

# Annual Report 2015

## Cork Visiting Committee

The Cork Prison Visiting Committee met on a monthly basis during 2015. We also had two members visit the Prison on a regular basis between meetings. Members met with and discussed with prisoners their concerns and problems. These were then brought to the Governor where they were logged and all responses were brought back where appropriate. Some of the issues raised concerned transfer to other prisons, medical concerns, problems with staff and other prisoners. Any issues raised were dealt with and we had no need for any follow up with any concerns.

### **The State Funeral of Thomas Kent:**

We would like to compliment the Prison Service and locally Governor Collins and his staff on the tremendous and dignified handling of the funeral of Thomas Kent. This was one of the highlights for Cork Prison during 2015 and everyone involved deserves great praise.

### **Death in Custody:**

On the other side unfortunately there was a tragic event which occurred in the Prison during the year where a prisoner was killed and this incident had a traumatic effect on both prisoners and staff. We offer our deepest sympathies to the family of the deceased.

### **New Cork Prison:**

Archaic, Dickensian, Unfit for Purpose these are some of the words used in the past to describe Cork Prison.

State of the Art, Modern, Bright, Spacey, New Family Visiting Area, these are some of the words we have heard to describe the New Cork Prison.

This is obviously the major highlight of the year. The completion of the New Cork Prison which in itself was a huge undertaking and to have it completed on schedule to enable a swift transfer was excellent. We would like to wish everyone concerned the

very best for a smooth transition. This perhaps is the most modern prison now in Europe with superb facilities for both prisoners and staff and should be a showcase for the Irish Prison Service.

### **Visit to Shelton Abbey:**

The Cork Committee made a visit to Shelton Abbey Open Prison during the year and were very impressed as to how content both Prisoners and Staff were. The committee were also very impressed and delighted to see that Shelton Abbey provides such help and support to the local community by undertaking local projects. It was also evident that if greater funding was available, that all at Shelton Abbey are eager to take on more projects to fully utilise the facilities there.

We would like to thank Governor Healy and his team for facilitating the visit.



### **Dedicated “Information Channels” for Prisoners launched:**

As a Cork Visiting Committee initiative, a new dedicated Information Channel was piloted in Cork Prison on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015. This was later extended to three channels. These channels were officially launched on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015 by the Director General of the Irish Prison Service Mr Michael Donnellan.

Work on this channel has been going on for some time ever since the then Chairman of the Visiting Committee Mr Dermot O Connell had a discussion with the responsible Officer. The Visiting Committee saw great merit in this idea and liaised with Ms Caroline O'Connor for assistance. Cork Visiting Committee continued to follow this initiative up through Chairpersons Ms Mary Loughnane and Mr Tomas Ryan. I, as current Chairman, along with fellow committee member Anthony Donnelly was delighted to witness the process that eventually led to the official launch of the Information Channels.

These three dedicated channels are now displayed on the Prisoner's TV's.

C21 is the original Information Channel that was piloted on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015. This is an innovative initiative which displays a rolling powerpoint presentation of 47 slides through the existing TV delivery system.

This channel displays useful information for Prisoners while they are in custody in Cork. The information displayed can be up-dated on a regular basis and can also facilitate regular alerts as detailed below.

The displayed information includes:

- The committal process
- Prison routine in Cork
- Integrated Sentence Management
- Phone calls and entitlements
- Visits and entitlements
- Prison regimes (basic, standard & enhanced) and the entitlements and gratuity of each one.
- Various care facilities that are available (before and after release) such as CRS and CSS Schemes who work in conjunction with Cork Alliance, Merchants Quay Project and Church field Trust etc.
- Professional services that are available such as Probation, Addiction and Psychologist etc.
- Education facilities

- Work opportunities eg: Print Shop, Fabric Shop, Laundry, Hurley Repair Shop and Kitchen.
- Trustee Opportunities
- Tuck shop opening hours

This is just a sample of the information displayed on this Channel.

It is hoped that C21 can be displayed in alternative languages with the possibility of interactive “expression of interest” icons and a voice over facility.

C23 is a Notice Board for the information of Prisoners highlighting various alerts or posters of interest to Prisoners. This is also available for up-dating as required.

C25 is a dedicated channel to display certain DVD`s of interest to Prisoners eg: Anti-bullying DVD or the DVD on Loughan House etc. provided by the IPS HQ.

It is hoped that these Information Channels will be of huge benefit to Prisoners as a guide to fulfilling their time in a healthy and beneficial way and to help them to adjust to life in Cork Prison. These Channels shall also be of benefit to staff as information will be readily available and regularly up-dated for Prisoners and with a Notice Board on C23 the need for physical posters on the walls of Cork Prison shall be greatly reduced.

The Cork Prison Visiting Committee would like Governor Collins and his team without whose commitment the channel would not be live today.

Also a huge thank you to all the various departments and organisations (both within Cork Prison and outside) that have contributed to making these channels a success.

Finally we would like to pay a special tribute to Prison Administration & Support Officer 1 Caroline O Connor without whose dedication and enthusiasm this project would not have got off the ground. The work and commitment shown by Caroline went beyond all expectations and the resultant Information Channel is testimony to her good work.

### **Chaplin:**

We were delighted to hear the news before Christmas that a new Chaplin has been appointed to Cork Prison .We would like to wish the new Chaplin all the best.

### **Cork Prison Library:**

We acknowledge the excellent service provided by Cork Prison Library Services in providing up-to-date material for Prisoners and staff alike from Books to DVD`s and I would also like to acknowledge the co-operation of Cork City Library.

### **2015 Report of the Industrial Area, Cork Prison.**

#### **Kitchen**

The kitchen scored 92.5% in this year`s food safety audit.

The kitchen staff are looking forward to moving into a new state of the art kitchen, in the new prison. It is no secret that the current kitchen is the oldest and least up to date in the prison service. The kitchen staff are to be congratulated for maintaining such high standards of food production and hygiene, in a totally outdated kitchen.

#### **Hurley / Joinery workshop**

G.A.A. basic and advanced hurley repair.	18 basic, 6 advanced.
City and Guilds 6218 / 01/02/03/04	88
Manual Handling	21
Total for Hurley / Joinery workshop	133

Here are some excerpts from our last City and Guilds audit, (30/3/2015), in the Joinery / Hurley workshop, Cork Prison. The guys in the workshop have excelled themselves. The external Verifier was David Cotton. I will attach the complete document below.

#### **Records**

Instantly available and ready for this visit. Furthermore the records are exemplary.

### Appeals procedure

Candidates have signed copies and a good understanding, as good a candidate feedback as I expect to hear. In this case from a candidate using a second language.

### Equipment, etc.

Most satisfactory, well equipped trade specific workshop. Strong evidence of good safety awareness. In fact IPS must be congratulated on outstanding H&S induction and auditable safety tracking. Wall chart safety guidelines are first class.

### Assessors

All in place. Good to see constant development of candidate portfolio's to a point where the portfolios are exemplary, no, near perfection.

### Facilities

All ready and appropriate. Excellent resources available, well maintained and organised. Rare to see high maintenance sharp edge tools in such good condition.

### Candidate's evidence

Complete, and standardised. No doubt about authenticity, comprehensive candidate input and generous cross section of photo evidence. Superb presentation, certainly as a past judge I can say that they are to medal of excellence standard.

Exemplary portfolio's, informative, interesting, beneficial to the candidate and rock solid standardisation.

Assessment product evidence seen was wide ranging, in fact 100% across the range.

Product evidence seen as supplementary evidence is nothing short of top quality industry standard.

### Additional Comments

Very easy to reach for a dictionary of superlatives to help with this feedback, but this will not be a problem.

The workshop provision is first class, with a great ethos of H&S and tracking documentation to prove it.

First impressions were excellent, and improved steadily all day.

The quality of product evidence is certainly to commercial standard, assessment evidence is as good as the best I see in a very wide range of providers, 100's in fact.

Portfolio evidence cannot be improved upon.

All of this is to the great credit to the Officers working in the Hurley Shop for their dedication and enthusiasm.

A very real pleasure for me to see this continuous evolution to excellence.

The Hurley / Joinery Workshop continues to do a lot of work for various charities. Here are some examples:

- **St Gabriel's Special School, Bishopstown, Cork**

This is a school that caters for severely autistic children.

We make and supply timber pieces for window/flower boxes that the children then assemble as part of their therapy.

- **Lavanagh Centre, Ballintemple Cork.**

We have made writing boards and special chairs for the children attending this service also the Cork Prison Social Club organises and run an annual Christmas party for the Children attending this school, This party has been run for many years and is a huge success, it is something that both children and staff look forward to for months in advance.

- **St Paul's Special School, Cope, Montenotte, Cork.** We make timber jig-saw pieces, picture frames as well as other play items for the children attending here.

- **Marymount hospice:**

We make photo frames for the hospice, about 30 per year. A lot of Cork Prison staff have had sick relatives in the hospice, so we do like to help this very worthy cause if we can.

## **Computer print workshop**

All of the printing for Cork Prison is done in this workshop, class logs, p19's, reception books, health and safety books, etc.

Prisoners also make cards here for birthdays, etc.

Prisoners can complete their E.C.D.L. certification here.

E.C.D.L. Certificates completed	2
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E.C.D.L. Modules completed	16
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## **Industrial Cleaning workshop**

This post is now manned by 2 W.T.O's, on a back to back basis. They now have responsibility for training all of the class cleaners on the various prison landings. This has helped to improve cleanliness around the prison.

Over 100 certificates (City and Guilds) were completed here this year. This gives prisoners a big help when it comes to finding employment upon completion of their sentences.

## **Fabric Workshop**

This workshop continues to do all of the uniform alterations around the prison, and a good deal of Charity work, particularly at Christmas time.

St Paul's School and Ballincollig Special Olympics are just two of the charities that have benefited from this workshop.

## **Light Maintenance**

Our new light maintenance workshop has been a big success. While doing bits of maintenance, tiling and painting around the prison, this workshop also does a



mechanics training course, 2 and 4 stroke engine maintenance. This has proven to be very popular with prisoners. The first certs were accomplished in the last few weeks.

### **Laundry**

The laundry had a very good year, with 45 certificates from the guild of cleaners and launderers being presented this year.

### **Officers Mess (training kitchen)**

This kitchen and dining area is working very well, and has 5 prisoners employed every day. This is a new departure from the norm, and is working very well.

### **Computer workshop over laundry**

This workshop continues to provide training to prisoners who would not otherwise have access to a workshop, as they are from the protection wing (A3) of the prison.

### **I.S.M.**

The I.S.M. staff are busier than ever, with the Community Returns programme, and the Community Support Scheme.

These are both going very well, and the high success rate of both (the I.P.S. won the civil service award for excellence and innovation this year, for the community returns programme) continues.

### **Waste Management**

This new workshop has been very successful in reducing our waste, and increasing the amount of recycling here in the prison. This means lower bills, and a saving to the state for waste management expenses.

By: Industrial Manager  
Cork Prison

## 2015 Report from the Education Unit, Cork Prison

As is always the case in the Education Unit, 2015 was a busy one!

### Certification and Achievements

- One hundred and eighty four Fetac/QQI modules were completed and received certification at QQI/Fetac levels 2- 5.
- Five students completed Junior or Leaving Cert and we have
- Two students currently enrolled for Open University (OU).
- In May nine students graduated from the Listener programme.
- Sixteen students completed a mindfulness course.
- 5 students completed a men's wellbeing course.
- In June the Cork Samaritan's Prison Listening Team with the involvement of a member of our Education staff received the overall award at the Lord Mayor's Community and Voluntary Awards Ceremony. (See photo below)



- Six students graduated with the Red Cross on the 26<sup>th</sup> May.
- One of our English students won a prize at the Listowel writer's week for a poem he wrote titled 'The barge'.
- Thirty four students completed the Safe Pass course
- The Art and Pottery department and their students opened the second successful art exhibition on Spike Island in July.

- Two pieces of work from the pottery department were selected as gifts for the president Michael D Higgins and his wife Sabina. (See photo below)



### **Post Release Service**

The post release service under the management of the coordinator Frances Russell, continues to perform the vital and necessary service of working with homeless prisoners and prisoners who require support in the community in terms of addiction, tenancy skills, social welfare/medical care needs, further education and training.

### **Dillon's Cross Project**

The Dillon's Cross Project is now happily settled in its new premises on the grounds of the Glen Resource Centre. We have fifteen participants currently enrolled and working towards completing an overall award at Fetac level 3 and additional modules at Fetac level 4. Three of our last year's participants are in further full time education, two completing courses in hairdressing in Holly hill and one student completing a childcare course in the College of Commerce. A previous participant graduated in childcare from the College of Commerce in June and is now in full time employment in the childcare sector.

We celebrated twenty years of the Dillon's Cross Project in April. This allowed us to reflect on the progress made by the project to date and also plan for the future of the project.

### **Multi-disciplinary activities**

In order to achieve the best outcome for the prisoner it is vital that all services in the prison work together. To this end teachers from the Education Unit are on many different prison working committees ranging from Prison Library, Listener scheme, Red Cross training, Health and Safety group, and CSS. The Education Unit also takes part in weekly multidisciplinary meetings and monthly review meetings. Staff in the Education Unit also continue to work and liaise with Addiction, Probation, Medical and Psychology services in the prison.

### **Year to come**

The coming year is going to be a very busy one! The obvious event which will dominate the year will be the move to the new prison. We are very excited about this move and the new opportunities and initiatives this move will afford.

I would like to conclude by thanking the Governor and his management staff for their help and support though-out the year.

I would like to especially thank Miss Coleman and her team of school officers whose calm and experience allows for the smooth operation of the Education Unit on a daily basis. Without the level of cooperation which the teachers enjoy a lot of what happens in the Education Unit would not be possible.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank all the teachers in the Education Unit for their commitment, positive attitude and continued hard work throughout the year.

We look forward to all that working in the new Education Unit, in the new prison building has to offer.

By: [Edel Cunningham](#)  
[Supervising Teacher, Education Unit, Cork Prison 2015](#)

## St Nicholas Trust

St Nicholas Trust continues to support the families of prisoners by providing information and moral support, particularly for those who are experiencing imprisonment for the first time. Families in this situation can become extremely distressed and feel they have nobody to talk to. In the regular support meetings, people meet others who have been through this difficult time and gain strength from the experience.

In 2015 St. Nicholas Trust launched a booklet for children of prisoners 'Visiting Mum or Dad in Prison' This is the third information booklet produced by St. Nicholas Trust. The information within it is taken from the experiences of children who have visited Cork prison. They and their parents have kindly helped us to produce this booklet. Informing children that their parent has been given a prison sentence is never easy, neither is it easy for parents to take children to visit the prison. This booklet highlights the difficulties that children may experience in this situation and provides helpful practical information for parents.

Throughout 2015 St Nicholas Trust has been instrumental in promoting better facilities for visitors to the new Cork prison with the support of the Irish Prison Service. Together I believe we have put in place a pleasant environment that will make visiting easier for families and particularly for children. We are privileged to have the continued support of a great group of volunteers who give their time freely in creating a welcoming tea/coffee service in the present waiting room and will continue to do so in the new prison. They also provide information and support to families when requested and help children by providing colouring materials and books. We have been able to do this by working closely with the IPS in promoting a more humane environment for visiting families. With this interaction, St. Nicholas Trust will endeavour to continue to develop supports and to help to create on-going development.

By: [Mairead Carmody](#)  
[St Nicholas` Trust, Probation Services.](#)

## Post Release Project

In October 2001, following a successful application to the CDLTF, the Post-Release Services Project was established within the Education Unit of Cork Prison. The project is funded by the Local Drugs and Alcohol Task Force and administered through the Cork ETB as a response to a gap in service provision to prisoners being released.

The main objectives of the project are to continue to provide a -

- Comprehensive post release programme to support the rehabilitation, reintegration and resettlement of ex-prisoners by liaising with voluntary and statutory agencies on their behalf.
- Continues to prepare, support and aid homeless prisoners for positive resettlement back into their communities.
- Continues to refer any members of the target group who require drug treatment to the relevant addiction community services.
- provide information to the target group
- act as a mentor for individuals who need it
- Increase the employability of prisoners after release.

The Project also facilitates the ongoing access to services for prisoners with community agencies to work with prisoners pre and post release, ie. Sophia Housing, Focus Ireland, Homeless Persons Unit, City and County Council's, Citizen's Information and services in Kerry and Waterford in order to create a bridge between leaving prison and positive resettlement back into their communities.

By: Frances Russell  
Post Release Co-ordinator.

## Cork Alliance Centre – 2015 Submission on the Centres work

The Cork Alliance Centre works with individuals released from prison, with the support of both the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service. The Centre provides support to make a ‘fresh start’, both in terms of reducing offending and increasing positive participation in individual, family and community life. It aims to facilitate an individual to be more aware and have a greater understanding of the consequences of their choices and exploring alternatives, so that they may choose the option best suited to their circumstances, and become generally better equipped to manage their lives more positively. The services of the Cork Alliance Centre focus on people who choose to voluntarily access our supports as they seek to desist from crime. It is directly target at prisoners or former prisoners – both men and women – who on release from prison reside in the Cork area<sup>1</sup>

The Centre operates two programmes –

- **Desistance and Integration Support Programme** – this can be accessed by individuals who have been in prison. The Centres work is directed towards facilitating service users to become generally better equipped to manage their lives positively. This strengths-based approach focuses on building self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-respect and self-determination, while taking responsibility for personal actions. The Centre is facilitated to access prisoners in Cork, Limerick, Portlaoise and the Midlands Prisons and in Shelton Abbey. With referrals from Loughan House, Wheatfield and the Dóchas Centre also received. On average 70 service users at any time access the supports of the service. In 2014 the Cork Alliance Centre worked with 174 people, 86% men and 14% women. Together with their offending behaviours their primary presenting need were identified as 76% addiction, 6% mental health and 17% reintegration. Some service users have been through university, and many more are at, or have been to college. Many have found recovery from addictions, and while others are struggling with their recovery they are seeking support to change.
- **Community Support Scheme**- prisoners serving sentences of 3-12 months have the opportunity to serve their sentence in the community rather than in prison. The focus is a short-term practical intervention linking participants to services as it

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<sup>1</sup> The Cork Alliance Centre does not work with sex-offenders

seeks to improve their chances of sustaining life outside of prison. Referrals are made from the Prison Service. The importance of the participants 'choice' to access the programme and the related responsibilities they hold to maintain it are key to the programme's success. The programme is not something enforced on participants, rather an opportunity they chose to avail of – and to take responsibility for. The programme also has a process of inter-prison and programme area referrals between Cork, Dublin and Limerick. In 2015 there were 194 referrals to the programme of which 119 were released to the Cork Alliance Centre under it, 9 are ongoing in prison and 1 person was referred to the PALLS programme. Of those granted temporary release under the scheme, 72% are current and completed their programme.

By: Sheila Connolly  
Cork Alliance

### **Churchfield Trust**

Churchfield Community Trust is a Community Organisation based on the North side of Cork City. This Organisation works using the ethos of The Servol model to work respectfully with persons who present with challenges regarding substance misuse/addiction and offending behaviour.

The community trust works collaboratively with The Probation Service, IASIO, Health Service Executive, Department of Social Protection and other local agencies. In late 2015 The Grattan project another well-established community based organisation amalgamated with Churchfield Community Trust. This development has added greater depth to the quality of services on offer particularly in the areas of administration & Addiction counselling.

The addition of two addiction counsellors to the churchfield team is significant, one of which is based @The Probation Service offices while the second will provide an in reach service at Cork Prison and also an outreach service within the local community. At point of referral a needs based analysis is conducted with potential clients to identify supports which need to be prioritised. Outreach support is offered initially to



persons who are ready to engage with same .This takes place in the context of both referrals from The Probation service and also pre and post release initiatives. Outreach support is given in the context of, one to one key-working, horticulture programme & signposting of services.

An Alcohol and Offending behaviour programme is also being run in conjunction with The Probation service with a view to engaging with persons are interested in exploring problematic relationships with alcohol and also its link to offending behaviour. Group work takes place over eight sessions in the context of exploration of attitudes and pre contemplation with a view to engaging further with support services as required. To date four groups have completed this programme while further groups will begin in February 2016 in strategic areas in the Cork- Kerry Region.

At our premises at Knockfree Avenue participants may engage in a second phase which focuses on community employment initiatives. There is a specific emphasis regarding adult education, in the areas of literacy support, communications, woodcraft, horticulture & Cookery.

Group work, auricular acupuncture and therapeutic massage are also core aspects of our in house programme. Our workshop at Knockfree Avenue under the direction of our workshop team provides training in the design and construction of both crèche /outdoor furniture and bespoke products.

In 2015 contracts were secured with Akzo/ Nobel (Dulux) for the design and construction of garden furniture which showcased a new range of Products at Bloom Garden show in Dublin.

A workshop premises has been secured at Ballyvolanne Business Park to engage with the outreach cohort of referrals and also Community employment participants who are ready to progress to a pre-employment phase. This Premises is currently undergoing a substantial refurbishment and will come on stream in spring 2016.Training at this workshop will be conducive to teaching new skills to those who are interested in returning to the workplace or indeed learning trades such as carpentry and woodcraft.

Community enterprise features strongly within this organisation, particularly in the context of The Garden Café which is situated in a Victorian style glasshouse in the Blackpool area of Cork City.

It is open to the public daily for breakfast, morning Coffee, & Lunch. This unique enterprise provides training and employment for persons in the areas of food preparation, Barista training, HACCP food hygiene training, customer service training while also gaining accreditation in QQI Training & Preparation for Work module . Training in the area of horticulture and landscaping is given to participants and horticulture interns in the use of equipment such as hedge cutters, lawnmowers, strimmer's and leaf blowers.

Finally in terms of influencing social policy Churchfield Community Trust has recently made a presentation to The Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Equality & Defence which is chaired by Mr David Stanton T.D. Matters which were discussed included function & purpose of Churchfield Community Trust, The Portuguese Model re decriminalisation & spent convictions bill.

Mr David Stanton T.D also visited Churchfield and met with participants and discussed challenges and barriers to desistance relevant to participants engaging with the organisation.

By: Paul O'Donnell  
Director  
Churchfield Trust

### **Irish Association for the Social Integration of Offenders (IASIO)**

IASIO works with clients of the Criminal Justice System in the community and prisons across Ireland. Three separate programmes work to assist clients to progress their lives by providing a professional support system. The work of this service is primarily built on desistance, a belief that people can and do stop committing crime. The services are The Linkage Service, The Resettlement Service, both of which work

in Cork Prison. The Gate Service is the third service and this service is available in other prisons in Ireland but not in Cork Prison. The Linkage Service is a Guidance and Placement Service with qualified Guidance professionals that offer a weekly clinic to prisoners in Cork Prison through referrals from the Probation Service; it is fully funded by the Probation Service. The Resettlement Service is a prison based service, the resettlement coordinator offers the opportunity to clients to make a resettlement plan for their release i.e. help with benefits, housing, relationships etc., whatever supports stabilise their resettlement. This service is funded through the Irish Prison service.

Clients are referred to these services and are met to support them during their sentence to look at future plans for their lives and with Resettlement specifically to consider what is required to stabilise clients on release and support reintegration into their communities and families. At the start of a sentence a guidance interview with Training and Employment Officer can encourage a client to utilise their sentence so that they can make changes in their lives on release by attending other services in the prison, like training, education, addiction counsellors. Towards the end of a sentence referrals are beneficial to the client so that a plan can be formulated with supports put in place for the client. Supporting clients on release is an easier process for the client if a professional relationship is formed with the client during the course of their sentence. It is hoped that on release the work will continue in the community to explore progression options with the client and support them with their choices.

A group work programme run over 10/2hr sessions called Changing Course is also available as an option for IASIO clients. This programme goes through individual set modules as well as using the combined knowledge from the participants in the group, to explore future possibilities for their lives. This is facilitated by the Linkage and Resettlement persons in Cork prison, Colm Carey and Maria Walsh. In 2015 four Changing Course programmes ran in Cork prison, the feedback from the participants was very positive. The uptake of the programme is good and the retention and completion rates for participants are excellent with a waiting list for the next programme.

This course encourages participation in existing education and training programmes in the prison and linking to other services. The links between services and the development of specific training and education progression routes from this course is an ongoing and growing process between the Principal and staff of the Education

Unit, the Prison Service training manager and staff (Cork), the Probation Service staff and IASIO staff. IASIO staff continues to explore new options for the benefit of clients both during their sentence and post release in their communities and families.

By: Maria Walsh  
St Nicholas Church  
Linkage Service

### **Review of the Irish Prison Service 2015:**

- The following submission was made to Judge Reilly's Review of the Irish Prison Service.

Further to our report in 2013 we still feel that consideration should be given to having on site all the necessary equipment that would enable full body searches to take place where there is a suspicion of contraband been brought in the prison. Were this in place it could prevent prisoners being used as mules and also protect the health of prisoners and prevent major health difficulties for the prison.

- Consideration should be given when the new Cork prison is fully operational, to using part of the existing prison as a Step Down facility.
- The new Information Channel currently been piloted in Cork Prison should be extended to all prisons.
- The Dept of Social Welfare should have an officer attached to each prison which could help alleviate the problem of people claiming welfare payments while in prison and could facilitate prisoners on their release.
- Another issue that occurs is the amount of Committals that have to be processed on a daily basis in relation to fines. Where prisoners are processed

in the prison and then released. We understand that this can be up to 80% of committals on certain days. This is a huge waste of Garda, Courts and Prison staff time. We feel that it is incumbent of the authorities to put a more appropriate system in place.

I would like to compliment and thank the members of the Cork Visiting Committee for their work during the year Anthony Donnelly, Tomas Ryan and Dermot O Connell and to also welcome the recent appointees of Cork Visiting Committee Diarmuid Drennan and Jerry O Sullivan.

Finally I would like to thank Governor Collins, Prison Administration & Support Officer 1 Caroline O Connor and all the staff at Cork Prison whose courtesy and help was very much appreciated during the year.

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Mr Robin Murray, Chairman  
on behalf of:  
Cork Visiting Committee

- Anthony Donnelly
- Tomas Ryan
- Dermot O`Connell
- Diarmuid Drennan
- Jeremiah O`Sullivan