

MAKING STRIDES FOR SOLIDARITY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-30
SUMMARY



SANCTUARY RUNNERS

Solidarity, Friendship, Respect

Making Strides for Solidarity

Sanctuary Runners is a solidarity-through-sport movement, promoting community integration by bringing migrants (especially asylum seekers and refugees) and longer-term residents together to run, jog or walk in friendship and respect.

Since its formation in 2018, Sanctuary Runners has grown into one of Ireland's most visible and respected community integration initiatives, connecting people around the country, fostering wellbeing and achieving national and international recognition.

Context for a new strategy

Our first strategy took us from 2021-2025, establishing the Sanctuary Runners movement. We grew our reach across Ireland, established partnerships with other sports and organisations and began to become known internationally. This updated strategy positions us to continue to have an impact for the next five years and make strides for solidarity. It responds to the following:

Feedback from our participants

Our participants – the people who run, walk and volunteer with us – tell us they truly value the belonging, visibility and connection that Sanctuary Runners has given them. But as the number of groups has grown, there is also a need for better communication and ongoing support, including active outreach to International Protection centres and migrant communities.

Potential for future growth in our movement in Ireland – and internationally

In Ireland, the movement is continuing to grow and we now need to put stronger foundations under that growth while consolidating and strengthening our existing groups. Continuing to sustain and grow our Sanctuary Runners groups will require clear and robust governance, organisational structure and systems.

This Strategic Plan 2026–2030 sets the foundations for our next phase. It is built on extensive engagement with group organisers, participants, Board members, staff, and external partners. It clarifies our identity, our purpose, and sets our long-term direction.

This strategy marks a transition from start-up energy to structured, sustainable growth while preserving the warmth, simplicity and humanity that define Sanctuary Runners.

In Great Britain, Sanctuary Runners is in the start-up phase and there is significant interest from multiple locations in England and Wales. We also have requests from Australia and other countries to set up groups.

This strategy positions us to consolidate and grow Sanctuary Runners in Ireland while putting foundations in place internationally.

Opportunities to expand our impact through partnerships

Partners (e.g. Sport Ireland) have expressed interest in working with us to help other sports become more inclusive. Leveraging our experience with integration this way has the potential to significantly broaden our impact on communities.

Public and political climate on migration

Although Ireland's attitudes towards immigration remain more positive than the EU average, vocal anti-migrant messaging is increasing, with asylum seekers and people of colour often scape-goated and attacked. Our focus on community integration is more important than ever in this context.



Vision

A more inclusive society where people from all backgrounds and nationalities are valued, and where community integration is properly understood and championed.



Mission

Our mission is to build bridges and bring people and communities together. We use running, jogging, walking and volunteering to welcome people of all backgrounds, especially migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.



Values

Solidarity
Friendship
Respect

Strategic Priorities 2026-2030



Grow Sanctuary Runners in Ireland: Strengthen and Support Irish Groups (Core focus)



Expand Internationally: Introduce Sanctuary Runners in other countries (Emerging Growth Area)



Explore the expansion of the model: Work with other organisations to promote integration and broaden our impact



Use our Voice to Advocate for Community Integration



Build Strong Foundations to Deliver

Implementation Roadmap



What will success look like in 2030?

- A thriving Sanctuary Runners community in Ireland, with groups across the island where migrants and locals come together in friendship and respect.
- Community integration principles have resonated and are reflected in public discourse and policy.
- Our model has been adopted by other sports to promote and improve inclusion more broadly.
- Sanctuary Runners GB is established, with groups flourishing across England, Scotland and Wales.
- We have a vigorous Sanctuary Runners Global network in place where different countries share best practices and learn from each other.
- Our migrant participants provide visible leadership within Sanctuary Runners and in broader society.



Sanctuary Runners is, and will continue to be, a catalyst for a more inclusive society, making strides towards solidarity.



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