

# Interlink

*The newsletter for Southdown intergroup*

*In this newsletter you  
can expect*

**Updates from our  
Intergroup  
Committee & the  
LOC**

**The SouthDown  
Legacy publication  
available to order**

**Annabel takes the  
Q&A**

*Get interlink in your  
inbox every quarter!*

Email [interlink.southdown@aamail.org](mailto:interlink.southdown@aamail.org)  
to subscribe

## Editor's Message

Dear readers of the Southdown fellowship,

Our Chair reflects upon her experiences so far in her role as Chair, her appreciation of fellows that have stepped up into service positions and her attendance to the Southern National Convention. There is also a reminder about a workshop on 26th January 2025.

In the Q&A this month, Annabel R takes the hot seat to talk about the new LGBTQIA+ meeting and her role as secretary.

The Liaison Officers give us an update on their progress over the last quarter and their greatly anticipated Volunteer workshop to take place next year.

..

We are always looking for volunteers to assist Liaison Officers maintain and improve the various projects they manage. There is also valuable service on the occasional Tuesday evening in Fareham at the Detox centre and again on a Thursday evening at the QA hospital in Portsmouth.

A gentle reminder that it's really important that each GSR prints one or two copies of Interlink for display on group literature tables. Please also ask fellows if they would like to be added to the distribution list thereby keeping informed of what's going on and service available in the Southdown locality. To ensure the distribution list is effective, please do also advise me if you'd like your contact details to be removed.

If there are any group celebrations taking place, we'd like to hear about it for the next issue.

Thank you all for keeping me sober today.

Yours in fellowship,

Jayne, Interlink Editor

[interlink.southdown@aamail.org](mailto:interlink.southdown@aamail.org)



# OUR CHAIR CHECKS IN...

Greetings Fellows,

I cannot believe that it is almost a year since I took on the position of Chair. The thought of doing the role did (and still does at times) scare me but I truly hope that I am serving you well. I care so deeply for AA, it's past, present, and future and my sole aim is to ensure Southdown Intergroup, it's meetings and members remain healthy. Overall, I feel we are in a good position with lots of service positions filled and great enthusiasm for the Fellowship. There have been a few challenges since our last assembly, but each has provided me with an opportunity to learn and grow, and for that I am grateful.

I am really pleased that we have people coming forward to take on Liaison Officer roles and am hugely proud that Southdown has fellows willing to take on service at all levels. Huge congratulations to Matt and Sonia on their respective appointments to Chair and Secretary of Southeast Region.

Everyone knows how enthusiastic I am about Service because I bang on about it all the time! So here is a date for your diaries - Sunday 26th January 2025 is when the next Regional Workshops will be held. If you have never been then I highly recommend that you attend. It is a fantastic way to connect with other fellows and find out about the various Intergroup positions.

I had the immense pleasure of attending the Southern National Convention in Weston Super Mare and had a fantastic weekend filled with fun, friendship, and fellowship. The Southern National has an incredibly special place in my heart, ever since I first attended Hayling Island at 7 months sober. It was great to see so many (about 800) members of the fellowship coming together to celebrate sobriety. Personally, I absolutely love conventions and am extremely excited to attend the 30th IoW convention - I hope to see lots of you there!

As always, if anyone has anything they would like to raise with regards to Southdown Intergroup, please do not hesitate to email me.

Ellie, Southdown Intergroup Chair  
[chair.southdown@aamail.org](mailto:chair.southdown@aamail.org)

## Q&A WITH ANNABEL R

### **How long have you been in this role and how long have you been in it?**

I'm Secretary at Portsmouth's brand new Women & LGBTQIA+ group, which held our first meeting on Sunday 21st July. My role with this group has been two-fold; helping co-found it, and now as part of the regular service group.

### **What are the highlights of doing this role?**

I have previously helped co-found two women's meetings; one in Costa Rica and the current one in Havant. These experiences have allowed me to witness first-hand the significant benefits of providing 'satellite' safe spaces for alcoholics as an additional offering to our core mixed meetings.

It is absolutely one of the highlights, if not THE highlight of my Secretary role, to see people gain trust, learn to accept help, and build an initial support network around them; which often gives them the confidence they need to then 'spread their wings' and engage with the fellowship at mixed meetings.

The collective decision in creating this new meeting to support the LGBTQIA+ community in Portsmouth too has also been a highlight. Pre-Covid there was a Queer meeting in the city but, like so many meetings, wasn't reinstated when the world returned to 'normal'. It has been, and is, an honour to be of service to this community as well.



# Liaison Officer Committee

## Liaison Officer Coordinator Report

As I continue to understand and shape the remit of the Liaison Officer Coordinator role, the Liaison Officer Committee (LOC) continues to move forward positively in raising awareness and engaging with our members and local organisations. The response rate for LOC support has been fantastic and we now have expressions of interest from over 40 members. Please be assured that we haven't forgotten those who have come forward and we will absolutely be in contact soon to ask for help. As an update, we are planning to set up a Liaison Officers Coordination day where we will invite those members who have stepped up to attend - the aim of the day will be assign volunteer members to individual Liaison Officers and set them all up with tasks to further carry the message in our community. The likelihood is that this will take place sometime in early January 2025. We would prefer to take a bit of time to plan and get this right.

In the meantime, we attended the Suicide Awareness event in September where we had a stand. Volunteer members represented the Southdown Intergroup and were able to be available to those who wanted to talk and sought more information - our members even managed to have a conversation with the Major of Portsmouth who we will be following up with again to seek their ongoing support.

At the end of October 2024, the Liaison Officer Committee members were at the Portsmouth Convention where we had a stand - thanks to those who stopped by to say hello, put your name down to help or took away some literature and posters to maybe pass onto your doctor's surgery or put up at your place of work, in the church hall or community centre. We are grateful for every opportunity to reach a person that needs our support.

I have also been speaking with several members who have shown an interest in taking the lead for Liaison Officer roles for Armed Services and Employment and am hopeful that we will have these areas filled soon. If you are interested in becoming more involved as a lead Liaison Officer in a specific area, please do contact me for a chat - whilst some of the roles are currently being covered, we know all too well that rotations will be occurring in the next year and therefore now is the right time to show your interest, get connected and gain some experience.

Yours in Fellowship

Colin.

[cood.southdown@aamail.org](mailto:cood.southdown@aamail.org)

## Q&A WITH ANNABEL R

### 3. What impact do you feel this role has had on your recovery?

I have served as Secretary previously so it has been my role in co-founding this new group which has been particularly impactful for me at this stage in my recovery. The new learning I needed to do, the advice sought from GSO and active members of the South Downs Intergroup, and the implementation of updated safeguarding guidance provided by recent AA literature has added a depth of understanding to the Traditions, principles and values of AA I hadn't experienced before.

Additionally, it has given me opportunities to better my ability to listen to the needs of others; practice patience, tolerance and loving-kindness (at times!)

; and to have faith in our abilities to 'do the next right thing' as a group.

It has also shown me how contemporary AA is supporting and providing guidance toward standing challenges within the fellowship, for which I am incredibly grateful.



# Liaison Officer Committee

## ARCHIVES

### ARCHIVE NETWORK MEETING

The meeting took place in York on 20th and 21st September. Intergroups are responsible for own Inventory at The Borthwick (Nick requesting funding for initial visit). A reminder that Intergroup secretaries are responsible for sending assembly minutes to GSO. Presentations were made by GSO, The Borthwick and The Fellowship Archivist. Reminder for groups to send GSO Pink Forms annually. GSO has received a huge collection of documents, which has led them to request controlled donations in future. A suggestion for a Share swap at next year's archive meeting, was made. The topic of archiving Intergroup splits was discussed, and archivists reminded that we are one Fellowship.

### NATIONAL ONLINE ARCHIVE WORKSHOP

Took place online 12th September with presentations by GSO, The Borthwick and The Fellowship Archivist.

### SE REGION ARCHIVE WORKSHOP

Took place in Pulborough on 24th September with six digital handouts in circulation. One digital handout highlighting the Role of The Intergroup Archivist. The Borthwick is now preserving websites digitally.

### HELP AVAILABLE

Southdown now have a mini display unit, with three banners, two of the banners have QR codes with links to The Darkness into Light website and the local contacts page. Banners can be displayed along side the Darkness into Light Banners or independently and are designed to be used by all Liaison Officers and Intergroups. Intergroup Liaison Officers are requested to use AA email addresses.

### THE SOUTHDOWN LEGACY

Edition 5 is now published and in circulation, more in the Spotlight section of this Interlink!

### ARCHIVING

Many thanks to Caroline and Debbie, for continuing their good work in putting together the Southdown Group Histories.

### SHARE MAGAZINES

Many thanks to the groups who have donated their unwanted Share magazines. The Southdown archive collection incorporates many of the past editions of Share. Donated magazines go towards this collection. The balance of these donations can go to our prisons.

Nick, Archives Liaison Officer  
[archives.southdown@aamail.org](mailto:archives.southdown@aamail.org)



## 12 STEP

Since taking over I have emailed all GSR that have volunteers on the 12 step list from their home group. I had 11 response and updated the list removing 7 people and adding 3. Currently we have 170 Volunteers across intergroup on the 12 step list. I update this list whenever required and I sent over 20 hard copies to telephone responder who cannot access this online.

At the Portsmouth convention I got a lot of interest and gave out lots of leaflets and cards on how to join and the requirements. My plan over the next year is to visit more meeting dropping off card and leaflets and promoting the wonderful service of 12 stepping a newcomer.



Neil, 12 Step Coordinator  
[12step.southdown@aamail.org](mailto:12step.southdown@aamail.org)



# Liaison Officer Committee

**"35% of the calls resulted in 12 step intervention"**

## TELEPHONES

Hi all,

In Q3 we have had 574 calls on the helplines. 35% of the calls resulted in 12 step intervention and 40% of calls were from out of area.

We currently have 2 permanent shifts available which are Saturday overnight and Sunday overnight which are both 10pm-7am.

We are always looking for people to be added as reserve responders and have some permanent shifts available. If anyone is interested please contact Marianne or myself. Many thanks

Marianne + Ed, Telephone Liaison Officers  
[telephones.southdown@aamail.org](mailto:telephones.southdown@aamail.org)



## YOUNG PERSONS

The Young Persons Breakfast with Bill, which is held in Portsmouth, had eight people in attendance this month which is the highest since it started earlier in the year. This meeting is going from strength to strength, and we highly anticipate that more new young person members will join us in the coming future.

There is a lot of enthusiasm from members providing support to young person's liaison service about carrying the message via leaflets and posters disseminated around the city of Portsmouth in areas that may reach other young people. Some posters have been provided to current members and more have been ordered so that we can further distribute in the community. I have communicated with Winchester and Portsmouth University by email but progress in these education sectors remains slow.

These are exciting times for Young Persons Liaison - for any members and Young Persons wishing to connect and/or assist in this service area, please do reach out to me on the email below.

Yours in Fellowship  
Dani  
[youngpersons.southdown@aamail.org](mailto:youngpersons.southdown@aamail.org)



# Liaison Officer Committee

## HEALTH

Whilst there have been no new health liaison opportunities in this reporting period, we continue to embed the Southdown Intergroup and AA into the regular weekly patient contact meeting held at the Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth. This continues to be an opportunity for inpatients to meet with members to receive AA information and to get support in what lies ahead after they are discharged. We know from our conversations with NHS staff that this is invaluable service and can make all the difference when a person leaves the care of the hospital. We have a good core of members to assist with health liaison service but are always grateful for new interest.

The same goes for the Dame Carol Detox Unit service located in Fareham, which continues to run smoothly. The staff have let us know that we have given good support to the inpatients at this facility and the plan is for this to continue for the foreseeable future.

Planning ahead and whilst I am happy to continue in the lead role into 2025, it won't be too much longer before I would have been in this position for three years. Therefore, I am now starting to reach out to prospective members to take over from me - I am happy to have a chat and provide sponsorship into the role next year for anyone that may be interested. I can be contacted by emailing by emailing

Yours in Fellowship

Nicky

[health.southdown@aamail.org](mailto:health.southdown@aamail.org)



## CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

The prison meetings continue to run at one meeting per month alternating between the two prisons on the Isle of Wight. From two years ago when there were no meetings the progress has been slow, mainly to do with the clearance procedure. The current team of six feel that the prisons need more meetings and are willing to do more. Inmates attending are between three and seven and would benefit from more meetings.

Having spoken with the contact at the prison the team will hold two meetings in December as a trial for the coming new year. If all goes well we can carry on with the two a month meetings. GSR's We need you to attract more members to come forward for this service.

Requirements are- minimum 2 years sobriety, have a sponsor, be willing to travel to the Isle of Wight (ferry expenses will be reimbursed by intergroup treasury).

Anyone that shows interest can contact me on 07811 226679



Thank you for your help.

Angie K

[criminaljustice.southdown@aamail.org](mailto:criminaljustice.southdown@aamail.org)

# interlink spotlight



## **THE SOUTHDOWN LEGACY EDITION 5**

Having been over a decade since the last Southdown Legacy was published, it's safe to say there's been plenty of time for new stories to be gathered. The original idea of an Intergroup archive newsletter was born following a visit by the Southdown archivist to The National Archive Roadshow at the Wirral in 2004. A committee was formed in 2005, with the aim of creating some form of vehicle to present the Southdown archives in an attractive, inviting and informative way.

It was vital that the majority of the content should come from members of the Intergroup, the "grass roots", particularly those with not only long-term sobriety, but also good long memories. The first edition was published in Spring 2006. Since that date a further three editions have been published, the last one being in 2011.

Over the last five years the archivist has been requesting and receiving new articles on a variety of topics. Lucia spent many hours collating these gifts and then Lucy has used her editing skills to publish the 28-page Edition 5. Big thanks to our archivist Nick who has led the project and has also contributed his experience of the Magical History Tour to the new issue.

Since the last issue, one of the major incidents which has affected alcoholics within our Intergroup (and across the world) is the pandemic. To that end, we not only have a selection of accounts from fellows written during this time, but also a poem and two paintings. What a creative lot we are!

The rest of this issue is a hopefully compelling blend of pieces on everything from service (at all levels) to conventions to the Southdown Founders Day Supper. There are a few stories about specific Southdown meetings and another that talks about the sense of belonging within a home group.

Edition 5 has now been printed and is currently being distributed. Preordered copies have been reserved and can be collected from the Southdown Assembly on November 21st 2024.

We hope you enjoy and invite any feedback or suggestions for the next one!

Lucy S and Nick  
Editor/Archivist

“

***Edition 5  
available Southdown  
Assembly  
21st Nov 2024  
(Must be pre-ordered)***

”

