



Kinsale Golf Club
Cumann Golf Cionn T-Sáile

Established 1912

Business Development Plan

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Context

Like so many golf clubs in the country, Kinsale has had a difficult time over the last number of years. The purpose of this plan is to examine how the club's income can be increased. Expenditure has been much reduced, and any further reviews are outside the scope of this plan as it is under the remit of the management committee.

Committee Members

Hilary Madden (Chairman), Brian Doran, Cathal Butler (Secretary), Rosemary O'Brien, Paul Aherne, Declan O'Flynn, Kieran Daly.

Committee Meeting's and contributions from third parties

Five Committee meetings were held, and contributions were received from

- Hal McElroy from the Trident & Acton's Hotel
- Local Tourist Office
- Aoife Lohse Kinsale Hotel & Spa
- Damien Connolly Club Support Officer Confederation of Golf in Ireland
- Ger Broderick Professional Kinsale Golf Club
- Janice McCarthy administrator Kinsale Golf Club

Objective

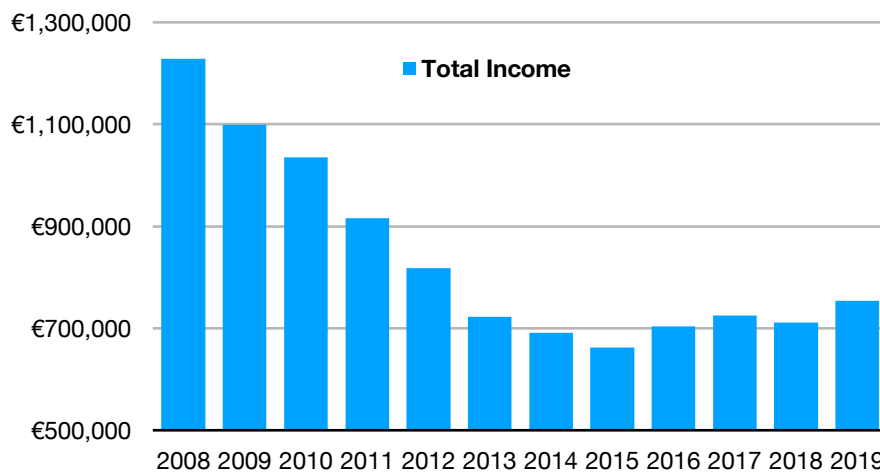
The objective of this plan is to increase income so that we generate a sufficient surplus to:

- 1) Undertake refurbishment of the clubhouse and facilities
- 2) Continue course improvement
- 3) Create a contingency fund
- 4) Reduce debt

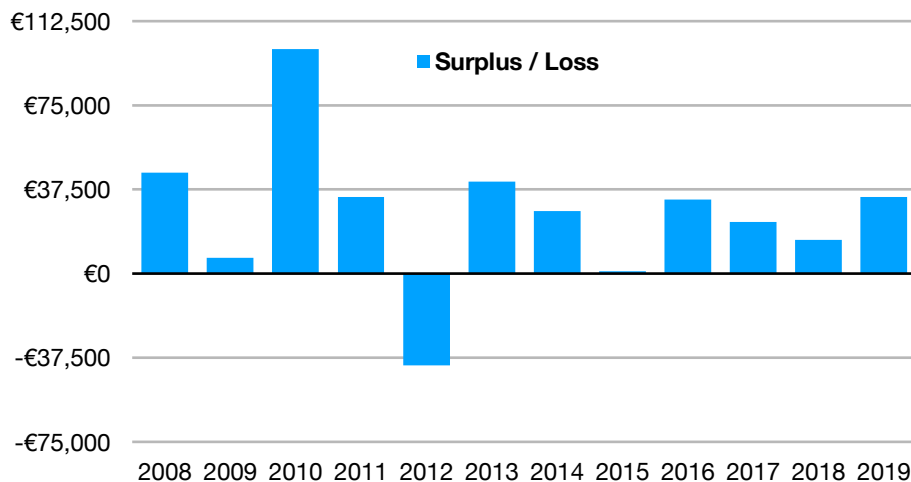
The target is to increase income to €800,000 by 2020 - raising the club's income by 12.5% (€90,000). The target for 2019 is to increase the income to €750,000 - up from €710,000. Note that a special levy was put in place for 2019. This is to resurface the carpark and the funds will be ring-fenced and will not be included in the calculations on this plan.

Membership

Like the majority of clubs, membership declined sharply in the aftermath of the financial crash of 2007/2008. Membership declined across all categories by 200 subscriptions from 2008 to 2019. This resulted in a loss of subscription income of over €150,000 in 2018 (compared to 2008). Noticeably the revenue generated by entrance fees has fallen from €118,000 in 2008 to zero from 2011 onwards.



Aggressive cost controls - reducing expenditure from almost €1.2m to €0.7m in 2018, has kept the club afloat. This level of cost reduction does impact on the club and this impact may be seen. We must recognize the efforts of our staff in reducing much of this impact.

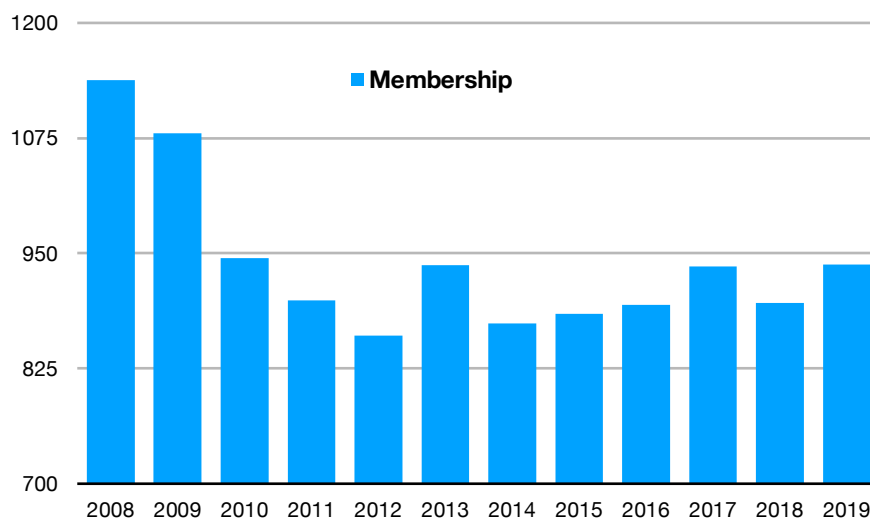


The issues we face are mirrored around the country, and even further afield. Playing numbers are declining and the average age of members is rising.

Our costs have been radically reduced over the past ten years. We must allow for an increase in the core costs as the club recovers and returns to a stable financial footing.

Membership subscriptions accounted for almost 85% of the club's income in 2018. This share has increased by 40% - it accounted for 61% in 2008, with the loss of entrance fees and Ringenane contributions being the principal causes.

It is clear that any meaningful increase in overall income must be generated by this category. There were 938 members in 2018, and of these 722 were 'key' members - paying close to the full subscription (that is not life or junior/juvenile members). This is an average subscription of €830 for 'key' members.



It has proven difficult to analyze the membership change over the years. The key statistic is the 'churn rate' - the rate that we lose and add to our membership. The greatest losses in 2007 - 2009 appear to be members who were lost to the game, not renewing memberships at any club. In recent years there is considerable churn as members come and go. The many offers available are tempting, and we responded by introducing a new category - Intermediate Member.

Membership in the key categories paying the full subscription must be increased, or the cost of the subscription must be raised. This is the dichotomy - higher subscription fees can result in a lower membership.

Maintaining the current subscription rate to 2020 will require a net increase of 115 new members to produce the required increase in subscriptions. This of course depends on the membership category, the numbers above are an average of junior, intermediate and full membership. The most likely path to increasing the revenues must be a combination of higher membership and an increased subscription.

Membership by Category

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Full Gent	678	636	526	488	452	517	484	466	463	484	459	478
Full Lady	129	129	109	106	100	103	94	95	92	114	128	139
Full Family	17	14	14	14	13	10	8	8	8	5	5	5
Life	56	54	52	52	52	71	69	68	69	68	65	63
Intermediate Gent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	20	32	31	35
Intermediate Lady	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2
Juvenile	160	138	140	137	131	132	115	116	122	110	91	92
Junior	28	38	20	23	23	17	20	17	25	20	17	19
Overseas / Special	28	25	34	30	33	25	13	28	24	24	20	22
Senior Gent	20	23	25	27	33	42	45	45	42	43	43	45
Senior Lady	5	5	6	5	5	6	10	12	12	14	15	15
Senior Family	7	8	8	7	8	7	6	5	6	8	7	8
Pavilion	4	4	5	4	5	1	4	4	5	8	8	10
Honorary	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	5
Total	1138	1080	945	899	861	937	874	884	894	936	896	938

It is a competitive market, with not only competition from other clubs, but from other sports. Many clubs are lowering their rates, creating a race to the bottom for some.

Increasing the total membership from 938 to 975, with the increase principally coming from the full member category can yield an additional €30,000. Increasing the full subscription by €50 may add a further €35,000.

A general levy has been applied for many years; we do not see this being removed in the near future.

Green Fees & Societies

This category produced €81,000 in 2018, as compared to €108,377 in 2008 (excluding Ringenane).

Again, this is an area under huge competitive pressures as all clubs look to increase, or at least maintain, their share in a declining market. The club has increased prime time green fees to €40, and an extra €10 will be charged for non-GUI members.

Societies have defined times at the weekend. To generate additional green fees, we will have to consider ring-fencing prime times on a Saturday and / or Sunday. How this will be accepted by our members is not difficult to gauge. Putting a four ball of visitors out on a Saturday morning at 10am would generate feedback - to say the least.

Feedback for the hotels and Club Professional that the current Green Fee rates are what the market will bear. Our target market is local, UK and Continental Europe.

We asked the local hotels that if we were to keep time for them at weekends instead of taking a society booking: feedback **take the society booking**

Other Income

A total of €30,000 was generated in this category in 2018. This is accounted by €11,000 contributed by the Men's and Ladies clubs, €7,000 by the Sand Levy, €10,000 by the Fundraising Classic and €2,000 by Other Income.

The amount contributed by the Men's and Lady's clubs was relatively consistent at €15,000 over the years. The amount has declined recently, with the recent team successes a contributing factor. This sum should be the minimum expected, and sponsorship appears to be the best route to achieving this.

The Fundraising Classic was a major success last year. The progress of the teams to the national finals helped raise this amount. Maintaining this level of income in 2019 should be seen as a success.

Key Recommendations

All the targets set out in this document may be reached by a single approach:

1 Sell Our Club

We do not mean to actually put the club up for sale, but to market our club better. We need to better leverage our assets.

Those assets include:

- The name Kinsale
- A championship Course
- Home to one of Ireland's top ranked amateur
- A junior / juvenile programme that is much envied
- A full range of practice facilities. Including driving range and chipping greens.
- A location easily reached by large urban areas
- Some negative perceptions amongst visitors and members concern the length and difficulty of the course. This can easily be addressed by using different markers.

2 Membership

Damien Connolly of the Confederation of Golf was quite complimentary of the Club's membership initiatives i.e. Get into Golf, Intermediate membership and our Juvenile programme.

- He felt that an overall membership officer should be appointed. New members need to be individually contacted and helped to integrate into the club. New members meetings do not generally work. A network of existing members should be established to help.
- The Get into Golf programme has been very successful in the Country as a whole. In Kinsale the full Lady membership has increased from 114 in 2017 to 139 in 2019
- A more individual approach is needed for men's golf with a one on one contact has proved to be more beneficial. A new member information pack should be produced.
- New membership software packages which include push message notifications should be investigated
- The creation of a new membership category - Academy Member should be considered. This will give the prospective member access to the putting green, the driving range, the practice greens and the clubhouse. This membership may be seen as a gateway to full membership. The potential loss of some existing members is a risk.
- Offer reduced subscriptions to junior members of the same family.

3 Green Fees & Societies

- Produce Club Brochure for Tourist Office
- Update Website and look at new software
- Establish mid week package with local Hotels and Golf Clubs
- Attend Kinsale Chamber of tourism meetings
- Join the International Association of Golf Tour Operators
- Join Kinsale Future Kinsale organisation

4 Other Income

- One officer to have overall responsibility for sponsorship and fundraising classic (suggest the Club Treasurer).
- The existing Men's and Ladies sponsorship roles would remain but would involve a coordinated approach with the Club Treasurer

5 Web-site Social Media

- The form and function of the website must be reviewed.
- The website was designed for members, with a lesser focus on visitor's requirements.
- The content must be updated regularly and consistently.
- At the moment the Men's Committee primarily maintain the site, but there should be more involvement by management.

- Improve our social media presence
- This must be more coherent and updated regularly.
- As with the website there is no overall structure or consistency in placing content online.
- Look at new software

We use our website, a twitter account, Facebook page and Flickr for storing our images. The booking system BRS also has an app which may be used to communicate with members.

Use sites such as TripAdvisor to improve our reputation and awareness. There are a few reviews, all positive. We should encourage visitors to post comments, many establishments post the TripAdvisor sticker to remind visitors.

https://www.tripadvisor.ie/Attraction_Review-g186600-d8383529-Reviews-Kinsale_Golf_Club-Cork_County_Cork.html#REVIEWS

6 Enhance the course and facilities

- We can do much without excessive spending around the course and clubhouse.
- Improving the signage around the course, ensuring it is clear where to go upon leaving a green. All course furniture should be in good condition.
- The area around the Pro Shop and the putting green is what most members and visitors see first, it should represent the club in a good light.