

Portlaoise Prison  
Dublin Road  
Portlaoise  
Co. Laois



Priosún Port Laoise  
Bóthar Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Port Laoise  
Contae Laoise

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Mr. Michael McDowell, T.D.  
Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform,  
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Dublin 2.

## **Visiting Committee Annual Report 2005**

We the members of Portlaoise Prison Visiting Committee are pleased to present our Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2005.

The Committee meet on the first Tuesday of each month throughout the year. Attendance at the meetings was very good, even though our Committee now only has five members as three members were not replaced during the year.

We elected a new Chairman during the year and our Secretary retired after many years of service to us.

Two members are nominated at each meeting to visit the Prison unannounced during the month. During these visits we visit all areas of the Prison and make our selves available to prisoners to discuss any grievances they may have.

We are very disappointed that D Block is still being used to house prisoners despite our previous recommendations that it be closed down with immediate effect.

We are glad to report that work is about to commence on the building of the new C Block and that it should be completed within 18 months. We have been critical over the years about the general conditions that prevail in the Prison especially the lack of in cell sanitation, and welcome the commencement of the new block

The overall health of the prisoners during the year was good. The Medical Officer (GP) along with the medical team of nurses, medical orderlies, psychiatrist and psychologist provided an excellent service for the prisoners throughout the year. Other services provided were dental, chiropody and optical when required.

The education area consists of temporary units at present while we wait the construction of the new education unit and C Wing. Despite the poor classroom set up, the services provided to prisoners through the Laois VEC is excellent. and a high quality, broad and flexible programme is available at the Prison. Credit is due to the staff who work under difficult circumstances and produce some exceptional results.

The Education Unit facilitates students to study through a process of open learning. Open learning allows the student to study at their own pace and choose their own goals. The teachers are available to help students select subjects and offer educational guidance as required.

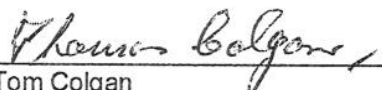
We wish to compliment the officers who run the kitchen for their high achievements and standards in the preparation, cooking and distribution of the food every day throughout the year.

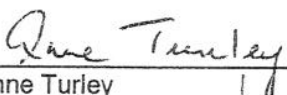
The Catholic Chaplain, Fr Drumm and Church of Ireland Minister take care of the spiritual needs of the prisoner community .

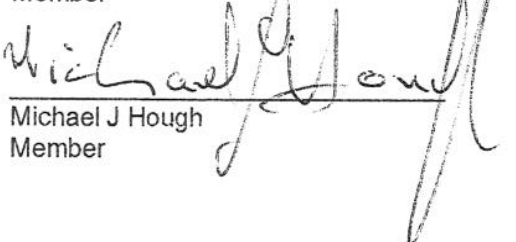
The Probation and Welfare Service also visit the Prison on a regular basis and give a very important support service to prisoners and their families .

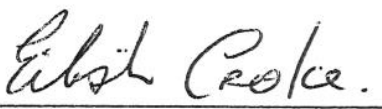
We look forward to the completion of the new building programme are optimistic of having a new and modern prison for the prisoners in the next couple of years .

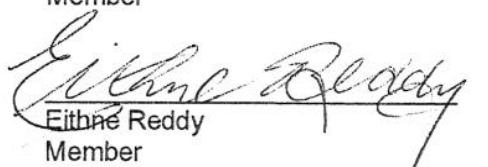
In conclusion, we wish to record our sincere thanks to the Governor and his Staff for the courtesy shown to us during our visits throughout the year.

  
Tom Colgan  
Chairman

  
Anne Turley  
Member

  
Michael J Hough  
Member

  
Eilish Croke  
Member

  
Eithne Reddy  
Member