**Ladies’ Chairperson Summary Report - 2019**

*(The Secretary’s report contains a detailed overview of the activities of the Ladies’ section in 2019 and is on the website to read. Below is a brief summary and our vision for 2020.)*

The Ladies’ section of the club continues to be the fastest growing section in terms of the numbers joining throughout the season in the nursery through to the teams. This is supported by sustained emphasis on inclusion for everyone, respect for each other and making the environment an attractive and fun place for girls to play sport. Coaches and volunteers stepped up again this year committing and contributing to the various fundraising and community events that were spread throughout the year (i.e. the inaugural Family Fun Run, the Mini All Ireland, etc.). Contributing to the One Club ethos the Ladies’ section are actively participating in  ‘Coach the Coaches’ in partnership with the boys section and initiatives are planned to ensure there is more collaboration between the two sections of the club.

In terms of Dublin County activity Syls girls are among the best and the brightest with a growing number of girls (16 at present) participating in Dublin development squads, with the Dublin Minor team and of course with our 4 senior All Ireland winning players. Special congratulations to Niamh McEvoy on winning her first All Star this year.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the involvement and steadfast commitment of the mentors, coaches, volunteers and parents at all levels.

Thank you all for your unrelenting efforts this year.

**Stepping Down**

Unfortunately this year there are a number of long term volunteers who are either stepping down or moving to other things. The Ladies’ section would like to specifically mention and thank:

* + Marcus Heary, who has decided, after many years of tireless work both coaching and at the committee level, to step away. The commitment and contribution of Marcus to the Ladies’ section has been incalculable and will not be easily replaced.
  + Eric Canny and Brian Sullivan have after 3 years decided to step away from coaching the senior and minor teams. Their knowledge of the ladies’ game and their enthusiasm to impart that knowledge and experience has seen the senior teams thrive in the last three years. We are grateful to them all and wish them all the best in their new endeavours.

**Vision for the 2020**

Our aim is to continue growing the Ladies’ section. As well as the need to keep recruiting younger girls we need to put a special emphasis on the retention of girls from 15 yrs upwards. An initiative to encourage this is for members of the Senior Panel to become more involved at coaching the underage teams.

There is a considerable shortage of female referees at present. This is an issue that needs to be examined more closely and we need to encourage more girls to participate in refereeing courses. We appreciate the intervention and guidance offered by Padraig Furlong on this issue in 2019 and we look forward to working with Padraig in 2020 to develop new initiatives on this matter.

With growing numbers and higher standards comes a demand for experienced and knowledgeable coaches. We want to use the high profile of ladies’ football to encourage those in our community who have an understanding of and capability in Gaelic Football to bring this to our teams to help us keep achieving success.

There is a strong competitive edge to all of our panels and our girls are hungry for success. While we will continue to provide all the resources we can to promote and support this competitive spirit we must not forget that sport should also be fun. We remain committed to providing a safe, secure and happy environment in which girls of all abilities can grow, flourish and achieve with their friends and teammates. **To that end in 2020 we will encourage all involved with the Ladies’ section to respect each other, their players, their coaches and volunteers, their opposition and their referees.**

Lastly I would like to acknowledge the strong working partnership that the Ladies’ section has developed with the Executive Committee of the Club. Together we are working towards the notion of One Club with parity for all.