

MOUNTJOY PRISON VISITING COMMITTEE

Annual Report for 2010

Mountjoy Prison Visiting Committee wish to express our sympathies and condolences to the families and relatives of all those who died in custody in 2010. May they rest in peace.

Apart from regular monthly meetings, members of Mountjoy Visiting Committee visit the prison on an ad hoc basis. The purpose of these visits is to carry out observations on cleanliness, operation of workshops and other ancillary activities. They also give members the opportunity to discuss with prisoners progress on issues raised at previous visits and meetings. These generally relate to queries from prisoners, which are prisoner specific and confidential, so will not be detailed here. General issues usually relate to missing clothing, tuck shop, 23 hour lock up, requests for T.R, requests for transfer , complaints about staff, loss of privileges and lack of laundry equipment and, many many more.

Reports of the committee prior to 2010 saw little change in conditions in the prison, other than those of a security nature. This was the case for far too many years, in particular the dirty conditions, prevailed, despite many written and, far more frequent verbal reports. In December we discussed the condition of the wings and the obvious lack of cleaning and cleaning equipment with Governor Mc Lennan. This discussion brought about major changes. From January 2010, cleanliness improved dramatically and continued throughout the year. The shower area in the Base was completely refurbished. When Governor Whelan was appointed we saw a further major improvement and it still continues. The entire prison has been cleaned, painted and a daily structure has been introduced. Cells were also cleaned and painted which proved that it was rubbish to suggest that nothing could be done with such an old building. It was difficult but not impossible. After all, soap and water were always abundant and needed a will and a belief, to push it on. The prison has been transformed from

very dirty to very clean. New equipment was purchased which was a tremendous help. We commend Governor Whelan, his management team and staff who put in Trojan work and brought about a changed mindset which has achieved results. Credit is also due to the many prisoners, who so willingly worked hard.

WORK PARTIES :

In the past we reported our efforts to establish work parties within the prison and to extend this out to worthwhile community projects. This is happening on too little a scale at present within the prison, with no external work parties at all. We were told that the work parties for community based projects were stopped due to employer's liability and public liability insurances. This is hard to accept, as surely the Dept. Of Justice have these policies in place. Our belief is that a small few got their wishes and the work parties were terminated. We are now calling on all concerned to bring them back. These projects were an opportunity to display the talents and the good in those incarcerated and show that the key need not be thrown away. Projects visited on opening days were attended by politicians, community leaders, senior Gardai , Irish Prison Service and many more. The statements by one and all, praising the work done, not just for the quality but for the dedication of those prisoners involved, with no financial gain. All of them sincerely appreciated the lavish praise. Those who attended saw a different side to those participants and the participants were now aware that doing good was no bad thing.

OVERCROWDING:

No improvement here despite new accommodation being provided nationwide. Increases in committals to prison is very worrying. With no real change yet in the trend to commit to prison rather than alternatives to custodial sentences, it is difficult to see an improvement in the short term. Continued reference to " we cannot hang out the no vacancy sign " ,while still cramming 6 people into cells for 4 and 4 into cell for 2. There have been instances of putting 8 people into cells for 4, simply by providing mattresses. New bunk beds were installed to help the situation , but they are not a success as far as we are concerned. They have reduced the available space within the cells and led to

more cramped, confined conditions. Granted it took a number of prisoners off the floor on mattresses, but cannot be construed as an improvement in living conditions. Eating and performing bodily functions and having to sleep in those conditions is not satisfactory. It cannot afford the reasonable breathing space required per person. Three bunk beds in the space makes it impossible to install a table, sufficient chairs or proper locker space. Meals have to be eaten off your lap, sitting on a bed a couple of inches off the floor, a few feet away from a toilet bucket with a simple lid. No one likes performing or seeing others performing bodily functions in front of other people, particularly during meal times. This is particularly so for those locked up for 23 hours per day. This is not a system that can be labelled humane or just.

The Separation Unit was a welcome addition, but has failed to make the changes we had hoped for in the Base. It is time also to look at the necessity of having office space on each wing, which were probably cells in the past. This is also the case in the old Medical section. The recreation rooms in the separation unit are being used as night time housing, with prisoners sleeping on mattresses on the floor. We would recommend that fresh bed clothing is provided with each new entrant, no matter how short the stay.

The standard of workmanship in this unit is deplorable, despite it being only in operation a short time. This issue was reported when the unit was first opened, but no remedial works have been carried out. Left for a little more time in this state will cost heavily in the future. Within a short time the special covering on the walls was peeling off, welded joints were splitting. Unacceptable gaps were appearing in finished surfaces.

23 HOUR LOCKUP:

The need to have so many people on 23 hour lock up has been raised on many previous occasions. There is an urgent need to review all these cases. Many of those on the 23 hour system claim they are due to petty squabbles and some report that a simple phone call to the local Garda station can result in

a prisoner being put on 23 hour lock up, despite there being no real threat to life or limb. This issue has been raised at local level and is being reviewed. The committee are also concerned at the lack of proper recreation time, lack of exercise and lack of daylight for such lengthy periods of time. The possible consequent damage to health, both physical and mental is deeply worrying.

BASE:

Holding prisoners in the shower area in the base for P19 hearings is a practice we have complained about many times in the past. It is degrading. However the improvements and repairs to the showers are welcomed. We have been assured that the following improvements are planned for the Base : Small gym, replacement of all windows, slop hoppers/toilets to be replaced and a roster allowing prisoners extra shower time. Library facilities need improvement in this area.

Medical Care Services

We are of the opinion that the full medical needs of the prisoners are not being met and there is a case for a review of hours available to prisoners, by the General Practitioners, who are employed on the basis of a contracted number of hours. A fairly consistent complaint to VC members was the length of time between request and action/treatment. Many complained that after waiting for months for an appointment they were hardly listened to and simply brushed off. Some complained that despite being on medication for years before they came into prison, treatment was stopped without due regard for possible consequences.

The medical care services at Mountjoy Prison comprise of (a) Medical Unit, which is a self-contained unit, and (b) Medical Centre, which is situated within the main prison block. Medical Services at the prison are administered by the Nurse Complex Manager, with support medical staff.

(a) Medical Unit

The aim of this facility is the provision of a primary care service by means of pro-active healthcare with a focus on preventive medicine. The new medical unit comprises of the following departments:

- (i) F1 – High Support Unit,
- (ii) F2-F4 – Slow Detox /Stabilisation
- (iii) F5 – Detox
- (iv) F6 – Drug Free

The facility provides for an eight week programme for prisoners committed to becoming drug-free with a view to seeking a transfer to another detention facility prior to release. Two weeks before the end of programme successful participants may submit their application for their future place of detention prior to release, for example (i) the Training Unit, or (ii) Shelton Abbey. Prisoners wanting to participate in these programmes are subject to certain qualifying criteria – the main restrictions are that the prisoner is testing negative for drugs, and the period of sentence remaining to be served.

On 6 December the High Support Unit opened for the care of *vulnerable prisoners*. This unit consists of 9 beds, plus 1 safety observation cell.

The provision of structured healthcare is to make available to prisoners access to the same quality and range of health services as are available to those persons entitled to medical care in local communities. The programme in place at the new medical unit is in line with the policy on healthcare to treat all prisoners with dignity and respect as afforded to all patients in the community.

Staff allocated to the medical unit, in their commitment and dedication, provide healthcare services to patients consistent with accepted professional guidelines and in accordance with policy. The primary care service sets out to provide pro-active healthcare with a focus on preventive medicine.

We welcome the opening of the new High Support Unit at Mountjoy and look forward to an increase in the numbers of prisoners obtaining treatment.

Medical Centre:

The Medical Centre in the main prison forms part of the overall medical strategy for the Mountjoy complex. Providing cohesive healthcare, of which its pre-assessment clinic is an integral part, with its main aim to reduce the number of hospital visits by prisoners. Staff with the required medical skills are in place to prioritise medical conditions, in many cases performing standard procedures in-house.

During the year a number of nursing post have been filled, which contributes in no small way to the continued success of medical healthcare services within the prison. However, with this in mind, it should be noted that a number of nursing positions remain to be filled.

The overall healthcare strategy forms part of the Integrated Services Management (ISM) at Mountjoy Prison and is built on the premise to:-

- (i) provide pro-active healthcare,
- (ii) reduce outward traffic for medical treatment,
- (iii) provide a duty of care to prisoners & staff,
- (iv) improve healthcare of prisoners by informed knowledge,
- (v) highlight non-disclosure of medical history by prisoners.

An essential administrative element of the medical centre is the availability of *officer support* when requested. The Chief Nursing Officer is best placed to determine the need for a support officer to be available in certain circumstances. A policy should be set in place to provide this back up when requested.

Services Ancillary to Medical Care

- **Drugs**

The approach taken by management at Mountjoy Prison in dealing with the interchange of drugs within the prison is in line with the IPS *Drugs Policy and Strategy*. With this in mind, prison management has made significant progress in dealing with internal drug problems. This is particularly so within the last six months, resulting from new measures implemented by the Governor, including the installation of new preventive nets.

Drug rehabilitation programmes for prisoners involve a significant multi-dimensional input by a wide-range of general and specialist services provided by the IPS and relevant statutory and non-statutory organisations. These programmes seek to reduce the demand for drugs within the prison system through an extensive set of initiatives, administered through the prison's medical unit.

The expansion of these programmes is being achieved in partnership with community-based services leading to noteworthy improvement in the availability, quality and range of drug treatment services within the prison. These services are being provided on the basis of clinical needs and supported by a system of mandatory drug testing. The implementation of this policy and strategy has also seen a continuous intensification of the need to eliminate the availability of drugs within the prison.

In recent years, the IPS has committed considerable investment in managing addiction issues in the prison system. The new Medical Unit at Mountjoy Prison is at the forefront in implementing relevant new initiatives. However we feel that this programme does not involve sufficient numbers of prisoners and needs further resources in order to achieve this.

Mental Health

The mental health of prisoners is always a primary concern in any prison environment and Mountjoy Prison is no exception in this regard. The policy of the IPS is to care for prisoners with mental health issues in line with best practice and in conjunction with relevant legislation as set out.

Presently, the medical staff at Mountjoy Prison is implementing relevant sections of the Criminal Law Insanity Act, which allows for prisoners with mental health issues to be treated, in certain circumstances, at their local mental hospital rather than being transferred to the Central Mental

Hospital. This initiative requires co-operation between the IPS and the management of the relevant local mental hospital. While this new venture is to be welcomed it is likely to have its teething problems.

It should, at all times, be borne in mind that the Inspector of Mental Hospitals has no jurisdiction over prisoners in hospital subject to his jurisdiction. With this in mind the establishment of a Vulnerable Persons Unit at Mountjoy Prison should be the subject of very serious consideration at this stage. This will allow for suitable in-house treatment of prisoners suffering from mental illness, in circumstances where they are not considered suitable for transfer to an outside mental hospital. The prison management must now move away from isolating mentally disturbed prisoners by dispatching them to special-cell accommodation, which is not conducive to their long-term recovery.

It should also be noted that the Prison Rules 2007 states that a prisoner shall be accommodated in Special Cells only if necessary to prevent harm and the placement is not to be more than 24 hours.

We are aware that prisoners have been kept in these special cells for weeks . While clean, they mean total isolation and that is not always the way to deal with people for either depression or overcrowding. The idea that silence , isolation and having time alone to consider your position is surely the wrong way to progress, in teaching offenders there is a better path in life that should be followed.

There is far too often a long delay in moving prisoners to mental health hospitals, due to a serious shortage of bed spaces. An increase in the availability of bed capacity for prisoners in Psychiatric Care Facilities should be pursued. While respecting the professionalism of the Medical people concerned, we must point out that the place to treat mentally disturbed prisoners for longer than 24 hours is most definitely not Mountjoy Prison.

Psychology Service

The Psychology Service within the prison applies psychological research, principles and skills to the needs of prisoners. The service addresses those functions that put prisoners at risk of re-offending;

participates in the developments of group programmes for particular offender factions and contributes to a variety of training initiatives for prison staff, which are aimed at enhancing the role of *the officer*.

The primary focus of the work undertaken by psychologists in Mountjoy Prison can be categorised under three main headings:

- (i) Individual work,
- (ii) Group Interventions,
- (iii) Policy Development

The Service is involved in the development of strategy, policy and protocols in areas significant to the operation of the prison system. It also supports and facilitates research projects, including the evaluation of interventions with prisoners.

Incorporating individual sessions, motivational counselling and group sessions the tasks performed by the Psychology Service are carried out in conjunction with a wide variety of people and services, including, prison management; staff; other specialist agencies (i.e. Probation Service, Healthcare, Chaplaincy); prison service training and central management.

Individual work has been the primary role of the Psychology Service. While an offender may be seen for any of a number of reasons, such individual sessions generally fall into one of three categories:

- (a) therapeutic work, which is typically longer-term and focuses on mental health issues,

- (b) motivational counselling to encourage the offender to address

long-standing problems such as addiction or criminal lifestyle,

- (c) crisis counselling, which is offered to offenders to manage highly stressful circumstances or emotions.

Note: A specific service /programme for those affected by bereavement in their families should be introduced. This is considered important generally, and in particular, to those not allowed out to attend their relations funeral, especially close family.

- **Chaplaincy Service**

Chaplains are an integral part of the processes that assist in developing effective person management. Entrusted with administering pastoral and spiritual care to prisoners and their families, chaplains form close links with the wider community. The VC in Mountjoy keep in touch with the Chaplains and enjoy a healthy interaction.

While conscious of their independent role, the chaplains work within the multi-disciplinary framework of the prison, at the same time ensuring that the confidential nature of their role is respected at all times. On a day-to-day basis, the chaplains visit prisoners in all parts of the prison.

At the present time, the main challenge to the chaplaincy service in the prison is the lack of resources and personnel. During the course of the year their personnel have been depleted due to illness and injury, with a notable increase in the workload undertaken by the chaplaincy service. The availability of extra resources should be a topic for further consideration going forward. This is essential when the numbers of prisoners has increased so dramatically with no increase in staff at the chaplain's office. This requires immediate attention as this issue has been raised a number of times by

prisoners to VC members and by the VC to management. We would like this situation solved as a matter of urgency.

Physical

Education:

There are currently four gyms' in place within the Mountjoy Prison complex. These are located in 'A' Wing; 'D' Wing, the Medical Unit and Separation Unit. A cursory examination of all three facilities showed that they contain modern equipment suitable for undergoing structured physical education programmes. A survey is to be conducted of all gym equipment and new equipment will be installed where considered appropriate. New gym and snooker tables are provided for the Separation unit and A workshops. Football tables are to be provided in the E1 section.

The gym in 'D' Wing is due for renovation and enlargement in the very near future. The proposed new development will see the size of this gym increase by almost 40% in capacity, thus allowing more prisoners the opportunity to avail of physical education instruction.

There are also plans to source a small gym for the Base.

Each facility is staffed by two prison officers who are qualified physical education instructors. Presently, there is a waiting list for inmates wanting to participate in physical education programmes. Each new participant to a physical education programme is initially made aware of the likely difficulties that may be encountered when taking part in physical instruction. With this in mind, each participant signs a consent form to the fact that he is not aware of any difficulty that may render him unsuitable for physical education training.(for example medication)

Prison staff appointed to administer the respective gym activities are committed and experienced. They are available to advise gym participants at all times and will prepare suitable training instruction for each new entrant to physical education programmes.

The main challenge to the smooth implementation of physical education programmes is the slow turnover time for the completion of maintenance/repair of gym equipment. This delay is not due to

any lack of interest on the part of relevant parties concerned, but appears to be based on the time period it takes to highlight any such difficulties via the channels of communication currently in place.

At present it can take up to four weeks to have gym equipment repaired once a fault is notified. To enter a gym to see equipment displaying *out-of-order* notices can be off-putting for course participants. In a prison environment a continuous slow delay in repairing equipment can present its own difficulties, which could lead to frustration and unrest amongst gym participants. Any delay in having non-effective gym equipment repaired can be a hindrance to dedicated staff members providing facilities to prisoners wishing to avail of the gym facilities.

On a positive note a budget has been approved by the Governor to carry out necessary renovations and the purchase of new equipment.

A much larger facility is urgently required or at least another temporary gym like the one already there.

Laundry & Clothes

- **Reception Area**

All prisoners sentenced to terms of imprisonment in Mountjoy Prison are registered, initially, at the reception area in accordance with the regulations as set out. An inventory is made of all articles brought into the prison by each prisoner. All articles taken from a prisoner are placed in the safekeeping of the Governor. An account analysis system is in place to ensure all articles, particularly clothing, are properly accounted for.

Complaints relating to missing items made by prisoners are fully investigated and in most cases are deemed to be without foundation. When a complaint is upheld the matter is brought to a conclusion by the relevant prisoner obtaining financial redress or replacement clothing.

It has been highlighted that in some cases certain prisoners may have in their possession items of clothing over the limits allowed. This, in itself, can create *accountability difficulties* and should be the subject of further consideration to achieve successful outcomes.

The reception area includes a small laundry room which deals mainly with clothing items relevant to that area. This room contains a small number of washing machines/dryers. Maintenance difficulties relating to these machines are administered under the guidance of the Chief Trades Officer. There are no maintenance procedures currently in place.

An air conditioning system in place within the reception area is vulnerable quite frequently, to breakdown, which can present its own difficulties. This is a matter that should receive regular maintenance checks to ensure that the air levels within the reception area are conducive to a good working environment.

Enclosed within the reception area is a small waiting area to facilitate prisoners pending registration or release. This area is covered by a CCTV camera, which relates images to a monitor at the main reception desk.

The installation of a second CCTV camera within this waiting area would be desirable.

Again we raise the point that information for prisoners on committal should be on screen with audio in order that those unable to read, clearly understand the rules.

We are also looking into the possibility of getting info on social welfare on the new digital system, as the old booklet system is wound down.

- **Shower Area**

The shower area functions six days per week and incorporates a large laundry room. This room deals with smaller items of laundry used in the prison, but not prisoners clothing. Larger items of laundry are outsourced. Prisoners send their laundry items home for cleaning.

Health and safety of prisoners and staff in the shower area should be reviewed on a regular basis.

With this in mind, the following two matters should receive immediate attention: -

Emergency alarm system –We recommend a review of the current alarm procedures.

(a) *replacement of current windows in laundry room with more conventional alternatives* – the laundry room within the shower area sustain significant heat levels, which increase substantially in summer time. This allows for a very uncomfortable working environment that may lead to health difficulties for prisoners and staff alike.

The windows currently in place in the laundry room are of a kind that will not allow even partial opening when necessary, to allow influx of clean air. We also request the installation of extraction units in positions that discourage vandalism. Consideration should now be given to replacing at least two of the current windows with more appropriate types.

It is the view of the Visiting Committee that a risk assessment should be carried out in the shower area to identify potential hazards and to have them eliminated without delay.

Library Services

The prison library is both an educational and recreational facility and a vital management tool. It provides a space in the prison where individuals can find limited respite through recreation from the prison routine while getting access to books and information which can help them with self-learning.

The opportunity for self-learning, which the library provides, for people who wish to improve their reading skills, is uniquely valuable.

Access to the prison library is by tradition, on a roster basis with most prison units/landings being allocated a slot in the weekly timetable so that every offender may get an opportunity to visit the library once per week. As this is in reality a short period, it should not be interfered with.

Research shows that the downturn in library use at Mountjoy Prison, in particular over the last two years, is as a direct result of limitations placed on the movement of offenders in the prison and the tightening of security measures, coupled with staff unavailability. .

The main challenges facing the library service in Mountjoy Prison are:

Library Opening

In order for the library to open regularly and consistently there has to be a commitment from prison management to provide staff. There appears to be a culture of keeping the library *down the ladder* of priority issues, which has led to the expectation that it will be the first service to be cut when staff is needed elsewhere. Notwithstanding that prison security is of primary concern, there is a need for more consistency regarding opening times and the movement of prisoners to the library.

Library Officer Training

Currently, there are seven (7) officers on the library panel in the prison. Three of these officers have been fully trained in the Liberty 4 Online Library Management System. The Library Service staff did meet with all seven officers for the purpose of training in the new system but found out on the day that not all of the officers had *network logins* and so the training was pointless as these officers could not access the Liberty 4 system. This was an unwarranted waste of time and resources and could have been avoided by discussing all issues with the IT department prior to commencement of training. Training for officers can be done in a basic way in as little as half an hour. Presently, there is a very modern library management system in place within the prison that remains unused by the majority of library officers due to difficulties with *network passwords*. This is a situation which must not be allowed to continue. It is the view of the Visiting Committee that the panel of Library Officers

should be increased to at least thirty (30) officers, while keeping in mind the length of remaining service. We have also raised the possibility of trustee prisoners helping out and alleviating the pressure on officer numbers.

Delivery of Books to Library/Prison

The issue of moving new books from the stock room to the library, as well as other locations within the main prison building, is creating logistical difficulties for Library Service staff. At present, this is a function that is performed by members of the Library Service by hand, and is a task that can create health & safety issues for all concerned. Where there is pressure on staff numbers, which may affect the delivery of books, again the possibility of using trustee prisoners should be considered.

However, with plans afoot to move the Library Service offices to the new office block on the site of the nearby Egan's Cash & Carry, assurances have been given by prison management that all logistical difficulties regarding the movement of library stock will be dealt with adequately, for the benefit of all concerned.

Communication

It has been established that communication difficulties exist between the Library Service and prison management. Though not intentional on the part of either party, it does, no doubt, inhibit how the Library Service functions within the prison.

The main cause for concern is the lack of consultation regarding opening times arrangements or the removal of assets important to the successful operation of any library.

Clearly, there is a need for more specific management accountability regarding the functioning of the library within the Mountjoy Prison complex. With this in mind, it is the view of the Visiting Committee that one senior person, be that a Chief Officer or Governor, is given charge for the library functions within the prison and that all communications relevant to the library are guided through him/her to the Library Service.

The Library Service is fully committed to the task in hand and provides a highly professional service. However, staff members are working in difficult circumstances and need the support of

prison management to provide successful outcomes. With this in mind, the new management team now in place in Mountjoy Prison has given an undertaking to deal with all outstanding issues and has made it clear that all matters of concern identified by the Library Service will receive a favourable response for the benefit of all parties. We will watch for improvements in this area as we believe it is of vital importance.

The TV or background music should be reinstated to the Library as it afforded prisoners the opportunity to have confidential chats without being overheard by others, due to the background sound it provided.

Probation Service

The Probation Service is the leading agency in the assessment and management of offenders in our communities. The Service is charged with organising and delivering a range of services, both within the prison system and the wider community. The work of the Probation Service can be listed under two main headings, as follows:-

- (a) Assessment,
- (b) Supervision of Offenders.

Officers working in Mountjoy Prison deal with a number of non-prioritised cases related, in the main, to child protection issues and mental health concerns. The wing allocation system remained a cornerstone of the work in Mountjoy. The monitoring of requests for interviews by prisoners in Mountjoy is based on wing books, and these allowed the Probation Service to keep the aim of seeing prisoner requests without undue delay.

During the past year there has been a continuing growth in demand in relation to probation. The demands have been in relation to the preparation of Probation Service Reports, prisoner numbers growth, and increased Parole Board cases. While the Service is well capable in dealing with all issues

it is inhibited by the lack of *access* for interviewing offenders within Mountjoy Prison, which has arisen because of security issues.

Conflict between prisoners on 'A/B' and 'C/D' Wings has meant that prisoners can no longer be brought from the 'C/D' wings to the Probation Office on 'A' wing. This requires interviews to be held on open landings, which in many cases is unsatisfactory.

Welfare Service

Presently, there is no Welfare Service in the prison. Welfare matters requiring urgent consideration are administered through the office of the Governor.

DRUG CONTROL:

The introduction of nets over the yards in the latter quarter of 2010 has strengthened the control on the Drug supply into the prison. Further intense investigation is needed to root out other avenues of supply. Non drug users should be protected, from pressure to take drugs, keeping them separate where possible. Sharing cells often leads to experimentation, and addiction for those never involved in drugs prior to coming to Mountjoy.

We recommend a drug free zone or wing as a further improvement in control. Information supplied to us up to now has pointed to the difficulty of achieving this because of the number of gangs housed in Mountjoy. A broader look at transferring of drug free prisoner to a specific prison could be worth consideration. Also recommended is a sentence management programme which would offer structure and incentives to drug abusers to address their addiction problems. Over reliance on psychotic drugs is also a problem and while we see a tendency to address this by IPS, alternatives should be rigidly in place, at the same time as removal or reduction, e.g counselling.

SPECIAL CELLS :

These are often used for accommodation purposes due to overcrowding and sometimes, at the request of prisoners who want time out from others to sort their heads out.

Temporarily for protection purposes where other cells are not available.

Requested by prisoners in order to increase their chances of transfer to another wing or different prison.

Defibrillators:

We are of the opinion that there should be more of these available throughout the prison complex and staff trained to use them in all areas of the complex.

Water Supply:

We recommend the installation of proper drinking water facilities throughout the various wings.

Kitchen:

The kitchen operates to the usual high standards and is well run. Safety and food hygiene are excellent. Relevant signage is posted at various locations. Excellence awards also hang at the entrance as confirmation of the dedication in this kitchen.

Menus are posted and updated from time to time. Inspections of the food served, throughout the year, and served on the wings confirmed good food and quite well varied.

The kitchen is kept very clean and rigid controls are in place to ensure that.

Consideration should be given to installing buffers on walls or a low wall rail to prevent trolleys breaking wall tiles.

We have raised at local level the desirability of using heavy duty plastic cutlery and utensils, which can be washed.

There have been only 3 or 4 complaints regarding food, in 2010. Well done to all connected with the Kitchen service.

Industrial Training :

Industrial training was brought up to date in 2010 by a Manager totally committed to making the workshops in Mountjoy a success. Visits to the workshops confirm very busy programmes of training. Many are FAS accredited courses , well attended and enthusiastically embraced by prisoners and staff alike.

More and more of these workshops are needed and should be encouraged and supported at all levels.

Workshops like the Library are a vital component in rehabilitating prisoners.

SIGNED BY THE VISITING COMMITTEE OF MOUNTJOY PRISON :

Stephen Langton (Chairperson) _____

Liam Hogan (Vice Chairperson) _____

Betty Minihane _____

Veronica Dalton _____

J.J Murphy _____

Noel Cloak _____

John Monahan _____

Phelim McGee _____