



CORK VISITING COMMITTEE  
ANNUAL REPORT 2019



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## Introduction

Cork Prison visiting Committee visited the prison regularly during 2019, and individual members were invited to many graduations, certifications and exhibitions throughout the year.

We interviewed prisoners who requested to see the VC mainly in relation to transfer to other prisons, prison visits, and personal or family issues.

On arrival to the prison we visited, different areas on each occasion and spoke with prisoners, prison staff and other professionals working in these areas.

We met with the Governor and Chief Officer regularly to discuss prisoner requests and any issues that may arise.

Our philosophy is to work with management and staff in the interest of prisoners, the enhancement of the prison from our perspective in consultation with the Governor and his staff

We would like to acknowledge, the support, cooperation, and professionalism of Prison staff on our visits

We found the atmosphere in the prison very calm and observed a very relaxed relationship between Prison staff and prisoner.

We acknowledge that the prison caters for a wide spectrum of offender, from petty criminal to gangland leader, persons with addictions, serious mental health issues, and numerous social issues. Prison is a catch all situation and many who finish there are only in prison because there is no suitable alternative.

As a Visiting Committee we focus on our role within the prison, and we also take an interest in rehabilitation and integration of offenders, as we observe the excellent work by the education unit, and the other professionals within the prison and prison staff. We also observe the excellent work of the Community and Voluntary organisations in the prison, and those agencies that reach into the prison and support prisoners on release.

We are aware that the Prison service contributes financially to many of these organisations, so we would strongly support the idea of a Governor in charge of services, who would coordinate the services inside and outside the Prison and link in with the relevant Statutory, Educational, Business, Community and Voluntary services in the interest of the rehabilitation and integration of offenders on release. Currently it is our view that rehabilitation and re-integration is an add on, not coordinated, and not an integral part of the Prison system

We also believe the information channels pioneered in Cork prison might be implemented Nationwide and also can be expanded to provide prison information and details in various languages.

We believe that podcasts of offenders who have done well, if they wish to share it could be shown on these channels. The success of these offenders can give hope to others and perhaps show them the way.

Deaths of offenders in Prison can be extremely traumatic for Prison Staff, and the families of the offender. Perhaps modern technology could assist in monitoring vulnerable offenders.

One of the big issues affecting Cork prison during 2019 was the amount of prisoners sleeping on the floor as various times during the year and also the availability of drugs within the prison.

Perhaps the purchase a full body scan x-ray machine could be investigated to help reduce the amount of drugs etc. coming in.

We have praised the modern workshops that are installed in the prison but unfortunately these are closed more often than they are open mainly due to staff been allocated for escort duty. This has been a regular issue with the Visiting Committee and there seems to have been no change during 2019.

The following are some of the presentations from the statutory, voluntary and community organisations of the work they do for the development of offenders and the rehabilitation of offenders within the community which is an area that the Visiting Committee takes a keen interest in.

This year we would like to congratulate the Irish Association for Social Inclusion Opportunities (IASIO) for been short listed for the Be-Inclusive EU Sports Awards. These are awards provided for by the European Union for not-for-profit organisations that have successfully developed sport projects aimed at social inclusion.

In 2019 the jury who adjudicate on the awards received 144 submissions. Independent experts evaluated the projects according to their contribution to social inclusion through sport, and we were very proud that the Community Sports Coaching Programme run in the Cork prison was one of the 9 projects which was chosen for final consideration. Alas on this occasion the overall award went to another project but it was a great achievement to have our project recognised at the very top in Europe.

The aim of the course is to assist and prepare the successful participants to gain coaching, volunteering and further education opportunities in the community sports sector in areas like personal training, coaching, referee, physical activity leaders and progression to further studies.

The programme content includes

Sports Coaching Training---Soccer, GAA, Rugby, Basketball

Physical Activity Training which includes—Code of Ethics, Disability inclusion, Active Leadership and more

Educational learning—QQI 3 in general learning in the school

Resettlement Planning – progression options, CV preparation and release and post release plans.

Rehabilitation is a priority for the Irish Prison Service and this is a project that significant investment and resources go into and we would like to congratulate all those involved in it.

Another project run in Cork Prison which is run by the Education Unit of the prison and the ETB is the Dillon's Cross Project which was short listed for from an entry of seventy community education projects in the 2019 Aontas Star awards in the Social Inclusive Category. This project was also shortlisted for the Lord Mayor of Cork's Community Award.

The Dillons Cross Project is a long running project been set up in 1995 to provide education and support to the female relatives of prisoners and ex-prisoners. The aim of the project is to provide the female relatives the same educational and development opportunities as the men in prison, thereby fostering a positive attitude towards education and training ,giving people shared experiences and goals and generally promoting family education.

The project recognizes the importance of maintaining family ties while a loved one is in prison. This increases the chances of prisoners staying out of prison after release and also encourages a positive family attitude to education.

The project offers women the opportunity to get FETAC/QQI Qualifications at levels 3 and 4 with a view to helping them move on to Level 5 further Education and Training or into employment.

A number of the Dillons Cross graduates completed their Level 6 Hairdressing courses another completed a BA in Applied Early Childhood studies in the College of Commerce in Cork and another four participants secured employment.

The following are some of the presentations from the statutory, voluntary and community organisations of the work they do for the development of offenders and the rehabilitation of offenders within the community which is an area that the Visiting Committee takes a keen interest in.

## Cork Alliance Centre

The **Cork Alliance Centre** was established in 2003 with the support of the Probation Service. The Centre works with both men and women on release from prison. It seeks to facilitate the process of personal recovery and empowerment with the overarching view of desistance from crime. As people seek to become better equipped to manage their lives more positively. Our service is based in the community with in-reach work in the prisons. The Centre's core funding is from the Department of Justice and Equality through the Probation Service and the Irish Prison Service.

The work of the Cork Alliance Centre is directed towards facilitating service users to become generally better equipped to manage their lives positively. 'To desist from crime, ex-offenders need to develop a coherent, pro-social identity for themselves, therein the importance of self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-respect and self-determination cannot be underestimated. Facilitating service users as they restore their positive 'connections' with their family, friends, community, society and most importantly with themselves is fundamental to the work of the Cork Alliance Centre.

Those who access the service of the Cork Alliance Centre choose to do so voluntarily. The work of the Cork Alliance Centre is grounded in a shared-caring approach, where with the agreement of the service users, support and assistance is garnered from state, semi-state and voluntary organisations and their representatives. The Cork Alliance Centre manages two programmes with both the Probation Service and the Prison Service (<http://www.corkalliancecentre.com/programmes>).

The significant challenges to the work of the Cork Alliance Centre relate specifically to the high proportion of people in custody who are homeless, together with the challenges of working with people in addiction and with poor mental health when there are insufficient residential resources in the community to support them.

The **Desistance and Integration Support Programme** is open to all people from Cork who have been in prison. Together with supporting people to address their offending behaviour, the team work to support people as they seek to build constructive and connected lives. The support is on a one-to-one basis, as personal plans are developed, realised and built upon. As the Centre works with a service user on all aspects of their life, a better 'wrap around' service is provided, linking in where appropriate with other agencies and departments in a more joined up service.

Referrals are taken from all prisons in Ireland and overseas, together with community and self-referrals. The services offered include

- Support and motivation work where among other areas offending behaviours, thinking skills, coping mechanisms, socialisation skills etc. can be addressed Supporting access to voluntary and state organisation to source and secure accommodation
- supporting access to secure financial supports

Maruna S (2001) *Making good: How ex-convicts reform and rebuild their lives*, American Psychological Association Books: Washington DC, p7

- Supporting access to source, secure and sustain trainings, education and literacy supports
- Supporting access to source, secure and sustain employment schemes and employers
- Supporting access to addiction treatment programmes and services
- Supporting access to professional counselling and acupuncture
- Supporting access to parenting and family programmes
- Highlighting emerging trends and developments among our service users and wider community

### Desistance and Integration Support Programme Annual Statistics

<b>Referral Agency</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>Status</b>	<b>Total</b>	
Probation Service	62	34%	Active	63	35%
IPS (incl. CSS)	58	32%	Successful Completion	31	17%
IASIO	5	3%	Discontinued	88	48%
ICPO	1	1%		<u>182</u>	
LDTF/Homeless Services	10	5%			
Self	46	25%			
	<u>182</u>		<b>Gender</b>	<b>Total</b>	
			male	159	87%
			female	23	13%
			<b>Total</b>	<u>182</u>	
<b>Age Profile</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>Primary Needs</b>	<b>Total</b>	
< 25	27	15%	addiction	116	64%
26-35	67	37%	addiction & mental health	30	16%
36-45	61	34%	mental health	9	5%
46-55	23	13%	reintegration	27	15%
>55	4	2%		<u>182</u>	
	<u>182</u>				

i Maruna S (2001) *Making good: How ex-convicts reform and rebuild their lives*, American Psychological Association Books: Washington DC, p7

The **Community Support Scheme** is run in conjunction with the Irish Prison Service, and offers prisoners serving sentences between 3-12 months the opportunity to serve part of their sentence in the community rather than in the prison. This constructive community based alternative to imprisonment is a means of positive sentence management offering a chance for change for the prisoner in an effort to break the cycle of repeated short-term imprisonments. The opportunity to serve a sentence in the community rather than in prison is a short-term practical intervention linking those availing of this early (temporary) release programme to services and service providers within their home locality, as a means to improve the person's chances of sustaining life outside of prison. The Cork Alliance Centre operates the programme in Cork, Portlaoise and the Midlands prison.

### Community Support Scheme Annual Statistics

<i>Referring Prison</i>			<b>2019</b>	
Midlands	135	28%	TR in the community	38 17%
Portlaoise	42	9%	TR Completed	128 56%
Limerick	6	1%	TR Non-Completion	62 27%
Mountjoy	1	0%	<b>Released under CSS</b>	<b>228</b>
Wheatfield	8	2%	Referred to other CSS	23
Castlerea	1	0%	Not Suitable/transferred	194
Cork	291	60%	Ongoing	39
	<u>484</u>			<u>484</u>
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Age Profile</b>	
Men	479	99%	total	
Women	5	1%	< 25	80
	<u>484</u>		26-35	223
			36-45	127
			46-55	39
			>55	15
			<b>Total</b>	<u>484</u>

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Maruna S (2001) *Making good: How ex-convicts reform and rebuild their lives*, American Psychological Association Books: Washington DC, p7

## **Industrial Area 2019**

### ***Report from Sean Nason Chief Officer (Work and Training) Cork Prison***

#### **Kitchen/Training Kitchen**

The kitchen/Training Kitchen employs 24 prisoners per day. We will have restructured our kitchen management system this year. In 2020 as a result we will be in a position to not only continue with City and Guilds accreditation but now can offer third level Cookery accreditation through a partnership with Cork Institute of Technology.

They Staff and workers continue to cook for events such as the Listeners' Graduation, retirement functions, etc., to a very high standard and take great pride in showcasing their new skills.

A score of 77% was achieved in this year's hygiene audit for the kitchen and 86% for the training Kitchen.

This year two prisoners were placed in employment in a catering capacity. This was in addition to last year's candidates who are still in full employment in their placement area. That's four people now working full time in the hospitality sector as a result of placement from Cork Prison Catering training.

#### **Hurley / Joinery workshop**

This has been a very disappointing year for the Hurley workshop, due to a high level of staff redeployments. The WTO is very keen to teach City and Guilds but criteria for accredited module requirements cannot be attained due redeployments.

The Hurley shop has through the dedication of the W.T.O. and the prisoners continued to provide a valuable service to the G.A.A. Club's in the community when opened but this service has been restricted. Redeployments have had huge impact in this shop. Management of resources around time and streamlined process's by the staff has supported its continued success as a service provider for the community. The joinery shop works in conjunction with Light maintenance, building cabinets, notice boards, units and benches in order to enhance the prison community for the staff and prisoners. There has been a lot of projects carried out this year for local charities such as Summer Garden Benches with wheelchair access for Cope and a lot of credit is due to Mr. Dineen and his team of workers.

#### **Computer / print workshop**

All of the printing for Cork Prison is done in this workshop, class logs, p19's, reception books, health and safety books, etc. Prisoners also make cards here for birthdays, etc.

This has been a very disappointing year for the Print / Computer workshop, due to redeployments, as a result there has been no certified training done here this year. On a very positive note W.T.O. O Donovan continues to work with prisoners with social and interaction

difficulties. This work is linked to the services in the prison. This work is having a positive effect on prisoner's welfare and it helps them integrate with the other prisoners in the workshop and in the prison community.

### **Fabric Workshop**

This workshop is redeployed regularly, and has done no certified training this year. I.S. Hannon's Shop has engaged in many projects when opened for the Prison community and Local charity organisations such as Cope.

### **Light Maintenance**

Unfortunately, this workshop is regularly redeployed, and has produced no certified training this year. However W.T.O. Sheehan and his prisoners still managed to paint the whole prison in 2019 and some areas up to four and five times as required. Mr Sheehan and his team continue to fit fixtures and fittings and other light maintenance projects throughout the buildings. This workshop provides worthwhile constructive activities and skills for up to 12 prisoners a day.

### **Laundry**

The Laundry is working well, with usually around 12 prisoners working there daily. The Laundry had a very good year, with the Laundry being certified again in March, to carry out training under the Guild of Cleaners and Launderers Certificate scheme. The two W.T.O's have provided Certified accredited Laundry Guild Training to prisoners in their shop. This year has seen the 42 module Certs attained in the shop, this certification provides opportunities for the prisoners on release in the hospitality and health sectors where laundry services are required.

### **Industrial Cleaning workshop**

This post is manned by 2 WTO's, on a back to back basis. They provide training, work and support for 18 prisoners 7 days a week.

The new cleaning chemical system introduced in 2017 is working very well and adheres to the highest standards found anywhere. The cleaners continue to train in the use of the auto dilution system. The cleaners have learned so much from the use of this dilution system, regarding dilution rates, chemical hazards and the environmental, physical and biological factors impacting chemical use. The continued use of the one dip mopping system which helps minimise people's exposure to infection and disease has not only assisted a vital infectious control policy but helped provide awareness around the value and importance of good hygiene.

The industrial cleaning workshop is in the process currently of attaining Trainer Provider Accreditation from Clean-pass. The two WTO's are currently in the process of training as

instructors. All going well this will allow for Clean-pass accreditation to be provided in this shop to prisoners. This qualification is highly recognised in the hospitality, health sectors and throughout industry providing opportunities for prisoners on release.

### **Integrated Sentence Management (ISM)**

The ISM. Staff are busier than ever, with the Community Returns Scheme (CRS), and the Community Support Scheme (CSS). These are both going very well, and the high success rate of both continues. Our numbers for CRS is slightly reduced this year and the CSS numbers slightly increased on last year. The Staff in this area have also played a big part in the community coaching course and the kid's summer camps for the prisoner's families. With C.I.T. coming on board this this year with a third level cooking course the ISM will be very much involved as a liaison coordinator as part of the ISM role for the students involved. We unfortunately lost WTO Coakley in ISM this year and we wish her all the best in her new role within the service.

### **Waste Management**

This new workshop has been very successful in reducing our waste, and increasing the amount of recycling here in the prison. This means lower bills, and a saving to the state for waste management expenses. It also helps the environment. We are continuously over 60% recycled waste every month. This is consistent high rate, thanks to the dedication of the staff and prisoners involved. Waste Management prisoner accreditation training packages are now in the process of tender with IPS and we are hoping this can be put in place in 2020.

### **Industrial Skills /Craft workshop**

This is on the same floor as the other workshops, it consists of a picture framing and engraving workshop. The new W.T.O. who operates this shop is currently on long term leave for personal reason.

### **Horticulture workshop**

This is a wonderful new facility, at the back of the prison. There is a poly-tunnel, raised beds, a glasshouse, and a work shed / potting shed. We are hopeful that this may be opened in 2020. We are waiting to have the staff assigned to this post, to use this excellent facility

### **Other Training**

Tight resources have resulted in workshop closures but we are still committed to equipping as many prisoners as possible leaving prison with some essential courses.

These are:

- Manual Handling
- Safe Pass
- Primary Food Hygiene
- 'Changing' course

I Sean Nason and Tommy Gaine teach Manual Handling, since September training has been provided for 90 prisoners. WTO Neil Collins Powell is in the process of becoming a new instructor and will provide a vital resource to the continuation of this required training. A.C.O. Karen Whelan is now a trained food hygiene instructor and will be providing accredited training for prisoners working in the catering areas. Colm Carey organises the other courses and this process is liaised with the I.S.M. Officers as part of the prisoner's sentence management plan. The goal of this is to give the prisoners a better chance to find employment on release, the above named Certificates assist with this process.

2019 has been a challenging year for the work and training areas with redeployments as mentioned. Huge credit is due to the staff working in these areas for their continued dedication and resource management to provide quality training and vital constructive activities under challenging circumstances.

C.O. Sean Nason

Work produced  
by students in  
the Education  
Unit, Cork Prison

## 2019 Report from the Education Unit, Cork Prison

2019 was another busy year for the Education Unit, Cork Prison. We continue to offer a broad range of subjects from basic literacy to Open University and a mix of both practical and academic subjects.

In 2019, thirty-two students completed seventy-four QQI modules between levels two and five.

### February:

- Fifteen students completed a wellness recovery action planning (WRAP) programme over two consecutive weekends.

### April:

- The Education Unit Red Cross was shortlisted for a national award
- The CIT lecture series was again very successful. Some of the lectures were also delivered in the Dillon's Cross Project.

### May:

- Two students achieved a bronze medal and two students a silver medal with Gaisce.
- Five students graduated with the Red Cross.
- One of our students won first prize in the Intermediate Poetry section in the Listowel Prison writing competition.

### June:

- Two students sat exams at Leaving Cert level.
- Books written and illustrated by traveller students from the Education Unit were launched at the TVG traveller men's conference in the Triskel Christ Church Arts theatre.
- The Education Unit launched its fifth annual exhibition of work 'Breakthrough' on Spike Island
- Five students passed the certified peer mediation external exam with the support of the Traveller Mediation Service (TMS)
- PET – 2 students completed the Preliminary English test (formerly known as Cambridge English qualification)





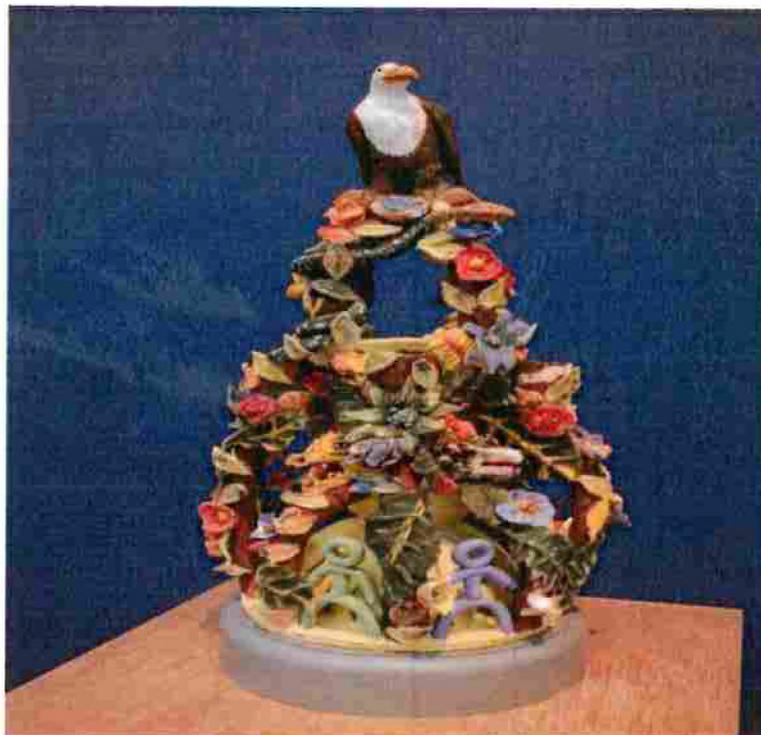
- Our collaboration with UCC's Adult Continuing Education Department (ACE) continues to go from strength to strength

**November:**

- Peer mediation – Ten students completed the introductory six-week peer mediation training programme (TMS)

**December:**

- Two students completed a Certificate in Mental Health, delivered through UCC.
- Eleven students graduated at this year's Community Coaching Programme. The programme was also shortlisted for a European Union sport awards in the social inclusion through sport category.
- Four students are enrolled with Open University. Students are studying courses in Science, Arts and Languages
- Many pieces of students' work were exhibited at National Exhibitions in Kilmainham Gaol, Rua Red Arts Centre Tallaght, the Hunt Museum Limerick and Dunamaise, Portlaoise. (Samples of this work can be viewed in panel on left hand side).
- Our annual 'Open Day' was very successful. Over seventy visitors enjoyed the work on exhibition in the school and students were able to explain the background to the pieces that they had made.
- Staff and students produced a very professional inhouse publication – 'the Full Sheet'.
- The school band gave wonderful performances at graduation ceremonies for the Red Cross, CIT and on Open Day.



## Dillon's Cross Project

- A former student has successfully completed Level 7 Early Childhood Studies in the College of Commerce. She is hoping to complete Level 8 this year. This student is sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy to whom we are very grateful.
- Four of our last year Dillon's Cross students are working in the catering industry and one has recently been promoted to manager.
- Jennie O'Sullivan an R.T.E Journalist, made a radio programme about the Project and wrote an excellent article entitled "Every success is hard earned at women's support group".
- Aontas Star Award: The Dillon's Cross Project was shortlisted from an entry of seventy community education projects in the 2019 Aontas Star awards in the Social Inclusion Category
- Over seventy children attended this year's Summer camp which was also funded by the Sisters of Mercy
- The Dillon's Cross Project was shortlisted for a Lord Mayor's Community Award.
- A generous benefactor, the charity "Away from it all" kindly funded five family days in Fota Wildlife Park. This consisted of train fares, luncheon vouchers and entry into the Park. The families had a great time and for those without transport it was the only trip away this summer.
- Three students graduated with caps and gowns at a BTEI graduation ceremony in the Ambassador Hotel.



Finally, I would like to thank the teachers in the Education Unit for their hard work and commitment. I would also like to thank our school officers and the Governors and Management of Cork Prison for their help and support throughout the year.

Edel Cunningham, Head Teacher, Education Unit, Cork Prison

## Post Release Project 2019

The Post Release Project coordinated by Frances Russell since 2001 continues to provide a comprehensive and integrated approach to support the rehabilitation, reintegration and resettlement of prisoners on release from Cork Prison. It strives to prepare, support and assist homeless prisoners for a positive resettlement back into the community by assessing committals daily to ensure that any prisoner committed to prison from homeless services are identified and met on committal. The completion of initial assessment forms under the protocols of Case Management for the Cork & Kerry Homeless Services continues to be completed and their details updated on the homeless 'Pathway Accommodation & Support System and Irish Prisons Service Integration Management Programme.

The project maintains strong links with the Housing Dept. in the City & County Council's to ensure that no prisoners are taken off the housing list due to their committal to prison. It also ensures the co-ordination of services with statutory and voluntary providers i.e. Homeless Officers in all local authorities, Cork City Council housing Dept, Focus Ireland, Cork Simon Community and St Vincent's Hostel to ensure a realistic & achievable plan is in place prior to a prisoner's release. The project continues to advocate with the City and County Councils on behalf of prisoners who are in danger of losing their accommodation due to their committal. It works with prisoners on their housing applications to ensure that they are on valid housing list and are eligible to apply for HAP payments.

The project works with prisoners who are non-Irish Nationals and are leaving prison without any means or entitlements by liaising with Reception & Integration Services Dept of Justice to access beds in Direct Provision Centres for prisoners wishing to apply for asylum or accessing funds for flights to allow them to return to their country of origin. The project often applies to the Governor for compassionate funding for those specific prisoners who wish to remain in Ireland.

The project continues to liaise with staff in the Dept. of Social Protection, Abbey Court House which ensures prisoners leaving custody have an allocated welfare appointment

and access to a welfare payment on the day of release. Prisoners on release have all their welfare applications forms completed so to ensure barriers of literacy and poor social or coping skills do not impede them claiming their social welfare payments. The project has arranged for the welfare officer to meet with some prisoners here in the prison prior to release – these prisoners would have complex mental health needs and would not be able to navigate the welfare process themselves.

All efforts continue to ensure that prisoners who are homeless on release from prison have access to emergency accommodation. As part of the Case Management Protocols for the Cork & Kerry Homeless Services, Initial and Housing Needs Assessments are carried out and updated on homeless prisoners serving over a 12- week sentence. Access to emergency beds are secured for prisoners serving less than 12 weeks but often through the Accommodation Placement Unit, Cork City Council especially for prisoners who are new to homeless services. The coordinator also sits on monthly meetings with the Homeless Action Team to refer and discuss specific supports for prisoners leaving prison with complex needs.

With the assistance of Sophia Housing, City Council and Dept. of Social Protection, 3 short term accommodation units continues to be provided for prisoners, where they are given the skills to live independently thus breaking their cycle of prison sentences and homelessness. The Post Release Project continues to provide assistance with bedding and basic provisions to these prisoners. When the prisoners are ready, move on accommodation is identified with the assistance of Cork City Council and the Homeless Action Team. They can continue to access ongoing supports from Sophia Housing once they move through the transitional flat on to long term accommodation.

The project continues work closely with the addiction counsellors here in the prison and maintains strong links with residential/community day addiction and mental health services to support prisoners applying for counselling in/day patient care. The project has contributed to financial support towards aftercare treatment in Fellowship House for some prisoners. It also continues to work with staff in the Cork Alcohol and Drugs Task

Force to ensure homeless prisoners continue to link in with services on their release. The project is commencing a pilot programme this year in-conjunction with Arbor House on the delivery of Naloxone training to prisoners who are prescribed methadone specifically.

The project continues to work with G.P's in the community and the Medical Card Unit to ensure prisoners have to access medical cards on their release which ensures the continuum of medical care on release.

The provision of the Safe Pass Qualification continues to be delivered to enable prisoner's access employment on release. It meets their educational needs by referring them to programmes been offered in the Education Unit in Cork Prison and by offering practical & financial assistance in enabling them access community education courses and post leaving cert colleges.

The project continues to coordinate clinics with Citizen's Information which are held monthly in the prison.

## Cork Prison`s Information Channels:

Cork Prison is the only Prison in the country to have two dedicated channels on the Prisoners TV`s for the information of Prisoners.

1. "INFO4U", successfully piloted on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015 and officially launched on Thursday, the 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 in the old Prison, Cork; displays information on Cork Prison and of all the opportunities/schemes/regimes available in Cork etc).
2. "Next Step Channel", successfully launched on Thursday, the 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2017; is a "Social Channel" displaying the fun events/achievements of Cork Prisoners. This channel also displays a Notice Board to inform Prisoners of up-coming events such as Smoking Cessation Courses etc.

### Progression:

A Business Case has since been submitted to up-date the current channels to a new Digital package, which shall facilitate:

- Extra channels to cater for extra languages. This will include a dedicated channel to display the basics of "INFO4U" in the more popular languages, plus a local channel from their country of origin.
- Fully GDPR complaint facilitating daily up-dates, if required.
- Option of a Voice Over facility catering for Prisoners who may have literacy difficulties and/or visual difficulties.
- Full HD on all TV`s resulting in a more pleasing, visual screen which will also display transactions, movie files/video clips, png files and jpegs.
- Ticker tape notices and alerts.
- The possibility of interactive channels in the Education Unit and the Library. In due course, this may also provide the possibility and opportunity of Prisoners linking in with outside Agency prior to their release re: housing, social welfare queries etc.

The current two channels in Cork Prison are proving very successful and to the benefit of both Prisoners and Staff alike.

This new digital package will offer an even better service by reaching more Prisoners and in turn helping both Prisoners and Staff alike by improving awareness by the distribution of information. This package will also let Prisoners know of services available, no matter what their language or disability.

The Irish Prison Service Head Quarters and other Prisoners have also been in contact about the Information Channels, as their success is gaining momenta.

Thank you all.

Caroline



## **Churchfield Community Trust In-Reach Cork Prison**

Prior to the merger with Churchfield Community Trust, the Probation funded Grattan Project would have had almost a twenty-year history of providing a full-time position/s of an Addiction Counsellor within Cork prison. This was provided with a view to provide follow up support for offenders returning to the local community. This role has a long history of collaborative case management and involvement in the strong multi-disciplinary teamwork identified within Cork prison.

### **Current Service Provision**

This In-Reach Addiction Counselling position supports the Probation Service and other Probation funded projects as it is responsive and adaptable. This ensures a continued link and the benefits of an addiction counselling service available to the probation team at Cork Prison within the context of case management and upon release if desired.

The benefits of this Churchfield Community Trust service is its flexibility to meet the presenting needs and different circumstances that arise within the prison for the Probation Service. The benefits include early support and assessment upon entry to Prison if requested by the service, identification and the development of goals for other services within the prison.

This Addiction Counselling for some may come towards the end of their sentence because of a transfer from another prison or where the Probation service have become aware of non-engagement with formal counselling services within the prison with regards an addiction.

This In-Reach Service consistently provides detailed information, advice and the benefits that have arisen for those seeking structure and support within Churchfield Community Trusts Outreach and the possibility of other options for those looking for and in the process of change.

## Addiction Counselling in the Community

Churchfield Community Trust provides an Addiction Counselling service to persons post release by appointment at the following locations Churchfield Community Trust 107- 109 Knockfree Avenue and at the Probation Service Cove St. Cork.

### Outreach Support

Outreach support is available post release in the context of brief and crisis intervention and sign posting to other Churchfield Community Trust services such as literacy and study skills support, group work, acupuncture & horticulture.

Churchfield Community Trust also contributes to other Probation Service collaborative projects.

**The Community Service Group** is a weekly collaboration with The Linkage Service, part of IASIO and Churchfield Community Trust in the Cork Probation Service. It provides an alternative to work groups and individual placements through the area of personal development as part of a person's Community Service requirements. It explores different topics related to employment /training, substance use/addiction and offending behaviour. It not only offers new and relevant information to participants, it also seeks to support soft skills development within a group format through feedback, reflection, and learning, an essential part of personal development.

**This Women's Group** is a collaboration of the Probation Service and two of their funded projects, the Linkage Service part of IASIO and Churchfield Community Trust. Since 2016 its goal is to promote social interaction and help motivate Probation service users to consider making decisions differently in their lives through looking at new and other possibilities. During this scheduled programme Churchfield Community Trust uses a psychoeducation approach to help communicate important knowledge to participants around internal experiences, substance use and addiction.



**Garden furniture products produced by CCT Workshop Team**

## ST. Nicolas Trust

St Nicolas Trust continues to offer support, information and counselling to families of prisoners, particularly families who are dealing with imprisonment for the first time. We supply volunteers in the waiting room who provide a kind word, reassurance and a cup of tea in what is a very difficult situation for families. We continue to provide a telephone support system which is increasingly busy with calls from all areas of the country and we operate a support group where people in similar situations can share their concerns and support each other. We can additionally meet people in an informal way for a coffee and a chat and if they are unable to attend a meeting. Over the past two years, we have met many people in Dublin, Kerry and many outlying areas in Co Cork in an informal way.

Over the past few years, the "SNT" has produced 3 information booklets, filled with simple information about the prison and its services and difficulties around home coming and children's issues. We are regularly asked to send copies of booklets to families in this position around the country. While the booklets relate to Cork Prison, the information contained in them can easily be adapted to all prisons.

With this in mind, we have asked the Irish Prison management to support us in forwarding this aim. There is an excellent printing press in the midlands prison which has previously printed copies of the booklets.

We have already asked the waiting room staff in the prisons if they would be interested in the booklets and they stated that they would welcome them. We believe this is possible with very little effort or cost. Since we produced the first booklets, people tell us that all the questions they want answered are addressed in the booklets, and in effect they reduce the calls to the prison service seeking simple information.

During the past year we are linking with an ex Chaplin in Dublin who has opened a halfway house. We are passing on names to her of prisoners who are servicing their sentences in Cork and other places, but their families are in Dublin. We are working together with new ideas for the future. We increasingly get calls from all over the country on our support phone. Our booklets are edited and currently available on our website. Our aim is to always to seek out help families who need a helping hand coming to terms with a family member in prison.

Mairead Carmody

Chairperson

**Report from the Chaplin of Cork Prison- Rev Fr. Ray Riordan**

As Chaplain of Cork Prison, I Father Ray wish to acknowledge the work the visiting committee do for the inmates of Cork Prison. The visiting committee visit the prison every couple of weeks. They meet the inmates and listen to them with honesty, compassion and empathy and refer any issues encountered to Prison management.

As for myself, the inmates would tell me how good the visiting committee are to them, and the committee take everything on Board - looking at the prisoners' problems both inside and outside the prison.

I think about myself as Chaplin, Chaplin's are a great benefit to the Prison service, a very balanced group of men who make no judgment of inmates, but always stand up for them and defend their rights.

I also wish to acknowledge the relationship that is had between the Governor, Chief and staff. The relationship that is built up is pure professional work ethic. It is a blessing for Cork prison to have visiting committee within the prison and I hope this will never be lost. All I can say is to keep up the good work in Cork prison.

Fr Ray Riordan

Chaplin Cork Prison

## **IASIO**

### **Irish Association for Social Inclusion Opportunities (IASIO)**

Our vision and mission is responding to crime through the development and delivery of services to offenders and people at risk of offending, making communities safer through excellence in practice and working towards an inclusive Ireland by developing opportunities for people referred through criminal justice agencies. Three separate programmes work to assist clients to progress their lives by providing a professional support system, the services are The Resettlement Service, The Linkage Service, both of which are in Cork Prison and The Gate Service.

#### **Resettlement Service:**

The Resettlement Service in Cork Prison offers one-to-one intervention whereby the Resettlement Coordinator co-develops an effective resettlement plan with the prisoner that addresses their needs and supports their reintegration back into the community. All prisoners that are referred to this service are met by the Resettlement Coordinator Mr. Colm Carey to discuss, support and encourage them during their sentence to look at future planning for their lives and to consider what is required to stabilise them on release and ultimately desistance.

#### **DEASP:**

The Resettlement Service in Cork Prison has been pivotal in the piloting and rolling out of an initiative between The Irish Prison Service (IPS) and The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) where that all sentenced prisoners on the day of their release are now offered a welfare appointment with the DEASP in the community under a planned release protocol.

This arrangement ensures that all eligible prisoners will be offered a scheduled appointment to attend the local INTREO centre in Cork City irrespective of their home address and county in the community to open a new social welfare claim on the day of release.

The success of this initiative goes from strength to strength and benefitted over 100 prisoners in 2019 on the day of their release to access a social welfare payment subject to eligibility on the day of release.

#### **Medical Card:**

The Resettlement Coordinator meets with referred sentenced prisoners to complete the required medical card application form and submits it on the prisoners behalf to the National Medical Card Unit (NMCU) subject to GP approval in the community in order to ensure

continued access to medical care and necessary prescription medication in the community with their own GP (if required).

In 2019 a total of 65 medical cards applications were successfully approved on the day of release for each prisoner through The Resettlement Service in Cork Prison that supports their reintegration back into the community.

### **Community Coaching Programme:**

This programme is delivered in Cork Prison in conjunction with the IASIO, CETB and The Cork Sports Partnership (CSP) and supported by the FAI, Basketball Ireland, Cork GAA and Munster Rugby. This programme runs over twelve weeks and aims to assist and support all the participants to achieve certified sports coaching and educational qualifications whilst in prison that will benefit them post release in the community in areas such as personal training, coaching, volunteering, employment and progression to continuing further education.

As part of the programme requirements all twelve participants attended the prison sports hall for one full day a week (Thursdays) for the sports coaching element and the prison education unit for the remainder of the week in order to complete the QQI Level 3 award in general learning. All the coaching and educational modules were certified by the various organisations upon completion of the course and an awards ceremony took place in the sports hall on Thursday December 12 for the participants and their family members. Feedback from all the participants, prison staff and tutors was extremely positive and we expect to run another programme in September 2020 with interest growing all the time.



In attendance at this year's graduation was The Lord Mayor of Cork Dr. John Sheehan, Mr. Don Culliton IPS Director of HR, Mr. Denis Leamy CEO Cork Education & Training Board, programme stakeholders and representatives from the visiting committee as well as invited representatives from various community based training and education providers.

A special word of thanks to the WTO'S, ISM and Education Unit staff for their ongoing support and commitment with continuing to ensure that this programme runs in Cork Prison every year.

## EU Sports Awards 2019:

In 2019 The Community Coaching Programme was selected out of 144 submissions from 28 different countries as a finalist in the EU Sports Awards ceremony that took place in Brussels on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> of November. The award invite's all organisations throughout Europe public or private, commercial or not for profit that have successfully developed sport projects aimed at social inclusion to enter their initiatives.



The awards ceremony was attended by Governor Pat Dawson of Cork Prison, Mr. James Kirby of Cork Sports Partnership and Mr. Colm Carey Resettlement Coordinator in Cork Prison. It was great honour for all the stakeholders, prison staff and participants involved in the programme over the last four years to be recognised at this prestigious event and it has certainly raised the awareness and profile of the great work and opportunities available to prisoners in custody in Ireland.



Ms. Marisa Fernandez Deputy Head of EU Sport

#### **CIT Lecture Series:**

Following on from the success and positive feedback from the previous year's pilot Lecture Taster Series it was agreed by all stakeholders to invite Cork Institute of Technology back into Cork Prison in April 2019 to deliver another series of one-off lectures. This year saw a total of over 75 prisoner's participant in one or more lectures over a two hour period with a question and answer session at the end of each lecture in the Education Unit.

The objective of this programme is to promote further educational and training opportunities and present positive learning pathways as alternatives to a life of crime for all participants. It also encourages participants to attend education and literacy classes in custody as well as offering prisoners who are engaged in work and training in Cork Prison new learning, information and motivation that encourages them to consider pursuing a new career upon leaving prison.

The number of lectures has doubled from 4 to 8 and this year offered a wider range of topics such as Leadership in Sport, Core Culinary Skills, Introduction to Film Language, Apprenticeship/Trade as a Career, Science for Life and Starting your own Business. One of the participants from this year's lecture series applied and was successful with his application to study Youth & Community in Cork College of Commerce and hopes to further his studies in either UCC or CIT in September 2020.

These two-hour introductory lectures are delivered to the prisoners in the Education Unit by a visiting lecturer from Cork Institute of Technology and supported by staff from the Education Unit as well as the Resettlement Coordinator.



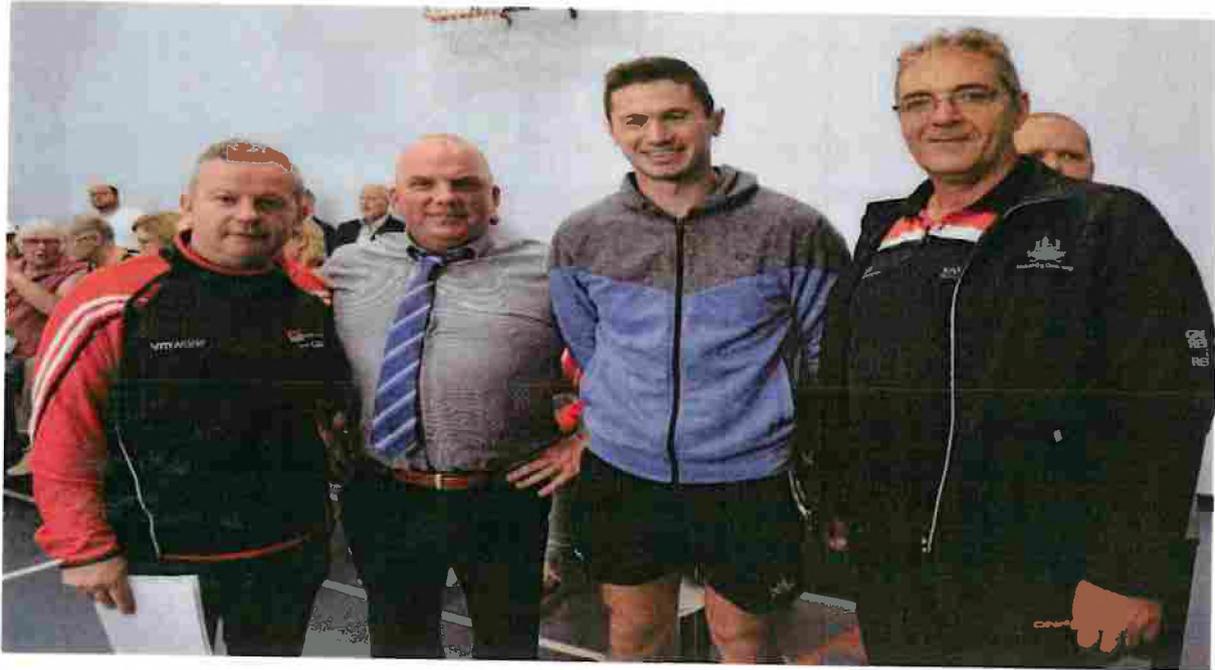
CIT President Barry O' Connor & Governor of Cork Prison Pat Dawson

### **Summer Sports & Activity Camp:**

In August we saw the third running of the Summer Sports and Activity Camp for children that takes place over one week and continues to grow year after year. The summer camp runs from 10:00am to 2:00pm each day in The Glen Sports and Resource Centre in Partnership with Cork Prison, Cork Sports Partnership, IASIO and The Dillons Cross Project and could not happen without the continued support of Sr. Agnes and The Sisters of Mercy in the Southern Service.

This important fun week of physical activities was again a huge success and involved a mixture of coaches and tutors from Munster Rugby, FAI, Basketball Ireland, RDC Dance, Basketball Ireland, Arts & Crafts and Cork GAA as well as a special guest appearance from Cork Hurling captain Mr. Seamus Harnedy on the Friday to present over 70 boys and girls with their certificates and medals in front of all their family and loved ones at the Family Fun Day event on the final day.

Volunteers included staff from Cork Prison, IASIO, Cork Sports Partnership & The Dillons Cross Project, UCC & CIT students and various community organisations throughout the week. The family Fun Day event had over 150 people in attendance that included Governor Pat Dawson and Assistant Governor Peter O' Brien, Mr. Kieran Moylan IPS Care & Rehabilitation, Mr. Vivian Geiran Director of The Probation Service and representatives from the Prison Officers Association and the Cork Visiting Committee who were all in agreement around the importance of continuing to run a camp like this.



IASIO and The Resettlement Service in Cork Prison continues to explore new initiatives and programmes for the benefit of clients both during their sentence and post release in the community. We would like to thank the Governor of Cork Prison, ISM, Education Unit, POA and all the staff of Cork Prison for their continued support shown throughout the year and look forward to working in partnership with them all again in 2020.

**By: Colm Carey  
Resettlement Coordinator  
Rathmore Road  
Cork Prison**

## Conclusion

The Visiting committee would like to acknowledge the many other professions who work within the prison that provide an excellent service to the very vulnerable section of our society i.e. Psychiatrist, Medical, Nursing, Dentistry, Probation, Counsellors, etc. and also the prison links with UCC, CIT, ETB, HSE, and the Cork City and County Councils.

We would like to complement the National Visiting Committee Chairperson's Group for organising two very informative training days during the year.

On the first day we had Ms Patricia Gilheaney Inspector of Prisons discussing the role of the Independent Office of the Inspector of Prisons and a Contemporary Prison Oversight in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Also Ms Michelle Richardson and Ms Ruth McLaughlin Senior Probation Officers gave us an insight to the Probation Service.

The second training day included a conversation with retired Judge Gillian Hussey about her experiences on the bench.

Governor John Flavin IPS Training College discussed Prison Rules and Regulations and we also had two PhD Candidates from Trinity College talking about Prison Oversight: Understanding the perspective of the prisoner.

Well done to the NVCCG for their excellent speakers and topics.

We met with Fr Ray the prison Chaplain during the year. The chaplaincy at Cork Prison provides a very important service, in terms of support and counselling to prisoners and certainly Fr Ray Riordan brings a very pragmatic and sensible approach to his endeavours.

The Chaplain meets with the new committals as soon as possible after their arrival to prison, and is available to prisoners and to all who work here, providing pastoral and spiritual care, and offering support to anyone wishing to avail of it. Mass is celebrated on Sundays, Holy Days and other occasions for members of the Catholic community, and all who wish to attend. The Chaplain also attends to the religious needs of prisoners of all faiths, where required.

Clearly the operation of Cork Prison is very much a team effort, led by senior management and supported by a very experienced and committed prison staff, along with a number of Professionals, Individuals, Voluntary, and Community organisations who contribute to the

wellbeing and Rehabilitation of prisoners. The overall focus in Cork Prison is on the life management of Prisoners with mentors available to support Prisoners in the areas of accommodation, training, social welfare, medical cards, education, employment, substance abuse programmes, physical and mental health, helping prisoners to address the root cause of their criminal behaviour etc. With the various professionals both statutory and voluntary etc as outlined in this report available within the prison and in the community, managed by the prison from custody into the community should help prisoners to sort out their lives, particularly those who may be interested in changing their lifestyle.

Sincere thanks to Governors Dawson, O'Brien and Spacey along with Chief Manley and Woods and all prison staff for their help and support in 2019. Thanks to all those individuals and agencies who contributed to this report, which shows the wide range of services available to prisoners in Cork Prison and in the Community.

Thanks to the visiting Committee Secretary, Pauline Mulholland for her efficiency and ongoing support throughout the year.

Thank you to Nikki O'Donovan for assistance in the printing and binding of the report.

To my fellow Committee members Dermot O'Connell Vice Chairman, Tomas Ryan, Anthony Donnelly and Jerry O'Sullivan thank you for your dedication and commitment during the year.

Robin Murray

Chairperson.