

## Wheatfield Prison Visiting Committee Annual Report

A Dhuine Uasail,

We the members of Wheatfield Prison Visiting Committee are pleased to present our Annual Report. The committee held monthly meetings and members made themselves available for mid month visits when necessary

The average number of prisoners, requesting meetings with the committee was Eight. We met the prisoners on an individual basis and their requests covered many areas but thankfully none of a serious nature. Areas identified are as follows;

1. Transfer to another prison with a large number requesting Arbour Hill.
2. Problems in relation to family visits and visiting conditions in general.
3. Medical treatments.
4. Temporary release applications.
5. Requests for Single Cell occupation especially by non smokers.
6. Methadone treatment.

The prison authorities dealt with our requests as speedily as possible given the limited means at their disposal.

The committee made a recommendation that a Sex Offenders Treatment Unit similar to that at Arbour Hill Prison be established at Wheatfield.

The committee met with Mr Brian Purcell, Director of Prisons in May 2008. He outlined the Prison Service plans for Wheatfield into the future. It is hoped the new building will be completed in Spring 2009 and is planned to house 175 prisoners. As this will house Remand prisoners, it will put an extra strain on The Visitor facilities that already exist. We have been assured that booked visits will be in place in 2009. It will also put extra pressure on the Kitchen and Stores area.

The members of the committee are still concerned as to the availability of drugs within the prison. We commend the staff on their continued work in reducing the drug flow. We thank the Minister for making funds available for the provision of "Sniffer Dogs" and we hope this will reduce the inflow of drugs.

The prison authorities have been very successful in their detection of mobile phones within the prison and the new security screening will help. The work is ongoing.

The committee note the very high standard of all aspects of the catering department and the cleanliness and hygiene throughout the prison.

We note the marked increase of Foreign nationals within the prison population. This puts an increased burden on the staff and we commend them all for the empathy they show to these prisoners.

The committee are very happy with the numbers of inmates gainfully employed and using the Educational facilities.

The medical team including the Psychiatric Service provide an adequate service, but it would be very helpful if more places were made available in The Central Mental Hospital Dundrum.

We compliment and thank the Governor, his assistants and all the staff. Their unfailing commitment, industry and cooperation is noteworthy. We look forward to working with them in the year ahead.

Is sinne,  
Le dea mhein,

*Pat Rohan*  
Pat Rohan  
Chairman

*Sadie Jordan*  
Sadie Jordan

*Eddie Kirwan* *Wm. Loughnan* *Hugh McGrath*  
Eddie Kirwan Wm. Loughnan Hugh McGrath

*John O'Neill* *Marty Rohan* *Una Ryan*  
John O'Neill Marty Rohan Una Ryan