



Ireland Lights Up with the GAA

The GAA, in partnership with RTÉ's Operation Transformation, is seeking to bring together communities across the 32 counties to enjoy healthy walks in the safe, bright, environs of their GAA club. In a bid to make exercise more accessible on the dark winter nights, 'Ireland Lights Up' will see participating clubs turn on their floodlights/lighting systems between 7-pm-9pm each Thursday for a five-week period (January 17th – February 21st 2019) as Operation Transformation returns to our screens in the New Year.

Each Thursday, club and community members will be invited to come together at participating clubs to walk off the Christmas excess, catch up with their neighbours, and banish the winter blues. (Walking is proven to benefit both our physical and mental health.) GAA clubs are already becoming hubs for health through the Healthy Clubs Project, with at least one Healthy Club in each county. During the five-week period Operation Transformation cameras will visit a selection of participating clubs across the series, with all clubs encouraged to capture their stories via videos and images for use on the show, GAA.ie, and RTE's various platforms.

The GAA is seeking expressions of interest from clubs that are keen to participate in 'Ireland Lights Up', which is also supported by Healthy Ireland and Get Ireland Walking (GIW). Clubs that complete the registration process and adhere to the necessary criteria will be covered by GIW's insurance for all walk leaders and participants. However, irrespective of GAA membership status, leaders and participants are not covered by the GAA Injury Benefit Fund for this initiative.

To participate, clubs **MUST** comply with certain criteria, including:

1. Register your club and at least two walking leaders free-of-charge with GIW at <http://www.getirelandwalking.ie/GAA/>. This extends additional indemnity cover to the club in addition to the GAA's public liability cover (be sure to click yes on this box on the registration form).
2. Ensure your club has a current health and safety statement in place and completes a documented hazard inspection of the proposed walking track/route in the club. All floodlighting must be checked prior to the commencement of each walk
3. Ensure your club can provide a safe, floodlit location for the 'Ireland Lights Up' walk each Thursday between January 17th-February 21st, 2019. This should only take place on a purpose-built walking track/surface.
4. If the club doesn't have a purpose built walking track with flood lights, they can coordinate walks which must begin at the clubhouse and end at the clubhouse, a full risk assessment of the route must be carried out by the club's safety officer to ensure the designated route is well lit and is able to cater for the required numbers. High Vis vests will need to be worn by all those taking part and the route should have adequate footpaths, a good road surface with no loose chippings, be pot hole free and should not take place near any designated road works. A record of the risk assessment must be maintained at the club. Adequate numbers of walk leaders will need to front the walking group and marshal it from behind to ensure all participants are walking in a safe environment. Clear and safe instructions will need to be given on each of the walking nights ahead of the group leaving the club premises. Dogs are not permitted.



5. The club can decide (and promote to its members and communities) what time between 7pm-9pm each Thursday the lights will be turned on. (It can be all or some of this period, depending on walk leader availability, floodlight resources etc.)
6. A registration of all participating walkers must be taken each night. This is will provided in the support pack once your club signs up. This is once again designed to protect the club from exposure to insurance risk and to allow us tally final numbers to evaluate the success of 'Ireland Lights Up'.

For any more information please contact the GAA's Learning and Development Coordinator Stacey Cahill at stacey.cahill@gaa.ie or 01 8192387.