

Shelton Abbey Open Centre
Beech Road
Arklow
Co. Wicklow

Visiting Committee Annual Report 2020

The Visiting Committee has pleasure in presenting their annual report for the year ending 2020

Due to Covid 19 and in adherence to Government guidelines the Visiting Committee met on only eight occasions throughout the year on the following dates 09/01/20, 06/02/20, 30/07/20, 27/08/20, 23/09/20, 29/10/20, 26/11/20 and 17/12/20. This has been a very different year for the prison Visiting Committee, prisoners, management and staff. The welfare, safety, wellbeing and successful rehabilitation of the prisoner to society remains our prime concern.

The Visiting Committee wish to acknowledge the immense challenge to prisoners and staff posed by the crisis and the necessary implementation of NEPHT guidelines. For people in custody, the restrictions meant that they were isolated without family visits, faced disruption and restriction of services including education and rehabilitation regimes.

The Visiting Committee wish to acknowledge the rapid response to the pandemic and the significant measures put in place by the Governor, management and staff in Shelton Abbey and of the Irish Prison Service for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of prisoners during this time.

We are pleased to report that the committee continues to be chaired by Mr. Thomas Gregan with the following Committee Members Mr. Anthony Lawlor, Mr. Thomas Healy, Mr. Richard Codd and Ms Geraldine Graham.

Initiatives in Shelton Abbey

The committee is pleased to report local management's continued commitment to delivering the highest standards in offender sentence management. With continuing financial limitations being imposed across the prison service, it is a credit to the excellent work and leadership of Governor Joseph Donoghue and all the team that the centre continues to maintain and introduce new initiatives.

- Following the completion of a barista course by six inmates, it was decided to purchase barista equipment and to open a pop-up cafe in the dining hall. The coffee dock is open to visitors at weekends and is manned by the inmates, engendering trust. We now have a total of 26 inmate trained as Baristas.
- Internet access continued to be extended to set up user accounts in 2020, the purpose of which is to assist both teachers and inmates to enhance the quality of the education experience and to be able to research employment, education and training opportunities.
- Video Visits for prisoners was set up in April of 2020. This initiative was put in place to allow prisoners to contact their families whilst physical visits were placed on hold as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. This has proved very popular with our prisoner population
- Video links to the courts were set up in Shelton Abbey, thus reducing the requirement for prisoners to physically attend court. The link to the court takes place in our Boardroom
- The Bikes for Africa Project was set up in Shelton Abbey in 2020, in conjunction with the Rotary Club. One of our inmates completes a Bike Engineers Course and a Bike Repair Shop was set up on the prison farm. To date, we have sent a total of 420 to school children in Africa

- Personal Protection Equipment – With the Covid 19 pandemic affecting all of our lives, one of our inmates began making Face Masks as his way of giving back to society. These were very well received by all
- Shelton Abbey CHAC Meeting continued to take place in Shelton Abbey by way of Video link
- Shelton Abbey prisoners made a wheelchair accessible picnic bench which was delivered to one of our charity partners, The Irish Wheelchair Association
- Alternative to Violence workshops continued in Shelton Abbey during 2020
- Shelton Abbey installed 36 PV Panels in April of 2020 in our efforts to promote a greener world for all
- Shelton Abbey continued to provide kindling to those who needed it in the Arklow area through one of our Charity Partners, Arklow Cancer Care Support Group

Community Involvement

As a direct result of the Covid 19 Pandemic, access to community projects and initiatives greatly affected our prisoner population. This included the following activities, which for the most part were cancelled: External Employment, External Training & Education, External Charity Work, Shelton Abbey's Open Day, Tinahely Agricultural Show etc

Training for Visiting Committee Members

Committee members attended one training day by zoom in 2021. Mr. Gregan also attended the visiting committee Chairperson's meetings by zoom on the following dates 25/05/20, 29/06/20, 24/08/20, 24/09/20, 19/10/20 and 07/12/20. Such meetings are an ideal occasion to share experiences with other committee members, while updating on current prison practices and their context. The visiting committee also visited the Dochas Womens prison in March 2020. Such visits provide a forum for experiencing the differences between secure and open centres as well as sharing best practice with regard to prisoner welfare.

Activities for Prisoners

Work training opportunities for the inmates are provided at the farm, on the grounds, kitchen and industrial cleaning teams.

The catering section continues to provide the highest quality of food production as well as rewarding employment and learning opportunities for offenders. The regular turnover of offenders ensures a continuous training schedule.

The farm is providing a wide variety of positive activities to suitable offenders. Continuous and regular audits ensure best practice is maintained. The mix of tillage farming and animal welfare enables offenders to experience a wide variety of skills, for example, poultry keeping, with the eggs produced being available for sale. Another example of supporting worthy community causes is the donation of potatoes and kindling to SVP and Arklow Cancer Care who also benefitted from the proceeds of the sale of logs from felled trees on the estate.

The garden and grounds team continues to maintain the outstanding features of the Shelton estate. Constant improvement and development of the areas provides a wide variety of skills and experience to interested offenders. A high proportion of offender employment revolves around the farm, grounds and garden.

The Industrial cleaning team continues to provide an excellent service, with cleaning and maintaining communal areas and communal toilet and shower blocks. This team also looks after the laundry.

Shelton Abbey's partnership with Dogs for the Disabled continued in 2020. Four dogs are in training at any given time, each dog being assigned to a prisoner who becomes the dog's handler for a period of twelve weeks.

Programmes for offenders

The provision of temporary release programmes, well in advance of an offender's release, is proving to be an excellent reintegration tool. All offenders must supply an address where they are welcome during the periods of temporary release. The phased release plan allows time for relationships and trust to build. The alternative – immediate release back into the community, is not as beneficial.

Addiction Counselling

The addiction service in Shelton Abbey is run by Addiction Counsellor Camilla Walsh who works closely with all services medical, chaplaincy, probation services, Redcross, management, IPS.

Meetings: Redcross, multi D, Review meetings, Lifers meetings, in house services, outside services, community based projects, Residential treatment, housing services.

There is only one counsellor assigned to Shelton Abbey and she operates a walk in service. There are no waiting lists in Shelton, Counsellor works four days per week and starts at 8 to facilitate those who work on the farm or attend school and also take lunchtime appointments to facilitate same.

All prisoners are seen on entry by Camilla regardless of charge. They are assessed to see if they have current or previous addiction issues. They are offered one to one addiction counselling if required.

In the absence of a psychology service they are also offered general counselling if they have issues other than addiction. E.G. (anxiety, bereavement, loss, depression, family issues, adapting to prison, release. etc).

If they require follow on treatment they are referred to residential services or days services pre-release for addiction support post release.

Camilla will also liaise with outside services to supply facilitators to run AA, NA and GA Groups.

From Covid lockdown of the Service in March 2020 to end June 2020 the service went from face to face contact to phone contact. The service then operated from 9-5 daily and was extended to weekends too, giving the prisoners 7 days access to counselling support.

All returned to normal post lockdown. Very busy. High turnover.

Chaplaincy

Lay Chaplain Ms Debbie Borland continues to provide spiritual guidance to the offenders, organising Mass and other religious events and is always available to assist the offenders and staff

Community Welfare Office

A community welfare officer visits Shelton Abbey one morning per week and provides a valuable service to the offenders. Offenders being released with a small allowance ensures their families are not put under pressure to provide for them.

Probation Service

The Probation Service continues to deliver a wonderful service to the offenders either by phone, zoom or in person. The Community Return Scheme (CRS) has been one of the most positive/progressive initiatives witnessed by the committee. The Centre is one of the highest providers of candidates for CRS and this is due to the dedicated work of the Probation team. The probation officers are still expected to deliver other services to offenders and are in constant demand.

Accommodation

The Open Centre is separated into two accommodation units, the Main Building and Avoca House. The main Building accommodates 56 offenders in dormitory/communal rooms with two rooms now fitted out with ten pods, giving offenders a lot more privacy, with long term offenders benefitting from this type of accommodation in preparation for moving into their own accommodation on release. The installation of pods continues as they are completed in the carpentry department of the Midlands Prison. Most offenders, on transfer, are accommodated in the main building and over time progress to single room accommodation in Avoca House. The shared toilet and shower facilities (Main House) have now been refurbished to a very high standard. All prisoners are responsible for the cleanliness of their own space.

Avoca House also accommodates the offices of the Probation Service, Chaplain, Addiction Counsellor, Training and Education Officer and Integrated Sentence Management Officer.

Medical Cover

Medical Cover is provided by a local GP Practice. The Doctors parade continues Monday - Friday mornings and all medical requirements are facilitated through their office. Most offenders are considered suitable (under contract) to retain their own medication and self-medicate. There are two Nursing officers assigned to Shelton Abbey with one nursing officer on duty during day time hours 7 days per week. There are no healthcare staff available during the hours of 7.30pm – 7.30am. There is no dedicated Psychologist or Psychiatrist assigned to the Centre but external appointments are made as required.

Recommendations

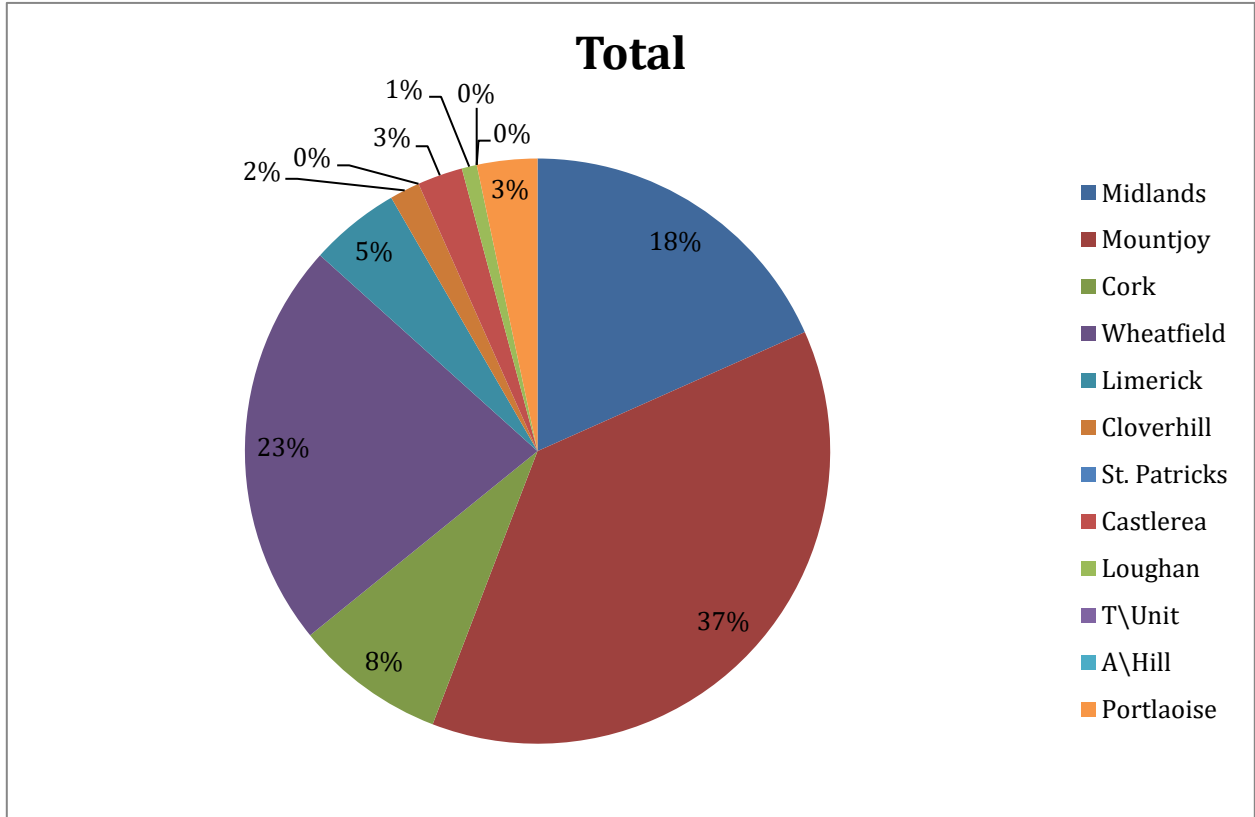
- There have been further improvements to Shelton Abbey in the past year and we feel these should be developed further. The committee requests the Minister gives strong consideration to their observations and recommendations.
- A state of the art workshop for offenders to pursue hobbies and interests was installed on-site in 2018 - however, this space still awaits connection to electricity, which hopefully will be addressed in 2021 with the installation of solar panels.
- The education centre continues to operate in a prefab building which has unacceptably evolved into a full time temporary solution. This building is no longer fit for purpose. The demand for particular classes exceeds the classroom size and there was a problem with rodents during the year. The committee recommends this situation be remediated as a matter of urgency.
- We feel single room accommodation best prepares offenders for release and acknowledge the ongoing installation of pods in the dormitories. The long term vision for accommodation in Shelton Abbey is self-contained bungalows.
- The Centre lacks other facilities that might be considered in future capital investment plans i.e. an enhanced visitor's area, in particular a designated space for children.

Currently there is no play space for children visiting their fathers, despite the submission of a very comprehensive plan a number of years ago.

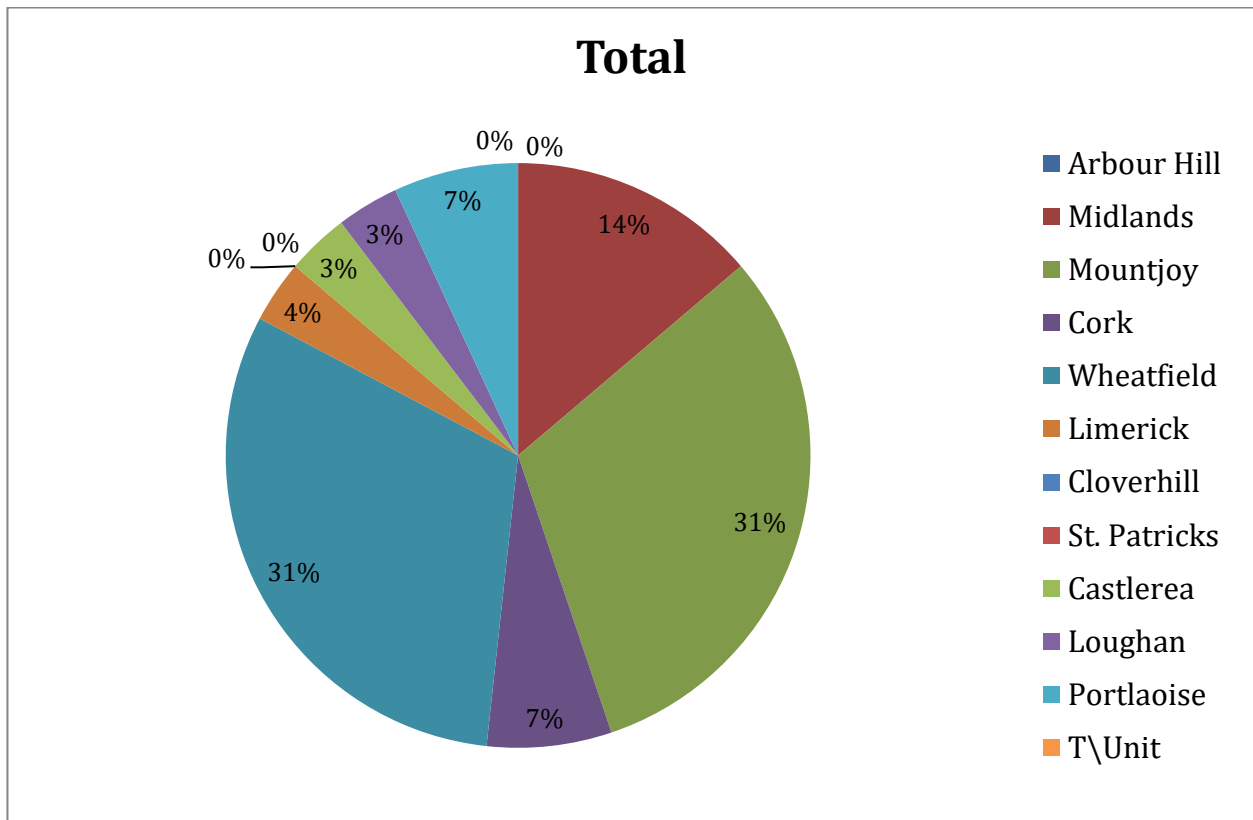
- The creation of the post of Work Training Officer for the laundry would give inmates the opportunity to gain accredited training in this area.
- The food provided by the catering department is of a very high standard. The committee recommends resources be granted to enable the department to apply for the Q Mark award once again.
- The committee also recommends the Irish Prison Service considers introducing further work and training facilities.
- Shelton Abbey generates income from the work on the estate, much of which is donated to charity which of course is welcome by those organisations. However, the committee asks the Minister to consider amending the financial rules to enable Shelton Abbey to self-fund some of their initiatives.
- The Visiting Committee also recommends that a psychology service be introduced in Shelton Abbey.

Offenders Statistics

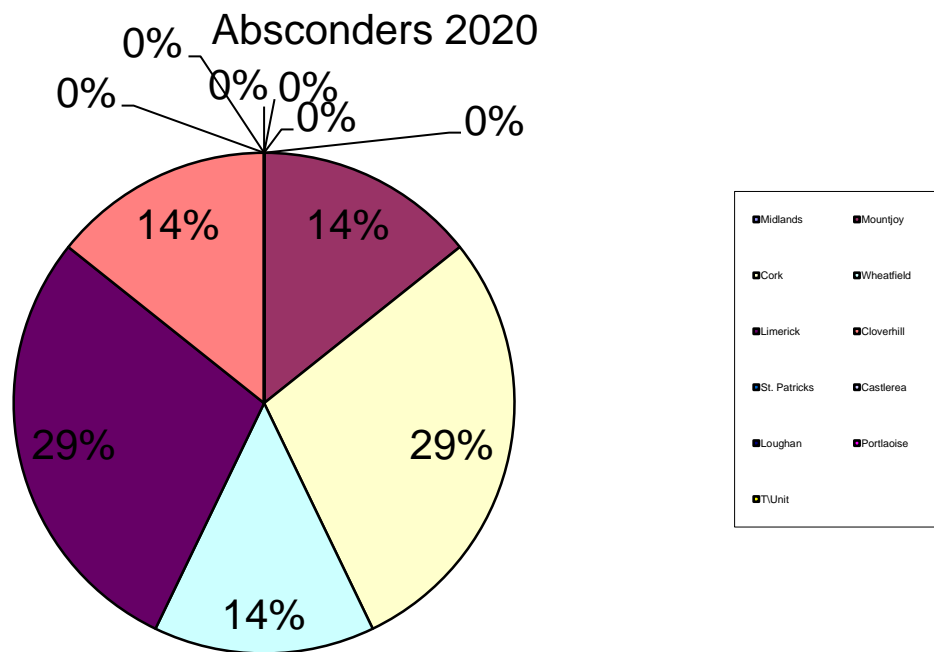
120 offenders transferred in



29 offenders transferred out



7 offenders absconded during the year with 2 still @ large at year end



Farming Report 2020

Tillage:

Due to the very poor weather conditions from late September onwards we failed to sow any winter barley this year because ground and soil conditions were not favourable for the crop. Instead the option for this year is to sow all spring barley in 2020 as the 2 crop rule has been scrapped as a result of the poor weather conditions nationally. All 52 acres of barley was sown on the 30/03/2020 in ideal conditions.

The barley was harvested on the 14/09/2020 which yielded 147.62 Tonnes which was good considering difficult weather conditions and all straw was saved and sold.

We did manage to sow winter barley this year and this was sown on the 18/10/2020 which we were lucky to do because windows of opportunity to sow were scarce due to persistent rainfall.

All tillage work was carried out to the highest standard by agri. Contractor Des Lane who won the tender for this work with the exception of the rolling of the crops after it was sown which was done by an inmate using our own tractor and roller.

Hedge cutting was conducted on the farm on the 14/10/2020 by a local contractor following a tendering process. We obliged to maintain the hedge rows under the CAP policies.

Potatoes:

1 acre of Rooster potatoes was sown and ½ an acre of mixed veg. was also sown (carrots, parsnips, turnips, onions and peas). All work associated with the potato and vegetable crops was completed by the inmates working on the farm such as ploughing, rotavating, sowing, fertilizing, spraying, harvesting and packaging. The potatoes were harvested on the 14/09/2020 and they yielded approx. 11 Tonnes. We have been experiencing a lot of damage by wild Deere which we are trying to address

Potatoes are sorted and bagged by inmates throughout the winter months and bags of Potatoes are sold from the farm for €6.50 for a 20kg bag. The Governor also donated some potatoes to two very deserving charities, one being the Saint Vincent de Paul and the other being a local Cancer support charity in Arklow.

Bedding Plants:

Bedding plants were brought into the poly tunnel on weeks 9, 11, 13, and 16. Inmates planted up all bedding plants and looked after the plants in poly tunnel by watering, fertilizing and hardening off the plants before sale. The bedding plants were sold to Mountjoy complex, Arbour Hill, Dochas centre, and Cloverhill Prisons as well as local sales. This year because of strict restrictions we were unable to allow anyone on to the farm to purchase flowers to protect our inmates from being exposed to Covid 19, instead people rang in and the staff took the order and arranged a meeting time for

collection off of the farm which worked well but did slow down sales and created a huge amount of extra work. Some local charities also received a donation of flowers on behalf of the Governor. Letters of appreciation are on file for same. Winter bedding plants were also brought into the poly tunnel in September and the Dublin Prisons were supplied with their winter bedding requirements.

The poly tunnel continues to be one of our biggest employers of inmates on the farm for the summer months as there is a huge work load involved which was more important this year more than ever since all work programmes we suspended because of Covid 19 and it provided meaningful structured employment for the additional inmates on the farm.

We also supply our own gardens here in Shelton with flowers which are in full bloom throughout the summer months in the flower pots and hanging baskets and the rose garden also.

Hens:

The hens continued to produce eggs throughout 2020. We culled one flock 09/03/2020 which were then disposed in the local knackery. These were culled because of their age and once the ratio of hens to eggs drops below 65% they are no longer productive.

The hen house was then completed power washed and disinfected before the arrival of the new flock.

The new flock of hens were placed 29/06/2020 which consisted of 220 free range Lohmann brown hens which were supplied by Whittakers and proved to be a very productive flock of hens.

Unfortunately there was an outbreak of bird flu on the island of Ireland and the hens had to be contained in their shed as per instructions of the department of agriculture the help stop the spread of the bird flu. This started on the 22/12/2020.

There was no physical visits from the Department of Agriculture officials to conduct their unannounced poultry inspections because of Covid 19 however they were conducted remotely or desktop audits where all paper work asked for was forwarded on to them successfully.

Dung samples from the hens are send to complete laboratory solutions every 15 weeks for salmonella testing and an annual water sample is taken.

Inmates are responsible for the day to day running of the hen house which includes egg collection are recording each day, feeding hens and replacing grit on scratch area each week.

We continue to be self-sufficient in eggs here in Shelton Abbey and any excess is sold in our eggspress machine from the back yard where staff and visitors can purchase 30 free range eggs for €5.00

Bothar:

Shelton Abbey once again provided the quarantine for the goats for Bothar in 2020. 105 goats from the Republic of Ireland arrived in Shelton Abbey on the 06/10/2020. All care for the goats is done by the inmates working on the farm and under the supervision of vets from the department of agriculture who come and inspect the goats and supervise the goats being loaded when they are being exported.

Goats received vaccinations such as Heptavac P+ and ivomec Super and all this is done with the assistance of the inmates working on the farm. The goats always prove to be popular with the inmates as a lot of the goats would have been bottle fed and are pets and have lovely temperaments.

22 calves were received on to the farm in March of 2019. These are currently being cared for here by the inmates and will be put in calf to a Friesian Bull from June onwards and will be exported in October.

Our herd test was completed on the 20/07/2020 where thankfully we had a clear T.B. test. The heifers were also scanned on this date and 19 heifers out of 20 were in calf. The heifer that was not in calf will be sold at a later date.

On the 03/12/2020 19 in calf heifers were exported to Kosovo. These heifers were originally destined for Rwanda but once again because of Covid 19 restrictions this was not possible because before Covid 19 hit there was 2 flights a week to Rwanda from Amsterdam which had been reduced to 1 and if there wasn't enough passengers to justify the flights the flights were just cancelled which would have meant the in calf heifers would have been stranded in Amsterdam so it was just too big a risk to take. Fortunately the route to Kosovo is all by road so Bothar could successfully plan their save route to the receiving families.

For the same reasons explained above the goats were not exported and all these goats were returned to Bothar on the 14/12/2020.

Bothar contacted us on the 09/10/2020 to say that the charity regulator had been appointed to Bothar to conduct investigations into financial transactions so we are awaiting the outcome of this development. Bothar has still committed to our project here in Shelton Abbey and we in Shelton Abbey are still committed to Bothar.

Timber and Kindling project

During 2020 were we lucky enough to receive off cuts of timber from a local company called Harmony Timber. All these bags of timber are then examined and sorted with all big off cuts cut to the right size and re-bagged. This timber is then sold on with monies donated to local deserving charities at the Governors discretion. We also on a regular basis give sticks to members of Arklow cancer support team which deliver them to deserving families.

Pigs

We continue to have one pig on the farm which is now past her breeding days so she is just being kept as a pet.

Tinahely Show Project:

Unfortunately due to Covid 19 the Tinahely Show was cancelled for 2020 and we look forward in participating in this project in the near future when lifting of restrictions allow for it.

Bikes to Africa Project

2020 was the beginning of the Bikes to Africa Project here in Shelton Abbey. This project was already operating in Loughan House so on the 03/09/2020 industrial Supervisor Tom Gregan visited Loughan House to see how the project was ran and how to set it up in Shelton Abbey. Soon after equipment needed such as tools and bike stands and spare tubes chains etc. was put in place and the workshop was set up.

The first delivery of bikes arrived here in Shelton Abbey on the 28/09/2020 and were delivered by the Irish Army. The project is ran in conjunction with an organisation called the Rotary club. The Rotary club is a club of business and professional people that is a member of a worldwide organization of similar clubs devoted to serving the community and promoting world peace.

One of the projects that they have identified here in Ireland is refurbishing old bicycles and exporting them to African countries where they are gifted to school going children who have walked up to 8km each way for their education, so with the Bikes times are obviously significantly reduced.

The Rotary club have put out a country wide appeal for people to dispose of their old and used bikes in their local recycling centre. From there members of the rotary club decide which bikes are suitable to be refurbished and they have the Irish Army involved to provide the transportation of the bikes from the recycling centres to Shelton Abbey. The bikes come via the recycling centres because the Department of the Environment contribute to the project because the bikes are being recycled and not dumped.

This project has been running successfully here in Shelton Abbey and our first export of fixed bikes took place on the 23/12/2020.

There was also 20 bikes delivered by mistake to Shelton Abbey which were too small, they have to be a minimum of 24" wheel for the Rotary club but very fortunately our Chaplain was able to contact an organisation called Cross Care in conjunction with the local Garda which look after juveniles in Dublin teaching them about bike mechanics and repairs so we were able to donate these bikes for that reason.

Concrete Products

We have been very fortunate to be able to restart making concrete products on the farm. We took delivery of some moulds which are no longer required in Mountjoy. The inmates are able to make a large range of products such as flower pots, slabbing, benches, lanterns and lots of various figurines such as dogs, bird baths wishing wells etc. This project has proved to be popular amongst the inmates and once again provides structured activity for them.

Garden report 2020

Glasshouse

In 2020 shrubs from cuttings, bedding plants and vegetable plants were successfully propagated in the glasshouse. Selected cuttings from certain trees and shrubs were propagated throughout the winter. Vegetable plants such cabbage, broccoli, lettuce were started in the glasshouse and then transferred to the farm and grown on. Tomato plants were also started and transferred to the poly tunnel and grown on when the bedding plant season was over.

Composting

The composting area was extended during 2020 with an extra bay added and more concrete laid. There is a huge amount of raw material for composting in Shelton Abbey each year. During the summer months it's the grass cuttings and hedge clippings and during the winter months it's all the leaf fall. All this green material is gathered and brought to the composting area and put into the different bays. As the material is composting it gets mixed and moved onto the next stage bay each time before being finally graded into a lovely compost material. This compost is then used around the gardens here in Shelton Abbey to replenish the flower beds each year and also around the trees. The inmates are involved at all stages of the composting procedure and they also helped to extend the composting area.

Flower beds and Hanging Baskets

All flower beds and hanging baskets were maintained to a high standard. The plants for these flower beds and baskets were sourced from the poly tunnel on the farm. Inmates were responsible for planting, watering and weeding these beds throughout the summer months. These flower beds and baskets were then taken down in October and filled once again with winter bedding plants such as pansies and primroses again sourced from the farms poly tunnel.

Footpaths

Certain footpaths throughout the garden that were in bad repair continued to be repaired throughout 2020. This involved improving the drainage on certain footpaths, digging up the existing chippings putting down teram membrane and resurfacing with new chippings and then edging both sides. Inmates were involved at all stages of the process.

Rockery

An extensive upgrade was on going in the rockery area in 2020. This area had all the paths resurfaced and the stone replaced. The area was completely weeded and all old and obsolete shrubs were removed and replaced with new suitable shrubs. There has been new ecological features included such as butterfly boxes, bird boxes and spider hotels added also, which were made by the inmates and now being looked after by them also. The inmates in the men's shed have also manufactured garden furniture from old pallets and placed some of them on the Rockery as well as other parts of the garden which also has enhanced the area.

Maintenance

As always the garden requires a huge amount of maintenance all year round. The garden requires a huge amount of grass cutting, strimming and spraying of footpaths throughout the summer. There was a huge amount of planting done also in the flower beds, fan beds, fountain, and rose garden and also maintenance around the reed bed, water towers and river access gate provided. Throughout the winter months it turns to leaf blowing and composting and drainage of footpaths. There was also a lot of trees in the garden planted which were to replace trees that have been destroyed by storm damage throughout the year. The inmates working on the garden were also involved in reseeding outside the new entrance walls and also sowed the new hedges. This greatly enhanced the entrance to Shelton Abbey. Another additional feature we are experimenting with is 2 areas of rewilding. The areas identified are the grass bank facing the allotments and also the grass bank joining the Avoca River. It's hoped that these areas will help to improve natural vegetation for the wildlife.

Grow your own Veg. Project

The allotments was a little different in 2020 as there was no education unit involved as they were not on site due to the Covid 19 restrictions. However it was very successfully organized by WTO Declan Jordan. All 12 allotments were packed with vegetables and grown from seed and cared for right through to harvest under the supervision of WTO Declan Jordan. This proved to be very popular amongst the inmates during the summer months.

We were also fortunate to get a fruit cage installed during 2020. Inside this fruit cage the inmates are growing a wide range of common fruits such as gooseberries, raspberries, black and red currants strawberries and rhubarb. Once again this proving to be very popular amongst the inmates and very educational.

The small polytunnel in the allotments was also being put to good use during 2020 where a wide range of salads were successfully grown such as lettuce, cucumbers, tomatoes etc.

Soccer Pitch and outdoor gym:

The soccer pitch and outdoor gym was maintained to a very high standard all during 2020. This is a very important feature here in Shelton Abbey as an added source of exercise to the inmates which was more important than ever in 2020. It's in constant use 12 months of the year and given the size and the fact its outdoors all inmates are able to use the facility safely during the Covid 19 lock down periods along with the walking path around the pitch and the gardens.

Manual Handling Training

During 2020 WTO Declan Jordan successfully completed manual handling training with 31 inmates here in Shelton Abbey. All industrial area working inmates were trained e.g. Garden, Farm, Kitchen etc. We have formed a partnership here in Shelton Abbey with a local safety training company called ASL so WTO Declan Jordan completes all the training on site and the inmates receive a recognized certificate from ASL which is hugely beneficial to the inmates when released as the certificate can be used when trying to gain employment.

WTO Declan Jordan has also received an IOSH (Institution of Occupational Safety and Health) qualification which will enable him to expand the training that he deliver to the inmates here in Shelton Abbey in the future thus enhancing the certification of inmates discharged from Shelton Abbey.



Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann
IRISH PRISON SERVICE

SHELTON ABBEY EDUCATION CENTRE

Annual Report 2020

Introduction:

The Education Centre provides offenders with an opportunity to engage with education services while in custody in Shelton Abbey. Courses which lead to certification and locally accredited courses are offered. QQI certified courses are offered at Levels 3, 4 & 5. This enables students to establish themselves on the National Framework of Qualifications with nationally recognised, vocationally orientated, valuable qualifications. Other courses offered provide students with an opportunity to develop new skills and to explore areas of study which are of interest to them.

All levels of educational backgrounds are catered for from Basic Ed. to Open University level. This presents challenges to accommodate a broad range of abilities and ensure that each student benefits from their time in the centre. To achieve this, teachers have had to become flexible and creative to cater for the individual needs of each student. Personal achievement is our core value, irrespective of what level it occurs at.

Education Services were provided by the equivalent of 7.4 whole time teachers.

2020 Unique Challenges

2020 brought with it a new and unique challenge as covid 19 caused disruption on a global scale. Prison education, like all other areas of education, was interrupted in March with closure of the centre from March 12 until August 31. During this time, access to education was severely curtailed as online facilities to enable this did not exist. However, 4 Open University students were able to continue with their studies and when the centre reopened in August/September they could reengage with the OU coordinator. Weekly National Head Teachers meetings resulted in the production of a number of volumes of activity books, which were produced and printed within the prison system.

Facilities

Locally Accredited Programmes		
Title of programme:	Throughput in 2020:	Comments:
Adult Guidance & Counselling	50	Preparation for release Referrals for employment, training & further education
ABE	12	Basic education (Literacy 1-1, small groups)
General English	10	Education Course
Sculpture in Wood	28	Skills Course
General Art	20	Skills Course
History	6	Education Course
Spanish	8	Education Course

Currently the Education Centre Operates in a prefab building which was originally installed as a temporary solution. This building is now in need of replacement with a permanent structure. Restrictions on space also mean class sizes are not adequate to accommodate the demand for certain classes.

Courses Offered:

QQI Courses		
Course	Level	Number
Word Processing	3	4
Mosaics	3	15
Woodwork	3	17
CAD	5	3

A book club project was initiated through the Artists in Prisons scheme and a Sebastian Barry book was chosen and read in all prisons with a review and Q&A session with the author at the end. This was a very successful project and it will run again in 2021.

A Red Cross course was delivered from September to December using video technology as the teacher was working from home. This was facilitated by using technology which was installed by IPS and proved very important for the running of this course.

Conclusion:

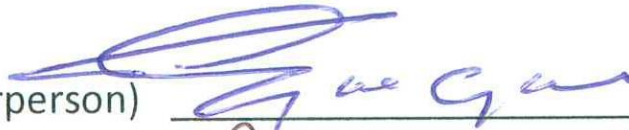
Following the challenges of delivering an education service during lockdown, some useful changes have been made to enable classes to continue in some format in the event of a future closure. Hopefully, this can be developed to allow for a greater variety of delivery methods for education services within the prison environment.

Conclusion

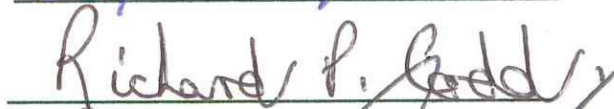
The committee once again wishes to convey their appreciation to Governor Joseph Donoghue and Assistant Governor Pat Corcoran and acknowledges the professional and dedicated service provided by all staff to offenders during their stay at Shelton Abbey. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the offenders who we have found to be respectful and courteous during our visits. A special word of thanks to Ms Noeleen Donnery for her assistance throughout the year and in particular for helping to compile this report.

Signatures:-

Mr. Tom Gregan (Chairperson)



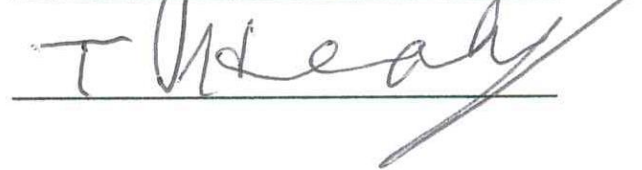
Mr. Richard Codd



Mr. Anthony Lawlor



Mr. Thomas Healy



Dated: 29th June, 2021