



Cobh Ramblers FC

St Colman's Park

Cobh, Co Cork

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FOOTBALL SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY STRATEGY

COBH RAMBLERS AFC

Football clubs cannot exist in isolation of their community, they are of the community and Cobh Ramblers AFC is no different to any other club.

Football has the power to have a positive impact on both the local and wider community across the country.

We play an important role in our community; home and away we bring people together to support our team, enjoy the game and socialise together afterwards.

The key elements of our strategy are as follows:

**Equality
&Inclusion**

Anti-Racism

**Child,Youth
Protection &
Welfare**

Football for all

**Environmental
protection &
Sustainability**

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

1. As a club playing in the League of Ireland, we feel we are responsible for setting standards and values to apply throughout the game at every level. Football belongs to, and should be enjoyed by, everyone equally. Our commitment is to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, colour, religion, or disability.
2. Cobh Ramblers AFC is committed to Equality and Inclusion across all aspects of our club.
3. Cobh Ramblers AFC is an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity within the organisation and to encouraging similar commitment for every organisation or individual acting within the game.
4. Equality of opportunity at Cobh Ramblers AFC means that in all our activities we shall not discriminate or in any way treat anyone less favourably, on grounds of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability. This includes:
 - Appointment to honorary positions.
 - Advertisement of jobs.
 - Job location or working environment.
 - Selection of candidates for employment or promotion.
 - Pay and employment terms and conditions.
 - Internal training and development activities.
 - Football development activities.
 - Selection for representative teams.
4. Cobh Ramblers shall not tolerate sexual or racially based harassment or other discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal, and shall work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate disciplinary action in whatever context it occurs.
5. Cobh Ramblers is committed to the development of a programme of ongoing training and awareness raising events and activities to promote the eradication of discrimination within our organisation and in the wider context of football.

ANTI-RACISM POLICY

Cobh Ramblers Association Football Club operates a zero-tolerance policy towards racism. It aims to create and maintain an environment for staff, members and spectators, free from racial harassment, abuse and violence.

Cobh Ramblers AFC is committed to a policy of equal treatment to all its members, volunteers and club officials and requires all its members to abide by and adhere to the policies and the requirements of the relevant legislation – Employment Equality Act 1998 & 2004, Equal Status Act 2000-2004, Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989 as well as any changes to these acts and any new legislations which are published.

1. Everyone connected with the Club has a responsibility to prevent racist behaviour and as such, are responsible not only for their behaviour but that of others.
2. Proven racist harassment, abuse or violence by an employee will result in disciplinary action by the Club and, if appropriate, action by An Garda Síochána. Similarly, such behaviour by a spectator or club member will result in a lifetime ban from the Club. The Club will encourage and be fully supportive of any criminal investigation.
3. Club employees, especially security staff, are obliged to report all racist incidents to the club, or to An Garda Síochána. It is NOT the sole responsibility of the victim of such abuse to initiate action. Racial abuse or racist behaviour of any kind is itself the trigger for action.

DEFINITION OF A RACIST INCIDENT

A racist incident is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim, or by any other person. RACIAL HARASSMENT Racial harassment is any verbal, physical, written or visible abuse that is aggravated by the race, ethnic background, nationality, language, skin colour or cultural background of a person and is unacceptable and offensive to that person.

Examples of racial harassment include:

- **PHYSICAL:** Intimidating gestures, physical violence or assault or the threat of the above, because of a person's race or ethnicity.
- **VERBAL:** Derogatory remarks about a person's skin colour, nationality or appearance, unwelcome remarks about a person's cultural observances or racist jokes.
- **NON-VERBAL:** Graffiti of a racial nature, defacing notices or posters, negative stereotyping of a particular ethnic or national group or written threats of a racist nature. There is no such thing as unintentional harassment. The key characteristics are that the behaviour is unacceptable to the recipient.

CHILD, YOUTH PROTECTION & WELFARE

CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE

The below statement is set out in accordance with the FAI Rulebook, FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding policy as well as our legislative requirements set out by Children First Act 2015. This statement is binding on all staff and club members.

Cobh Ramblers Football Club provides various sporting opportunities for young people through participation in our national league teams and various local events. Cobh Ramblers Football Club is committed to safeguarding children and by working under the guidance of safeguarding policies and procedures. Our staff working throughout the organisation are committed to providing a safe and fun environment for our young people to develop.

Principles to Safeguard Children from Harm

This statement recognises that in accordance with legislation and the requirements of the FAI Rulebook, FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding policy, other FAI policies and procedures that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances.

Cobh Ramblers Football Club is established on several core principles: the needs of the child, integrity and respect, environment, equality, fair play, welfare and safety in football. These underlying principles underpin our rules, policies, and procedures to ensure when Children participating in our activities, they do so, as far as is practicable, in a safe and enjoyable environment.

Risk Assessment:

In preparing this statement Cobh Ramblers Football Club have completed a risk assessment of the potential risk of harm to children when they are participating in any of our games and attending our activities. The risks were reviewed under the following headings: Club and Coaching Practices; Complaints & Discipline; Reporting Procedures; Use of Facilities; Recruitment; Communications; and General Risk of Harm.

The Risk Assessment was first undertaken on March 30th 2020 and reviewed most recently on **April 20th 2023**. Cobh Ramblers Football Club Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, The Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.

Cobh Ramblers Football Club has the following procedures in place as part of our Safeguarding Policies:

- Procedures for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct by staff or volunteers against a child availing of our activities.
- Procedures for the safe recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers to work with children in our activities.

- Procedures for the provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
- Procedures for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Statutory Authorities.
- Procedures for maintaining a list of the persons in the relevant service who are mandated.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures/policies listed are available on request.

The Designated Liaison person is Michael O'Donovan. (085- 708 -0330)

The Club's Children Officer is Maura Field. (087 122 8114)

Cobh Ramblers recognise the implementation is an ongoing process. Our Football Club is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child welfare and safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while participating in our activities.

This statement has been published on Cobh Ramblers website www.cobhramblers.ie and displayed in a prominent place on the premises. It has been provided to all staff, volunteers and any other persons involved with the service. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request.

A copy of this statement will be made available to Tusla and members of the public if requested.

As part of the club's commitment to Child and Youth Welfare the club have appointed Mrs. Allison O'Regan as the official Chaplain to the club. This is to provide an extra Mental Health resource for players and officials with the club.

Cobh Ramblers asks its Academy players to periodically fill in a mental health questionnaire. The purpose of this is to ascertain the mental health of players and to deploy resources as may be necessary to help.

Our Underage coaches have been made aware of the need to be mindful of an individual player's mental well-being when omitting a player from a game.

FOOTBALL FOR ALL

Cobh Ramblers are committed to establishing a football for all programme to assist in providing footballing opportunities for all players with a disability to participate in football.

Cobh Ramblers recognise that some people or communities start from a disadvantaged position and so may need assistance from the club to access the opportunities that football affords them.

Cobh Ramblers believe that everybody regardless of their ability should have access to their local club ensuring that we promote an ethos of inclusivity within Cobh Ramblers.

The club realises that by providing a safe environment and a feeling of belonging to a club that we can provide a facility for all to enjoy the game that they love and progress further if they can.

To date Cobh Ramblers have partnered with the following groups to provide access to football that might otherwise not be available.

Cork Cope Foundation

Cork Rainbow Club.

Autism Assistance Dogs

We also provide match night commentary for visually impaired fans if required.

Cobh Ramblers is also committed to establishing a 'Walking Football' programme for older members of our club and the wider community.

This is important for older club members who may be suffering from loneliness and isolation.

This programme will commence in 2024 with the installation of an Astro pitch at St.Colman's Park.

This programme will be extended depending on demand and will form part of our policy to make Cobh Ramblers a club that is operating 7 days a week.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Football leaves more than footprints on a pitch; the carbon footprint from football is considerable, (currently estimated to be between 0.3 and 0.4% of global emissions) everything from team and supporters travel to merchandising leaves a footprint and needs to be confronted.

Cobh Ramblers recognises that our actions and events have an impact on our environment, on our economy and the wider community.

Cobh Ramblers AFC are committed to achieving Net Zero and will sign up to UN Sports for climate Action Framework.

We will achieve this by measuring our Carbon footprint and create a roadmap to Net Zero.

Our Action plan to achieve Net Zero will include but is not limited to the following:

- The removal of gas boilers in buildings at our ground.
- Move to purchase our electricity requirements from sustainable energy companies.
- Installation of solar panels in stadium buildings.
- Rainwater Harvesting.
- Installation of waterless urinals in all toilet facilities located within the stadium.
- Installation of LED lighting on stadium floodlighting.
- Incentivise the use of public transport to and from our home games.
(25% reduction of ticket prices to fans that use Public Transport)
- Recycling of match day waste
(Our commitment is that any fees due to the club from recycling initiatives will be donated to tree-planting and re-wilding projects in Ireland.)
- The club will partner with charities committed to wildlife conservation.
- Future construction projects at our stadium must be environmentally friendly and construction and design companies must clearly demonstrate how this will be achieved.
- The phasing out of printed match day programmes.
- Encourage and incentivise club members to demonstrate their commitment to join us on the road to sustainability such as walking, cycling or using public transport to our matches.
- Carry out a digital de-clutter of unnecessary files, app's etc on the club drives.
- Encourage our members and supporters do carry out a digital de-clutter.
- Use alternatives instead of travelling to meetings such as video conferencing and conferencing calls.
- Merchandising contracts will be awarded to companies that are sustainable and obtain their materials from ethical sources.
- Installation of EV charging points at our stadium

The above list is not a complete list, and the club will review this policy and upgrade as necessary due to internal or external factors.

Timeline of planned Events

- Establish Baseline data

2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Installation of LED floodlighting	Sign up to U.N framework for climate action	Installation of solar panels					
Alternatives to meetings	Phase out of physical matchday programmes	Removal of gas boilers	Installation of rainwater harvesting systems				
First Digital De-clutter	Link with Wildlife Charity Partner	Digital De-clutter	Digital De-clutter	Digital De-clutter	Digital De-clutter	Digital De-clutter	Digital De-clutter
Purchase energy from sustainable companies	Incentivise fans to travel sustainably	Awarding of building contracts to environmentally aware companies	Incentivise fans to travel sustainably	Incentivise fans to travel sustainably	Incentivise fans to travel sustainably	Incentivise fans to travel sustainably	Incentivise fans to travel sustainably
Develop matchday recycling policy and initiatives							

NEXT REVIEW DATE: 21st March 2024 and every 6 months thereafter.

Review progress against U.N framework for climate Action KPI's