

BOWHOUSE VISITING COMMITTEE



Annual Report

1st April 2012 - 31st March 2013

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE OF HMP BOWHOUSE, KILMARNOCK

1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013

This is the 13th Annual Report of the Visiting Committee of HMP Kilmarnock

1. THE COMMITTEE

East Ayrshire

Jim Currie (Chair)
Jim Mills
William Garven
1 Vacancy

South Ayrshire

Cllr Peter Convery
Cllr Philip Saxton
Eila MacLennan
Jean Wilson (Co-Vice Chair)

North Ayrshire

Nan Wallace (Co-Vice Chair)
Jim Montgomerie
2 Vacancies

East Renfrewshire

Cllr Alistair Carmichael
Sylvia Black

South Lanarkshire

Cllr Maureen Devlin

- 1.1 During to the uncertainty of the future of the V.C. Committee 3 Vacancies are still vacant until a decision is made

2. MEETINGS AND VISITS

- 2.1 Meetings were held in May 2012, August 2012, October 2012 ,December, January 2013 & April 2013. 2.2 At all Quarterly meetings a full report was given by the Bowhouse Director, Sandy McEwan, and a full update given of any changes to staff personnel which had been made during the course of the previous quarter.
- 2.2 The average attendance at the meetings was 11 - a slight decrease from the previous year.
- 2.3 During the year the Co-ordinating Chaplain was dismissed due to disciplinary indiscretion
- 2.4 The Annual Burns Supper again took place in Bowhouse on the 25th January assisted by a Burns Club from Hamilton and the participation of the Prisoners. This was very well received and thoroughly enjoyable
- 2.5 The rota visits which took place on a fortnightly basis were all successfully covered. As was initiated last year, follow-up complaints had to be made by those who had received the initial complain. This has proved a success and any problems with regards to the inaction of any complaints was reported to the Director.

Issues and incidents

- 3.1 During the course of the past year a brick laying scheme has started to enable the Prisoners to perhaps seek employment in that trade on release and within the next few months a wallpaper course will be starting
- 3.2 In June a new Head of Learning and Skills followed by three new tutors with a fourth remaining to take up post. The New Head is extremely enthusiastic and a number of the inmates are progressing to sit National Exams in the near future .
- 3.3 During the course of the year funding was gained to build an excellent Astra Turf within the Prison
- 3.4 The chairman now keeps a record of all training undertaken by the Visiting Committee. This includes all visits to other establishments. Any local training undertaken will be recorded at each quarterly meeting.
- 3.5 The future of the Visiting Committees is still in 'limbo' but hopefully a positive decision will be made within the next few months
- 3.6 During the year there were no serious incidents other than smuggling of items into the prison and a number of breaches of security which included the use of mobile phones.

- 3.7 During the year Hugh Munro, H.M. Chief Inspector of Prisons visited Bowhouse between 26th September and the 3rd October. In general it was a first class report with a number good practices given credit and a number of recommendations given - all of which were quickly resolved
- 3.8 The Health Care facilities , which were changed over to the N.H.S. last year seems to be working well with an increase in Surgeries during the year
- 3.9 During the visits all areas of the prison were visited including the Medical Centre and kitchen. No abnormalities or complaints were made. It was encouraging to note efforts were being made to obtain more private work for the prisoners.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 The Committee would like to record their thanks to the Director and all the prison staff for co-operating totally with the various complaints made and the time and effort they gave to the Visiting Committee throughout the year.
- 4.2 The quarterly report on Bowhouse Prison was given at each Visiting Committee meeting by the Director, Sandy McEwan. The main difference in 2011 was the change-over of the Medical Facility to the NHS . It is too early to judge as to whether there has been an improvement in the service.
- 4.3 On 31st March 2012 there were 646 prisoners and on 31st March 2013 there were 500 prisoners, an decrease of 146.
- 4.4 With regards to staffing levels in Bowhouse, on the 31st March 2012 there was a 7.6% decrease in staff . Staff sickness over the period was 3.85% days of working days which was 10.24 of days lost per head.

In the reporting period there were a number of Incidents

Reportable Incidents	1156
Staff Serious Assault	0
Prisoners Serious Assault	2
Smuggled in Items	25
Breaches of Security	18
Use of Restraint	179 (92 full restraint & 87 compliant removals)

- 4.5 There are Quarterly Meetings a year and at each meeting we have a written prison report. The Governor always attends to answer any relevant questions with regards to the prison.
- 4.6 There are two members of the Visiting Committee in the prison every fortnight on a rota basis

- 4.7. Every fortnight the Prisoners Complaints Book is made available to the Visitors and the appropriate inmate interviewed. If the complaint is not satisfactorily settled that day the same members of the V.C. have to return until they are satisfied that the complaint has been properly investigated. There are on average at least two complaints per visit but mostly it has been found that rather than a written complaint a prisoner will approach a member of the V.C. to verbally register their problem.
- 4.8 Three other prisons were visited by the committee during the past year.
- 4.9 Any new member of the V.C. has to attend an Induction Course.
- 5.00 There are twelve members at present with 3 vacancies.