ A continual pipeline of international amateur events staged on the island of Ireland. ✓ Substantial growth in the opportunities for referees and volunteers to become involved in international events.
Regularly host International Golf Events throughout the island of Ireland	Engage with the European Golf Association, European Disabled Golf Association and International Golf Federation to identify long-term hosting opportunities.	









NURTURING OUR TALENT

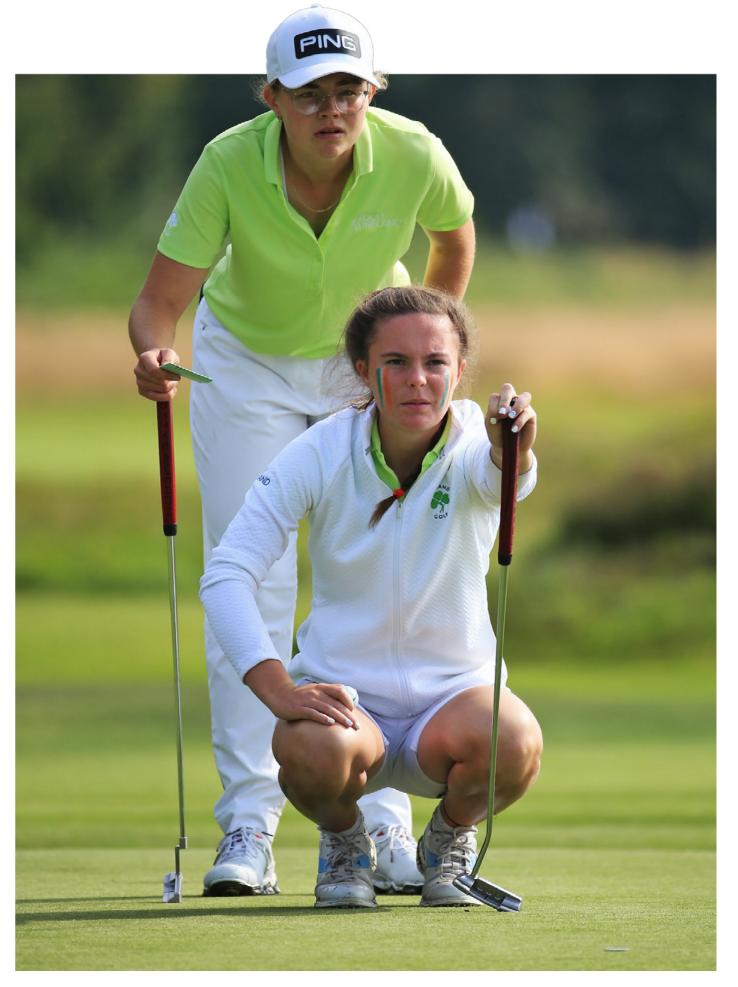
"We will provide access to a performance pathway which delivers success"





STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS: NURTURING OUR TALENT

Objectives	Actions	Desired Outcomes
17	Maintain and review Talent ID programmes at Club, Area and National levels.	✓ Irish players achieving medal positions at international individual and team events
	Devise, implement and publish selection criteria at all levels of the pathway.	 ✓ Robust International tournament schedule for National squads ✓ Feedback from all levels to review
Delivers	Continue to create opportunities for mixed gender coaching and events.	Talent ID programmes and their effectiveness
Successful High- Performance Pathway to provide Papertupity Continue collaboration with Sport Ireland, Sport NI and the Olympic Federation of Ireland to ensure best practice in all areas of the pathway. Have a robust funding and support Have a robust funding and support	the pathway Combined male and female events and squad sessions where	
	programme in place for emerging	✓ Increased funding and support for emerging professionals.
providers to ensure ongoing support for their professional and personal development. Open up opportunities for coaches to be part of all areas of the pathway. Increase visibility of and opportunities for female coaches.	teams' programmes.	
		coaches. ✓ More coaches working at HP level of Golf Ireland pathway
		 ✓ Upgrading of targeted existing facilities. ✓ Opportunities for new venues to be official Golf Ireland training venues.
	•	





GOLF FOR EVERYONE

2022-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN



SECURING THE FUTURE

"We will build a positive image of golf that inspires everyone





OF GOLF

to get involved"

- 1 Innovate and promote
- **Grow participation** particularly of Women and Girls
- Lead and advocate inclusive and equitable activity
- Promote sustainability on and off the course
- 5 Build strong partnerships

SUPPORTING OUR **CLUBS** & GOLFERS

"We will support all Clubs to be strong, healthy, sustainable & maintain steady growth"



- Promote excellent, inclusive and equitable governance
- Support the recruitment and retention of volunteers and staff
- Provide high quality support and services to golfers

LEADING OUR ORGANISATION



- 10 Set and maintain standards of excellence
- 11 Ensure effective communication at every level
- Create a progressive inclusive, equitable and open culture
- 13 Support current and potential volunteers, officials and staff to excel

DELIVERING **OUR EVENTS**

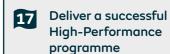
"We will deliver Worldclass, inclusive and equitable Championships and events"



- Stage World-class competitive events
- Deliver a clear. streamlined, inclusive and equitable event calendar
- Regularly host International golf events



"We will provide access to a performance pathway which delivers success"



Provide World-class coaching, facilities and support services

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APPENDIX

Table 1 details the consultation carried out throughout Q4 2021 in the development of the strategy.

QUANTITATIVE	Surveys	Golf Ireland Strategic Plan Survey. (N=10,166. Survey sent to all Golf Clubs, Registered Golfers, Golf Ireland Volunteer Network, Golf Ireland Social Media platforms) Public Participation and Engagement Research Survey (N= 1600, results weighted to the standard nationally representative population in each jurisdiction)
	Research	 Golf Ireland Program Data Golf Ireland and R&A participation research May 2021 R&A Golf and Health research 2021
QUALITATIVE	Focus Groups	Golf Ireland Staff and Volunteers Regional Executive Committee National Committee Members Regional Committee Members Club Members Staff Members Golf Community Youth Focus Groups Club Members
	Consultation Workshops/ Meetings	Golf Industry Bodies Association of Turfgrass Professionals Ireland Irish Golf Club Managers Association PGA National and Regional Committees Golf Ireland Board Governance Committee Regional Executive Officers Funding Bodies Sport Ireland R&A



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