

Content

Foreword by the Chairman, Philip Hughes, MBE.....	Page 1
Dumfries Prison History.....	Page 2
Role of Visiting Committees.....	Page 3
Dumfries Prison Visiting Committee.....	Page 4
Chairman's annual report.....	Page 5

Foreword by Phil Hughes MBE Chairman.

At the time of writing this report we are short of two members, John Dinwoodie resigned due to other pressures and as late as last week my Deputy, Bob Agnew had to resign due to ill health. Bob will be sadly missed not only by the committee but also by the staff of the prison, He has served on the committee for fifteen years and during that time has given 100% dedication to his role as a deputy and as a Visiting Committee member.

Unfortunately this is a difficult time for the committee due to the statement by the justice Secretary that he intends to abolish visiting committees in April of next year. In spite of this however the committee have agreed to carry on and for this I am extremely grateful to them. The Justice Secretary has however now agreed to carry out another consultation and this may help in our recruitment

We still have a variation when making visits in that some members carry keys and tour the prison unescorted whereas some members prefer to have an escort

As a committee we are now in the fortunate position of having a designated office, computer, cabinet and secure post box for prisoner applications which is located within the admin complex, this facility is thanks to the Governor.

Phil Hughes MBE
DPVC Chairman

Dumfries Prison History

1473 First records
1881 Current land purchased
1883 Prison opened
1951 Converted to a borstal
1964 New hall built
1965 Young offender institute
1967 Another new hall built
1989 New gate and admin complex
2002 Changed to local adult prison
2004 Changed to current category

Dumfries and Galloway has been served by a number of prisons since 1473 and on a number of different sites within the boundaries of Dumfries.

In 1881 land was purchased for the sum of £1376 from a local farmer. As was the custom in those days farmers often named their fields after their daughters and in this case the land was called Jessiefield.

As a result the Prison was referred to by locals as Jessiefield Prison. Even today one often hears it referred to by that name.

Role of Visiting Committees

1. General Duties of Visiting Committees and Members (The Prisons and Young Offenders Institutions (Scotland) Rules 2006

- 158 (1) A Visiting Committee shall co-operate with Scottish Ministers and the Governor in promoting the efficiency of the Prison and shall inquire into and report to the Scottish Ministers upon any matter into which they may ask it to inquire.
- (2) The Visiting Committee shall:-
- (a) Immediately bring to the notice of the Governor and circumstances relating to the administration of the prison or the condition of any prisoner which appear to it to be expedient to report for the Governor's consideration; and
- (b) Bring such circumstances to the notice of Scottish Ministers if it appears to the Committee that the Governor has not remedied any matter which the Committee has notified to the Governor in terms of sub paragraph (a) within such period as appears to the Committee to be reasonable
- (3) The Visiting Committee shall from time to time inquire into the state of the prison premises and shall-
- (a) Inspect, in particular, the food and drink provided to prisoners; and
- (b) in relation to any such inquiry:-
- (i) record particulars of every visit made together with any deficiencies found during such visits, in the committee's minute book; and
- (ii) promptly send a copy of such particulars to the Scottish Ministers and to the Governor
- (4) The Visiting Committee shall also discharge such other duties as the Scottish Ministers may from time to time assign to it.
- 159 (1) The Visiting Committee and any Member shall hear and investigate any complaint which a prisoner makes to the Committee and the Member.
- 160 Not fewer than two Members of a Visiting Committee shall visit the prison at least fortnightly and for this purpose the Committee shall arrange a rota of attendance at the prison.
- 161 The Visiting Committee or any member of the Committee may inspect prison records other than:
- Personnel Records
 - Prisoner's records
 - Security Manuals or other papers which have implications for security
- 162 The Visiting Committee shall make an Annual Report for the period of 12 months ending on 31st March each year to the Scottish Ministers concerning the state of the prison and its administration and may include in it any advice and suggestions it considers appropriate.

Dumfries Prison Visiting Committee

Committee Membership as at end March 2012:

Phil Hughes MBE - Chairman
 Robert Agnew Depute
 Jane Ingall
 Elizabeth Clarke
 John Syme*
 Andrew Wood*
 Frank Gourlay
 Dianne Stewart
 Sandy Edwards
 Stuart Clement

* Member of Dumfries and Galloway Council

The Member attendance from 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2012 is detailed below:

Name	Statutory/Other Visits	Committee/other meetings	Training	Date of Appointment
Phil Hughes MBE Chairman	8	6	4	March 2002
Robert Agnew Depute	8	4	4	June 1997
Jane Ingall	4	3	3	October 2004
Elizabeth Clark	8	6	4	October 2008
John Syme*	3	1	1	May 2008
Andrew Wood*	5	3	3	May 2008
Dianne Stewart	4	2	2	March 2011
Frank Gourlay	4	1	2	March 2011
Sandy Edwards	4	3	3	March 2011
Stuart Clement	3	1	2	April 2011
Vacancy				

*Denotes Local Authority Member

Dumfries Prison Visiting Committee Annual Report 2011/12

In compiling this year's annual report I have once again used extracts from reports submitted by the Governor and other members of his staff about various parts of the prison and for which I am very grateful.

Dumfries currently has a mixture of short term local prisoners and long term sex offenders with a small number of life sentence prisoners. The prison continues to meet the aims of the Scottish prison Service in that there have been no escapes or incidents of mass disobedience during the reporting period and all prisoners are treated with respect and humanity.

Breakdown of prison role when the numbers were high varying between 196 and 205 (contract figure 195)

The current breakdown of the population is as follows

Short Term Prisoners	79
Long Term Prisoners	118
Total	197

Of these 20 are on remand and 67 are Sex Offenders.

Whilst Dumfries may be a small prison in terms of numbers the breakdown of types of offenders and layout of the prison brings with it its own problems. That said the staff cope exceptionally well and should be commended

Suicide Prevention

The prison continue to have excellent suicide prevention measures in operation and whilst there has been a small number of prisoners self harming themselves there has not been any suicides. I am also pleased to report that the Samaritans are once again playing an active part and a number of prisoners have been trained as listeners.

There has been one death in custody but this was a prisoner who died from what is believed to be natural causes and to their credit the prison staff done everything possible to care for the prisoner. A fatal accident inquiry will determine further details.

Use of restraints

The use of restraints within the establishment has been minimal and on the occasions that they have been used they have been fully justified and there has not been any complaints raised with the committee about the use of restraints. This and the fact that the number of Governors reports continue to be low in number is another indication that the Regime is running smoothly.

Prisoner complaints/requests to the Visiting Committee

Once again these have been small in number with a total of only 34 during the whole reporting period, another indication that the prison is running smoothly. Following my report last year when there was only 25 applications we have been given a higher profile in that details of the committee and how to make an application to see a member have been widely distributed throughout the establishment.

BREAKDOWN OF PRISONER REQUEST TO VC 2011/12

Nature of request	Number
Transfer	8
Closed visits	2
Canteen	1
Change of location	4
Employment	3
Use of telephones	1
Canteen	2
Healthcare	1
Smoking policy	1
Bullying	1
Multitude of frivolous requests	3 (1 prisoner)
Closed visits	2
Withdrawn at time of interview	4
Privileges	1

The reader will note that there were no complaints about food throughout the year, in fact we have received numerous comments of praise in relation to the food and for this the catering manager and his staff are to be commended.

The above figures do not take into account the number of times that members of the committee give advice to prisoners, during their scheduled visit, about concerns that they may have

Assaults

These are on average running at about 3 per month which is not excessive considering the mix of prisoners within the establishment. Although the number of these assaults by prisoner on prisoner are relatively small, and under the corporate target I also note that the figure, I am aware that the prison management team are continually looking at ways of improving the establishment's anti bullying strategy.

Visits Complex

The complex is a very bright, spotlessly clean and cheerful area information notices for visitors are plentiful and well displayed and an adequate play area for children is situated within the visiting room. The waiting room has recently been refurbished which has resulted in a separate area for legal visitors, a more secure area and a much more pleasant area in which to wait.

Most prisoners actually receive much more than their minimum legal entitlement with remands getting 1 hour visits instead of 30 minutes and the short term prisoners receiving 3 visits per month.

The visits complex has a canteen which is staffed by a group of ladies belonging to a voluntary organisation called Friends of HMP Dumfries. Another group of volunteers active within the visits complex is an organisation called Hope and their members visit the long term

prisoners who do not get many visitors. Both of these organisations do an excellent job and have to be commended.

The number of prisoners on closed visits is quite small and all are reviewed on a monthly basis.

Reception

Concerns had been raised in the previous annual report concerning the Reliance escort service turning up late for escorts. However since the contract has been taken over by Group 4 these problems now appear to have been resolved which is indicated by the lack of complaints in regards to this issue.

Induction Programme

Great strides have been made in the induction programme with all prisoners continuing to partake in the following modules:

1. Addictions
2. Act (suicide Risk assessment)
3. Core screening (individual/personal needs)
4. Visits
5. General prison routine
6. Service providers (service available and access arrangements)
7. Listeners (mentor system using reliable fellow prisoners)
8. Anti bullying
9. Race relations
10. Complaints procedures
11. Orderly room practice
12. Religious needs
13. Personal hygiene and infection control
14. Visiting committee-role and access
15. Family contact and development officers
16. Health Care.

Within each Module there are on average eight components. The complete programme is not always taught in continuous sessions as this is dependent on the availability of prison officers to take the classes or groups. However as a prisoner completes a module this is recorded and he attends until all modules are completed. For this induction programme prisoners are divided into two groups:

1. Local short term and remand prisoners
2. Long term prisoners

Obviously not all module content will apply to short term and remand prisoners. It is recognised that the above is a very comprehensive programme which is vital for the maintenance of good prison discipline and a human quality of life for prisoners and the prison staff are to be commended. It is also apparent that this is a dynamic programme which is being reviewed and altered due to a continuously evolving climate of legislation and expanding knowledge of prisoners needs.

Extract from Governors report for March 2012

I am enclosing an extract from this report as it highlights a lot of good work that the prison are currently involved in

Dumfries Prison Visiting Committee Annual Report 2011/12

This quarter began on a very positive note with the launch of the Dumfries and Galloway Community Integration Pathways for Short Term Prisoners. There are a number of services provided for prisoners while held in custody and for ex-offenders when they are released but there was some belief that they were not as 'joined up' as they could be and, as a result, short term prisoners on liberation were drifting back to a life of crime. The Community Integration Pathways are a series of protocols which define how the prison and community service providers can work closely together to provide a more seamless service in matters to do with accommodation, employability and substance misuse. The idea was floated past the SWS Community Justice Authority (CJA) and gained their wholehearted support and this led to us hosting the "Together is Better" event in August 2010 when we invited the views and participation of the local authority and third sector partners. That event showed us that there was significant support for our idea and so we set up three working groups under the chairmanship of FLMs Iain Cushen, David Buchan and Addictions Nurse Amanda Allen to take forward the three work streams. They and their community colleagues worked tirelessly over the next year and on 1 December 2011 we were pleased to launch the protocols at an event in Dumfries hosted by the CJA. Over 50 guests were present for the launch and it was well reported by the local press, BBC local radio and ITV Border news. I have now asked the staff to look to see if these pathways can be broadened to embrace education as we have been having some success in attracting short term prisoners to education classes and would like to explore if there is any way we can continue their education after liberation.

The festive season can often be difficult for prisoners and we understand that they just wish it to pass as quickly as it can. I am grateful to the staff who tried to make it as bearable as they could by organising and running a series of competitions and my thanks also go to the catering staff that provided some delicious festive fare. One must not forget that I am only able to fund such fare through the generosity of the Friends of HMP Dumfries who kindly donate a significant portion of their profits from the visits tea bar to the Prisoners' Common Good Fund.

Our new Life Skills party still seems to be popular amongst the short term prisoners and I am often taken aback when told as I watch prisoners at their work that they are actually working through their tea break!! Following the launch of the Pathways we were approached by an organisation, *Springboard*, who reported that in SWS there were a number of job vacancies in the hospitality sector but that there was not the matching interest from the jobless; they asked if they could run a two-day event in the prison to try to explain to our short term prisoners that the hospitality sector comprises of much more than washing up or waiting on tables. This event was run towards the end of February and, although too early to measure its success in terms of future employment, was well received by the prisoners who took part. We hope that it can be run again, not least to maximise the use of our new training kitchen.

Education Provision

The prison continue to exceed their delivery target for this year for learning hours and further engage more short term prisoners. This is to be a key aim for the foreseeable future.

ESTATES MANAGEMENT

The prison is continuing to focus on meeting their targets for planned preventative maintenance and for fault repairs. It is planned to move onto a new computerised system linked to all other establishment estates units.

Projects

A Training Kitchen has recently been built in the work sheds as part of the Life Skills programme. Work has been completed to upgrade of the ECR and the Gate Lodge.

It is also planned to replace the Prisoners Tea Hut in the gardens and to upgrade the Visits Canteen and the Prisoners Reception Office in the very near future.

Fire Safety

The roles of Fire Safety Executive and Fire Safety Officer are about to move from Estates to the Establishment.

Industries

It must be noted that the industrial cleaners continues to be an area of excellence, with all inmates who complete the training, gaining certification.

I would suggest that the joiners shop could still be regarded as an area of best practice, the prisoners have built a single story wooden building and now make doors and window frames to fit the building, which is a great challenge to their acquired skills and leads to certification.

The prison delivered in partnership with the charity, *Springboard*, a two day hospitality taster – 20th & 21st February, in the new training kitchen facility in the life skills area. The idea of the project is to allow short term prisoners to find out what opportunities are available in the hospitality industry and to encourage them to consider employment and training in this field. The course was delivered by a range of hospitality professionals and will be evaluated over the following weeks. Discussions are underway to establish this as an ongoing feature of what is on offer at Dumfries.

Children and Families

The Scottish Pre-School Play Association, a charitable organisation working with excluded families in the community, will began to offer play support and advice to mothers before visit sessions from Wednesday 22nd February. This will be trialled for a period and if successful will be extended further. Parenting sessions for dads are being planned along similar lines.

The first family induction day will be held on the 28th March, inviting the families of convicted prisoners to attend the prison and have an opportunity to meet with and ask questions of, the various service providers and staff who work with their loved ones about, e.g. HDC, parole, drug and alcohol counselling, employment preparation etc. Assuming the first event is successful it is envisaged that we will hold these days quarterly.

Religion

Representatives from several faiths make appointments to see prisoners on request including those from the Muslim, Jehovah Witness, Buddhist and mainstream Christian faiths.

Awards Achieved by prisoners

A total of 325 awards were achieved by prisoners throughout the year, this is way above the KPI and something for the establishment to be proud of. A breakdown of these awards is shown as appendix A

Awards to Staff

During the quarter two members of staff, Officer Charlie Douglas (ICM Co-ord) and Officer Ian Archibald (VT Cleaners) were presented with Butler Trust commendations by Baroness Linklater. Only 30 Butler Trust awards are made each year, three went to Scotland and two of those were given

Dumfries Prison Visiting Committee Annual Report 2011/12

to Dumfries staff; this is a tremendous achievement for the two members of staff and for the establishment

Best practice

One area that stands out once again is the practice of using the mobile cleaning party, all of the prisoners are trained to a very high standard in industrial cleaning, a qualification recognised in outside industry, and subsequently employed, unsupervised, throughout the prison. This practice coupled with the cleaning schedules displayed in all areas results in a very high standard of cleanliness throughout the establishment.

VC members training

Unfortunately national training for VC members has been suspended pending the outcome of the latest consultation on the future of Visiting Committees. We have however continued with limited local training thanks to our training coordinator, Liz Clark and the prison training officer

Conclusion

The committee are satisfied that the prison staff provides a high standard of service to Dumfries prison, and commend the management on the many changes made over the past year. The staff in Dumfries Prison at all levels are extremely dedicated and as a result relationships between staff and prisoners are very good, resulting in Dumfries offering safe conditions of custody.

I would like to add my thanks to Committee Members for their continued dedication, professionalism and support over the reporting period.

Objectives for 2011/12

Unfortunately due to recent statements regarding the future of visiting committees it is not practicable to set any objectives for the following year, suffice to say that I am extremely pleased and proud the current members have agreed to remain on the committee despite the uncertainty of the future

Phil Hughes MBE
DPVC Chairman