

# Tuarascáil an Oifigeach Chaidrimh Phoiblí 2021

## (PRO Report 2021)

### Introduction

Like 2020 my third year as OCP was strongly coloured by the persistence of the Coronavirus and associated regulations restricting GAA activity. The last few months, however, were easier with the return of spectators to live games and the easing of other restrictions around social distancing. In contrast to last year, all of the 2021 championships, with the exception of the u-21s which is currently underway, have been completed and almost entirely within the schedule laid out by the CCC. Scór Sinsear also went ahead this year with CLG Buncrancha winning Ulster gold with their Novelty Act and Aodh Ruadh Beal Átha Seannaigh also competing in the All-Ireland Quiz final by virtue of their 2020 qualification.

Communications is the core role of the PRO – with the general public, with the 40 clubs in Donegal and with fellow officers. With the plethora of channels now available for communication - social media, the press, broadcasters and e-mails - this is a time-consuming role and I am highly indebted to many, many people who have helped me perform it with a degree of success. There have been some mistakes and omissions, all of my own making. Additional roles have included liaising with the Ulster Council, with GAA HQ in Croke Park, working as a team with my colleagues on the County Board and keeping records for historical purposes. In the remainder of this report, I will try and outline how these functions were performed throughout the year.

### Social Media

#### DonegalGAA.ie

Different PROs have different approaches to how they use Social Media to communicate. For the last three years, the official Donegal website - [www.DonegalGAA.ie](http://www.DonegalGAA.ie) - has played the central communications role for CLG Dhún na nGall. Donegal GAA's website is available in mobile device and desktop versions. The vast majority of visitors use mobiles – well over half of visitors use Apple I-Phones. Many Donegal GAA's "followers" get their information from our Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn feeds but, with the exception of result updates, almost everything first appears on the "News" section of the website and the other social media all link back to the site for more detailed information.

Reflecting this, and other additions and modifications, available capacity for more content on our website as it is currently formatted is running low. The existing site was designed in 2015 by our current IT Officer Aidan Spence, of Spence Digital Agency (who maintains the site), and our long-term contract with the existing platform provider is due for renewal in February 2022. With the aforementioned capacity problems and increasing traffic on the site, it is likely that we will both move to a new provider and opt to totally re-design much of [www.donegalgaa.ie](http://www.donegalgaa.ie) early next year. The content will remain generally the same. The objective is not to make it snazzier but rather to make it easier to operate and to navigate and to highlight better the key messages we want to convey at any particular time.

One small step in this direction in 2021 was alternating home page graphics. Last year the "landing page" (home page) was dominated by the "Win Your House in Dublin" advert and the previous year it was the "Buy a Brick" campaign graphic for the entire year. A key change this year was the graphic on the home page changed regularly depending on what was happening - the current home page, for example, reflects the recent completion of the 2021 Club Championship and will be replaced early December when the new Donegal Kit is launched.

The desktop home page currently has ten tabs - all edited by the PRO but the sub-tab relating to "Results and Fixtures" is directly linked to "Foireann" which has a variety of contributors – this section was problematic early in the year because of the switch from the old GMS to Foireann but most of these issues are now resolved. The tabs are: About Donegal; Coaching; Cultur; Adults; Juvenile; Teams; Gallery; Wellness, Covid; Admin; and News. It was hoped to change back "Wellness, Covid" to "Health and Wellbeing" in 2021 but like many other plans the persistence of the pandemic scuppered plans. Perhaps this can be achieved in 2022. On the mobile version these ten tabs are on a dropdown menu and the direct links of the mobile home page are for "News", "Fixtures", "Results" and "Juvenile". The 2022 version may look at varying these across the year.



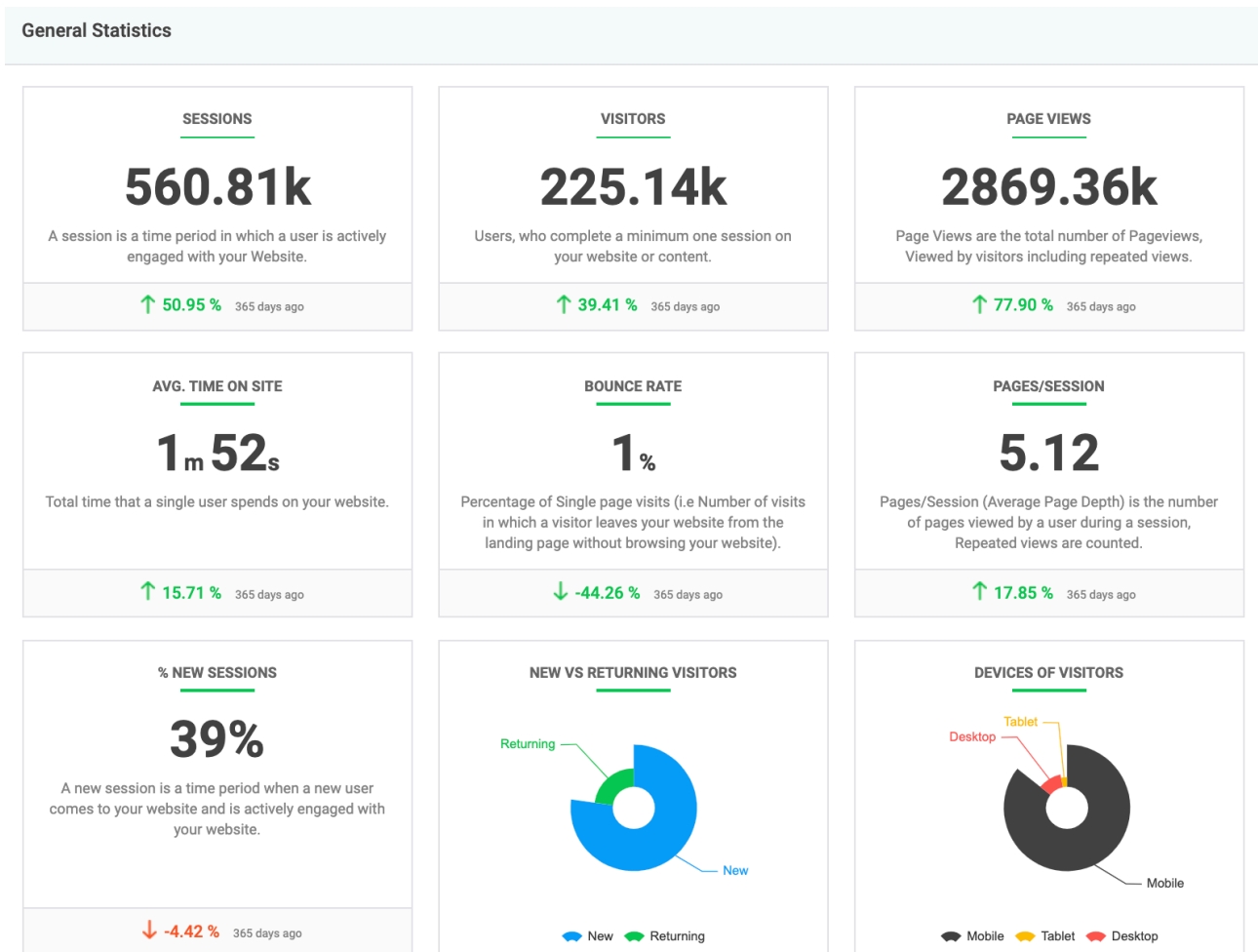
Once again Covid restrictions prevented the publication of a Leabhrán Eolais. The Administration, Adults and Juvenile tabs of [www.DonegalGAA.ie](http://www.DonegalGAA.ie) were used to fill the resultant gap. Club pages (on the Adults and Juvenile tabs) provided listings of club officers, a master fixture list was uploaded under the Adults and Juvenile Tabs and regulations, composition of committees, referee listings, etc. were under the Administration tab. None of this is additional to what was there in recent years simply that the site replaced the Information Booklet as the primary source. As noted above, the “News” section of the site is the central channel for communicating with the public. News items are posted on an almost daily basis and communicated more widely through links on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. There was relatively little activity in the first half of the year as a result of Covid restrictions but activity increased considerably from May onwards. Similar to 2020, but different to the years pre-Covid, a very high proportion of postings – 499 in all - covered games with considerably less on events, cultural activities, health and wellbeing, coaching and administrative issues.

### Weblogs - November 2020 to October 21

	Nov-Dec 2020	Jan-Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Totals
County Football	17	3	17	13	13	1	0	1	65
Club Football	0	0	5	31	34	43	21	32	166
Hurling	10	4	15	15	17	4	6	5	76
Youth Football	4	5	4	12	21	10	13	10	79
Coaching	5	8	4	2	3	0	0	4	26
Health & Wellbeing	2	4	6	3	4	1	2	3	25
National/Provincial/Admin	6	10	2	2	0	0	2	7	29
Culture	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	3	9
Miscellaneous	8	3	4	4	0	3	0	2	24
<b>Totals</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>499</b>

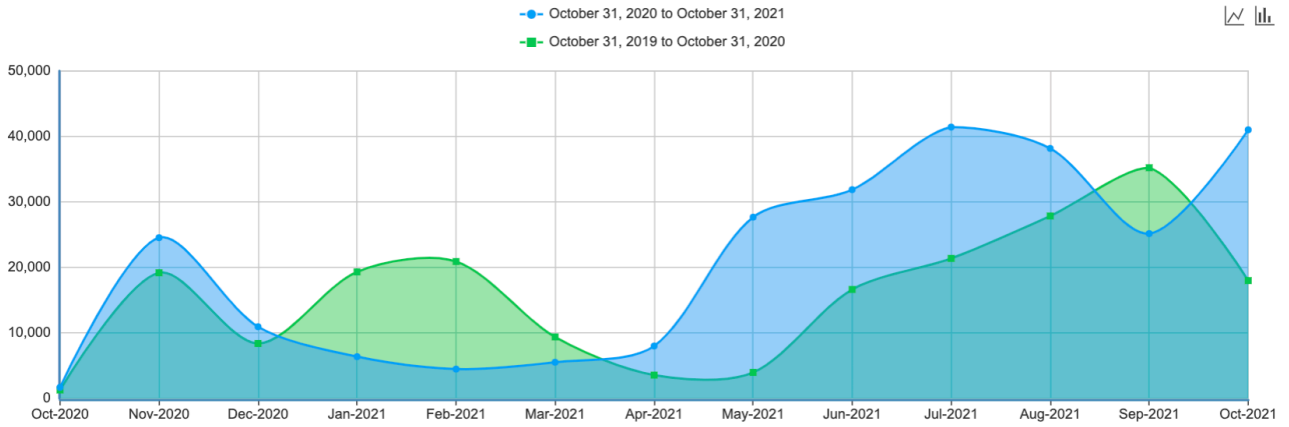
Activity on the website fell sharply in 2020 with the advent of Covid and the impact of the pandemic continued to impact in 2021 but not to the same effect. Over the course of the 12 months from Oct 31, 2020 to Oct 31, 2021 there were 2.9 mn page views on DonegalGAA.ie, compared to 1.6 mn in the corresponding period in 2020 and almost back to the 3.1 mn for the same period in 2019. Sessions were also up but not quite as sharply, proportionately, 561,000 compared to 374,000 in 2019/20 and marginally higher than 556,000 in 2018/19. Other interesting trends included:

- Almost 4 in ten visitors to the site in 2021 (Oct 2020 to Oct 2021) were **new** visitors (also high in 2020) and possibly reflecting new viewers to access Donegal GAA TV;
- each visitor stayed longer than in 2020, approx 2 minutes versus 1 and a half mins last year; and,
- on average each visitor visited 5 pages in 2021 compared to just over 4 in 2020.



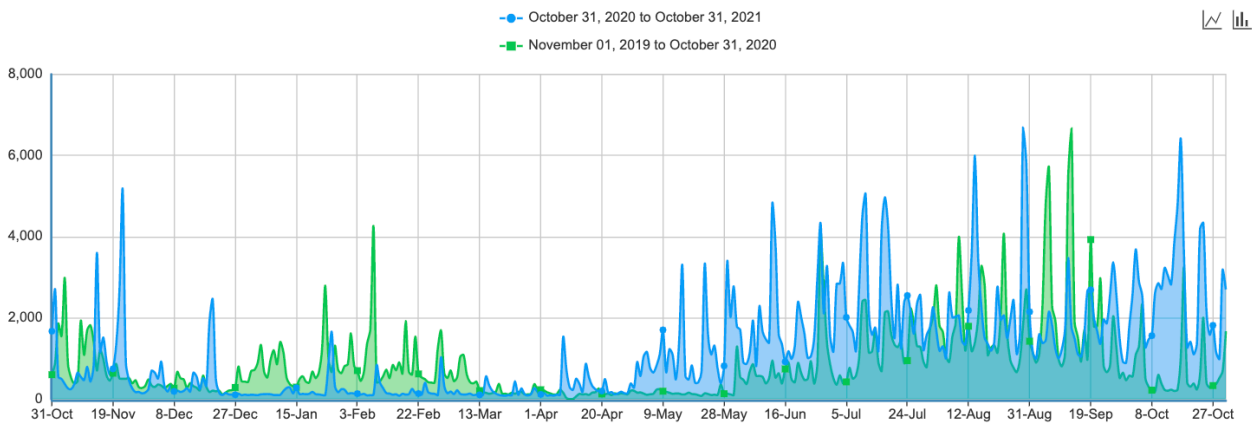
The share using mobile phones to access the site continues to edge upwards and is over 80%, which will be addressed in our re-design of the site next year, in particular making it faster to operate and more focused on user requirements. Currently, the mobile site prioritises access to particular areas of the site rather than the 10 tabs – which are accessed via a dropdown menu – namely News, Fixtures, Results. Juvenile and Donegal GAA TV. Scrolling down it also provides immediate access to the key message bars of the landing page and the O’Neill’s shop as well as links to our sponsor websites.

The bigger window for games, particularly as they were absent in Q2 2020, accounts for some of the higher level of activity on the site in 2021 - the graphs below indicates plenty of activity (blue) in April to June 2021 - and very little in Q2 2020 (green) – when both the All County League and County games were in full flow.



**445.2k** vs 311.08k

Months Year



Visits via other Social Media Channels was at its highest level yet reflecting our policy, as mentioned above, of directing visits to our news blog via these channels, as well as slightly more social media followers. In the 12 months to end October 2021 were 207,000 visits compared to 144,000 in 2020, 164,000 in 2019 and just 33,000 in 2018 (before this strategy was implemented). The rise is evident across three of the four channels – from 95K to 138K from Facebook, 48K to 66K from Twitter and very big rise, proportionately, from LinkedIn, up from 190 last year to 3,009 in 2021.

Social Network <a href="#">↗</a>	Total Visits
Facebook	137.65k
Twitter	65.73k
LinkedIn	3,009
Instagram	252
Instagram Stories	121
Snapchat	48
YouTube	7

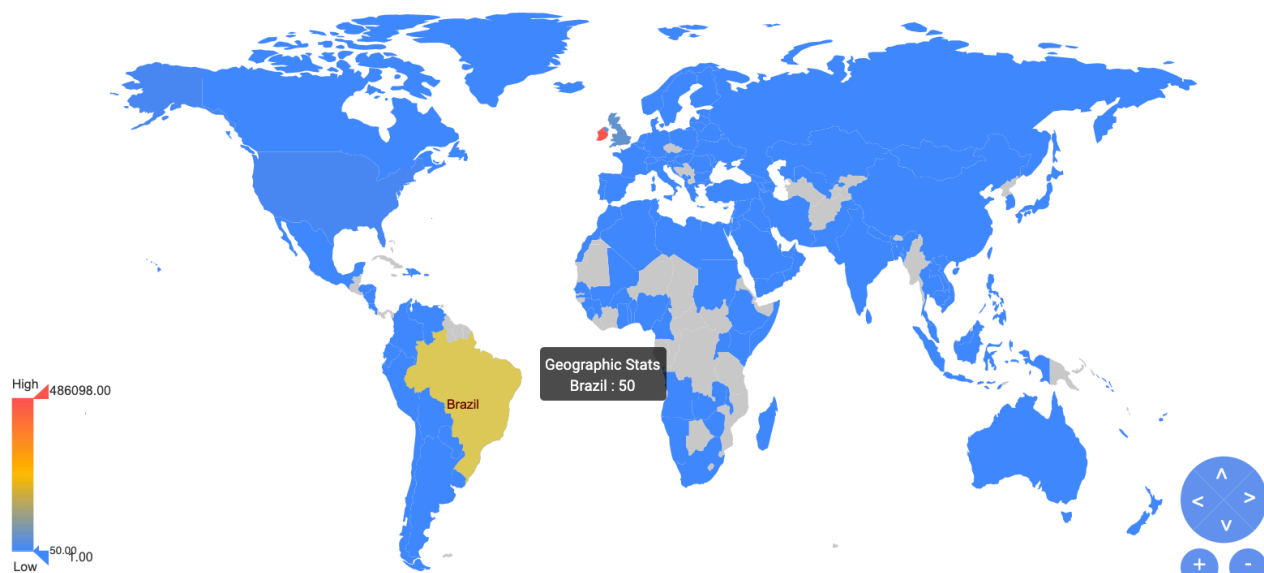
The most popular pages on the website remains those relating to fixtures and results – three of the top five. Visitor numbers were well up on last year. This is not surprising for the landing page given the general rise in website activity. The substantially higher number of visits to the fixtures and results pages probably reflects greater interest in the traditional Division 1 to 4 leagues, with promotion and relegation (originally *in situ*) than in last year's concession to Covid with regional leagues. Results and fixtures are not updated by the PRO – through the wonders of modern technology results are updated automatically by referees via text and the pages are managed and amended by Ed Byrne (Secretary of the CCC, until recently), Jim Quinn (Secretary of the Minor Board), Sinead Breen (Northern Divisional Board), Elaine Steele (Southern Divisional Board), Michelle Bennett (Referees Administrator), Jim Gillen (Inishowen Board) and Elizabeth Doherty (Hurling Board). Thank you to Bernard Smith in Croke Park who held a virtual training course on the use of Foireann with Donegal officials in May.

## DonegalGAA.ie Top 5 Pages Visited

Top Page	Views	Av Time (seconds)	Bounce Rate
Landing Page	311 (241)	19 (16)	1% (1%)
Latest Fixtures	283 (199)	12 (37)	0% (1%)
Competitions (All)	188 (108)	13 (18)	0% (1%)
Latest Results	167 (97)	44 (45)	0% (1%)
Newsblog Brian McCormick Sports D1	139	28	0%

The majority of sessions on the website are from Irish visitors – 487,000 from Ireland, about 87% of the total compared to 84% last year. Next is the UK with 51,000 (33,000 last year) and the US with 11,000 (10,000 last year). Of the Irish visitors 56% of them (and 49% of the total) were from Dublin (272,000 compared to 169,000) with 37,000 from the Letterkenny area.

### Geographic



Top countries <a href="#">CSV</a>	Visitors	Top cities <a href="#">CSV</a>	Visitors
Ireland	486.1k	Dublin	272k
United Kingdom	51.17k	Letterkenny	37.12k
United States	10.88k	Sligo	12.27k
Australia	1,951	London	9,653



## Twitter

The @OfficialDonegal Twitter account currently has 56,300 followers, up 1,700 since mid-November 2020. A small reduction in follower numbers during the pandemic lockdown was reversed as Twitter activity re-started in May 2021. In Jan-Apr 2021 there were just 59 tweets compared to 354 in May. The top tweet for the year is from November 2020 when Peadar Mogan won Man of the Match against Armagh in the Ulster Championship (96,000 impressions), followed by the U21 captain Rory O'Donnell's presentation to the O'Dufaigh family (82,000) and 74,000 on the announcement that the CCC had decided to replay the 2020 final.

## Top Tweets Nov 2020 - Oct 2021

	New Followers	Top Tweet	Tweets
Nov 2020	635	Peadar Mogan Man of Match (96,000 impressions)	248
Dec 2020	57	Laochra Gael + Kevin Cassidy returns to TG4 (19,000)	40
January	5	Karl Lacey New Head of Donegal Academy (17,000)	15
February	4	Congratulations Danny Cullen (13,000)	9
March	-29	Gary Duffy Appointed u21 Manager (16,000)	13
April	-147	Congrats 3 new Natl Committee Members (9,000)	22
May	224	What a brilliant goal from Michael (27,000)	354
June	222	RTE Man of the Match Ryan McHugh (45,000)	295
July	510	Presentation to O'Dufaigh Family (82,000)	553
August	255	CCC Decides to Replay 2020 Final (74,000)	244
September	272	2020 Final Replay Postponed (23,000)	91
October	179	County Final to be Broadcast by TG 4	672


Donegal GAA tweeted 2,556 times over the twelve months to end-October (96% in May-Nov), our profile was viewed 1.5 mn times and our account was mentioned by others 9,000 times. Our tweets were viewed 15 mn times well ahead of last year but well below 2019's 20 mn. July – at the height of the county senior, u20 and minor championships and with the club leagues in full flow - was the busiest month with 563 tweets and 3.42 mn views.

**Jul 2021** · 31 days

**Tweet Highlights**

**Top Tweet** earned 82.2K impressions

Donegal U20s captain Rory O'Donnell presents a copy of the no 6 jersey to the Monaghan chairperson Declan Flanagan. The jersey will be passed on to the family of Monaghan U20s captain Brendan Óg O'Dufaigh. At dhis Dhé a raibh a anam. [pic.twitter.com/vSy4GVnu4y](https://pic.twitter.com/vSy4GVnu4y)



3 replies 26 retweets 801 likes

[View Tweet activity](#) [View all Tweet activity](#)

**JUL 2021 SUMMARY**


Tweets	553	Tweet impressions	3.42M
Profile visits	335K	Mentions	1,475
New followers	510		

**Top mention** earned 17.5K engagements

**Ulster GAA**  
@UlsterGAA · Jul 16

Captains Rory O'Donnell @officialdonegal and Brendan Óg Duffy @monanghaa before the @Eirgrid Ulster U20 semi final gets underway at Brewster Park 📸📸📸


#Ulster2021 [pic.twitter.com/JUkZEmV0pN](https://pic.twitter.com/JUkZEmV0pN)



17 replies 8 retweets 237 likes

[View Tweet](#)

**Top Follower** followed by 59.6K people




**Brendan Murray** [@brendan\\_m96](#) · [FOLLOWS YOU](#)

Singer - Songwriter - Irish 🇮🇪  
Murraybrendan28@gmail.com

[View profile](#)

**Top media Tweet** earned 22.8K impressions

Two happy @RealNaMaraGAA men after @officialdonegal 's exciting @UlsterGAA SFC quarterfinal win in Páirc Sheáin Mhic Cumhaill. [pic.twitter.com/UirvZ9QrsR](https://pic.twitter.com/UirvZ9QrsR)



2 replies 4 retweets 134 likes

Communication via Twitter is not simply a matter of Donegal GAA tweeting information or links. Just as important are re-tweets by @OfficialDonegal. In particular, I am heavily reliant on half-time updates and full-time results, of club matches tweeted by the PRO's of Donegal clubs to keep fans informed. This applies to underage as well as adult games.

Thus, the more clubs that have Twitter accounts – a few don't and some others are dormant - and the more regularly they use them the easier it is to communicate up-to-date information. Finally, special thanks to Damian Carr from Naomh Columba who tweets in-match from most Donegal County games and many knock-out club championship matches. Go raibh míle maith agat Damien.

## **Facebook**

The official Donegal Facebook page currently has over 32,900 followers, up 900 in the last year. Two thirds of these followers are Rep of Ireland, one-fifth from the UK, followed by North America (4%), Australasia (3%) and 3% across the rest of the world.

There are generally three types of post – pictures or photo gallery's (usually uploaded by Geraldine Diver but also by the PRO), video clips (mostly by either Geraldine or Bradas O'Donnell but also live championship games this year by C-Live and fStop) and articles with links to our website (always the PRO). Facebook is also used as a video channel. Six championship games were streamed "free to air" on Facebook during 2021. The Senior, Intermediate, Junior and u21 football championship draws were also streamed live on Facebook as were the Senior and Junior Hurling championship draws. Statistics for the entire year are unavailable but the breakdown of 115 Facebook posts during October, a busy month, indicates 19 videos, 7 pictures/galleries and 89 link articles back to the website.

## **Instagram**

The Official Donegal GAA Instagram account added more than 2,000 followers over the course of the 12 months to end-October 2021 and now has over 11,000 followers. With over 1,600 posts it is a key component of Donegal GAA's social media strategy.

Engagement, particularly in this day and age, on social media is key with Instagram having considerable growth in recent years. There were 2.2 million Instagram users in Ireland as of January 2021, which accounted for 45.2% of its entire population and is the most popular of all social media in Ireland for the 18-34 bracket. Instagram helped keep people in touch when they couldn't attend matches during the pandemic in 2020 and has continued to flourish since. In a new feature, Instagram can also link from its stories directly to the Donegal GAA website. This was a late 2021 addition and referrals to the website from Instagram were fairly low (373) but should increase considerably in 2022.

Over 2,500 users view posts and stories during matches, videos of supporters are also uploaded.

## **LinkedIn**

There was a significant step-up on the use of LinkedIn as a medium of communication in 2021 and also as a means to promote our key sponsors (notably Circet and LYIT). This was already alluded to above in the very substantial rise in visits to our website via LinkedIn.

The number of contacts on LinkedIn currently stands at 1,295 compared to 822 in mid-November 2020.

## **YouTube**

One of the small targets set for 2021 was to make better use of Donegal GAA's YouTube.

Work towards this goal commenced in November 2020 with the uploading of videos of some of the games from the 2019 and 2020 Michael Murphy Sports and Leisure club championship and the Nickey Rackard Hurling games streamed by Donegal GAA TV as well as the Nickey Rackard final. There are, however, only 71 subscribers to the Donegal youtube channel and currently Facebook remains the core channel for video-content.

## **Traditional Media**

### **Press and Broadcast Media Relations**

The statistics in the preceding section indicate Donegal GAA communicates directly with many fans via its website and various social media platforms. However, the appetite for information on Donegal GAA is considerable and most of those who use our communications facilities complement this with information from our partners in other locally-based multi-media organisations, while many others rely totally on these outlets. Donegal GAA's communications channels also informs our media partners both through targeted emails, a WhatsApp Group, press briefings and old fashioned

phone calls. These partners include the Donegal Democrat/DonegalLiveSport, Donegal News, Donegal Post, Donegal SportsHub/Donegal Daily, Highland Radio, Inish Times, Inishowen Independent, Ocean FM, Radio na Gaeltachta and Tir Conaill Tribune. I use the term multi-media because most of these organisations have moved beyond their traditional patch to include their own social media channels.

Press requirements also include: provision of advance information before important games – including press briefings; ensuring media are facilitated at County and key championship ties; controlled access to team managers and players after games, as well as promotion of other events. For all of 2020 and most of 2021 press briefings were all virtual – via Microsoft Teams – but with the easing of restrictions in the second half of the year there was a return to normal, including the launch of Donegal’s partnership with Global Hydrate, the press nights for our club championship finals and the up-coming launch of the new 2022/23 Donegal jersey in partnership with O’Neills. Social distancing of the media at games and for interviews, sanitation requirements, restrictions on movement within grounds and access to players and management largely remain but not to the same extent as during 2020 and the first half of 2021. The overflow area in the Stand is still in use but for the last few games of the Championship limited numbers of the press were back in the press box. On the good news front, work is expected to commence soon to introduce strong Wifi to the press overflow area in the stand, the absence of which has been a longstanding and legitimate bugbear for journalists. Finally, the work undertaken in the Press Box by the MacCumhail club last year to provide individual cubicles for the broadcast media remains in place and will probably be retained indefinitely.

Media relations are not a one-way street. Good communication by CLG Dhún na nGall is strongly dependant on traditional media. As always, co-operation in this regard was excellent. With the move to streaming games there were plenty of virtual match programmes compiled and local journalists are very accommodating in providing content – both text and pictures – and in helping with match commentary for the Donegal GAA TV Streams. As well as the club championship, as can be seen from the Graphic below which shows a selection of our virtual programmes, they were also produced for our county hurling games – both in the Allianz League and in the Nickey Rackard Championship.

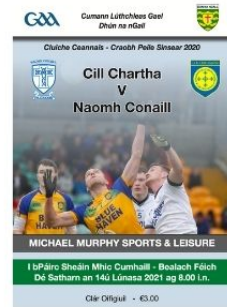
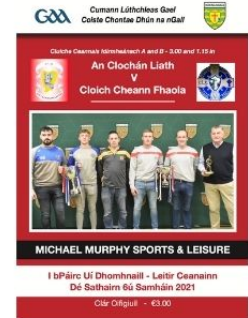
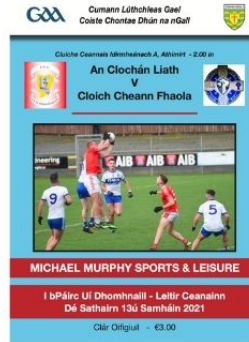
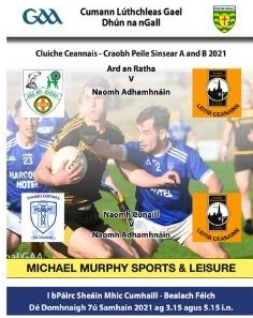


By the time of our championship Covid restrictions had eased and Donegal GAA decided it was safe to mark our County finals with printed programmes. Programmes were provided for six in total: the 2020 and 2021 Senior Championship finals; the two hurling finals; the Junior finals; and the Intermediate Finals and Intermediate A final replay.



## Printed Programmes 2021

### Senior Finals Intermediate Finals Junior Finals Hurling Finals Intermediate Final Replay 2020 Senior Final



Thank you also to all the club officials, players and management personnel who co-operated with the Donegal Stream Team to add content to our match coverage by providing expert analysis before, during and after games.

Unfortunately during 2021, Donegal lost one of its most valued and long-serving press men with the passing of Michael Jack O'Donnell. Fear uasal go smíor a chnámh a raibh fíor bhródúil as CLG Dhún na nGall i rith a shaol. Duine cairdiúil a bhí ann agus bhí sé ina mháistir mar ghrianghrafadóir agus an-bhróid aige ina cheird. Bhí sé iontach éasca oibriú le Michael i mo ról mar OCP ar Bhord na contae. May his gentle soul sleep in peace.

### Broadcasting and Streaming

A major objective of CLG Dhún na nGall is to promote our Association and its games and good works to the public at large. In the latter category while health conferences and Scór events were streamed in 2019 there were no such events in 2021 as a result of Covid restrictions. Streaming of our games, however, took off in 2020 because of the restrictions on spectator numbers and were a feature again in 2021 even after crowds returned. Our County hurling games in the May and June were not covered by either the national broadcasters or the GAA's streaming service GAAGO. These were the first games streamed in 2021. Donegal GAA also moved to a new streaming platform 247 which combine relative cheapness with a consistent service. The only slight downside was that subscribers needed to sign-up to the service which while costless provided additional steps for anyone signing up for just one match. However, once signed up it was very easy for subscribers to buy additional games. 247 were not used, however, for the delayed 2020 County final - BeoSport covered it – as at that early stage in our relationship our experience with 247 was not long enough to convince that it could handle high volumes of subscribers.

When it came to championship knock-out games, with the exception of the delayed 2020 County final, spectators were largely allowed back. Nevertheless, the decision was taken to continue to stream games. Key factors influencing this decision were:

- Analysis of viewer figures in 2019 and 2020 showed a relatively high number from outside Donegal indicating there were supporters of Donegal football outside the County whose only avenue to view games was via our streaming service;
- There would still be a residue of supporters - particularly those for whom Covid presented a very adverse threat to health – who would still not feel comfortable attending games.

With restrictions on capacity the County Board also encouraged clubs to stream their games but contrary to the experience in 2020, very few streamed games in 2021. Up to early November 2021, Donegal GAA TV had streamed 24 knock-out Championship games on a Pay Per View basis and another 6 were streamed free of charge on the Donegal GAA Facebook page. A further two, the Senior semi-final between Naomh Conaill and Kilcar and the Senior final between Naomh Conaill and St Eunans were broadcast on TG4.

Overall, a total of 4,340 single streams were purchased. In addition, 112 Season tickets at an average price of €23.9 - the price of season tickets varied across the weeks depending on how many games were left. Initially it had been

planned to offer other ticket packages such as double-headers but the 247 platform could only accommodate one package at a time, namely the season ticket.

The number of stream viewers was well down on 2020 reflecting the fact spectators were back watching games live. Only five times did the number of viewers exceed 300: 2020 County Final (841); Gaoth Dobhair v Naomh Conaill senior quarterfinal (601), St Eunans v St Michaels senior semi- final (360), Cloughaneely v Dungloe Intermediate A final replay (327) and Cloughaneely v Dungloe Intermediate A final (317). These figures do not include “replays” purchased which will be added at a later stage. Pricing, though set low at an average of €3.90 for 247 streams, was a higher than expected barrier to viewership. The six games streamed free on Facebook had much higher traction - Kilcar v MacCumhaills in Ardara peaking at nearly 800 live viewers and the Naomh Mhuire v Dungloe, Four Masters v Termon, and Realt na Mara v Milford all peaking at over 400, while Bunrana v Fanad Gaels was over 300 and the Senior C final close to 300.

Viewership of the County final on TG4 was high. It was the most watched programme on TG4 that week and, on average, 11% of people watching TV in Ireland that Sunday afternoon tuned into the game at some stage although “peak” viewership was low by comparison reflecting the one-sided nature of the game. There is a financial argument against broadcasting our premier games on TV as some potential spectators remain at home and watch on TG4 rather than travelling to the game, although this dis-incentive is easily overstated. Promoting our games is a key PRO brief and from this standpoint the benefits of showing our games to wide audience outweigh any negative impact on gate receipts.

The vagaries of broadband coverage has proved a problem for streaming though less so in 2021 than last year. On the one hand there are still pockets in the county where subscriber signals are weak and the quality of download coverage is uneven. There is nothing that can be done about this from a Donegal GAA perspective. There is also a problem on the other end that the quality of the broadband at grounds is poor resulting in poor quality upload. There is a select number of venues in the County where this problem has been overcome. MacCumhaill Park, the venue for many of our key club matches, has broadband but not fibre and there can be upload problems from time to time. The necessary investment in MacCumhaill Park to bring it up to the required standard is, however, imminent with the installation of fibre broadband that should solve this problem. With spectators back at games streaming in 2021, and henceforth, is not a lucrative commercial venture that will generate substantial revenue for the County Board. On the other hand, viewership is sufficiently high to suggest this important service can be provided for those who often cannot make the actual games while still making a modest financial contribution to County Board revenue.

There are so many people to thank for their work on the Donegal GAA TV streaming service this year I may miss mentioning all of them. They include our core Stream Team of Bradas O'Donnell, Joe Brennan and Ciaran O'Donnell, which was augmented by three other “teams” C-Live (thanks Sean Quirke), fstop media (thank you John Conlon) and Realt na Mara (Shane Smyth) all of whom stepped up to the mark superbly when required. Highland Radio (Oisín Kelly) and Radio na Gaeltachta (Damien O'Dónaill) provided the commentary for many of the games while Damien Dowds covered most of the hurling games. Thanks as well to Ryan Walsh, Ciaran Cannon, Gerard McLaughlin, Tom Comack, Pauric Hilferty, Owenie McGarvey and Conor Breslin who all stepped in to provide commentary. Coverage was also enhanced by variety of co-commentators including, Martin McHugh, Brendan Kilcoyne, Brendan Devenney, Francie Friel, Gary McDaid, Stephen McGonagle, Damian Diver, Liam Galbraith, Tom Hennessy, Marty McGrath, Daithí Roberts, Joe Boyle and Micky McCann. Donegal GAA TV also added content with half-time and post match interviews with representatives of competing teams and thank you to all the clubs who facilitated this.

All club championship draws, including those for Rounds 3 and 4 of the new format championship league, were also streamed – on Donegal's Facebook page - and hosted (and largely organised) by Damien O'Dónaill of RnG.

## **Publications**

CLG Dhún na nGall had no hard copy publications this year, apart from match programmes for the Championship finals. None of these would have seen the light of day without considerable input from club secretaries and PROs and thank you to all of them. Thanks too to the journalists who provided me with match previews and other articles and particularly to Geraldine Diver, but also Evan Logan and Peter Campbell, for providing many of the images. County officials Michelle Bennett (referees administrator), Catriona Sweeney (Irish Cultural Officer) and Fergus McGee were also invaluable. Finally, thanks to Gemma and Sammy in Impacto Print.

With the club season still in full swing in October and November a 2021 Donegal Annual was not compiled. On the one hand the season was far from complete so the information in the Annual would be very limited and secondly club PROs,

key contributors from the press and the County PRO were all flat to the mat with very little time to gather the requisite information. It may be an option to pursue in January 2022.

## Miscellaneous

### Working as a Team

Working as part of a team is integral to the work of a PRO. The help of the County Board and the timely co-operation of the clubs is essential across a range of PRO functions. Our flagship County Football team attracts the lion's share of media and public attention. Co-operation of the squad and management is integral to the success of CLG Dhún na nGall's communications with the public. Declan Bonner has been exceptionally easy to deal with from a PRO perspective, always available for pre-match press events, post-match interviews, launches, fund-raisers etc. Similarly, squad members have followed suit and my sincere thanks to them for their availability, affability and the comfortable efficiency each and every one dealt with the media and the general public. Thanks too to the hurling fraternity, particularly Frankie Doherty, Mickey McCann, Marty McGrath and Manus O'Donnell for their co-operation both in preparing for hurling match days and putting together match programmes. Finally, both Gary Duffy and Luke Barrett were always helpful in relation to the County u20 and minor teams. Comhghairdeas to all four bainisteoiri on their re-appointment,

As already noted, the work of club PROs and Secretaries and their inter-action with me is vital to ensuring the Donegal PRO brief is fulfilled. The @gaa.ie based communications system is a massive help in making communicative teamwork more efficient. All secretaries use their @gaa.ie addresses but a significant number of club PROs do not use this address. This makes electronic communication more difficult and it also means they cannot access the information folders on One Drive. I urge all PROs, already *in situ* not using this system or appointed for 2022, to please sign on for next year.

Teamwork on matchdays vitally important and considerable thanks to ground staff/stewards at grounds throughout the county where we streamed games and sought accommodation for the press during 2020. Working closely with the scrupulously efficient Fergus McGee on match days to communicate with fans is always pleasure.

There were just two meetings of the PR and Marketing Committee this year, both virtual. The relatively high number of tweets and Weblogs on Underage games (66 in the second half of the year) reflects co-operation with the Committee. The Donegal GAA Academy and Donegal Coaching both have their own social media accounts which frees up the PRO from this area but leads to occasional mis-communications. It is recommended they have a representative on the 2022 PR and Marketing Committee. Reflecting this new arrangement the proposed new website for GAA Coaching in the County was shelved.

The CCC, on the other hand, had a plethora of meetings and the PRO worked very closely with this Committee to organise the All-County League and Championship structure. Particular thanks to Seamus Ó'Domhnaill (chair), Ed Byrne (secretary for most of 2021) and Frankie Doherty for all the heavy-lifting that helped make my job in relation to fixtures and results a lot smoother.

### Sponsors

Sponsors are increasingly important in providing the funding for the activities of CLG Dhun na nGall. The logos of key Senior team sponsors – *cir*cet, Abbey Hotel, McGinley Motors, O'Neill's Sport and Leisure, Evolve Menswear, YesChef Catering, Affidea, LYIT and Global Hydrate are all on the landing page of Donegal GAA with links through to their own websites. A new and upgraded Memorandum of Understanding was signed with LYIT this year that, *inter alia*, gives the Institute enhanced access to the Donegal GAA Centre and our development squads more access to LYIT's expertise and facilities. A new sponsor is also on board for 2022 - POD-TRAK - who's logo (as well as Global Hydrate) will appear on the sleeve of the new Donegal County jersey. There will also be a joint launch with O'Neills of the new kit for our football and hurling squads on December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Competition sponsors – Michael Murphy Sports and Leisure, Brian McCormick Sports, Marley Travel, YesChef Catering and McGlynn's Restaurant are mentioned as often as possible whenever the relevant competitions are discussed. In particular, special graphics were designed in-house to assist with promotion. Considerable thanks to Aidan Spence for his help in designing not just graphics for promoting our sponsors-competitions but also for other events and promotions.

Thanks once again to everyone who has helped me over the course of the year and apologies if I have left anyone out – the omission was not intentional. Go raibh mile maith agaibh,

*Sean MacConduibh, OCP*

*John McEniff, PRO*