**Press release**

**The Erne Gaels club have been SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN FLAGSHIP NATIONAL HEALTH PROJECT**

The **Erne Gaels club** has been selected to participate in Phase 2 of the innovative GAA Healthy Clubs project.

GAA Healthy Clubs aim to support their members’ and their communities’ health by empowering them to take greater ownership of every aspect of it – be it physical, emotional, or social. Our motto is: Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds, Healthy Clubs.

An Uachtarán Cumann Luthchleas Gael, Aogán Ó Fearghail, commended all the clubs that applied for Phase 2 (almost 100 in total) and wished those selected every success on their journey.

“The GAA is more than just a sporting association, we are also a community organisation. We want to ensure that everyone who comes in contact with our clubs – be they players, officers, coaches, referees, parents, or just members of our communities – benefit from that experience. We believe that the Healthy Clubs project will help support clubs in achieving that goal,” he said.

The Healthy Clubs project is a key element of the GAA’s growing work in the area of wellbeing. It involves a unique public-private partnership involving the Irish health sector (Health Service Executive/National Office for Suicide Prevention) and Irish Life, whose Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) investment has made Phase 2 possible. It also benefits from input by Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland, the Public Health Agency, and relevant academia.

The independent evaluation into Phase 1 (which ran from March 2013-July 2015 and involved 16 clubs across the four provinces) strongly endorsed the project’s partnership approach to addressing health and wellbeing at community level. The report, by a team from Waterford IT’s Centre for Health Behavioural Research, also commended the clubs’ volunteers for their selfless work in areas relating to healthy eating, physical activity, emotional wellbeing and mental health, social inclusion, youth development, and much more.

Phase 2, which will run for approximately 18 months, remains a learning experience for all involved. The 60 participating clubs (at least one from each county) and the Community & Health team in Croke Park are breaking new ground. Through the continued evaluation of their experiences they hope to develop a suite of resources and materials that will be fit for purpose as they aspire to make the Healthy Clubs project available to all interested clubs in Phase 3.

**Club chairman Declan McCaffrey stated ”When I entered the club into the process, I did have high hopes of being successful and getting into phase 2, this was due to the high profile level of work we’ve already done on the area of Health and wellbeing, but I’m delighted now to be officially in and that our work has been recognised at Croke park level, this is a great honour for our club to have been chosen from the 100 plus applicants, the area of health and wellbeing has been of particular interest to me and I’ve put a lot of my time and energy into this along with our clubs Health & Wellbeing officer Ciara Hughes, I’m hoping the people from our area embrace and reap the benefits from our events”** “Our club will be using **Lá na gClubanna on May 8th** as an opportunity to officially launch our participation in the project. More details will follow but we are inviting all interested persons to come along, get involved, and help make our community a healthy place for everyone to enjoy.”

**For more details visit the Erne Gaels club Facebook & Twitter accounts or go to** [**www.gaa.ie/community**](http://www.gaa.ie/community)