

# Loughan House

Visiting Committee

Annual Report 2003

( 01.01.03 - 31.11.03 )

## **Loughan House Visiting Committee Annual Report 2003**

We, the undersigned members of the Loughan House Visiting Committee, have pleasure in presenting this our Annual Report for 2003.

The committee held a total of 11 meetings during the year all of which were well attended. During the year Mr Clifford Kelly, Mr Eddie Feeley, Mr Denis Brosnan, Mrs Rita Delahunty, Mr Eugene Delaney, Mrs Kathleen Richey, Mr Naul Mc Cole, Mrs Mary Kathleen Johnston, Mrs Alice Bonner, Mr Brendan Hughes, Mr William McDermott and Mr Martin Doonan served on the Committee.

Mr Clifford Kelly served as Chairperson of the Visiting Committee and Mrs Kathleen Richey as Vice Chairperson.

We had a total of 591 committals from other institutions during the year to the end of November 2003, an increase of 51 inmates on the previous year. The Temporary Release programme continues to work well with only a very small percentage of inmates failing to comply with their conditions of release.

33 inmates absconded from Loughan House during the year but 16 were returned to custody shortly afterwards. Five inmates escaped from escorts with two of these prisoners being captured shortly afterwards.

Mr Derek Brennan served as Governor in Loughan House and Mr James Reilly as Assistant Governor. Mr Gerard Mc Morrow was promoted to the rank of Chief Officer in Loughan House during the year.

### **Visits**

During the year the committee members visited the house on their unscheduled visits and found all inmates in a good and contented manner. The house and grounds were always in a neat and tidy condition and likewise the kitchen area which received an excellent report from "Fáilte Ireland" and attained a pass certificate for the first time this year, was in pristine condition on each of our inspections.

The Governor Mr Brennan has established a Board Room for meetings and this facility has assisted greatly in our work. On the instruction of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform no annual visit was carried out to any other institution during the year.

### **Education**

The education unit continues to offer an excellent range of subjects to the inmates from basic literacy skills up to comprehensive third level courses. Such diverse subjects and topics as cookery skills, woodwork and parenting skills are on offer. Inmates continue to attend this unit on an enthusiastic and totally voluntary basis.

In addition inmates attend courses outside Loughan House whenever the opportunity and demand arises.

### **The CAIT initiative**

This continues to be in use seven days of the week and has a high level of participation from the inmates. Inmates have benefited greatly from this facility and it compliments the activities ongoing in the education area.

### **Probation and Welfare Service.**

There is a full time Probation and Welfare Officer attached to Loughan House. A good service is provided with inmates making good use of the service. A pre-release substance abuse programme is run in the institution by this service in conjunction with the Education unit and the North Western Health Board with inmates very willing to participate.

### **Pre-release Programme**

A formal pre-release programme called "New Horizons" is now running in Loughan House and this should greatly assist inmates when they are released as it covers all practical aspects of living in the community following release. The topics and skills learned include Safe Pass Certification, Forklift training, Personal Finance Management and Men's Health

### **External Agencies**

The needs of the inmates continues to be attended to by members of Alcoholics Anonymous when they have volunteers available. The Samaritans continue to promote their service within the institution through the provision of informative documentation and the help of the various bodies within the institution itself

### **Health Care.**

The provision of health care continues to be provided by our two visiting doctors and dental surgeon to a very high standard. Psychiatric and Psychology services are provided whenever the need arises.

### **Inmates Requests.**

During the year one inmate requested to meet with the Committee. All inmates were given the opportunity to speak to the Committee in an unhindered manner. Inmates requests to the committee are dealt with promptly but none complained about their treatment in Loughan House. Inmates expressed a high level of satisfaction with the staff and the facilities provided.

### **Chaplaincy**

The spiritual needs of the inmates are attended to by a visiting chaplain from the local parish. Mass is celebrated on a weekly basis and on all the various feast days during the year. Fr Molloy was moved to another parish during the year, A farewell mass and reception was held to mark his departure and he was replaced by Fr Comiskey who now serves as Chaplain to Loughan House. The chaplain is available to attend to any inmate whenever called upon to do so and is greatly assisted by Sister Ellen Wallace who attends on a regular basis. The requirements of all inmates of whatever persuasion are attended to as required.

### **Maintenance.**

The members would like to thank the Governor and all his staff for the way they have maintained the buildings and grounds. The general environment of Loughan House was consistent with good residential care and would have greatly contributed to the comfort of its inmates.

### **Environmental Management System**

Loughan House has put in place an environmental management system which is the first ever to operate in any prison and is to date working well contributing greatly to the local environment and raising awareness of environmental matters

## Library

The library service continues to be provided by Cavan County Library. It is a valuable and well run service open three times a week under the care of a dedicated part time Librarian. Inmates make great use of this service.

In conclusion, we the members of the Loughan House Visiting Committee would agree that Loughan House provided a good cost effective service to its residents and continues to review and upgrade the services it provides.. We would like to compliment the Governor and staff for the commitment and dedication they give to the well being of the inmates in their care. Finally we would like to thank the Governor and all his staff for the courtesy and co-operation extended to us on all our visits throughout the year.

Griffith Kelly Chairperson

Kathleen Ruckey Vice Chairperson

Brendan Sheehan Member

William McKenna Member

Deir Brosan Member

Martin Doonan Member

Eugene Petanery Member.

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Nail Mc Cole. Member.

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Eddie Fealy Member.

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