



2008- 2013

Tullamore Canoe Club

Strategic Development Plan

“Building and Securing a Future”

- **Open Canoeing**
- **General Purpose Kayaking**
- **Canoe Polo**
- **Freestyle Kayaking**
- **Safety & Rescue Training**



Introduction

The Tullamore Canoe Club's first development plan "Building and Securing a Future" outlines the framework of strategies and programmes that the Tullamore Canoe Club will employ to:

1. Deliver the Tullamore Canoe Club's long term aims;
2. Achieve the strategic objectives for the period 2008- 2013;
3. Guide the direction of canoeing and its disciplines taken by Tullamore Canoe Club for the period 2008- 2013;
4. Maintain the thrust of the Tullamore Canoe Club's primary mission to co- ordinate, develop and promote canoeing in all its diversity in Tullamore and the surrounding area.



Building and Securing a Future reflects the Tullamore Canoe Club's desire to continue offering the sport of canoeing to the various people and organizations of Tullamore, continue to provide training in skills, rescue and safety at the highest standard and strengthen the work achieved in the last four years by obtaining land in the local area to house our equipment and provide training.

Building and Securing a Future aims to:

1. signal to all members and other groups of interest the strategic direction of the Tullamore Canoe Club for the period 2008- 2013.
2. set and seek to achieve identified strategic objectives for the period 2008- 2013.
3. Guide annual operational planning for the period 2008- 2013.
4. Highlight issues that need particular attention to ensure the success of **Building and Securing a Future**.
5. Re- enforce the current development of canoeing in Tullamore by maximising resources, structures and in particular, partnerships to significantly increase participation and ensure that all participants can enjoy canoeing, achieve their personal goals, and maintain a healthy lifestyle.



Vision

The vision for the Tullamore Canoe Club:

“The Tullamore Canoe Club seeks to be an organization with the capacity to deliver the highest standards of training, coaching, and opportunities to participate, by maintaining a quality approach to the governance and management of the club’s activities”



Mission Statement

The Tullamore Canoe Club's long term objectives are to;

1. provide water sports training at a high standard.
2. provide a safe learning environment and maintain the safety standards of the Irish Canoe Union.
3. Improve and develop skills.
4. Recognize and encourage growth and progress through canoeing.
5. Provide access to canoe equipment and training.
6. Promote and encourage participation in the sport of canoeing.
7. Recognize and fulfill the Club's role in the local community.



Core Values

In striving to achieve its Vision and to deliver it's Mission Statement, the Tullamore Canoe Club will incorporate the following values:

1. Effective standards of leadership, governance and management.
2. High levels of competency and responsibility amongst all who represent the club.
3. Inclusiveness and diversity throughout the club's activities and structure.
4. Implementation of safe practices and the creation of safe environments for participation throughout the club's activities and structure.
5. Promoting awareness of environmental issues.
6. Promoting fair play and a drug free philosophy.
7. Actively promoting co- operation, partnerships and linkages.



Objectives & Outcomes

The success of **Building and Securing a Future** will be built on achieving the following Objectives & Outcomes:

1. More efficient and effective management of the Tullamore Canoe Club, its affairs and activities.
2. Expansion and preservation of existing members, links to other clubs, instructors and organizations.
3. Improved support for and provision of competition and participation opportunities.
4. Enhancement of athletic performance.
5. Increased revenue streams and sponsorship.
6. Increased public awareness of the Tullamore Canoe Club and a heightened profile for canoeing in the Midlands.
7. Improved delivery of quality training programmes and services.



Annual Operational Plan

Building and Securing a Future will be implemented during the period 2008- 2013 through the implementation of an Annual Operational Plan. The Annual Operational Plan will set out each year how the Strategic Objectives of **Building and Securing a Future** are to be addressed and will at year end utilize End of Year Indicators to monitor progress towards the achievement of the Strategic Objectives of **Building and Securing a Future**.

The delivery of **Building and Securing a Future** will depend on the following operational framework:

1. Clear goals and an effective management framework.
2. Effective preparation for, and integration of, all important areas and issues.
3. Effective use of data and information to manage activities.
4. Creative involvement of members and coaches so that full use is made of inherent skills and ideas; and that member's energy and enthusiasm are effectively harnessed.
5. Understanding and satisfying the needs of all club members and instructors.
6. Provision of recreational and competitive pathways that focus on participation and sporting excellence.



End of Year & End of Plan Indicators

The effectiveness of **Building and Securing a Future** will be monitored by:

1. establishing a clear statement of the Tullamore Canoe Club's Strategic Objectives for the period 2008- 2013.
2. identifying End of Plan indicators that will enable assessments to be made with respect to the overall success of **Building and Securing a Future**.
3. identifying End of Year Indicators to provide annual milestones by which progress can be assessed.
4. systematically reviewing the performance of strategies against End of Year and End of Plan Indicators.
5. implementing adjustments to strategies in response to changes in the circumstances affecting the delivery of strategies.

The following End of Plan Indicators will demonstrate the successful implementation of **Building and Securing a Future**:

1. Measurable increases in participation, members, instructors and volunteers.
2. Greater effectiveness, efficiency and independence underpinned by sound governance.



Monitoring and Evaluation

The success of the Tullamore Canoe Club at all levels depends on the availability of up to date, quantifiable data to enable the club to make objective assessments of progress- not only of participants, instructors and volunteers but also of the range of programmes and activities designed to achieve the strategic objectives of the club's Development Plan.

An integrated approach to the implementation of the plan seeks to ensure that each strategic objective supports the other, providing the blueprint for developing the Club into a more cohesive and integrated organization. The interdependence of the strategic objectives means that the success of the plan will be directly affected by the success we achieve in implementing each objective.



Strategies

Building and Securing a Future contains a range of overarching and highly interdependent programmes designed to ensure the successful outcome of the Plan. The programmes will concentrate on a number of Key Focus Areas, namely:

1. PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE

- 1.1 Increased Participation**
- 1.2 Skills and Instructor Development**

2. SITE AND FACILITIES

- 2.1 Acquisition of Site and Equipment Storage Facilities**
- 2.2 Continued purchase of Club Equipment and maintenance of existing Club Equipment**

3. PROFILE

- 3.1 Profile and Marketing**

4. POLICIES, GOVERNANCE & BUSINESS PLANNING

- 4.1 Creation of new, and review of existing Club Policy Documents.**
- 4.2 Finance**

1. PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE

1.1 Increased Participation

Canoeing is widely recognized as an ideal and accessible physical activity- one in which people of all ages and ability can participate.

The Tullamore Canoe Club is fully dedicated to promoting canoeing. Also we investigate and develop ways of making the sport more accessible to less able people and less privileged people who would not normally have the opportunity to participate. One of our most active instructors is also a qualified special needs assistant and uses his qualification to allow groups in the community such as RehabCare and the NAD to run sessions with us.

One initiative that the club has been investigating is the possibility of developing a Special Olympics Team. The club has been in contact with trainers and coaches in both Northern Ireland and the south in an attempt to bring this highly rewarding scheme to Tullamore.

Also throughout all our activities; training or otherwise, we promote and encourage environmental awareness. We work on the “Leave No Trace” principle, a new initiative in Ireland promoting ethical use of the outdoors.

Canoeing can deliver both recreational participation and sporting excellence through competition. The Tullamore Canoe Club aims to promote both broad aspects of the sport. From racing in specially made canoes and kayaks, to family trips on the banks of the canal or lakes.

Building and Securing a Future aims to increase opportunities both through increasing the frequency of club activities and opening our facilities to non-members such as Transition Year students in schools, the Scouts etc.

Strategy: Increased Participation

Objective: Increase awareness of canoeing as a sport and increase membership in the club.

2008- 2013

Tasks/Activities	Targets	Outcomes
Ensure anyone being introduced to canoeing benefits from participation in activities/ disciplines to a level to which they aspire	Measurable increase in the number of people participating in canoeing activities within the club.	Increased awareness of the benefits of canoeing as a healthy life style activity.
Continue to promote canoeing for people with disabilities	Build on relationships with organizations who have an interest in canoeing with their clients	Increased scope for people with disabilities to pursue sport as a means of recreation
Create links with schools, in particular Transition Year Students	Provide Transition Year "Intro to Canoeing" programmes.	Measurable increase in people in the locality with a means of pursuing canoeing
Encourage at least two members to become Leave No Trace Instructors.	A means of providing Leave No Trace courses in the locality	Increased environmental awareness within the club and available to the community
Continue to create new links with other clubs/ governing bodies	Increased contacts with some of the countries finest instructors/ training facilities	Increased training opportunities for all members

1.2 Skills and Instructor Development

The Tullamore Canoe Club promotes and helps develop standards of proficiency and qualification of coaches as set down by Irish Canoe Union guidelines.

The Club aims to encourage all members who display leadership skills or have an interest in teaching canoeing to pursue an instructor award. To date the Club has aided 22 people in getting their instructor award.

Some of the club's instructors are very actively involved in developing different disciplines of canoeing that have yet to become as popular as they could be in Ireland. As a result of this dedication, the Tullamore Canoe Club is widely regarded as Ireland's premier Open Canoeing Club with the highest member base actively participating in the discipline. In the next five years, the club aims to have established a training center for Open Canoe Freestyle, a sport which does not exist in Ireland as of yet, as well as Slalom, Freestyle and Canoe Polo.

The club aims to achieve this through continued support of the Irish Canoe Union's Training and Accreditation Scheme, as well as forging new links and strengthening and maintaining existing links with other clubs, instructors and governing bodies.

The club also aims to encourage their instructors to pursue various specialist instructor awards such as freestyle and polo.

On a participant level, we have had junior polo teams competing very actively and ranking highly in competitions, sprint and long distance racers who won the junior series Open Canoe class outright last year, and just recently, four of our junior members have not only ranked very highly in the Irish Freestyle National Championships, but two have been selected to represent Ireland in the European and World Championships in 2008.

All our members are encouraged to attend either the safety river rescue and safety workshops that the club runs internally, or specialist training outside of the club such as Swift Water Rescue Technician Courses. Also very high proportions of our members are REC (Rescue Emergency Care) First Aid Certified, and carry First Aid Kits with them at all club activities and events.

Strategy: Skills & Instructor Development

**Objective: Improve the standard of canoeing and overall professionalism of the club and its representatives
2008- 2013**

Tasks/ Activities	Targets	Outcomes
Extensive promotion of the ICU Awards Scheme as a medium for increasing participation in canoeing	Measurable increase in the number of ICU Proficiency Certificates awarded	Widespread improvement and standardization in members skills
Continuation of Safety Awareness Programmes	Measurable Increase in the number of paddlers with a high standard in First Aid and River/ Sea Rescue skills	Heighten Safety Awareness
Continue to encourage all members to pursue instructorship awards.	Measurable increase in the number of available instructors in the club	Easier to run courses for new members
Explore and develop new disciplines of canoeing	New disciplines available to members	Broader service to provide to potential members
Encourage continued development in all instructors	Noticeable higher standard in club instructors teaching and paddling abilities	Increased professionalism and independence within the club

2. SITE AND FACILITIES

2.1 Acquisition of Site and Equipment Storage Facilities

In the four short years that the club has been in existence, it has amassed over 30 canoes and kayaks of various shapes and sizes and all the equipment involved in running skills courses with these boats. At this stage in the Tullamore Canoe Club's development, the most advantageous step forward for the club would be to acquire a facility to house all this equipment.

A place where all the equipment can be stored together is more beneficial to the members as it allows them access to the equipment which their membership entitles them to, as well as reducing the responsibility of a few members who store equipment in their homes at present. Such a facility would not only act as a store for equipment, but would also act as a meeting point for members and in time it shall be used as a base for training.

Also at the moment, club activities that take place on the canal in Tullamore such as canoe polo involving children are raising an issue when the children have to change. At the moment, children have to get changed on the side of the road. An adequate changing area, divided in terms of gender is vital as our membership numbers increase.

Building and Securing a Future aims to remedy these issues by laying out a framework of, how over the next five years, the club will acquire land and storage facilities.

Strategy: Acquisition of Site and Equipment Storage Facilities

Objective: Increase the facilities available to current members as well as making the club more appealing to potential members

Tasks/ Activities	Targets	Outcomes
Seek out all possibilities to acquire land, equipment or storage facilities in order to create the foundation of a training center in the Tullamore Region	Obtain land from the town/ county council.	Possession of land to be used to start the development process
Explore the possibilities of temporary structures, and try to acquire such structures. (I.e. portable containers)	Gain the use of a temporary structure for club use.	Temporarily remedy changing and storage issues.
Continue to apply for grants in order to fund a building project	Acquire funds to build a permanent structure within planning regulations	Have a permanent base for the use of all members for training, changing, assembly and storage purposes.

2.2 Continued purchase of Club Equipment and maintenance of existing Club Equipment

As mentioned above the Tullamore Canoe Club has, through extensive fundraising and successful grant applications, managed to amass a substantial amount of equipment. At the moment, the club can facilitate a group of 12 Open Canoeists or General Purpose Kayaks on the water.

The club also has recently bought 10 canoe polo boats. In order for the club to properly compete with their own equipment, specialist canoe polo equipment is needed such as; helmets with face guards, specialist canoe polo buoyancy aids and specialist canoe polo paddles. A suitable trailer for transporting the boats to competitions is also required.

As it stands, the equipment that the club owns needs constant care and maintenance. The club owns 2 trailers, 34 sets of buoyancy aids, cagoules and helmets, 7 open canoes, 13 general-purpose kayaks, 10 canoe polo kayaks as well as 5 fiberglass canoes, which all, through constant use need repairs, maintenance and, in some cases, replacement.

Building and Securing a Future aims to address how to maintain gear, buy new equipment and prioritize the order of which gear needs to be maintained/ repaired/ replaced/ bought first.

Strategy: Continued purchase of Club Equipment and maintenance of existing Club Equipment

Objective: Continue to provide the best and safest equipment possible for all members.

Tasks/ Activities	Targets	Outcomes
Continue to apply for grants for the purchase and upkeep of equipment	Equipment at a high and safe standard of upkeep	Members continue to be able to paddle using equipment of the highest standard

3. PROFILE

3.1 Profile and Marketing

The Tullamore Canoe Club and its members believe that it provides an excellent service to Tullamore and its surrounds. The club also realizes that it has the potential to provide a better service to a larger member base. In the next five years the club aims to tackle this issue by raising its profile substantially through contacts with the media, advertising through schools, businesses etc and increased club activities in Tullamore town to attract the attention of passers- by.

Communications

Before the club can effectively advertise and communicate with the general public, it aims to analyze and improve on its methods of internal communication. At present, the club alerts its members to upcoming events through a hotline updated weekly, group text alerts for big events, and the club website www.tucc.ie. Along with the website, an interactive bulletin board or forum has recently been provided for members to communicate with each other, arrange outings and find advice.

Marketing the Canoe Club

Tullamore Canoe Club will seek to improve its image and increase awareness in the club and what it offers to existing and potential members through the Public Relations (PR) Officer. The PR Officer will alert the public of all club activities through the newspapers, advertising in shops where relevant and through the organization of public events such as festivals in the town.

Strategy: Profile and Marketing

Objective: An increased public awareness in canoeing and the Tullamore Canoe Club

Tasks/ Activities	Targets	Outcomes
Identify new ways and modify existing ways of communicating with members	Measurable increase in all club activities	Stronger member base and increased participation in canoeing in general
Continue to use the local papers to advertise club events that are open to all members.	Measurable increase in interest in the Tullamore Canoe Club	Stronger member base and increased participation in canoeing in general
Explore new methods of involving the public in club activities	Measurable increase in interest in the Tullamore Canoe Club	Stronger member base and increased participation in canoeing in general
Continue to support local events and festivals with club presence	Increased involvement with the public	Stronger member base and increased participation in canoeing in general

4. POLICIES, GOVERNANCE & BUSINESS PLANNING

4.1 Creation of new, and review of existing Club Policy Documents.

The Tullamore Canoe Club is dedicated to facilitating the needs of all its members. In striving to do this effectively, the club aims to have in place certain policy documents to guide its members, instructors, committee members and the public.

At the end of each year the committee reviews the documents and alters them to deem them applicable and relevant to the following year.

Strategy: Creation of new, and review of existing Club Policy Documents

Objective: Increase clarity of Club Policy and aid transparency between members and the committee

Tasks/ Activities	Targets	Outcomes
Draft and implement Child/ Parent Guidelines	All parents have signed the policy document	Increased understanding of the running of the club
Draft and implement Leaders Guidelines	All leaders have signed the policy document	Increased protection for both the leader and the club
Draft and implement a Complaints Procedure	Increased satisfaction in the committee	Increased understanding of the running of the club

4.2 Finance

The Tullamore Canoe Club aims to be financially secure and independent. As a non profit organization, the club aims to have enough to operate and provide the service to its members as laid out.

The club has various means of getting finance. Fundraising events such as bag packing, flag days, social events such as bowling nights

have all been employed in the past and have proved to be moderately effective. **Building and Securing a Future** aims to continue this trend of involving all members in obtaining funds through the fundraising officer.

The club has in the past received grants from the Department of Sport. In the future the club aims to reapply as this has been highly successful in the pursuit of more expensive equipment such as canoes and kayaks.

Through working with so many festivals in the locality, the club has been given some very generous donations from festival committees such as the Daingean Festival and the Fleadh 2007 committee.

The club also manages its day to day costs from the money brought in from running courses. Building and Securing a Future aims to maximize the monies brought in from this and encourage the committee to review the costs every year.

Strategy: Finance

Objective: Increase the club's financial stability

Tasks/ Activities	Targets	Outcomes
Continue to follow the year in question's budget	More systematic expenditure	Measurable increase in the club's financial stability
Explore new methods of raising finance through fundraising	Increase in revenue from fundraising	Measurable increase in the club's financial stability
Approach businesses for sponsorship	Increase in revenue from sponsorship	Measurable increase in the club's financial stability
Continue to run courses on demand, and promote courses to potential members	Increase in revenue from courses	Measurable increase in the club's financial stability