

Vision Sports Ireland

2022 Vision



It's all about reach.

In the next 4 years, we will reach out and increase participation in sport and leisure by vision impaired people in Ireland by 50%. This significant leap into the great outdoors and indoors will improve the individual's personal empowerment, confidence, health and wellbeing. The keys to success will be partner collaboration and social inclusion.

Contents

It's all about reach.	1
About Us	3
Our Vision	3
Our Mission	3
Our Guiding Principles	3
Our Values	4
Key Drivers	4
Continued collaboration	5
Our Objectives	6
Our 4 Strategic Priorities:	6
Strategic Priority 1: Increase Participation	6
Strategic Priority 2: Development and Variety	6
Strategic Priority 3: Inclusion	7
Strategic Priority 4: Achieve Member Potential	7
Strategic Priorities Ambitions and Objectives	7
Strategy 1: Increase Participation	7
Strategy 2: Development and Variety	7
Strategy 3: Inclusion	8
Strategy 4: Achieve Member Potential	8
Finance	9
Governance	9

About Us

Vision Sports Ireland is unique in that it is Ireland's only organisation that is dedicated to promoting sport and recreation for those who have a visual impairment. Vision Sports was founded in 1988 and is a non-profit organisation and registered charity. As the National Governing Body (NGB) with Sport Ireland, Vision Sports Ireland represents children and adults with a vision impairment in Ireland nationally. Vision Sports has strong partnerships with organisations dealing with welfare and sport. It is also partnering with Paralympics Ireland and is Ireland's representative on International Blind Sports Association.

Our Vision

All blind and vision impaired people in Ireland will have access to and enjoy the health benefits derived from regular participation in sport and recreational activities of their choice.

Our Mission

To enable blind and vision impaired people to participate fully in sport and recreational activities of their choice.

Our Guiding Principles

Our Vision and Mission give rise to the following four fundamental guiding principles:

1. Every individual should have the same opportunities to participate in sports and recreation. Factors such as visual acuity, disability, gender, or religion should not hinder participation.
2. Individuals should be enabled to participate at any level, with whatever support required being available to them to reach their full potential.
3. The benefits of sports and leisure activities for blind and vision impaired people should be promoted to both the blind and vision impaired community and the general public.
4. Integrity embracing the highest standards of ethical behaviour and moral character is expected of anyone acting for or on behalf of Vision Sports Ireland.

Our Values

1. **Inclusive** - All individuals have the opportunity to participate in sport and recreation.
2. **Empowerment** - Empowerment, confidence and belief in one's self will grow with increased accessibility in sport and recreation.
3. **Health and Wellness** - Physical and mental health and wellness can be improved by extending access to sport and recreation for those with vision impairments and blindness.
4. **Inspiring** - Helping those with visual impairment become more involved in sport and recreation not only benefits the individual, but also those around them. Development of positive role models for children who are visually impaired, through sporting participation and success, can provide inspiration and confidence required to encourage participation, consequently increasing reach and positive impact.

Key Drivers

To guide the development of Vision Sports Ireland's strategic development over the coming four years, consultation within the community as well as an analysis of our business model was completed.

In May 2017 Vision Sports held TalkFest, a conference in conjunction with our annual multi-sports weekend MayFest, to increase awareness of Vision Sports in the community and gain further understanding of where we can increase involvement. TalkFest featured speakers from various organisations in an open discussion of our 'Vision Sports 2020 and Beyond' strategy, including representation from the GAA, Sport Ireland, Sport for Business, Vision Sports Ireland, Cycling Ireland, Tennis Ireland and Irish Blind Golf.

In the Autumn of 2017, Vision Sports in collaboration with the UCD Quinn Business School carried out an analysis of the position of Vision Sports, and the viability of our business model. This analysis indicated a vibrant, unique, collaborative charity and sport NGB which grew from the vision impaired community in Ireland. However, this analysis also highlighted that we are not well known outside the sport and vision impaired community, which may be limiting our success and potential for external investments. The future of

Vision Sports Ireland is positive, and we hope to benefit from the economic upturn and the projected increase in disability and inclusion awareness.

With significant research on the current market, company structure and standing undertaken, in Winter 2017 the Vision Sports Board then set to develop a new four-year strategy. Rather than utilise a traditional three-year plan, a four-year strategy was selected based on modern sports cycle requirements. The strategy will be supported with annual Operational Plans to track and support responsive development.

“2022 Vision” was drafted by the Vision Sports Board of Directors, and unanimously adopted by the Board of Vision Sports Ireland at its meeting on 29th September 2018. This plan covers the period 1st October 2018 – 30th September 2022.

Vision Sports Ireland Board: Finbarr Roche (Chairperson), Alan Worrell (Treasurer), Fiona Cusack (Company Secretary), Robbie Cousins, Ann Cusack, Barry Ennis, Caroline Fogarty, Kevin Kelly, Martin Kelly, Patricia McCarthy, Raymond McSweeney, Rahim Nazarali, Tina Paulick, Jason Smyth, and Sandra Watts.

Acting on behalf of the Vision Sports Board, the Report facilitator is Joe Geraghty with editor Anderson Smallwood, kindly supported by Aaron Mullaniff from NCBI.

Continued collaboration

To continue to drive the development of sport in Ireland Vision Sports will build on its success as an ace collaborator.

Vision Sports will continue to collaborate and forge strong relationships with key partners, including all agencies linked to education and welfare of blind and vision impaired people. Similarly, the organisation will further develop its relations with national sport governing bodies, including Tennis Ireland and Triathlon Ireland with direct Government Dormant Account Funding.

Networks including CARA, Local Sports Partnerships, NCBI Community Resource Workers, Department of Education Visiting Teachers and Disability Officers at third level institutions will also be included to maximise reach.

Our Objectives

Vision Sports facilitates the development and growth of sport for individuals with a vision impairment in Ireland. In building and undertaking this strategy, we aim to focus on supporting vision impaired people in Ireland under four key strategic priorities to improve their sporting lives.

Our 4 Strategic Priorities:

- 1. Increase Participation**
- 2. Development and Variety**
- 3. Inclusion**
- 4. Achieve Member Potential**

Strategic Priority 1: Increase Participation

To increase reach, we must build awareness of sport for vision impaired people, as well as developing the 'Vision Sports Ireland' brand. Alongside community ground-level work, we must continue promoting sport and leisure for people who are vision impaired through all media channels.

At end of September 2018, we directly supported 800 unique vision impaired sports participants. In the coming years, we propose to increase participation supports by approximately 10% cumulatively year on year.

Strategic Priority 2: Development and Variety

Consolidating and building sport for vision impaired people requires further expertise and finance resource investment. While focusing on our core sports of athletics, swimming, tandem cycling, paratriathlon, blind/VI tennis, blind golf, football and judo, we must also recognise and invest in the dozens of sports available to vision impaired people, with varying levels of adaptations available.

Strategic Priority 3: Inclusion

We recognise sport as a key passport to social inclusion, building confidence, understanding, and supporting community networking. Participating in sports not only results in improved health and wellbeing, but also supports community participation, education and life opportunities. We will continue to support the breaking down of barriers which prevent vision impaired people from participating in the community.

Strategic Priority 4: Achieve Member Potential

We will continue to embrace the Olympic motto of *Citius, Altius, Fortius*, 'Faster, Higher, Stronger'. We strongly believe there is no limit to the abilities and potential achievements of vision impaired sports people and facilitate participation at all levels.

Strategic Priorities Ambitions and Objectives

Strategic Priority 1: Increase Participation

Ambition: Increase the number of vision impaired people in Ireland participating in sport at all levels. Against clear annual growth targets, aim to increase individuals supported/participating by approximately 10% cumulatively year on year. By the close of 2022, we aim to support 1,200 members.

Objective 1: Explore, develop and achieve sustainable cross the board sport growth which caters for new and existing Vision Sports members and participants.

Strategic Priority 2: Development and Variety

Ambition: Seek avenues to increase core and new sports development funding to cover development staffing and administration, coaching and participation.

Objective 2: Align and collaborate with key partners and related agencies to continue to develop new and existing relationships. Increase access and supports on a demographic basis with specific focus on individuals under 25 to participate in sport and leisure.

Objective 3: Alongside our core offering of athletics, swimming, tandem cycling, paratriathlon, blind/VI tennis, blind golf, football and judo, aim to continue to support the development of new sports where possible.

Strategic Priority 3: Inclusion

Ambition: Working with our partners and collaborators, build towards full inclusion in sports participation by vision impaired people at all skill levels.

Objective 4: Support every vision impaired person who seeks assistance and information by advocating and directly liaising with their local sports governing bodies, clubs and community groups.

Objective 5: Promote awareness and support the development of educational programs to assist in removing stigma and access barriers.

Strategic Priority 4: Achieve Personal Potential

Ambition: Every person in Ireland with vision impairment will have the opportunity to pursue any sport or recreational activity of their choosing.

Objective 6: Aim to assist in the sourcing of support guides/pilots to support vision impaired people to participate more fully in sport.

Objective 7: Support disability awareness training to facilitate high-quality coaches and personal trainers to support vision impaired people in sport.

Objective 8: Increase the quality and quantity of organised events for vision impaired people at all levels of sport. Work with our partners and collaborators to provide opportunities for competition, development, goal setting and community involvement.

Finance

Vision Sports places significant reliance on funding from the State and NCBI. Core sports funding dipped during the recession and whilst it is beginning to stabilise, base rate funding is significantly lower than a decade ago.

Whilst positive and in line with our strategy, the increasing assistance sought for sports participation by vision impaired people is placing pressures on our finances. With a goal to continue to expand our remit and support further individuals, the financial impact of advancement of the services must be considered.

Voluntary sector fundraising is proving a greater challenge now than it did in our formative years. We will continue to adapt to the modern finance seeking scene, knocking on many doors to secure a successful pitch. Positive branding and success in the community will only help to further support our call. We continue to develop PR and marketing opportunities which will assist in funding our vision.

Governance

To ensure Vision Sports delivers the best possible service to its members, it is imperative that we strive to maintain and enhance our existing Governance and Accountability policies and procedures.

To successfully grow as an organisation, we must retain the trust and confidence of our members and stakeholders.

To ensure a high-quality service to the vision impaired community that we serve and to retain public trust and support Vision Sports Ireland commits to:

- Uphold the highest standards of Governance, Transparency and Accountability in all aspects of our work.
- Full compliance with the Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland.
- Comply with all additional regulatory obligations at a minimum, and aspire to adopt and implement any other voluntary code that arises throughout the lifetime of this strategy.

- Adopting the “Investing in Volunteers Standards” to recognise the importance of volunteers to our work.
- Achieving the Triple Lock standard by adopting the statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising.
- Communicate with the public and all stakeholders in a clear and open fashion.

Each of the above commitments will be reviewed on an annual basis by our board to monitor progress and to ensure our Governance & Accountability Standards are up-to-date and comply with all regulatory and best practice codes for the charity sector in Ireland.

End document.