



Strategic Plan  
**2017 - 2021**



DEVELOP | PROMOTE | GROW



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# 1.0 Chairperson's Address

Boccia Ireland is starting an ambitious journey with the publication of this first strategic plan with the determination and confidence of the new committee shining through in the scale of what we hope to achieve, over the next four years.

Everyone involved with the sport, whether as a player, supporter, volunteer or official has a different story as to how or why they came to be involved and each will have their own desires, as to what they want to achieve in Boccia. It is our hope that in the coming years we can cater for all and help everyone achieve those goals.

It was a great honour to be appointed Chairperson of the Boccia Ireland committee by Paralympics Ireland and I am looking forward to leading the committee and organisation through this strategic plan. This is a hugely exciting time for Boccia Ireland and with the support of an excellent committee the organisation will go far.

Nearly all strategic plans in sport are follow on documents, an update on the previous period with a renewed set of aims and for the next period, based on the performance of the organisation and perhaps the performance of its elite representatives.

Starting a new and fresh document left us with a bit of a dilemma. We did not have a previous period to draw upon, and we cannot simply renew a goal or show some progression – we had to think carefully about what we wanted to achieve.



Playing it safe with our strategic goals would have been one option, creating a document that laid out an easy path over the next four years that we could follow comfortably and simply tick the boxes as we went, congratulating ourselves as we passed the milestones we had set ourselves.

It would not, however, sit well with anyone on the committee if we were to take that path, which is why we have chosen to be ambitious and set ourselves some big goals for the coming years. As you read on you will see the scale of what we plan to achieve, and I hope you can join us on our journey towards our five strategic goals.

Reaching all of them is a real possibility, and that is of course our aim, but by aiming high we have ensured that even if we do not quite reach all of our strategic goals, Boccia Ireland will still be in a fantastic place.

The strides that have been taken so far in 2016 are just a starting point, a solid foundation for us to build upon as we go forward and I am confident that by the end of the period covered in this plan everyone will be pleasantly surprised with the progress.

Each of our five strategic goals covers a slightly different area within the sport. Gaining independence and financial sustainability are key to the long terms success and governance of the sport and Boccia Ireland. We have also considered coaching and classifier structures and will be working extremely hard to be running our own certified courses before the end of this strategic period. Development of players and competition is also a big part of the plan, with a dual focus on providing opportunities for all to play, as well as creating a high performance pathway to develop and support elite athletes who can represent Ireland on the world stage.

December 2016 brought to an end what was an excellent year for Boccia Ireland, with the hosting of our first National Championships at the National Sports Campus in Dublin a particular highlight. It was a pleasure to see so many in attendance, and so many people taking part in the Blitz event that ran alongside the National Championships, some experiencing Boccia for the first time. As the event, and the year drew to a close it was clear to me that Boccia Ireland already has the people needed to be a great success and I hope that I can prove to you all that we are an organisation that will develop, promote and grow the sport towards that success.

**Chris Siddell**

*Chairperson, Boccia Ireland.*



# 1.1 Introduction

Boccia Ireland is the governing body of the sport in Ireland, responsible for all aspects of boccia and providing for all levels from participation to high performance.

As of the start of this strategic term, Boccia Ireland operates as an executive sub-committee of Paralympics Ireland under terms of reference agreed by the board.

Ireland has a rich history in boccia having previously had medallists at both World and Paralympic level but has never had a sport specific National Governing Body (NGB) to represent the sport.

This document outlines the progress that has already been made since the creation of

Boccia Ireland as well as the strategic goals and plans for the four year period up to 2021.

This guide has been primarily driven by the working group, including input from players, families, volunteers and then collated and compiled by the committee. It will serve as a guide for all those involved in the sport.

The strategic plan not only sets out our strategic goals and outlines how we will reach them over the four year period, but shares our values as an organisation and our mission.

We invite you to join us on our journey as we work to develop, promote and grow the inclusive sport of boccia in Ireland.



## 1.2 Purpose and Mission

Boccia Ireland is responsible for developing all aspects of the sport in this country, from beginner to elite, providing for all levels, from participation to high performance. Our aim is to ensure the right structures are in place for each level of the sport to enable all areas of boccia to grow accordingly.

The current structure within Boccia Ireland will help serve our purpose and mission, with each member having a vital role to play.

### Our mission

*"To develop, promote and grow the inclusive sport of boccia in Ireland"*



## 1.3 Our Vision

Boccia has had a successful past and after a difficult period is enjoying a rejuvenation through the creation of Boccia Ireland, a new National Governing Body for the sport. While being incredibly ambitious in the pursuit of not only reaching, but surpassing previous glories, it is important to remain grounded and realistic in our vision and values.

Our vision is to ensure the sport of boccia in Ireland becomes a successful and sustainable sport that enjoys success regularly whilst maintaining an exciting future.

This strategic plan outlines what we hope to achieve in the next four years, but is far from the limit of our vision, with this period seen as the time in which we need to lay strong foundations to ensure the sport continues to get stronger far beyond 2021.

Our vision is that, in time, and with the help of clear strategic planning and realistic goals, Boccia Ireland can become a leading nation in global boccia, with sustained success and growth in all areas of the sport.



# 1.4 Guiding Values

To help us reach our vision and to guide us through this, and future strategic plans, we have a set of values which we see as fundamental to Boccia Ireland and will be seen in the behaviours and actions of those involved with the organisation.

✓ **RESPECT**

All those involved with boccia in Ireland, and any others who come into contact with Boccia Ireland, in any way, will always be treated with respect.

✓ **FAIRNESS**

All members of Boccia Ireland are expected to approach every situation without bias or prejudice, and to actively challenge any form of discrimination.

✓ **TRUST**

The actions of members and staff of Boccia Ireland will always be in the best interest of the sport, ensuring a culture of transparency and trust between the governing body, members, players and supporters of the sport.

✓ **ENJOYMENT**

Boccia is an inclusive sport that while sometimes competitive, should always be enjoyable. We feel that everyone involved in the sport, at any level and in any role should enjoy their time playing boccia.

✓ **TEAMWORK**

We recognise that while often perceived as an individual sport, the achievements of both individuals and the sport as a whole will be far greater if we strive to work together as a team.

✓ **DEDICATION**

Those involved with boccia in Ireland are fully committed to the sport and the vision, mission and values of Boccia Ireland and are dedicated to bringing our values to life and reaching our goals.

# 1.5 Achievements

Boccia Ireland has had a productive first year and has already made some significant progress as an organisation prior to the completion of this strategic plan.

## Appointments

Paralympics Ireland made the first significant steps with Boccia Ireland through the appointment of a part-time Boccia Development Manager who plays a huge role in the development, promotion and growth of Boccia in Ireland.

Although Boccia Ireland is moving towards being an independent National Governing Body, it is currently operating as an Executive Sub-Committee of Paralympics Ireland. The committee operates under the Terms of Reference agreed with Paralympics Ireland and all positions on the committee have been filled.

Working to build the organisation towards independence and creating long term and sustainable structures, the committee has five members and a Chairperson, each with a specific focus to help Boccia Ireland. The appointment, and subsequent meetings of the committee has been a catalyst for action and all the original objectives for 2016 were met.

## Code of Conduct & Personal Assistant Agreement

All members of the Boccia Ireland committee have agreed upon and signed a Code of Conduct that was created specifically for the organisation in line with best practice governance structures.

After an initial period creating the document, all members signed the Code of Conduct before the end of 2016, with an additional document, a Personal Assistant Agreement, also in place for any assistants who attend committee meetings to support a committee member.

Both documents will be available to view on our website.

## Strategic Plan

All National Governing Bodies must publish a strategic plan to show their vision and aims for future years. We are delighted to present this document as our first strategic plan having spent the latter part of 2016 creating the document.

We hope that it provides a good explanation of the direction we wish to take over the coming years.

This is an ambitious plan but we feel that it covers the main elements of sports development and that the five key objectives are most important in the initial stages.

## Social Media

Boccia Ireland has created a number of social media accounts on major platforms including Twitter and Facebook. Prior to the end of 2016 both these platforms were growing steadily and our presence on social media allowed us to showcase our first National Championships.

In addition to social media work has also begun on a new website, which will come online in 2017 ([www.boccia.ie](http://www.boccia.ie)).

## New Logo & Branding

An important part of establishing a new organisation was to design a logo and create a brand that were recognisable and meant something to those involved.

In 2016 the committee agreed upon the shamrock design with the name incorporated into the logo. This will help us to become easily recognised and help attract potential sponsors or stakeholders.

## The National Championship 2016

The final major achievement prior to the end of 2016 and the completion of the strategic plan was the first Boccia Ireland event, the 2016 National Championships.

The event was held at the National Indoor Arena, at the National Sports Campus in Dublin, and not only saw National Champions crowned in three categories, it also incorporated a successful Blitz event with around 30 participants.

The event was a great success and an excellent starting point from which to build upon for our future events and championships.

We look forward to more success in the coming years as we work towards the strategic aims in this document and hope you can join us on our journey.



# 1.6 Key Strategic Goals

The five key strategic goals for Boccia Ireland for the period 2017 – 2021 are as follows:

**1** To achieve recognition as an independent National Governing Body by Sport Ireland

**2** To develop a coaching and classifier pathway with certified qualifications.

**3** To build a sustainable financial model to resource the organisation.

**4** To develop a network of recreational opportunities to increase participation in the sport.

**5** To build a performance pathway for athletes to compete at Paralympic Games



# 1 TO ACHIEVE RECOGNITION AS AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY BY SPORT IRELAND

How we will achieve this:

## ● **Governance**

We will create a clear and transparent governance structure in line with the 'Good Governance Code' recommended by Sport Ireland, ensuring we have in place relevant codes of conduct and policies to ensure the sport is run effectively and with integrity.

## ● **Leadership**

We will display strong organisational management and leadership to show our capability to be an autonomous and independent National Governing Body – putting in place leaders at all levels of the sport who display our guiding values and help develop, grow and promote the sport.

## ● **Finance**

We will ensure that the sport is funded responsibly and sustainably as an independent body.

## ● **Coaching**

We will create a network of coaches and classifiers within Ireland through the creation of our own certified qualifications and education programmes.

## ● **Participation**

We will ensure that as an organisation we are constantly working towards improving the sport and creating opportunities for people to participate at all levels, increasing the number of people playing boccia and providing an opportunity for lifelong involvement in the sport.

## **Measure of Success**

- Before the end of this strategic period we will have made a successful application to Sport Ireland for recognition as an independent NGB.

## 2 TO DEVELOP A COACHING AND CLASSIFIER PATHWAY WITH CERTIFIED QUALIFICATIONS

How we will achieve this:

### ● **Accredited Coaching Courses**

We will create a number of coaching courses that are accredited by Boccia Ireland and recognised by Sport Ireland.

### ● **Education Programmes**

We will create a series of education programmes to support coaches, volunteers and those involved with the sport.

### ● **Classifier Qualification**

We will create a series of courses aimed specifically at classifiers and ensuring there are well educated and qualified classifiers in Ireland.

## **Measure of Success**

- To have in place at least four coaching qualifications run by Boccia Ireland, ranging from an introductory course to a high performance coach.
- An accredited qualification delivered by Boccia Ireland for classifiers.
- To have at least four education course run by Boccia Ireland aimed at supporting volunteers and those involved with clubs and community groups.

### 3 TO BUILD A SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL MODEL TO RESOURCE THE ORGANISATION

How we will achieve this:

#### ● **Grant Funding**

We will look for and apply to grant funding streams from charitable and government organisations who may support Boccia Ireland as a whole, or a particular project that is planned.

#### ● **Sponsorship Revenue**

We will create a number of sponsorship rights within Boccia Ireland and use them to attract sponsors for the organisation and for specific events and schemes.

#### ● **Commercial Revenue**

We will create, where appropriate, commercial revenues from services we provide, such as membership, coaching courses and certain events.

#### ● **Fundraising**

We will at times run fundraising events to help with funding special projects or any other appropriate activity within Boccia Ireland.

### **Measure of Success**

- Boccia Ireland will have an overall sponsor and other corporate partners for events and schemes.
- To be able to fund all planned schemes, projects and competition programmes.
- To have a cash reserve within the organisation as is standard practice in NGB's.
- A membership system that generates income for the organisation.

## 4 TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION NATIONWIDE

How we will achieve this:

### ● Support Existing Players

We will identify those who already play boccia and support their lifelong participation by providing opportunities to access coaching, participation events and structured competition.

### ● Support New Clubs

We will encourage the creation of new clubs in areas where there are players but not enough club provision, providing support and guidance on starting a club as well as ongoing support through a club guidance scheme that will help clubs develop and grow.

### ● Promote in Schools and Community Groups

We will work with schools and community groups throughout the country to introduce the sport to young people in particular, creating a pathways and framework to develop complete beginners into lifelong participants.

### ● Lifelong Participation

We will provide a framework for people of all abilities and ambitions to play the sport, ensuring there is an appropriate environment for high performance, competitive and social boccia.

## Measure of Success

- A very low 'drop-out' level among regular participants at all levels with membership in Boccia Ireland growing year on year.
- At least four boccia clubs in each major population hub in Ireland; Dublin, Galway, Limerick and Cork with more than 40 clubs nationally.
- An established school programme with qualified coaches visiting schools regularly to introduce pupils to the game.
- A teacher's qualification to allow school teachers to coach Boccia independently.
- Established events providing both social and competitive opportunities for Boccia players.
- A membership system that generates income for the organisation.

## 5 TO BUILD A PERFORMANCE PATHWAY FOR ATHLETES TO COMPETE AT PARALYMPIC GAMES

How we will achieve this:

### ● **National Rankings**

We will create a ranking system through events in Ireland that allows domestic players to earn ranking points based on performances

### ● **Competition Pathway**

We will create a series of competitions at local, regional and national level which allow for progression right up to National Championships and then on to competing in International Competitions such as the Paralympics.

### ● **Regional Performance Squads**

Each region will have its own regional performance squad made up of players that have been identified as having potential to progress to National and International competition, with high level coaching and training preparing players for competition.

### ● **Elite Level Coaching Structure**

Through our coaching pathway and structures we will ensure that we have highly qualified coaches working with Boccia Ireland to ensure we are capable of producing international quality players with medal prospects.

## Measure of Success

- Published national rankings with clear scoring system.
- A competition calendar with competitions starting at a local level and progressing through regional level to the National Championships.
- Regional performance squads made up of invited athletes in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway.
- At least six coaches with high level qualifications and capable of coaching athletes with global medal prospects.

# 1.7 Measures of Success

- Before the end of this strategic period we will have made a successful application to Sport Ireland for recognition as an independent NGB
- To have in place at least four coaching qualifications run by Boccia Ireland, ranging from an introductory course to a high performance coach.
- An accredited qualification delivered by Boccia Ireland for classifiers.
- To have at least four education course run by Boccia Ireland aimed at supporting volunteers and those involved with clubs and community groups.
- Boccia Ireland will have an overall sponsor and other corporate partners for events and schemes.
- To be able to fund all planned schemes, projects and competition programmes.
- To have a cash reserve within the organisation as is standard practice in NGB's.
- A membership system that generates income for the organisation.
- A very low 'drop-out' level among regular participants at all levels with membership in Boccia Ireland growing year on year.
- At least four boccia clubs in each major population hub in Ireland; Dublin, Galway, Limerick and Cork with more than 40 clubs nationally.
- An established school programme with qualified coaches visiting schools regularly to introduce pupils to the game.
- A teacher's qualification recognised by the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), to encourage the integration of Boccia into PE classes.
- Established events providing both social and competitive opportunities for Boccia players.
- Published national rankings with clear scoring system.
- A competition calendar with competitions starting at a local level and progressing through regional level to the National Championships.
- Regional performance squads made up of invited athletes in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway.
- At least six coaches with high level qualifications and capable of coaching athletes with global medal prospects.

## 1.8 Conclusion

Boccia Ireland recognises that the five key objectives and subsequent, desired, outcomes is ambitious in nature and presents a number of significant challenges. In order to accomplish our aims it will require a huge investment of time, resources, and commitment from people, especially in relation to collaborative relationships. To successfully achieve all of these outcomes in a four-year period is a big ask; however we would rather challenge ourselves than set the bar too low.

Delivery of this four year action plan will be monitored regularly by the committee and also with various stakeholders. The committee and stakeholders in collaboration will aim to identify required supports and possible adjustments needed to ensure the continued success and relevance of the plan.

The vision we have is for the long term sustainability and success of the sport and we are looking forward to the exciting years ahead.













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