



General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain

FIFTY-SIXTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 8 – 10 APRIL 2022

Theme: The Family Afterward

Final Report 2022

General Service Office of AA
PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ
www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

FIFTY-SIIXTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2022

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DIGEST OF AGENDA

Friday 8 April 2022

Opening Session

Committee Meetings Commence

Nominations - Conference Chair 2023

Presentation of
General Service Board Reports:
(Session 1)

Finance Presentation
Safeguarding Presentation
Literature Presentation

Saturday 9 April 2022

Committee Meetings Continue

Presentation of
General Service Board Reports:
(Session 2)

PI/Communications Presentation
75th Anniversary Convention Presentation

Open Forum

Sunday 10 April 2022

Presentation of Committee Reports

Election of Chair for the Fifty-Seventh General Service
Conference 2023

Confirmation of
Board Members Elect

Closing Address

FRIDAY 8 APRIL

The Fifty-Sixth General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain convened in person on Friday 8th April 2022 at 2.45p.m. with a hybrid option for those who could not attend in person. Held at the Park Inn Hotel, North Street, York – a venue not used since 2019 - situated in the heart of the City of York and only a few minutes' walk from the Railway Station and the General Service Office. All full sessions were held in the Henley Suite.

Safety at Conference was vital for all attending and delegates were asked to produce a negative Lateral Flow Test prior to Conference.

After lunch, registration and distribution of folders commenced at around 1 pm and was followed by a reception which, as usual, provided an ideal opportunity for delegates to familiarise themselves with the venue, to renew friendships and to share with those delegates and observers attending for the first time. After the opening session, Committee proceedings commenced at 4.00pm including welcome and introduction to Committees.

The Conference comprised 83 delegates from sixteen Regions of which 6 joined online; 24 members of the General Service Board of which 2 attended online; Adelle S - Conference Chair (Scotia Region), Ranjan B the General Secretary and 7 members of staff from the General Service Office attended. Also in attendance were 9 Observers from the following countries:

Bulgaria	1
Greece	1
Ireland	2
Latvia	1
Poland	2
Portugal	1
Romania	1

Total in attendance 125.

Opening of Conference by Adelle S (Conference Chair 2022)

Good afternoon and a warm welcome to the 56th General Service Conference of AA Great Britain. My name is Adelle and I'm an alcoholic. My home group is Cumbernauld Sat morning – we are still in Zoom and will warmly welcome you any Saturday – just not tomorrow!

My role this year is Conference Chair. Having chaired Committee 6 virtually last year I can say with all honesty that it's great to see you all here – either in person or on screen. As Conference Chair let me formally welcome you all – delegates, board members, overseas visitors, GSO colleagues and red dotters. A special word for the red dotters – please wear your red dot with pride as it means we can bombard you with love and support this weekend. If your experience at Conference is anything like mine then you are in for an amazing, challenging, knacker and exhilarating experience.

When Scotia region put me forward as regional delegate – seems like ages ago now – I had no intention or ambition to be Conference Chair. But I am humbled to be asked to serve, thank you for trusting me!

But this isn't about me, it's about you and the work you are doing here in service of the Fellowship. This is OUR Conference so to set us off on the right foot, please join me in reading the Preamble:

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organisation or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

And before I launch into the theme of this year's conference, I'd like to welcome Ranjan, General Secretary who will read the 12 Traditions.

Thank you. And that's why we are here today...to represent this wonderful fellowship for those of us already in the rooms and to protect it to make sure an active fellowship remains for those who come after.

Service can sometimes feel like an impossible and somewhat never-ending task – but if we act with love, tolerance and understanding this weekend we can leave Conference on Sunday feeling proud of the part we have played in moving AA forward through the conscience of our regions and through you as individuals.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: THE FAMILY AFTERWARD

So...why did I choose the Family Afterward as the theme for this year's Conference?

When I drank, I didn't just hurt myself, I hurt the people around about me – my two beautiful children, my family, my friends, my colleagues as well as plenty of random folks who had the misfortune to cross my path at the wrong time!

At only my second meeting I was introduced to Chapter 9 – The Family Afterward.

I sat at that meeting, wondering how the bleep it had come to this, all tears and snotters. I loudly and visibly sobbed my way through that meeting, but the words of Chapter 9 which were read that day went straight to my heart and they live there today:

“Years of living with an alcoholic is sure to make any wife/husband/partner or child neurotic. The entire family is to some extent ill” Page 122

Hearing these words was a massive reality check for me...but it also represented a new beginning. The beginning of a long journey to change the way I was living my life. From a scheming, selfish existence to learning to live on life's terms – and accepting that my family also had terms of their own.

Looking back, I am glad I didn't appreciate the scale of the journey I was beginning, or I'd probably have done a runner!

But lucky for me I am eternal optimist. A pal once told me a story which nicely summarises the difference between a pessimist and an optimist...when a pessimist says, "it can't get any worse than this" an optimist says, "of course it can!"

And so, optimistically I began my recovery. But before I tell you more about that let me tell you a bit more about me and my condition.

I am the eldest of 3 daughters and was named after probably the least famous of Emily Pankhurst's daughters – Adela. I came into this world believing anything was possible – it's that optimism again – and was instructed by my parents that as the eldest I had to lead the way for my sisters.

From an early age I longed to belong. I longed to be loved. I longed to be your pal. I longed to be part of something, anything and when the kids at school started drinking then so did I. I am the dictionary definition of a people pleaser.

From that 1st drink I used and abused alcohol. But I didn't just use alcohol.

I used people to feel part of something. I used my children to feel part of something...I used my career to feel part of something. I used anything I could to fill the empty void inside. But most of all I used alcohol – it was my best pal and my worst enemy rolled into one.

But I loved life...I loved my children...I loved my friends and family...I loved and was proud of my career. Why then when full of optimism and love in my life did I keep drinking even though I knew I should stop.

My family was blown apart but yet I chose drink.

The career I was so proud of was hanging by a thread, but I continued to drink.

My two beautiful children had been removed from my care by social workers ...and I still chose drink.

Day dawned I chose drink. I knew not of any other choice.

But choosing drink meant I had no other role to play anymore. I was no longer a wife, a mother, an aunty or a colleague. I was just Adelle, Adelle to drink.

I was Adelle who drank for far too long...until that morning on 11th November 2009 when I'd simply had enough. I was completely empty, defeated and utterly alone. Utterly alone in a world

full of people I loved but who struggled to even like me back. I was a mere shadow of who I was meant to be.

That morning, my window of clarity was wide open, and I called the AA helpline. A lovely lady who had given up her time to do telephone service answered my call and uttered those magic words...you are no longer alone.

From that first short interaction with AA, I belonged, and I began to go to meetings. My AA family began to form itself naturally around me. I still didn't have anything I'd lost back in my life yet – but my AA family, the structure I now had to my day, and doing service saved me from feeling disconnected from the world. I had a part to play in the world again - a reason to get up, washed and dressed in the morning, a reason to live.

But I had absolutely no clue about the AA structure, Traditions or even just how AA worked! But my AA family was made up of wise men and women who could see that, and they slowly educated me in the ways of AA.

Educated me that to be of service meant I was not only helping others but protecting myself. They didn't make a big deal out of doing service...they just told me what was expected of me. I soaked up everything that AA had to offer, and I flourished. I'd finally found what I'd been searching for – a group of individuals who loved and understood the very core of me, and I've stuck like glue to them ever since. I am now a wife, a mother, an aunty or just Adelle...Adelle who doesn't drink – one day at a time.

The family afterward talks of the recovery of the family and the obstacles they face. A very wise old bird once told me that you need to work your AA from the fireside out. And I think that it's also a lovely way to look at recovery.

Without doubt AA is a programme of self. If I don't look after my own sobriety, then I'm goosed...and before all else I came into AA for me. But I also did it because I wanted to be the person I was meant to be – not just for me – but for those I loved and cared about...not a shade of a best intention.

And one day at a time things got better. It looks me a really long time to get my kids fully back in my sole care – that didn't happen until April 2010 – and it took even longer for my family and friends to trust me again. It was nothing like plain sailing, we had – and still have – issues to work through but just as outlined in Chapter 9 my life did get better, and as I got better so did those around me.

Getting better meant that I could actually be useful to others, and I attended my first Conference in 2018. That 1st conference was a massive learning experience for me as I was too focussed on what I had personally achieved at Conference and completely missed the fact that as a collective, Conference had moved AA forward that year. When I got home, I spoke to those wise folks again – folks in my AA family – and with love and empathy they put me right about my place in the scheme of things. My favourite saying in AA is progress not perfection – and so my search for humility continues!

During that first, and subsequent conferences I also realised that just like any other family, AA has individuals who whilst they have a common bond, shared experiences and a love for each other – that sometimes we just like to have a good old disagreement! Chapter 9 reminds me that “Talks will be constructive if they can be carried on without heated argument, self-pity, self-justification or resentful criticism”. Wise words to bear in mind this weekend.

The Family Afterward also tells us that everyone has a place in the family, eldest, youngest, eccentric uncle just as everyone has their place in AA whether its conference delegate, region rep or the person who constantly gets the shares for their group – we all have place in AA. I hope that this weekend cements your place in AA.

The family afterward, inside and outside of AA have all merged into one for me now.

It’s obvious any group of individuals/family dealing with alcoholism from active addiction through to recovery is going to have its up and downs.

I realise that for any family to flourish it needs everyone to pull their weight...to be there for each other when needed and to pick up the slack when others just can’t manage it.

The family afterwards needs to constantly move forward to survive and protect itself. To welcome new members into the family who may not entirely understand the ways of the group – they just know that they want or need to be part of it. We all have a part to play in welcoming anyone who wants to join our family with open arms, even if they don’t look, sound or act the way we’d like them to!

I’ll end now by wishing everyone a Conference filled with love, tolerance and understanding. If you need me for anything over the weekend, anything at all, please just reach out.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS

I’d now like to welcome up here the members of this year’s CSC, who along with the incredible support and patience of our GSO colleagues and Board members, Jo and Sandi, have done everything they could to make this Conference inclusive for all. They will tell you a little bit about themselves and they are:

Committee 1:	Shirley S	South East Region
Committee 2:	Carina H	Continental European Region
Committee 3:	Kathryn C	North East Region
Committee 4:	Shirley C	Eastern Region
Committee 5:	Richard F	London Region South
Committee 6:	Levey P	Continental European Region

Shirley S, who is Alternate Chair, will now talk you through this year’s Conference Steering Report.

CONFERENCE STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

Good afternoon, Conference. My name is Shirley and I’m an alcoholic. I have the privilege of serving as this year’s Alternate Conference Chair. My sobriety date is 10th August 2006 – ‘*One Day at a Time.*’ My home group is Newington Wednesday in West Kent and I’m the Committee 1 Delegate for South East Region.

Adele's, chosen theme, "***The Family Afterward***," is the chapter in the Big Book that eventually helped me make sense of those words in the Promises, "*We will not regret the past, nor wish to shut the door on it.*" They really baffled me for quite some time after coming into the Fellowship. How could we *not* regret the terrible things we put our families through when we were drinking? Why would we *not* want to lock those shameful memories away forever? The book says, '*We grow by our willingness to face and rectify errors and convert them into assets*'; That, '*By bringing former mistakes, no matter how grievous, out of their hiding place, we can turn the past to good account. Showing others who suffer how we were given help is the very thing that makes life worthwhile to us now.*'

There it was! Now I understood! No matter how hard I try, I cannot change the past and I won't ***ever*** be able to fully make up to my family for the hurt and pain I put them through when I was drinking. However, this wonderful Fellowship and it's 12-Step recovery programme, has helped me to completely turn my life around and for that, both I and my family will be forever grateful. AA saved my family *and* my life, and I owe it to those families who are still in the midst of the misery and turmoil caused by this dreadful disease, to willingly bring the painful past, out of the shadows - to carry AA's message of hope and recovery. I now understand that I can share that experience in a positive way, to give strength and hope to the still-suffering alcoholic. I try to do this in any way I can, through service, whether that be as one alcoholic to another at the meeting before the meeting, making a 12th Step call and taking someone to their first meeting, through sponsorship, or service on a more formal basis throughout the service structure. My life has taken on new meaning and a new purpose over the past 16 years. So, "Thank you Adele," - it's good to be reminded that, "To be helpful is our only aim" and that *my* family's painful past may avert death and misery for others.

It's now my pleasure to deliver my report on the work of the Conference Steering Committee in preparation for this year's Conference.

The Committee comprises the Conference Chair the six Committee Chairs, two Board Trustees (Sandi and Jo), General Secretary (Ranjan) and Conference Co-Ordinator (Sharon), who have provided welcome support and guidance with the development of the Conference agenda.

Unfortunately, throughout the second half of 2021, we remained in a period of uncertainty, regarding the spread of Covid and ever-changing government restrictions, particularly on travel. Unquestionably, we would have liked to have attended our meetings here in York, but we took the decision to hold each one via Zoom, particularly as three of us resided in Continental Europe and our Chair, in Scotia. From the outset however, preparations were made as for a traditional 'Face-to-Face' Conference, with the intention to reassess the situation and reach a definite decision on what was to be, our final meeting in early February.

At the first meeting in June, Shirley C was elected as Secretary and myself as Alternate Conference Chair. The Committee voted in favour of our two Board members being given voting rights. Ranjan thoroughly briefed us of our responsibilities, the history of the CSC and the Conference Charter. The comprehensive CSC guidance notes emphasize how important it is, that all matters concerning questions or subjects under discussion should be treated as *confidential* and are *not* discussed outside of the meetings. The intention of this, is that the questions are received by the whole Fellowship on the same day, when they are published. The Terms of Reference were reviewed and became the document by which we selected this year's questions.

The closing date for submissions is 31st August every year. They are sent to the Conference Co-Ordinator, (Sharon S), at the General Service Office (GSO), in York. In the interests of transparency, Sharon then removes the sender's name and address and allocates each one a reference number to ensure that they are received by the CSC members anonymously. They were sent to us in blocks as they were received and initially, we were each responsible for conducting our own research on each one. This meant that we were better prepared to determine whether or not a question was suitable for selection when we came together to discuss them.

The pace ramped up at our second meeting in September, which was spread over two consecutive days. A total of 47 questions were received and each one was carefully considered against the Terms of Reference (TOR). Anyone with prior knowledge pertaining to a specific submission, declared an interest and opted out of its discussion and the decision regarding its acceptance, as is suggested in the Guidance Notes.

We were mindful of past recommendations, that questions be worded in a clear and unambiguous manner to make them easier to understand. In an effort to do this, several Questioners were contacted and asked for clarification, or further background. Some were accepted as suitable, subject to minor drafting, or textual amendments and when doing this, great care was taken to retain the meaning of the original question. Those that required further discussion were deferred until our next meeting. By the end of the two days, we were left with three piles: "Yes", "No" and "Maybe".

The Committee is also required to deal with correspondence received, in relation to the Conference Agenda. All members receive copies of any correspondence that impacts on the work of the Committee. These are discussed at the next meeting and any necessary action is taken.

Another important element of the Committee is to ensure that Conference fulfils the purpose devised by our Co-Founders, to be part of the "Check & Balance" system, ensuring that AA continues in accordance with the Traditions, Concepts and Warranties (*Conference 1997, Committee 1, Q4*). The progress of Conference 2021 recommendations were reviewed, and the Conference Matrix updated, at every meeting.

We reconvened in early October and picked up where we had left off. During the interim, the final details had all been dealt with. The "Maybes" were now further discussed and decided upon, the final questions were reviewed and the background material decided upon, after which, they were allocated to the Committees, along with the literature items requiring review. The majority of the 2021 recommendations had been completed by early October and the remaining five have been on-going and their progress will be reported on in the relevant Board reports this weekend.

Members whose questions have not been accepted, are always afforded a written explanation from the Committee, explaining why their question was unable to be accepted on this occasion. The six Chairs were split into pairs, apportioned the questions and formulated the individual replies, which were subsequently sent out by Sharon. The questions were published in the Winter edition of AA Service News in early December. The rejected questions were published on the AA GB website at the end of January.

What was originally scheduled to be the 4th and final CSC meeting, took place on the first Friday in February. Under normal circumstances, this is when we would have looked at the planned itinerary and tied up any loose ends. However, before we could do that, we needed to decide

whether we would hold a physical or a virtual Conference! We considered long and hard, the pros and cons of each, including the potential Covid risks. Following a simple majority vote in favour of it being physical, further discussion led to a second vote deciding on a face-to-face Conference for those able to attend and a hybrid option being made available for anyone who could not. It was decided to consult with Delegates and other attendees as to their preferred choice and to meet again once we had definitive numbers.

Unfortunately, due to personal commitments, the elected Committee 5 Chair, Dena A, from Continental European Region, felt unable to attend in-person. With her committee members being here in York and herself attending virtually, she felt that it would impact on the quality of service she would be able to give her committee and to Conference. Regrettably, Dena subsequently stood down. Richard F, from London Region South, the elected Secretary for Committee 5, stepped up as the new Chair and Willy D, from South West Scotland Region, replaced him as Secretary.

We met again on 23rd February, by which time the large majority of attendees had registered their preference as 'physical,' with a very small number wishing to attend virtually. Additional actions required for Conference to now be hybrid, were identified and discussed and Ranjan took us taken through the final briefings. The after a lot of fine tuning by Ranjan and Sharon..... here we all are!!

The CSC would like to thank all those members who took the time and effort to submit Questions. We have done our best to choose questions that have provoked much interest and discussion throughout the Fellowship and will lead to stimulating debate by the Committees this weekend. On behalf of myself and the other Committee members, I'd like to thank Ranjan, Jo and Sandi, for their support and invaluable guidance throughout, and I'd especially like to thank Sharon, our long-suffering Conference Coordinator, whose massive input, as always, has been indispensable. Thanks also to my fellow Committee members, whose commitment and team spirit has made this such a rich and rewarding experience. I hasten to include here, Dena, who also dedicated a huge amount of time and effort as a member of the Committee.

If I may, I'd like to end by paying tribute to Barbara K, my sponsor and dear friend, who sadly passed in the Autumn of 2020. Barbara, herself a Committee Chair in 2010, was a fine example of "service in action" and it was she who inspired and first encouraged me to "dip my toe in the water" and seek service beyond the group. Without her nudging me to stretch my boundaries and to take on new challenges, I would probably not have had this amazing service opportunity.

I wish you all a very enjoyable and rewarding weekend.

Shirley S,
Alternate Conference Chair

ORIENTATION

I would like to invite Ranjan, our incoming General Secretary, to share the Orientation and Conventions.

Ranjan read the orientation explaining that 'red dots' on badges meant first time at Conference and that 'green dots' on badges were overseas observers and also covered any last minute changes, safety information and the National Convention dates which are:

Scottish Convention – 20th – 22nd May 2022

Welsh Convention – 27th – 29th May 2022

Southern Convention – 30th September – 2nd October 2022

Northern Convention – 2023 TBC

Thank you Ranjan.

EXPLANATION OF VOTING PROCEDURE

As is customary, eight tellers are to be selected from the hat of second year delegates. Two tellers will be assigned to each of the four quadrants where they will be responsible for counting the votes in that section for the remainder of Conference.

The tellers will then count the yes votes, no votes and abstentions, confirm the count with each other, and when agreed, present them to the GSO staff member for recording.

The abstentions will be acknowledged but not included in the final outcome. A quorum of Conference shall consist of two thirds of all the Conference members registered.

The staff member will then calculate any majority or otherwise and pass the result to the Chair of Conference, who will then announce the result.

Thank you, tellers, for your service.

Open Forum As you will see from the agenda this is due to take place tomorrow night between 9 and 10 o'clock and it is your opportunity to ask any questions that you have got particularly if you don't think they are going to be covered anywhere else throughout the weekend. So have a think, you have an hour tomorrow night and it really is just an open session giving you an opportunity to ask anything that is on your mind.

CLOSING OF FIRST SESSION

The Opening Session ended with Adelle thanking everyone and, following a break, Committee proceedings commenced.

Friday 7.45pm Second Full Session

Adelle welcomed everyone back and opened the second full session of Conference at 7.45 pm with a moment's silence and the Preamble, asked for nominations for Conference Chair 2023 before handing over to Clive K, Honorary Treasurer of the Board, to start the General Service Board Reports.

NOMINATIONS FOR CONFERENCE CHAIR 2023

The under mentioned were proposed and seconded for the Chair of the Fifty-Seventh General Service Conference 2023:

Carina H	-	Continental European Region
Shirley S	-	South East Region

The nominees signified their willingness to serve and each gave a brief summary of their AA service background. The formal election, by way of a modified Third Legacy procedure as recommended by Conference 1998, to take place at the final session of Conference.

General Service Board Reports

Finance

(Clive K – Honorary Treasurer GSB)

My name is Clive, an alcoholic and very grateful to be sober and grateful to be here. I never thought I would be doing this and when I was asked about how I felt about putting my name forward for the next Treasurer at a Board meeting a couple of years ago now, my first reaction was are you having a laugh and then I remembered what I had been told by many people to not refuse anything you are asked to do in AA if you can possibly help it. I prayed about it and thought in for a penny, in for a pound! I got elected and it has been an amazing journey and now an overview of the Charity's accounts over the last year.

For anyone who does not know AA's financial year starts on the 1st October and runs through to 30th September each year and the objective of this is to provide an overview of last year's accounts compared to the year before and to examine various financial trends in certain aspects of our finances.

And what a year it's been. Whilst we have all endured a second year of restrictions due to the Pandemic, the Fellowship has shown its true colours by continuing to step up and adapt to this challenge.

We, as the Trustees of the Charity, would like to give you a big thank you.

The GSB, which is the charity, meets all the HMRC & Charity Commission legal and recommended stipulations relating to investments.

In line with all other UK charities AA's investments are exempt from UK tax laws.

No Charity investments are held/managed in districts that fall under the 'tax avoidance' or 'politically unstable' umbrellas.

GSB holds 3 accounts for the Charity

1. Development Fund Account (Closed or Restricted Account)
2. European Service Meeting Account (Closed or Restricted Account)
3. General Open (or Unrestricted) Account

Development Fund Account is serviced by the royalty's derived from the sale of the Hard Copy versions of the Big Book and The Twelve & Twelve books.

This money is used to promote Primary Purpose activities and aid the AA infrastructure around the globe, mainly in Eastern Europe & Sub-Sahara Africa.

European Service Meeting Account is serviced by the English speaking countries in Europe to fund their bi-annual meetings which are held in York.

General Open Account is serviced by the contributions from the Fellowship, sale of AA literature and Investment revenue.

It is used to carry out Primary purpose work within the UK as directed by the Fellowship by the deliberations of the Conference Committees.

Investment Company

Our Investment Company is **Churches, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA)** whose headquarters are in the City of London and act on the Charity's behalf investing the money in their **Ethical Fund**.

This fund is amongst the top performing funds in this sector. The Charity now takes an income from the investments, as opposed to accumulation of units.

Income to the Charity - Where does the money come from

Voluntary Contributions – Group & Intergroup; Conventions; Legacies; Gratitude Week; Personal (which can be gift aided); Publications; Reserves as Shares and Financial Accounts Interest

The charity (GSB) has no control over any aspect of its income.

Unrestricted Fund Income & Expenditure

Totals	Financial Year to 30 / Sept / 2021 £'s	Financial Year to 30 / Sept / 2020 £'s
INCOME	1,302,794 A decrease of 119,423 from 2019-20	1,422,217
EXPENDITURE	1,186,501 A decrease of 128,655 from 2019-20	1,315,156
SUR / DEF	116,293 Before gains on investments	107,061 Before gains on investments

Income from Publications

As shown in the accounts includes:

Income from Share & Roundabout plus diaries and calendars and all other 'listed' literature sold

Income from publications was: £457,315

Cost of Publications

Represents all external printing of items on the Literature Stock list plus Share & Roundabout

Purchasing of Literature costs: £172,484

Income from Publications = £457,315

LESS

Cost of Publications = £172,484

Surplus = £284,831

Our literature stock is only of value to AA

The literature surplus covers:

- Storage of literature
- Importing books from America & Cost of damaged literature
- Stationary, Internal Printing (ink) & Photocopying
- Postage & Packaging
- Staff and associated premises overheads
- P.I. Leaflets, Free Literature, Confidential Directory
- Group Treasurers Cashbook, Illustrated Literature Catalogue
- Conference Reports (Preliminary & Final).

Is this Surplus a Profit?

Our Co-Founder Bill W gives a resounding NO to this question,

"This net income to the groups and to AA's General Services is actually the sum of a great many contributions which the book buyers make to the general welfare of Alcoholics Anonymous. The certain and continued solvency of our world services rests squarely upon these contributions."

Concept Twelve; Warranty Two

The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain 2017 page 65

Reserves Policy

All UK Charities have a reserves policy and ours is:

Concept 12 - Warranty Two: Sufficient operating funds plus an ample reserve should be its prudent financial principle

Ample Reserve held by the charity should exceed 1 year's expenditure

Sufficient Operating funds are considered to be one quarter's expenditure

Giving a total Free (Prudent) Reserve of over 1.25 year's expenditure (£1,483,126). This is AA's and the Charity's Commissions recommended practice.

The Prudent Reserve figures are always taken from the Unrestricted/Open Account.

Prudent Reserve Calculation

• Total Expenditure 2020 to 2021	£1,186,501
• One Quarter's Operating Fund	£296,625
• Charities Required Total Reserve	£1,483,126
Taken From 2020 / 2021 Audited A/c	
ASSETS: Investments & Cash – Creditors	£2,354,730
LESS	
Warranty 2 level (W2)	£1,483,126
Capital over & above W2	£ 871,604

This is the working capital that enables the GSB to fulfil its own primary purpose to the public, professionals and services to Alcoholics Anonymous without dipping into our prudent reserves and operating costs.

• Capital over & above W2 2020	£670,900
• Capital over & above W2 2021	£871,604
• Increase on 2020 to 2021	£200,704

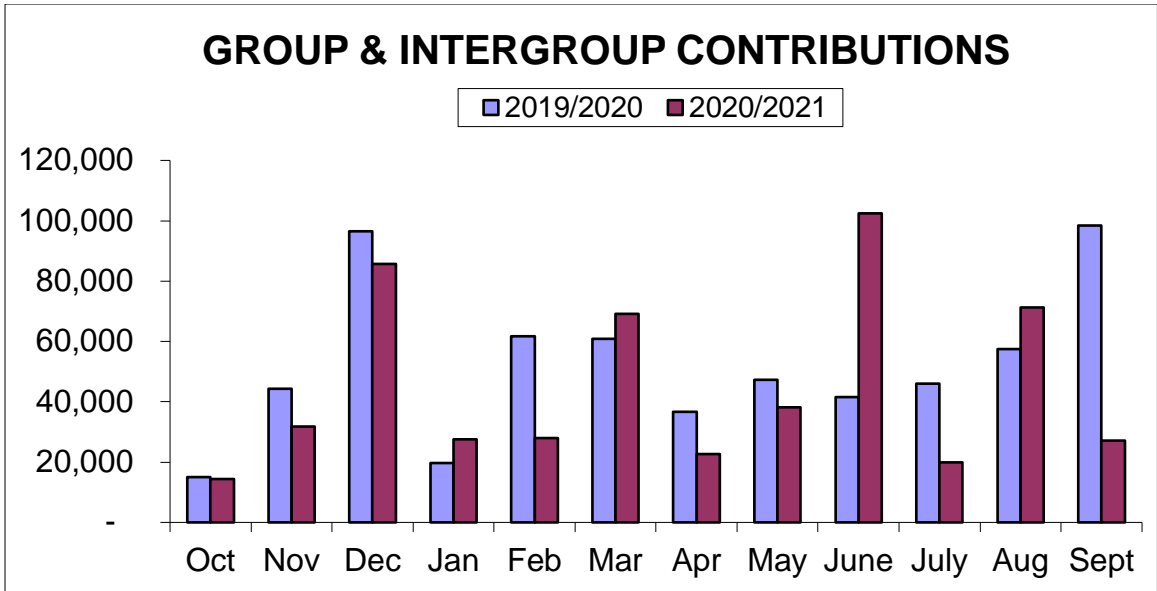
Charity Funds already allocated to Fellowship Projects

• 75 th Anniversary Convention 2022	£ 161,000
• Borthwick Project (Digitisation of Fellowship Records)	£ 80,000
• Committee 6 2021 Working Group PI Videos	£ 35,000
• Total Allocated Money	£ 241,000
• Capital over & above W2 2021	£ 871,604
• Unallocated Money	£ 630,604
• GSO normal spend on Primary Purpose	£ 80,000
• Approximate Surplus in funds	£ 515,604

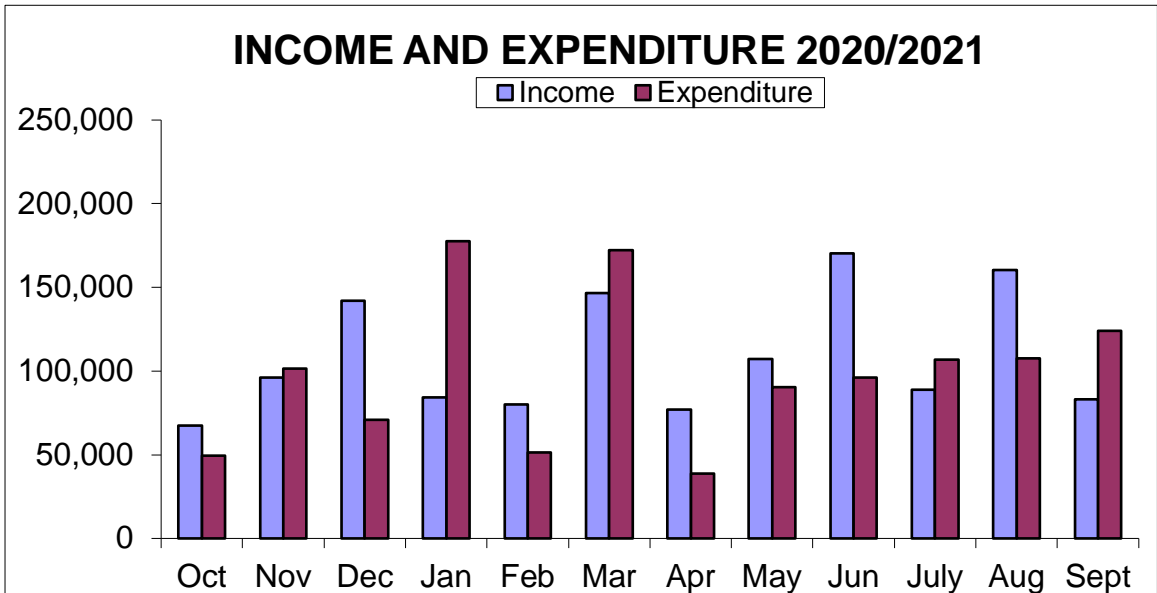
This does not take into account any projects allocated at Conference 2022.

Graphs and Pie Charts 2020 – 2021

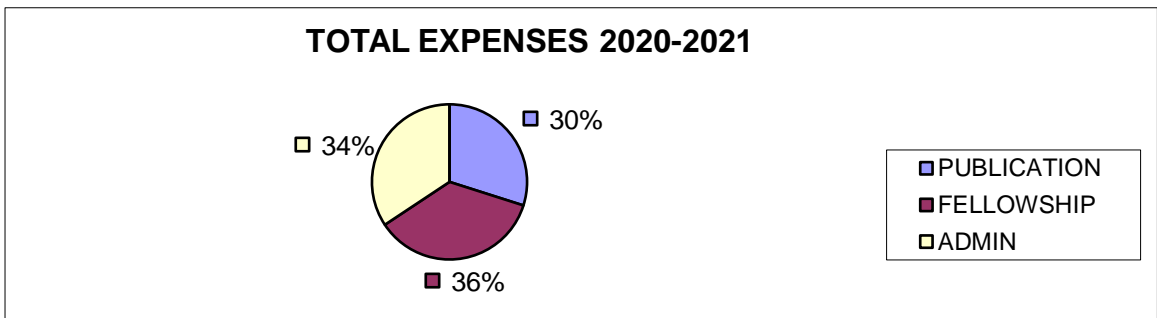
- Annual Group and Intergroup Contributions to GSO
- Income and Expenditure
- Allocation of Total Expenditure
- Sources of Total Income
- Group and Intergroup Contributions 2009 - 2021



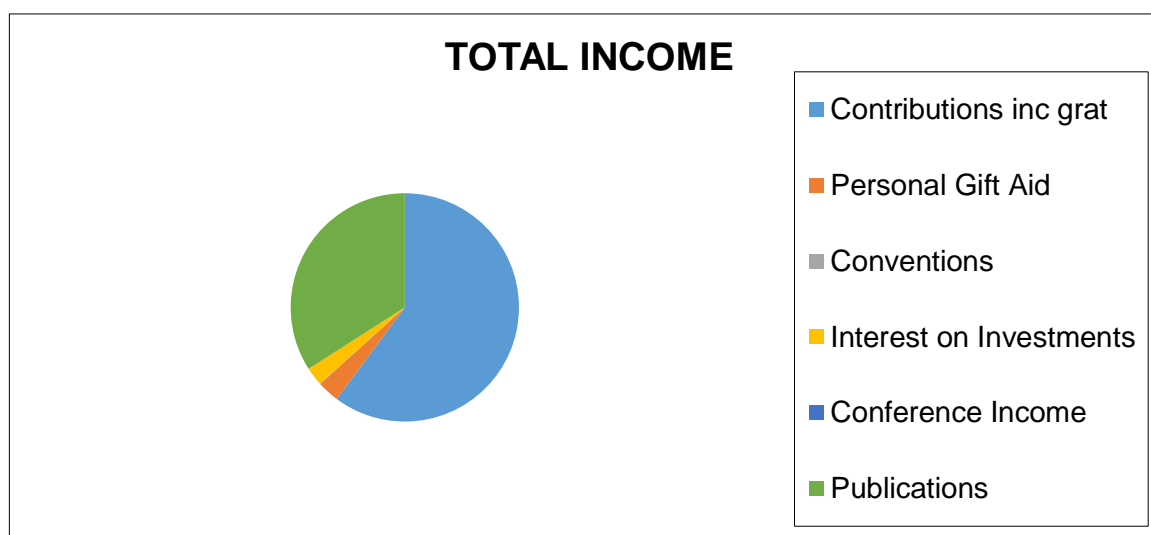
You can see from the above that the Group and Intergroup contributions fluctuate from month to month. If you look at June 2021 you can see it was considerably more than June of the previous year. September of the previous year was considerably more and rather than have an ebb and flow situation it is better if the funds come in steadily which helps us to plan primary purpose work and we have a better idea of how we stand.



Expenditure is split up in three ways – publication expenses, fellowship expenses and admin



They usually work out at about a third each.



Most of the income is coming from your contributions and the next biggest is publications and it's heart-warming to see that the publications income is increasing steadily which is a good result which is attributed to you.

GROUP & INTERGROUP CONTRIBUTIONS (UNRESTRICTED FUNDS)

2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
46,761	34,370	33,701	26,221	38,341	28,060	26,214	30,591	32,155	108,268	27,063	15,069	14,485
21,192	56,496	31,821	52,863	26,040	44,317	16,656	20,384	55,447	26,366	79,647	44,274	31,717
72,487	34,611	32,424	52,492	66,029	30,585	50,712	85,807	44,007	46,905	29,824	96,429	85,693
24,711	33,995	81,360	62,529	44,671	41,951	70,085	60,297	26,315	49,387	39,768	19610	27519
43,237	74,293	37,688	37,583	32,164	44,496	32,456	40,084	92,820	44,679	17,295	61792	27935
78,660	63,402	92,437	75,140	105,825	81,888	108,065	86,854	99,720	74,569	73,791	60954	69135
32,784	41,997	62,057	62,461	45,608	48,917	18,771	44,648	7,922	32,412	12,296	36579	22626
41,648	41,874	60,519	59,300	59,661	34,608	33,452	38,590	61,075	21,900	24,702	47344	38151
77,556	58,263	77,475	102,802	46,531	54,724	94,833	65,356	71,196	85,223	168,473	41521	102400
66,831	73,938	66,488	70,474	51,637	35,224	30,374	34,374	60,493	71,332	15379	45941	19919
77,770	43,317	45,635	36,327	48,456	15,748	36,980	47,229	51,791	26,703	39129	57446	71181
93,818	119,556	124,162	85,582	102,400	115,127	126,085	119,663	60,305	83,864	76860	98506	27143
677,455	676,112	745,767	723,773	667,363	575,645	644,683	673,877	663,246	671,608	604,228	625,465	537,903

Above is a list of Intergroup and Group contributions covering the years 2008/9 to date and again you can see that it does fluctuate.

Over the past few months, I have had a few questions about the Furlough Scheme. In 2020 when the Government locked us all down and we had to stay in our homes and everything closed down which meant that the General Service Office had to close along with the Northern and Southern Services offices.

The Board discussed this at their May meeting in 2020 and we decided that we would take the Furlough Scheme and the reason for taking the Furlough Scheme money, or Corona Virus Job Retention Scheme as it is properly known as, was to basically protect our staff as the income had dropped.

The alternative would have been to lay off staff and many of our staff have been with us a long time and have a lot of experience and we did not want to lose that and we were quite entitled to take the money we felt and it ensured that we were keeping within the law.

The total Furlough money we received was £34,689.00 and following the questions we had from various sources throughout the Fellowship we discussed this at the Finance Committee meeting yesterday and also at the Board meeting this morning and we decided, because we are in a much better position now, we are able to repay the money back to the Government, as a few charities and business have done.

We are not back-tracking, we are coming from a different position now and we feel it is the right time and we have taken on board what people asked and we will repay the money.

Thank you.

Safeguarding

(Jonathan P)

Good evening Conference, my name is Jonathan, an alcoholic and an outgoing Trustee. It's my misfortune to have got COVID and not to be with you this evening but it has been my great fortune to have been involved with the Safeguarding Committee since its beginning.

Last year at Conference 2021 we submitted a Safeguarding Document and Conference voted with a two-thirds majority to accept the Document, but it was agreed that further discussion and consultation should take place with the Fellowship before bringing it back to Conference this year.

Since that time, we have had workshops in nearly every Region, every Region that has requested one in fact. The purpose of these workshops was to explain not only the need for this but importantly to seek the Fellowship's suggestions for improving this important document.

Tonight, I am here to present the final version of the Safeguarding Document which has been edited to take into account the opinions that have been expressed so I propose to read through the document in its entirety and will happily attempt, with the help of Tom Fox, Non-Alcoholic Trustee, who is here with us, to answer any questions you may have.

At the end of that there will be a vote. The vote tonight is not on the document as a whole but on the amendments which have been made to it since last year and once this is concluded the document will be added to the Structure Handbook.

The document which is version 3:

Safeguarding and Personal Conduct **V2 Revised V3**

5.0 Introduction

The welfare of the individual, anonymity and our primary purpose are at the core of our understanding that safeguarding is for everyone.

The aim of this guidance, is therefore, to provide the background and a general framework for AA groups seeking to tackle safeguarding issues.

Tradition One

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity

The unity of Alcoholics Anonymous is the most cherished quality our society has. Our lives, the lives of all to come depend squarely upon it. We stay whole or A.A. dies. Without unity, the heart of A.A. would cease to beat, our world arteries would no longer carry the life-giving grace of God. His gift to us would be spent aimlessly. Back again in their cave, the alcoholic would reproach us and say, "What a great thing A.A. might have been!"

"Does this mean," some will anxiously ask, "that in A.A. the individual doesn't count for much? Is he to be dominated by his group and swallowed up in it?"

We may certainly answer this question with a loud "No!"

We believe that there isn't a fellowship on earth which lavishes more devoted care upon its individual members; surely there is none which more jealously guards the individual's right to think, talk, and act as he wishes. No AA can compel another to do anything; nobody can be punished or expelled.

Our Twelve Steps to recovery are suggestions; the Twelve Traditions which guarantee A.A.'s unity contain not a single "Don't." They repeatedly say, "We ought...." but never "You must!"

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

5.1 History and Background

In order to help protect and safeguard our AA Fellowship, the General Service Board (GSB) of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain (AAGB) has produced a safeguarding policy for the AA Fellowship. This guidance, the *Safeguarding Policy Document*, can be accessed via the AAGB website, or by contacting the General Service Office (GSO) to obtain a copy.

A continuing function of the GSB as custodian of the Traditions is to inform and guide the Fellowship as a whole. The GSB of AAGB is a charitable organisation and as such, has a responsibility to the Charity Commission to report safeguarding incidents under active investigation by legal authorities.

Every AA group makes an open invitation to its meetings to any member of the public having a desire to stop drinking. In terms of AA Traditions, it is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that carrying the message to all prospective new or established members, is done honestly and decently. We also understand that our Twelve Traditions, including that of group autonomy, do not place groups or members above the law, and that when individuals act injuriously to others, they are legally accountable. Our First Tradition reminds us that all members and groups have a responsibility for the common welfare and safeguarding of the individual member.

We suggest that AA groups recognise and accept responsibility for dealing with unacceptable behaviour and protect the Fellowship and the reputation of AA.

Many of us who join AA have a chequered past and this is only to be expected. With recovery we can be restored to society and lead a fruitful life. Society has become progressively more concerned with safeguarding the rights of the individual and these concerns have been reflected in recent changes to the law. The Protection against Harassment Act 1997 and the Human Rights act 1998, together with the Care Act 2014, are specific examples.

Neither the GSB nor AA groups are regulated care providers, but Tradition One requires that we understand good safeguarding practice, and the duty to care for others in the group.

The potential damage to AA's unity and reputation arising from any wrongful or criminal acts of individual members, and of course the associated publicity, is of natural concern to the Fellowship.

To be clear, no member of AA is above the law for any offences committed prior to joining AA or any offences committed whilst attending AA. We as a Fellowship believe that *Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions (Tradition Twelve)*, but this does not mean that we allow the protection of anonymity to anyone to exploit or abuse our Fellowship, or any individual member of AA.

5.2 What Constitutes a Safeguarding Issue?

Abuse and exploitation in all its forms, some examples of which are listed below, should not be tolerated at any level of the structure; our members have the right to feel secure in meetings and whilst going about AA service / business.

- Abuse or exploitation may include cyber abuse, direct physical or emotional abuse, or negligent treatment. People may be abused or exploited, for example, because of their disability, religion, ethnic origin, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, age, stature, appearance etc.
- Bullying or harassment
- Data breaches
- ~~Discrimination on any grounds under the Equality Act 2010~~
- Disparaging behaviour
- Exploitation (criminal, commercial, financial or otherwise)
- Forced marriage
- Health and safety issues
- Modern day slavery or human trafficking
- ~~Violence~~
- Offensive language, or behaviour within meetings and online
- ~~Racism Racialism~~, sectarianism, extremism or radicalisation
- Sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation
- ~~Spiritual abuse~~
- Threatening behaviour
- ~~Violence~~

It is important to note that one need not be the direct object of such behaviour to feel concerned. A person witnessing such an event may deem it necessary to take appropriate action to stop such behaviour.

6.0 Addressing Safeguarding Issues

Tradition 12

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities

Groups, through their conscience meetings, may establish contingency plans to deal with safeguarding issues and be mindful of the Safeguarding Policy Document produced by the GSB of AAGB. It may be that groups appoint a safeguarding representative at either group, intergroup or region level. An experienced, respected AA member may be best suited to this role. For example, safeguarding issues that come through our on-line services may be forwarded to our General Secretary, who then may wish to discuss a particular issue with the Board's Executive Committee. This would be done in a manner that respects anonymity.

We believe that individual welfare coupled with anonymity are central to the Fellowship's safeguarding responsibility. We suggest that any response be consistent and supportive. It is not our place to discuss, investigate or judge. We have one primary purpose, and we will always suggest recourse through **appropriate** outside agencies **when appropriate**.

In dealing with any unacceptable behaviour the response must also be measured and reasonable, given all the circumstances. Members should neither place themselves in danger physically, nor open themselves or the group to legal repercussions. If an incident cannot be defused quickly and safely, members and groups may have to consider involving appropriate outside agencies.

In cases of persistent inappropriate / predatory sexual / threatening / violent behaviour that prevents the carrying of the AA message, groups may refer to the following by Bill W:

This amount of charity does not mean that we cannot exclude those who disturb meetings in progress or seriously interfere with the functioning of the group. Such people can be asked to quiet down or go elsewhere, or, to come back when they are better able to participate.

(Letter from Bill W 1969)

6.1 Personal Action on Unacceptable Behaviour

- It is often sufficient for the recipient of behaviour they feel is inappropriate to raise the difficulty with the person creating the problem by pointing out that the conduct is offensive. Anyone has the right to challenge unacceptable behaviour from any other members of AA at any stage, and request that the behaviour stop.
- Support and help – it should be possible for the recipient to prepare for this conversation with the help of their sponsor or another member if they wish. If they find it too difficult or embarrassing to raise the issue with the person creating the problem, it may be appropriate for the recipient to have the conversation with their sponsor or another member present, such as the group's safeguarding representative.

6.2 Group Action

- When a personal approach fails or the recipient feels that this method is inappropriate, the recipient may approach **a-another**-group member or **another** trusted servant for help and guidance, feeling secure in the belief that any safeguarding issue will be considered as a serious matter.
- The alleged offender should be told of the complaint as soon as possible.
- If the situation is sufficiently serious or complex, it may be necessary to involve members from outside the group.

- If the group conscience decides it necessary, unacceptable behaviour may result in temporary exclusion from the group. The ultimate decision on the return of the offender rests with the group conscience.
- The reporting of safeguarding instances to the appropriate outside agencies may be required

6.3 Group Meetings

- Members are encouraged to choose a home group in which true bonds of Fellowship will lessen the need to fear behaviour they might find offensive.
- It is suggested that Group Conscience meetings be held regularly plus additional conscience meetings as they become necessary.
- Where safeguarding issues occur in a group situation, as described in 5.2 above, members in recovery have a responsibility to ask for the offending behaviour to stop.
- We suggest that an explanation of the dangers of unacceptable behaviour in AA be given at the time, or at the end of the meeting.
- Offensive behaviour cannot be condoned. Failure to challenge and stop inappropriate behaviour implies that the offender has permission to repeat the offensive behaviour and can encourage others to follow suit.

6.4 Service Meetings

Our experience has shown that it is important to remember that groups are encouraged to participate within the AA structure to foster unity and to provide support.

Collective experiences have highlighted instances where individual members and groups have actively tried to dictate the conscience of service meetings through abusive and threatening behaviour.

When these instances have occurred, experience shows that it is perfectly acceptable for a trusted servant to stop the meeting, remind all attending of our primary purpose and our need to allow God, as we understand him, to express himself through our group conscience.

If the above suggestion does not have the desired effect, there may be a need to involve the appropriate outside agency.

6.5 Primary Purpose Service in Institutions

Organisations expect any member of AA attending prisons, hospitals or any institution requiring security clearance, to abide by the rules of the organisation and follow their safeguarding guidelines. Should groups be asked to introduce a chit-type system for specific offenders, please make sure that both safeguarding, and anonymity are considered. Guidance on the chit system can be found in our Service Handbook.

In addition to the above, we suggest that each service within AA has its own safeguarding guidance within the terms of reference.

6.6 Safeguarding Children and Juveniles

There are times when children or juveniles will be in attendance at AA open meetings or AA conventions. It is the responsibility of the group members to agree safeguarding policy. Parental responsibility is essential.

If there are safeguarding issues involving children, we suggest that a trusted servant act in accordance with the GSB's current Safeguarding Policy Document, and consider whether it is necessary to report their concerns to the appropriate outside agency.

6.7 Minors Attending AA

Minors are defined as children and young people under the age of 18, although this legal definition may vary from country to country. If, however, the Fellowship uses it as a guideline, we can better ensure the safeguarding of these younger members.

We want to help minors who believe they may have a drink problem, but we must respect the law.

Consideration should be given to laws protecting minors where best practice is for written parental or guardian consent to be obtained. It should also be understood that minors do have the right to make their own informed decisions.

7.0 The New Member

Often when a new member joins AA a feeling of hope and the lifting of despair can lead to thinking that every AA member has their best interests at heart. Experience shows that most AA members will offer great support but a few may not.

7.1 Sponsorship

Within AA good sponsorship is vital for both our recovery and service. We have a pamphlet - *Sponsorship Your Questions Answered* - which can be very helpful. We suggest that groups have this readily available on their literature table. A man for a man, and a woman for a woman has often been suggested as working best. Today, however, we recognise that sexual and / or romantic attraction, regardless of sexuality or gender identity, can be problematic and may create safeguarding issues.

Good sponsorship involves making the sponsee aware that sponsors are not trained counsellors. All we have is our own experience of recovery from alcoholism. We believe that most sponsors would want to make the sponsee aware of the importance of personal confidentiality and trust.

Concerning Step Five, all or any part of this can be taken with whomever the sponsee feels most comfortable, and this need not be the sponsor.

As individuals we decide whether we are alcoholic, and again, we as alcoholics choose our own sponsors. Some groups offer temporary sponsorship to new members which can be helpful in the beginning.

7.2 AAGB Staff Members ~~Public~~ /Volunteers and Members of the Public

AAGB staff have the same rights and responsibilities as AA members regarding safeguarding. No AA staff member need tolerate abuse or exploitation in any form, and likewise, none need be tolerated from AA staff members.

In regard to members of the public coming into contact with AA, be that at Public or Open AA meetings, or for any other reason, they are entitled to the same level of safeguarding as any member of AA.

8.0 About Behaviour

All forms of abuse and exploitation being acted out **is are** negative and unacceptable. Discrimination of this kind is in conflict with AA Traditions and our way of life in recovery. All such behaviour needs to be taken seriously, and sober AA members must deal with it as it arises. Whether or not the behaviour is intended to be hurtful is irrelevant, the important point is that it is offensive.

AA members within their groups need to recognise the power of their behaviour in their relationships with other members of the Fellowship and with potential newcomers. Members in recovery will understand that our behaviour influences others. Recognising that we can control our behaviour, we have a responsibility to set a good example.

Members have a right to expect that they will be safe at a group meeting. It is the responsibility of the group holding the meeting, through its members or trusted servants, to ensure that no member or visitor is subjected to, or experiences, unacceptable behaviour of any kind.

8.1 Personal Conduct Matters

The final report of the General Service Conference 1979 (Committee 1, Attraction by the Individual) contained the following statement:

The importance of the individual member in drawing the suffering alcoholic to the way of recovery was stressed. By guarding his/her own behaviour, morals, dress, ethics, tolerance, sympathy, compassion and understanding of all human beings [a member] carries the message or leaves a slur on the name of AA.

Should someone speak to you about your unacceptable behaviour, listen to their criticism, think about what they have said and respond appropriately. You may even at a later stage wish to thank them for pointing it out to you!

Conclusion

By Bill W. –

It is an historical fact that practically all groupings of men and women tend to become more dogmatic; their beliefs and practices harden and sometimes freeze. This is a natural and almost inevitable process. All people must, of course, rally to the call of their convictions, and we of AA are no exception.

Moreover, all people should have the right to voice their convictions. This is good principle and good dogma. But dogma also has its liabilities. Simply because we have convictions that work well for us, it becomes very easy to assume that we have all the truth. Whenever this brand of arrogance develops, we are certain to become aggressive; we demand agreement with us; we play God. This isn't good dogma; it's very bad dogma. It could be especially destructive for us of AA to indulge in this sort of thing.

Newcomers are approaching AA at the rate of tens of thousands yearly. They represent almost every belief and attitude imaginable. We have atheists and agnostics. We have people of nearly every race, culture and religion. In AA we are supposed to be bound together in the kinship of a common suffering.

Consequently, the full individual liberty to practice any creed or principle or therapy whatever should be a first consideration for us all. Let us not, therefore, pressure anyone with our individual or even our collective views. Let us instead accord each other the respect and love that is due to every human being as he tries to make his way toward the light. Let us always try to be inclusive rather than exclusive; let us remember that each alcoholic among us is a member of AA, so long as he or she so declares.

Bill Wilson, Toronto International Convention, 1965.

Suggestions at Group Level

Your group conscience meeting may consider discussing and agreeing upon a clear statement for display, for example:

Safeguarding in AA

This group wants all members, whether new or long-standing, to be kept safe while participating in meetings and other AA activities. We seek to follow the recommendations in our AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain (The Group, Section 5)

**None of us is above the law.
If an issue is within the law, our Traditions apply;
if outside the law, then contact outside agencies**

This Group does not tolerate:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Discriminatory Behaviour
- Or any other form of abuse or exploitation.

Personal Conduct Matters!

**Bad Language often
offends... But its absence
never does**

Tradition Eleven

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

Reference: Within this guidance we have highlighted three of many legal documents which relate to safeguarding. These can be found under Annex C in the AA Structure Handbook Great Britain

After full discussion a vote was taken on the amendments to the document which was passed with a two-thirds plus majority.

Brief Update on the Safeguarding Policy Document

(Sandi A)

I'm Sandi and I am an alcoholic. We have worked on this for a while and our Solicitors have checked it and it was a real privilege to work on this with Ranjan and Stevie.

AA Fellowship Safeguarding Policy

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain) Limited (GSB) is a charitable company, with registered charity number 226745.

The members of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) support each other in self-regulating groups (the AA Fellowship) which are autonomous from the GSB.

Whilst the purpose of the GSB is to serve the AA Fellowship, the Groups which make up the AA Fellowship are recognised by the Charity Commission as informal, autonomous affiliated groups which have no independent constitution.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Scottish Government have confirmed that AA members do not require DBS or Disclosure Scotland checks for 12th Stepping or Sponsoring, as they are members of self-regulating groups. As individuals, however, AA members should be aware of their duty of care to others and hence follow the law and best practice on safeguarding, when acting in AA's name.

The basic principle

Everyone should recognise that all individuals, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

AA affirms this principle in the context of its common welfare, primary purpose and anonymity.

The AA Traditions give general guidance to all those in understanding the duty of care owed by one AA member to another, as well as those they come into contact with, through the AA Fellowship.

Who the Policy protects?

This Policy applies to the safeguarding of all AA members, GSB Trustees and General Service Office staff, and those they come into contact with when acting in AA's name, including minors.

Disseminating best practice

It is important that all AA members, GSB Trustees and GSO staff understand and learn about safeguarding in order to ensure a safe environment for AA members, and those they come into contact with, when acting in AA's name.

New members should be given the newcomers pack which includes a safeguarding card.

The General Service Conference in conjunction with GSB has created an in-depth guidance for the entire Fellowship that is contained within the AAGB Structure Manual.

The GSB has recommended to the AA Fellowship that within the AA structure AA groups appoint Local AA Safeguarding Representatives who are able to provide a DBS certificate, and who can help signpost members to the appropriate agencies should the need arise.

The GSB also advises that a Local AA Safeguarding Rep, an AA member who holds a current DBS certificate or has appropriate Child Safety Training be consulted when a minor attends an AA meeting unaccompanied by an adult.

GSB has safeguarding guidelines for its volunteers on the GSB's National AA Helpdesk, the Chat Now Service and for the AA Fellowship's Telephone Helplines.

DBS Checks for members attending schools and prisons

Schools, educational establishments, and prisons will carry out identification checks, and may ask AA volunteers to provide a DBS certificate. This includes any member who, in AA's name, attends a school, educational establishment, or prison or may have unsupervised contact with a minor or vulnerable adult.

It is the establishment's duty, and not that of the Fellowship, to ensure that the requisite DBS checks are completed. As a matter of best practice, any members acting in AA's name, should be willing to provide a DBS Certificate or sign up to the DBS Update Service for repeat checks, if requested.

If any Group Secretary or AA member is unsure whether any role undertaken in AA's name requires a criminal record check of any sort, they should consult the following governmental guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>.

Reporting safeguarding concerns

If any AA member, GSB Trustee or GSO staff member believes that the actions of an AA member, or someone in contact with the Fellowship, gives rise to a safeguarding concern within AA, they should consider taking the following action(s), as appropriate:

- Preserve any evidence.
- Report all concerns to a:
 - Trusted AA member and/or local AA Safeguarding Rep
 - Local Authority Adult Social Care team (about a vulnerable adult); and/or
 - Local Authority Children's Services team (about a minor)
- In an emergency, if there is immediate risk of abuse call 999
- If a crime has been, or may be committed report to the Police

If there is any doubt about whether a situation amounts to abuse, members of the Fellowship should ask the advice of their Local Authority Safeguarding Lead.

Any individual who has reported their concerns to the Local Authority Adult Social Care team, Children's Services team, Safeguarding Lead or the Police must follow the guidance and advice provided by that relevant authority contact.

[Where an incident has caused significant harm to an individual or is likely to bring either the GSB or the AA Fellowship as a whole into serious disrepute, then a serious incident report will be filed with the Charity Commission by the General Secretary of GSB. The General Secretary has the authority to act in all matters relating to the incident.]

This document was reviewed this year and will be reviewed each year.

Thank you.

Safeguarding Policy Document Card and Tabletop Card

(Justin T)

Hello Conference, my name is Justin and I am an alcoholic. Just before Erik does his last hurrah as Chair of the Literature Sub Committee, there is a link between the Safeguarding Policy we have been looking at and a literature item we were asked to produce:

TABLE TOPPER

Safeguarding in AA

This group wants all members, whether new or long-standing, to be kept safe while participating in meetings and other AA activities. We seek to follow the recommendations in our AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain (The Group, Section 5)

None of us is above the law.

**If an issue is within the law, our Traditions apply;
if outside the law, then contact outside agencies**

NEWCOMER PACK CARD

Safeguarding in AA

Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain has a policy on safeguarding, which individual groups are recommended to follow. This is to ensure that new and long-standing members alike do not suffer harm from actions by members or non-members while participating in AA activity.

If something feels wrong, it is suggested to discuss the matter with another member, a Group officer, or consult our AA Structure Handbook for GB, (The Group, Section 5) for guidance.

If the issue is within the law, our Traditions apply; if outside the law, then contact outside agencies.

Keen observers will note that the Table Topper was actually in the document that we have just approved and what we have above is the Newcomer Pack Card which was alluded to in the Policy Document, partly inspired by GSO New York's version although that is currently under revision if you look at their website. The aim of it is very simply to tell newcomers that we have their best interests at heart.

After a vote the above was passed by Conference with a two-thirds plus majority.

Literature

(Erik A)

My name is Erik and I am an Alcoholic.

Hello from Luxembourg.

I have the great pleasure and honour to have served as a General Service Board Trustee the past four years and to have served as Chair of the Literature Sub Committee (LSC) the last two.

The LSC is presenting revisions to four pamphlets this year:

- 'Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered'
- 'AA Business Meetings, the Group Conscience and Group Conscience Meetings'
- 'Growing into Service'
- 'Younger People in AA'

In addition, every Conference Committee this year will be reviewing one or more sections from *The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain* and / or *The AA Service Handbook for Great Britain*.

In the instances where the subject(s) of pamphlet revisions are also under review by a Conference Committee of one or the other *Handbook*, we are asking Conference for further approval to amend the pamphlet text(s) *if necessary* to ensure alignment on the same subject in the two different sources.

This is specifically the case with the revisions for the 'Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered Pamphlet', and those for the 'AA Business Meetings, the Group Conscience and Group Conscience Meetings' pamphlet. In both instances Committee Four is reviewing the relevant revised text in the *Handbook(s)*.

Conference approved the above proposal to 'Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered Pamphlet' with a two-thirds plus majority.

The proposed revision for the 'Growing into Service' is a minor revision cross-referencing service sponsorship in the 'Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered' pamphlet.

Conference approved the above proposal with a two-thirds plus majority.

The proposed revision to the 'AA Business Meetings, the Group Conscience and Group Conscience Meetings' pamphlet.

Conference approved the above proposal with a two-thirds plus majority.

Minority View: Uncomfortable with the order of approving the two pamphlets 'Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered' and 'AA Business Meetings, the Group Conscience and Group Conscience Meetings' in view of the revisions possibly made by Committee Four.

The 'Younger People in AA' is a substantial revision of an existing pamphlet revised by the Young People's Sub Committee with editorial assistance from the LSC.

Conference approved the above proposal with a two-thirds plus majority.

I have served on the LSC for eight years, the first four as a member, then as a Trustee shadowing the Chair, then rotating into that role the last two years. I am looking forward to being promoted back to being just a member of AA on Sunday morning when I rotate, although I confess it will feel strange not to be participating in or going to LSC meetings.

I thank all of you for your trust and for the opportunity to serve in a role I have loved.

Adelle closed the second session by thanking everyone for their hard work and asked all to join her saying the Serenity Prayer.

SATURDAY EVENING

Continuation of General Service Board Reports

Adelle welcomed everyone back, asked everyone to join her in saying the Preamble and went on to invite Tom Fox (GSB) to commence the continuation of General Service Board reports.

PI / Communications

(Tom Fox)

Good evening Conference, my name is Tom and I have spoken to a variety of audiences in my life – the Northern Convention was pretty scary as I turned up expecting 15 and there were 1200 and E Hall in Barlinnie was scarier but tonight, especially if people keep throwing things, might actually be worse.

I have been a non-alcoholic trustee for two years. I've worked with AA for over 20 years and the reason I was privileged to become a non-alcoholic trustee was the transformation that I saw in the lives of people in my day job in the Prison Service. There are a couple of people here this evening, who I'm sure will not mind me saying, had the loyalty counts for my day job and whose lives have been transformed by this Fellowship. This is an opportunity for me, on their behalf, to say thanks.

I'm really privileged and honoured to have been asked to be a trustee and honoured to be able to work along with so many wonderful men and women in this Fellowship.

I'll move on to the presentation because I've been threatened by Adelle if I overrun I'm going to be in serious trouble and I believe her so I want to give you an overview of some of the things that we've been doing over the last couple of years in PI and Comms.

Much of this is work in progress. Some of it will have to come back to the Conference next year for final approval but I just thought it would be interesting to give you a bit of insight into some of the things that we're doing.

The committee that I chair, PI Communications is a new committee formed by the Board this year, is taking forward a range of communication activity on behalf of the Fellowship and the Board.

One of the things we do is media relations. Something else we'll be looking at as an issue that came from a Conference question in 2019 and we've called it branding which is actually quite an unfortunate expression in many ways. What it's about is trying to achieve consistency and consistency of look in the publications that we produce as a fellowship across every area.

We've also been looking at support for the publications that already exists and how we can make it easier and more cost effective for people to produce a range of publications within the fellowship. And, of course, for the last year or so and for much of the year ahead supporting the activities round and about the 75th Convention.

Media activity has been really quite interesting. I joined the Board two years ago and so did COVID and the two are not causally connected, can I just make that very clear! We had an awful lot of activity during the lockdown, the media very interested in how an organization like AA was responding to the challenges that COVID created. I have to say it was humbling

for me as a newcomer to see how quickly and how effectively this Fellowship rose to the challenges that this represented.

It was really good to have the opportunity to big that up with the media. I even got to do an interview with Chinese television about how this Fellowship had responded, how we went from 3000 meetings to nothing and how very quickly we had a whole range of online activity supporting the still suffering alcoholic and people actually found it hard to believe and I was one of those people - that all of this was done from the bottom up and not from the top down.

I remember having a conversation with a journalist who was absolutely bewildered by the fact that when he said are you getting any money from the government to support this technology? I said no and we wouldn't accept it, we are a self-help organization, we work for fellow alcoholics. The message and the impact of what our fellowship had done had on people who knew nothing about the fellowship was remarkable to see. And I think you should be incredibly proud of the way each and every one of you responded to the challenge that COVID presented.

I did multiple radio interviews with places that I didn't even know had radio stations. One of the benefits of being a non-alcoholic trustee is that I don't need to be anonymous. I really have a very good face for radio I have to tell you! Our key message throughout all of those challenges was that the helping hand was still there, and the helping hand would always be there.

There was a Conference question in 2019 about having clear guidelines round about the use of branding and identity. It also requests guidance on things like fonts, having a consistent AA look in what we do and the guidelines are a work in progress and I want to share that work in progress with you now and I emphasize that it is work in progress, this is something that we will come back to hopefully for Conference next year to get approval to issue these across the fellowship as a suggestion and a help not as a demand or a must do.

One of the things that we're trying to do is give people a reference point to ensure that family look across what we do. If you see a publication, you see a pamphlet, you see a leaflet you know it's from AA.

The brand guidelines have a white background and we're looking at a variety of different issues. An overview to provide a rationale for why we want that consistency of approach across the fellowship. A brief synopsis of the brand we're going to change that because I hate them as a title, but to show a variety of different ways in which the logo can be used in different environments. The kinds of typefaces that people should consider using to maintain that continuity of look, because there's something quite disturbing when you see publications using radically different typefaces. It doesn't look as if they come from the same place.

One of the other things that we have been asked to look at is supporting publications across the Fellowship, like a Roundabout and Share, and to provide templates for people to create content easily. Now whether they're creating that content for print, or they're creating it for electronic versions, it's a way that they can use it intuitively and easily so that they can produce publications and, again, that look as if they belong all within the AA family.

We're looking at expanding that to other areas of activity so we can provide templates that people might use for flyers or for other material locally, local groups who may want to

produce their own posters which don't require Conference approval, but they would do that in a way that again fitted in with the look of the AA family.

We are also creating a standard template for presentations.

We're looking at creating an image bank of approved images that we can use to promote the activity of the Fellowship and the outreach of the Fellowship. And please note the templates will be on a white background.

So that's the kind of look we are talking about. For something like Share and providing a template that people can populate with their own text with their own imagery, but to make it look modern, and attractive. And Roundabout and you'll see we're trying to continue that look they don't look the same, but they do look as if they came from the same place and that's part of the rationale for doing this.

For service use, being able to create, again, a publication that has that continuity of look, it looks modern, it looks attractive, and it's easy for the people putting the publication together to create something that is visually appealing. These templates can be used to create electronic publications or they can also be used to create publications that move out into print and hardcopy.

The inside of these publications will also provide a variety of templates for different pages. Different pages, different styles for different purposes and again, these templates will be available to those people originating the publications.

The other thing that we're doing is producing a video that explains to the people who are using the templates, how the templates can be used and how to use them. They have been designed to be as intuitive and easy to use as possible so you're not going to have to study specialized software before you're able to use them.

Support for the 75th Convention

One of the things that I have been privileged to do is work on a video along with other colleagues on the Board to tell the story of 75 years. Very early on we made the decision that we would tell the story through the lives of the people who are members of this Fellowship. We haven't got anybody so far as I can identify that was there 75 years ago. We know somebody will probably stand up at the back and shout when I say that.

We have looked at a variety of different life stories, different people coming from different places coming to the Fellowship in different ways. All of them bringing with them an insight into how this Fellowship has evolved and changed. People who came to the Fellowship because somebody told them to go to a meeting, people who came to the Fellowship because they saw an advert, people who came to the fellowship through the telephone helpline, people who came to the fellowship online for the first time.

We asked for volunteers who would step forward and allow us to tell their story, and they would allow us to illustrate our history through their life and it was overwhelming. It was absolutely overwhelming the people who stepped forward and we ended up having to turn away I think about three times as many people as we were actually able to use and we used more than we'd originally intended to.

Some of the stories which you'll see very shortly are incredible. They are a wonderful reflection of the diversity of the Fellowship, the compassion of the Fellowship, and they explain why so many people do service. To get it you've got to give it away to keep it. The message comes through loud and clear. No more spoilers.

We are also working with the BBC, who are producing a documentary which should coincide approximately with the 75th anniversary celebrations. And again, we are looking at the lives of members of the fellowship and illustrating what we do through those lives.

We've been involved in numerous negotiations to ensure the anonymity and security and privacy of the members who are participating, but we have the opportunity to appear on primetime television, on BBC across the UK, telling the whole of the country our message and offering a hand to those people who still need it. It's fabulous that we're able to do that and it is fabulous that we're able to do it with the support and with the help of our members.

We are also providing event support for 75th and I'm getting to write the letter inviting all the VIPs. If anybody has got any VIPs to suggest please let me know because we're anxious to make the most of this opportunity. We are also anxious to use the media to make people aware of us, of what we do and how we help those suffering from this terrible disease of alcoholism. How we have done it for 75 years and, higher power willing, we'll be doing it for the next 75 years.

I now have the privilege of sharing with you the video that we've created for the 75th Convention. We're going to have a vote after the video about PI use of some of the sections of this for our outreach work beyond the anniversary celebrations.

I am not going to say any more I'm going to let you see what we've been able to produce with the support, with the help, with the dedication and sometimes with the tears of our members.

Thank you

The video was shown and Conference voted on the proposal that PI are able to use parts of this video for wider PI work and on the website which was passed by a two-thirds plus majority.

The video is also going to be sub-titled before its next public viewing to make it more accessible to the widest possible audience.

75th Anniversary Convention (Stevie S)

Good evening everyone. My name is Stevie and I am an alcoholic and member of the Cumbernauld Saturday morning group and it is a real privilege to be here this weekend. Fantastic to be back face to face and great to see everyone.

It's quite difficult to follow that video. Really a fantastic piece of work by our Comms division and everybody that was involved in it. And I can tell you that it will be used to open the 75th Convention when we come to Leeds in June. So that should be good fun. I'll give you a bit of background.

In 2016 Conference asked the Board to arrange a 75th Anniversary Convention and to form a committee to run our event.

In 2018 the Leeds Arena was selected as the venue following consideration of various options as being the best financial choice and contracts were agreed.

Our committee's aim is to run a financially self-supporting event and still is.

The ongoing global covid crisis has undermined our efforts though not diminishing them - many of our membership have pre-registered for the Convention and we remain hopeful.

In 2017 there was a logo competition which then allowed us to look at merchandising, which carries the logo and that helps us to provide finances for the events along with the registration fees that have been paid. £25.00 tickets were the original early bird tickets now we have moved to £35.00.

I believe we now have about 2,350 registered for the weekend which given the nature of our Fellowship is not too bad as most of us decide in the last week whether we're going to show up or not. So, we keep pushing and we get a lot of help with it.

We've developed a 75th website which is functioning today. It's updated with news regularly of all the things that will be happening over the weekend. So please use the opportunity to visit it and see what you'd like to get into.

We sourced all the memorabilia and got that ordered. We looked at a few options. We looked at suppliers in the UK and they were not quite giving us what we wanted and there was one guy who was in the automobile industry and he had contacts over in China, so we sourced them there and there was some very good quality stuff and that started arriving in the UK a few weeks ago, so we are on schedule with that.

A big part of the whole event has been the regional involvement. We really wanted to involve the whole Fellowship as much as possible for this weekend and not just for the weekend, but for the whole thing really. The speakers will come from each region and we asked each region to nominate four speakers. Then we had the 'World Cup' draw to see who gets an opportunity to speak and that'll be coming up in the next few weeks.

We asked the National Conventions to provide the chairs. So, we'll have the chair from the Welsh National Convention, the Southern National Convention, the Northern National Convention and the Scottish National Convention and each of those will chair one of the big meetings over the weekend.

We then looked at the idea of having an historical walkway within the event. We thought that that could be achieved through pop up banners where each region could get involved with this and give us a history and that work had already started because of the production of the Book. I'm going to get Clive up to speak a bit the Book.

We formed a committee through Share, Roundabout and a few members of the 75th committee. We started working on the book and the book is terrific.



**Anniversary Publication Working Group
Clive K – Treasurer GSB**

Thanks Stevie and I'm Clive and I'm an alcoholic and it's great to be still here. It's been a wonderful weekend and basically this was one of my first tasks when I joined the Board. I think it was at the Conference 2018 that the then Vice Chair pulled me over for a little chat and he volunteered me into the role of chair of this little working group, which consisted of representatives from Roundabout magazine, Share magazine and a representative from the 75th subcommittee. There was also a representative from Archives as well.

The idea was to get the fellowship involved. So, one of the first things we did was we sent a letter out to the regional archivists, secretaries and chairs basically asking for help to produce a history of their region and we also asked the Board trustees to help with putting together a history of each service discipline.

We carried on meeting and we had meetings with Mark Comer, the publisher of Share and Roundabout, as he was doing the layout of the book. He gave us various quotes and we were thinking it was going to cost about £15,000, but I'll go on to that in a bit, but anyway, we carried on meeting and then of course, when the pandemic hit, we met online.

The work continued and I'm so grateful to see many of you here who did help to contribute. Now we have 148-page book, which I'm really proud of, it's amazing, we got the timeline which is on the front and back covers and we're just in the final stages of editing now.

We've got one more meeting of the Group which is going to be next week, where we will sign it off and then it will go to the printers but the final cost has actually come in at £7895 and that's all in so that that's brilliant.

It's thanks to you really for your involvement as without you this wouldn't have happened. So from me thinking how is this ever going to come about to having a product there is amazing.

This is going to be for those who are coming to the Convention who have registered. It's going to be part of your goodie bag when you register that will be in the bag as well.

It is planned that we will sell this as well, so it is going to be part of our legacy and I think I'll leave it there and say thanks to everyone who got involved with this. It's been a real labour of love, it truly has.

Thank you and I will hand back to Stevie.

We also have regional Ambassadors and I think I can see a few here tonight. Regional Ambassadors have been helping to sell tickets and helping people to register for some of our older members it is not the easiest thing to do but because of security at the Arena they require us to pre-register. However, we know what you are like and you will be able to register at the event.

Registration will open up on Thursday and we have hired a place called St. Georges Centre which is about a seven-minute walk from the Arena and it's also the place to be used by some of the events that will be happening over the weekend. We have the AI Anon meetings which will be in St. George's. We have the Young People's Exhibition, which Sandy and Gretchen will be running. Sandy would you like to say something about this:

Conference asked that young people be heavily involved in this convention. And it's a great opportunity for young people to be involved and to learn more about fellowship, to have fun, and for the rest of the Fellowship to encourage them into service.

We're going to have an Archive Exhibition at St. George's, which Gretchen will be organising.

I'm departing tomorrow, but I'm still on the 75th so I just like to say that we have a lot of rooms in the convention centre called the VIP rooms and some of the discipline so having a box so that they can encourage people into service, but they need quite a lot of helpers. So if your discipline is having one of these boxes, look for your subcommittee people or your Trustee and volunteer to help them for two hours at a time because it's good for them to have people who know something about telephones or prisons or PI or whatever. I can see that Tom would love to have a queue of people to help him.

Anyway, the Young People's discipline are running the fun run and you don't have to be over 60 for the fun run! The reason I'm the trustee, until tomorrow, for the Young Peoples Subcommittee is that I came into AA at a young age. And, as you can see, I'm quite old now. But I'm still very passionate about it. It's so amazing how things have changed and how more young people are coming to the Fellowship and they're getting younger and younger and it's a really good thing to support them.

I hope you'll all come to the Convention and you'll come to St George's there'll be a disco. Oh, and they want to play these funny games/board games, which I don't understand at all, but there'll be all sorts of activities.

There will also be other meetings, extra meetings. There'll be a Young Peoples meeting, there'll be a Diversity meeting, a Polish meeting, LGBTQI+ meeting and there might be a couple more if people want them here. Thank you very much and I will hand back to Stevie.

One of the other big items that we will have on over the weekend is that we'll be given a space at the City Museum in Leeds which is about a five-minute walk from the Arena and we'll be putting on a very big exhibition there. We've been given a fantastic space in that area and Thomas Baldwin, who unfortunately isn't here tonight, assures me this is going to be the best Archives Exhibition anybody has ever seen.

James, from the Borthwick Institute, will be attending and he will be running a class teaching Archivists how to catalogue and that will be happening sometime during the Saturday and as well as that the Museum have given us another two large meeting rooms. So that will help with overflow from different meetings.

The Early Bird meeting is Thursday night and Registration is starting on the Thursday and big Sing Songs on Friday/Saturday at St. George's. There will be Discos and a morning meditation walk and we have about 30 people registered for that already.

The target was to be financially responsible with this and there's been a lot of savings that we've been able to make. I reckon that if we had about 3000 we're going to be financially responsible for it but we will have the online sale of the Book, we'll have some of the online sales of the merchandise and we're looking at that.

This is about unity of the Fellowship and it's about the projects that we'll be using to help everybody carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic, the BBC thing. The Archives segment, people in the City of Leeds can come and visit that over the weekend. The video, I think we're going to have a great weekend.

Thank you.

AA Service News Update

AA Service News (AASN) is the General Service Board's principal medium for communication of service events and developments throughout all regions of AA Great Britain. It is published quarterly, with articles that emphasise in particular matters affecting our Primary Purpose: to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

The annual Winter edition contains the Conference Questions and the Summer edition the recommendations from the General Service Conference in response to those questions.

Additionally, news and details about Parliamentary events in England, Scotland and Wales, and other notable service events are published throughout the year in articles written for and by the Fellowship. These include General Service Board Sub-Committees vacancy notices (and information on how eligible AA members may apply), regional Seventh Tradition and In Memoriam contributions, as well as a Concept or Tradition and a calendar of AA events in Great Britain and overseas.

Historically, copies have been sent to the postal contacts for all Groups registered in the Great Britain Service Structure, to intergroup and regional officers, and to the General Service Board. Since the beginning of the pandemic, widespread closed venues, and the suspension of many face-to-face meetings, digital-only editions have been prepared and circulated via email. This will continue. Recent digital editions have included guidance on how hard copies can be printed locally by groups.

A downloadable PDF of each edition is also posted in the Document Library section of the Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain (AA GB) website.

This year will see a new Editor rotating into post.

If your group is not receiving AASN, please check that your Group Registration details – including an email address – are up-to-date with the General Service Office. (Alternatively, fill out a new registration form – also called the ‘Pink Form’ – and be sure to include an email address.) If in doubt, please contact the office.

Many thanks to the staff at GSO for their work to collate and pass along information for each issue, and especially to Sharon who maintains the database and who is enormously patient in reminding me of the deadlines.

And finally, a big thanks to all contributors without whose articles and notices AASN could not be published. Your willingness to share your service related experience, strength and hope informs the Fellowship and encourages all of us – and our groups, intergroups and regions – to keep AA’s Legacy of Service alive and thriving.

Jo F and Erik A
GSB Trustees, AA Service News

Archives Update

Response from the Archives Sub-Committee to the Conference question (2021 committee 5, question 3) concerning the transfer of materials from regional and intergroup archives to the AA Archive at the Borthwick Institute.

The committee 5 recommendation is as follows:

1. *The Committee agreed that the best way to keep archive material intact is for it to be moved to GSO/Borthwick for the best protection of the fellowship’s history.*
2. *The Committee recommends that there is a request made to Region and Intergroup archivists that material older than 10 years is passed to GSO for storage, bearing in mind the autonomy provided to all by Tradition Four. A minority view was expressed that this request should not be made.*
3. *The Committee agreed that is considering the moral ownership of the material, AA archives belong to the fellowship and not the individual; legal imperative notwithstanding.*

The recommendation continues as follows:

The Committee recommends that the GSB instruct the Archive Sub-Committee to provide clear guidance to the fellowship about items that should be included with the archive material. This guidance should be added to the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain, chapter 11 ‘Archives’.

The Committee hopes that the above recommendations inform the ongoing review being undertaken by the Archives Sub-Committee of the views of the fellowship on these points.

The Committee recorded a majority in favour of the decision. A minority view that the question should have been postponed until further background information was made available was expressed, fully considered and respected.

These recommendations were considered carefully at the meeting of the Archives Network in York in September 2021, and the discussion there has informed the response by the Archives Sub-Committee to the conference recommendations.

The following important points were made at the Archives Network:

- (i) It came to light that the question had been proposed for conference by a regional archivist (who was present at the Network meeting). Although the recommendations were of course supported by a majority of conference members, it was noted that there was a significant minority view opposed to them.
- (ii) While it was accepted that there is a problem about ensuring the survival of local archives which are threatened with disposal, several members of the Archives Network argued that there are strong objections to the method of ensuring their survival by transferring older materials to GSO for storage in the Borthwick Institute which is proposed in recommendation 2. In particular –
- (iii) Many speakers at the Network Meeting emphasized the importance of keeping local archives local, so as to ensure that they remain accessible to local groups who wish to preserve a record of their own distinctive development, history and achievements. There is here, as many speakers emphasized, an important matter of trust: those who donated materials to their local archive did so in the belief that these materials would remain readily accessible to local groups.
- (iv) This point was reinforced by James Neill in his presentation to the Network, who remarked that the Borthwick Institute does not wish to receive van loads filled with the materials in local archives that are over 10 years old. It would be difficult, and potentially expensive, to find space for all this material in the Institute. Furthermore, it is likely that some of this material duplicates material already in the archive; and even when it does not, much of it is better kept in a local archive where it records local developments that are primarily of value to local groups rather than to the Fellowship as a whole.

Subsequent discussion at the Archives Network started from a proposal made by James Neill, that instead of transferring all materials that are 10 years old or older to the AA Archive at the Borthwick Institute, regional and intergroup archivists should prepare inventories of their archive and submit these to the Borthwick Institute. These inventories would enable archivists at the Borthwick, with help from the Archives SC and the Fellowship Archivist (once one is appointed), to identify materials which would genuinely enhance the AA Archive at the Borthwick Institute, and equally materials not suitable for transfer to the Borthwick. In the case of the former, with the agreement of the local intergroup or region, it should generally be possible to create good quality copies of original papers which can be kept in the Borthwick while the original is preserved in the local archive (or vice-versa, depending on the wishes of the local archivist). An important advantage of this approach is that it would make it possible to develop an extended catalogue of AA Archives, to include materials in intergroup and regional archives as well as that stored in the Borthwick AA Archive.

Some of the archivists present commented that they have extensive archives which are not fully catalogued, and cataloguing such collections might be difficult and take some time. In subsequent discussion it was observed that this practice has in fact been recommended for some time in the Policy and Procedures Manual for Archivists, and its importance is not dependent on this question concerning the possible transfer of materials to the Borthwick Institute. James Neill recently produced an example of a Box Folder Catalogue, and this has been presented to the Archive Network as an appropriate way to catalogue an AA archive which not only lists its content but also its confidentiality status. Furthermore, the AA

Archivist at the Borthwick Institute will not be able to process a large number of inventories each year, so there is no expectation that this task can be done quickly - especially where it will require the physical inspection of large amounts of paper etc.. In the end, therefore, there was unanimous support at the meeting for the basic point here, that having created an inventory of the materials in their archive, regional and intergroup archivists should submit a copy of this inventory to the AA archivist at the Borthwick Institute in order to initiate a discussion concerning the selective transfer of important material of national significance to the AA Archive at the Borthwick Institute, while maintaining the strength and vibrancy of local archives.

In developing its response to the conference recommendations, the Archives Sub-Committee endorses this approach. While recognizing that more needs to be said concerning the conference recommendations, the sub-committee observed that this proposal does provide a way of beginning to implement the recommendation that 'the GSB instruct the Archive Sub-Committee to provide clear guidance to the fellowship about items that should be included with the archive material'. For this proposal provides a clear procedure for identifying material which merits transfer to the Borthwick Archive. The committee recognizes that it will not be possible to apply this procedure very quickly: in many cases it will take time for inventories to be prepared and it will also take time for the Borthwick Institute to deal with large numbers of them. But the committee hope that this will be a constructive learning process: once this procedure has been applied to a few archives for which there is already a complete inventory, it will become easier to provide further guidance to archivists preparing an inventory concerning the types of archive material which are likely to merit transfer and those not suitable for transfer.

Going back to the beginning of this discussion, the Archives Sub-Committee recognize that this procedure does not of itself guarantee the safety of an archive threatened with disposal, for example following the death of an archivist. The sub-committee strongly recommend that archivists should guard against disputes about ownership of any AA archive they have been looking after which might arise after their death by including in their will a codicil to the effect that the papers and other materials in the AA archive are the property of their region or intergroup, to which they should be returned after their death. However, even where an archive has been returned there is still no guarantee that it will not be disposed of if the relevant intergroup or region cannot find an archivist to take over the archive or arrange safe storage of it. In a case of this kind there are two possible situations: either there is at least a partial inventory of the archive which covers the older material, or there is no significant inventory at all. Where there is a partial inventory of the archive under threat, this inventory can be sent to the Borthwick Institute, and a judgment made as to which materials described in the inventory merit transfer to the Borthwick. The remainder are then the responsibility of the relevant intergroup or region, and while the Archives Sub-Committee would strongly recommend that some way be found of preserving at least those materials which make an important contribution to local history, the committee has no resources to make this happen. In a situation of this kind the sub-committee therefore recommend that the relevant intergroup or region should approach the Fellowship Archivist and other archivists in the Archives Network for advice.

Where there is no significant inventory at all, and the relevant intergroup or region cannot find an archivist to take over the archive or arrange safe storage of it, the Archives Sub-Committee recommend that it would be appropriate to refer the matter to GSO so that the situation can be assessed with the advice of the Fellowship Archivist, the Archives Sub-Committee, and the Borthwick Institute. As a last option it should remain possible to

‘shelter’ an archive in this situation at the Borthwick Institute where the AA archivist can investigate to see if it contains valuable material which merits transfer to the AA Archive at the Borthwick Institute, and, if there is, transfer it. The situation with respect to the remainder is then similar to that described above: the Archives Sub-Committee would strongly recommend to the relevant intergroup or region that some way be found of preserving those materials which make an important contribution to local history, and that they should approach the Fellowship Archivist and other archivists in the Archives Network for advice as to how this can be best achieved.

Several members of the Archives Network reminded the meeting of the value of the injunction: ‘keep it simple’. The main procedure recommended here, of relying on inventories prepared by local archivists to facilitate the selection and transfer of materials to the Borthwick Institute (subject to the agreement of the relevant intergroup or region), is relatively straightforward. The courses of action recommended for situations in which there is a threat to an existing archive are not so straightforward, for these situations are inevitably complicated and practicable ways of dealing with them are bound to be similarly complicated. But we hope that situations of this kind will become increasingly rare once the main procedure recommended here has been widely implemented.

Thomas Baldwin
GSB Trustee - Chair, Archives Sub-Committee.

Electronic Communications Update

In Spring 2021 we were pleased to welcome AA-GB’s new Web Manager who joined GSO staff, and ECSC were happy to help her find her way through our large and complex website. Much of the early-stage work was of a housekeeping nature and a great deal of tidying up has already been carried out with some much-needed streamlining of background processes.

Our email service has undergone a major change in the past six months, with migration to a new Gmail-based system, hosted by a known and trusted provider. The changeover ran smoothly on the whole, with a couple of issues which were rapidly dealt with by our new host. Many thanks for the hours of work by GSO and NSO staff who were tasked with the issuing of new passwords and handholding of members when required. We are confident that the new system will be more stable than the previous, and that efficient support will be provided when necessary.

To preserve anonymity and to comply with GDPR, we continue to offer generic email addresses for posts at Intergroup and Region. To avoid delays with their issue, please ensure that the Confidential Directory is kept up to date using the Intergroup and Region Officer Registration Form available from the website Document Library, which includes an optional request for an aamail.org email address.

The continuing pandemic has seen ongoing activity in Online Response Service and ChatNow. These essential services are moving out of ECSC to join National Telephones SC in forming the new ‘First Response’ sub-committee. This is a logical transition given that, albeit using different media, the services provided to newcomers are similar, so a consistent message can be passed by all three.

Norman B, GSB Trustee, Electronic Communications Sub Committee

Employment Update

The Employment Sub-committee has re-grouped and re-organised, with the support of the General Service board Chair and Vice-chair, following the resignation, for various reasons, of several members.

An informative and positive face-to-face Sub-committee meeting was enjoyed on 28/29th January, and face-to-face meetings are planned for 11/12 March and the AGM with RELO's 17/18 June. In the absence of an Employment Liaison Officer, Regions are encouraged to send another representative.

The enthusiastic nucleus of members are continuing interaction with Regions. The "Now You are an Employment Liaison Officer" pamphlet is now available and being distributed. An informative flyer to interest potential Employment Sub-committee members is under preparation.

The "Blue Light" initiative is being continued. Active results with local Employment Liaison Officer involvement are being achieved with Humberside and Dorset Police Welfare teams. Other Police opportunities are being pursued.

A more nationally attractive approach for all "Blue Light" services is under planning.

The value of working with Health and Public Information subcommittees is recognised and encouraged.

Employment presentations for the 75th Anniversary Convention are underway. The Employment room will be continuously attended by Employment Sub-committee members and Regional and Intergroup Employment Liaison Officers are invited to help with this information centre.

The Employment Sub-committee meets monthly on Zoom to informally catch up with our primary purpose, and to care for our wellbeing by sharing.

Charles R
GSB Trustee, Employment

Health Update

Throughout 2021 the Health Subcommittees' planned events continued to be delayed, disrupted and rescheduled by the pandemic. There is little doubt that it may be extremely difficult for the Health Subcommittee members, the Regional and Intergroup Liaison Officers and the Health discipline at every level to recover from the major impact the pandemic has had on relationships and co-operation built over many years. Working directly with the healthcare professionals continues to be disrupted by the closure of most healthcare facilities to outside visitors.

Undaunted the Health Subcommittee continued to support Health Liaison Officers at Regional and Intergroup level, who in turn continue to meet online to carry out regular Open Meeting Workshops within universities, colleges, hospitals, health practices and other health care facilities throughout AAGB.

Although unable to attend live health conferences, members did manage to attend many virtual events and the Health Subcommittee passed new information and continued to support the Regional and Intergroup Health Liaison officers including updating the website and the file store. The regular virtual meetings allowed a constant flow of communication and became a new tool in our Spiritual toolkit.

When restrictions eased the Health Subcommittee met face to face in July 2021, and plans were revised for the postponed Health seminar to take place in October 2021. A full programme of events was proposed, and although uncertain of their availability, the Health Subcommittee approached a variety of relevant prominent speakers who without hesitation consented to give freely of their time and commitment.

HEALTH SEMINAR

The highly successful seminar was held as a hybrid event to ensure all Government guidelines were adhered to. It also allowed members who preferred not to travel and accommodated members from other AA service disciplines to attend. Chaired by Amanda S, chair of the General Service Board of AAGB, Amanda chose two of the members joining virtually to open the meeting by reading the Preamble and the Statement of Unity.

The opening keynote speaker, ex Non Alcoholic Trustee, Dr Eric Carlin, is now leading the European team to develop the World Health Organization's European Alcohol strategy. Dr Carlin presented an excellent overview of the effects of alcohol worldwide and the ensuing annual alcohol related deaths now exceeding three million, with one in four of those deaths aged 20 -24. He stressed the importance of Health Liaison Officers presenting Alcoholics Anonymous to healthcare professionals to always stress the efficacy of the twelve-step programme, as evidenced in the recently published and highly acclaimed Cochrane Report. Dan Carden, MP for Liverpool, shared his personal experience of AA and recovery and how he broke his anonymity to promote addiction as an illness in the Westminster Parliament. He discussed the high financial cost to the UK economy caused by alcohol harm and stated that the UK Government policy strategy has not been reviewed since 2012. Dan also stressed that he believes in visible recovery, the value of recovery to society and stressed his belief that a recovering alcoholic is an asset to every community.

Ms Debbie, Head of Policy NHS England, described the post pandemic comprehensive model for personalized care, introducing co-operative working with community recovery and linking specialised alcohol nursing teams with local Alcoholics Anonymous liaison officers. One new opening gateway to allow the health discipline to engage with healthcare professionals post pandemic.

Sohan Sohata, shared his long recovery experience in Alcoholics Anonymous and compared this with his personal experience of racism and discrimination in trying to access other support services. He then went on to describe his own Nottingham based project carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic who is often stigmatized, including within their own black Asian and minority ethnic {BAME} communities.

Ex Non Alcoholic Trustee, Dr Sarah Flowers, an addiction specialist working within an NHS twelve step rehabilitation centre, presented a doctor's view of AA. Sarah stated she had been a doctor for twenty- five years before she encountered people in recovery. With the minimum of training on alcohol related harm, it was not until she attended an AA meeting that she understood AA's effectiveness. Dr Flowers went on to serve on the General Service Board and continues to prescribe recovery, linking patients with AA. She is a strong

advocate of Open Meeting Workshops and regularly participates in assisting I/RHLOs in delivering these to student and other healthcare professionals.

The General Secretary, Ranjan B, presented a brief though very informed outline of the structure and the framework of Alcoholics Anonymous GB for the benefit of the non-alcoholic delegates.

Dr Mani Mehdikhani, Non Alcoholic Trustee, General Service Board, summarised the recent 2020 Alcoholics Anonymous quinquennial survey. As always Mani fielded many questions and emphasized the efficacy of the statistics obtained from the survey and their value in underpinning the message when HLOs are delivering presentations and Open Meeting Workshops to health professionals.

The Seminar concluded with a thoroughly informative session, headed 'yes we can' from serving Health Subcommittee and liaison Officers from a wide range of Intergroups/Regions, including Daniele V LRN, Mike A GR, Robin H SER and Navraj D, Birmingham Intergroup who gave a summary of his experience in the new role of Community Liaison Officer. The feedback from the Seminar was very supportive and the following is an example from one AA member.

I found the seminar to be an uplifting experience and it was so valuable and confidence building to be able to hear all the experience of the speakers. I was quite blown away by what the people I heard have accomplished in service, yet with humility and a simple desire to carry the message. I am very grateful to everyone who organised and ran the seminar and who were so welcoming and happy to offer advice. It was a gift and a privilege to be there and to be able to report back to my intergroup, where, working together, I hope we can achieve some good things. We sometimes talk about staying in the middle of the bed. On my drive home, it felt that the bed was a lot bigger than I realised. Edward H

MEDICAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM – ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

In 2019 Alcoholics Anonymous GB was invited by the Medical Council on Alcohol to participate in its annual Symposium which is held in London every November. The event finally took place virtually in November 2021. Alcoholics Anonymous member, Daniele V chaired a live Open Meeting Workshop, supported by six members from London Region North, who shared their experience, strength and hope, a first for this prestigious event. The feedback from the professional audience was considered and highly commended.

Following his presentation, the recipient of the 2021 Max Glatt medal and presenter of the Max Glatt lecture, Dr Peter Rice, Director of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, invited Non Alcoholic Trustees, Mr. Tom Fox and Dr Mani Mehdikhani of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous GB to speak on AA's behalf.

Tom delivered a very moving and thought -provoking complimentary overview of his experience of Alcoholics Anonymous over many years in his role as Corporate Director of the Scottish Prison Service. This was widely appreciated and commented on. One delegate stated that Tom's personal experience and dignified passion for Alcoholics Anonymous was enlightening.

Tom was followed by our longest serving Non Alcoholic Trustee and Clinical Psychologist Dr Mani Mehdikhani's presentation of the analysis of the quinquennial Alcoholics Anonymous survey conducted in 2020. The Medical Council delegates had a particular interest in these

statistics as presented and this too was very well received. Dr Mani later participated in the question -and -answer panel shared with Professor John Kelly, professor of addiction medicine at Harvard Medical School and Dr David McCartney, Recovery and Residential Rehabilitation, Edinburgh. The final word went to Dr Mani when he answered the last question which closed this highly lauded Symposium.

Delegate question to Dr Mani. What is it in your opinion that makes Alcoholics Anonymous so successful?

Dr Mani answer: They keep coming back!

Terri S
GSB Trustee for Health

Prisons Update

Prisons over the year have been without meetings but are now slowly opening, all being limited to certain days and times due to staff shortages. Vetting & Clearance is causing issues and clarification is needed from the Ministry of Justice.

There has been a lack of refresher training taking place which will be investigated as a matter of safeguarding for volunteers.

The Dorset team received a reward for their service to prisons in their area.

It's the Prisons Sub Committee's aim to have a Seminar in 2023.

The Prison Liaison Officers have been doing a marvellous job in delivering Roundabouts and Shares to the still suffering alcoholics in Prisons, as well as using Postal Sponsorship, these have been well received. I would like to thank all the Prison Liaison Officers and volunteers for their hard work and dedication in these trying times.

Pat McG
GSB Trustee, Prisons

Probation Update

Probation officers have been working hard and have been represented at the two Zonal meetings that we were able to have during the year at Stirling and Bristol.

There are now eleven area directors for probation in place and we hope there will be a good relationship and co-operation with AA.

The Sub Committee has been busy working through the structure manual taking out CRC details, finishing probation starter pack, arranging templates with the Website Manager, arranging Chit Symbol for meetings, vetting and clearance issues etc.

We will be proposing a Seminar for 2023 for CJS Officers where we can bring everyone up to date and receive questions etc but all in all the probation service is on the up and the service is getting increasingly better as strategic plans start to be introduced.

I would like to thank all Probation Officers for their Service.

Pat McG
GSB Trustee, Probation

Survey Update

The Survey Sub Committee, having produced and delivered the 2020 Survey, has spent the year looking at new and effective ways to disseminate the wealth of information that resulted from the 2020 Survey.

Due to the pandemic the Survey had to be conducted completely online and a lot of valuable lessons were learned, not least of which being the importance of keeping group contact details up to date.

This subcommittee's aim is to coordinate and produce the surveys and they will be producing a comprehensive handover report which will enable continuity for the surveys going forward.

There are currently 3 members of the Sub-Committee along with two trustees and the Fellowship Project Administrator from GSO. The Sub-Committee is looking to recruit into the two remaining posts and would like to encourage those with some electronic communications skills as well as an interest in surveys and general communication. An outside professional organisation is involved in collating the data from the survey.

Gretchen S
GSB Trustee, Survey Sub Committee

First Response Update

Earlier this year has seen some major changes and developments in the organisation and support of forward-facing services. After much thought and discussion, it was agreed that the Online Response Service (ORS) and Chat Now would migrate from the Electronic Communications Sub-Committee to the National Telephone Sub-Committee (NTSC). Which means that all services providing first contact with the still suffering alcoholic are under one roof. The board agreed a one year's trial of this arrangement and as a result the National Telephone Sub Committee (NTSC) has now been renamed the First Response Sub Committee (FRSC).

Help requests to our email-based ORS and our one-on-one live Chat Now service showed a continuing increase in numbers of people contacting them. ORS had almost 20,000 emails in 2021 and has responders working 7 days a week from 8am to midnight. In 2021 Chat Now totalled almost 15,000 chats with a dedicated team of 26 responders. Each of these services encourages the still suffering alcoholic to call our telephone helpline and start the journey into recovery.

The sub-committee continues to support RTLOs and TLOs across the country – who in turn support Telephone Responders and 12steppers. The difficulties involved in the transition from analogue to digital network providers have been largely overcome for all the 37 local helplines.

In 2021 the 0800 Helpline number received a total of 130,262 calls - 11% of these calls did not result in a Responder talking to the person calling. There are several reasons for this – the phone line is engaged – the caller cuts the call as soon as it rings – and sometimes there is no answer at all. All these reasons are, of course, of concern, but hopefully these will be addressed as we look for a new structure for the telephone service.

Committee 1 of Conference 2021 requested the Telephone Sub Committee and Literature Sub Committee to review Chapter 10, especially about the use of mobile phones and new technologies. The Committee also recommended that there should be a review of the structure of the national telephone service.

In addition, the Committee recommended that the review of Chapter 10 include guidance to responders on how to handle malicious calls. Plus, more comprehensive information be included in a pdf document to be stored in the document library freely available to all responders. This recommendation also takes into account the safeguarding of members.

To this end, while there is a draft review of Chapter 10, this is on hold pending revisions that will be required when issues surrounding safeguarding have been settled. After much work by members of the sub-committee, we now have a National Telephone Training Document that includes guidance on how to handle malicious calls. We have had discussions with GSO solicitors and are waiting for their opinion on some matters regarding, amongst other issues, safeguarding minors.

During the last year members of the sub-committee plus others with involvement in the telephone service have formed a Working Party to look at options for restructuring the national telephone service.

When the national telephone service was introduced some 20 years ago it was based on a single national number serving local telephone areas. At that time most callers used landlines and the use of mobile phones was relatively infrequent. Calls from a landline to the national number were routed to the appropriate local area and the system worked well.

The advent of the mobile telephone meant that, whilst calls would theoretically be directed to the nearest geographical BT system feed-in point, they would in practice be routed to a feed-in point determined by the telephone service provider's system loading algorithm, meaning that the call could end up anywhere in the country.

This is not a recent phenomenon and has been the case since the introduction of the system. The significant change over the last 15 years has been the decline in the use of landlines and the almost universal adoption of mobile phones. *Figure 1* below illustrates this change nationally.

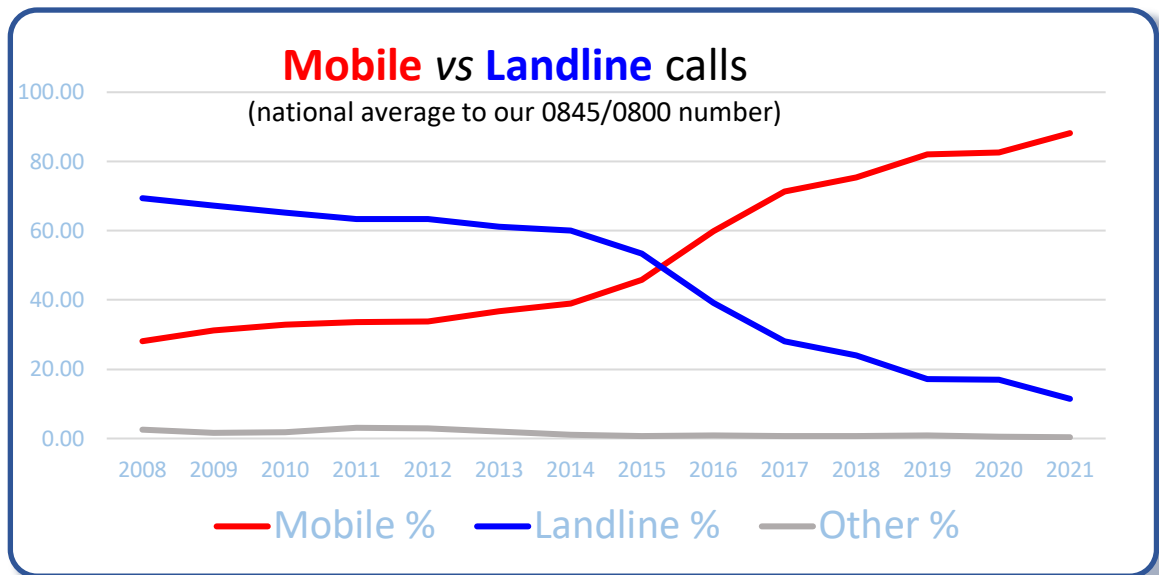


Figure 1

Locally these figures vary, with 3 telephone areas which have no feed-in points still receiving no mobile calls, one receiving only 30% of its calls from mobiles, and 6 receiving between 50% and 80% of their calls from mobiles.

In essence this means that 37 disparate telephone areas, working different hours and with varying levels of training, have been handling what is in effect a national call load. For the future, some of the smaller areas could combine with neighbouring areas, as has been happening recently.

Traditionally the home responding system has meant that those telephone areas using home responding have had one operator on duty at any one time, with office-based systems (London and Manchester) having another 6 or 7 operators on duty between them, making a total of some 45 operators nominally on duty at any one time during daytime and evening shifts. The London and Manchester service field 30% of the national calls between them – using just 7 operators. There is the view that as few as 12-15 operators could effectively handle the total national call load on any daytime or evening shift. They would almost certainly find it a more satisfying experience than those in some of the quieter telephone areas who commonly receive few if any calls.

The Working Party is looking at the idea of a national team of operators working on a modern VoIP system. This would probably be significantly cheaper as well as being more effective, lead to significantly fewer lost calls, an improved standard of response and a consistent “face” to the caller.

This national “front line” team will pass out 12th Step calls to responders in local areas. Local calls could continue to be answered locally, or diverted, allowing greater flexibility. Most local areas also maintain their own meetings lists which, rightly or not, tend to be more up to date than the national *Where to Find*.

So, in essence this would be a 2-tier system, this isn’t new -- the London telephone area has worked in this way for some time.

In the past, telephone responders have worked largely in isolation, often but not always, with the knowledge that a TLO or RTLO can be contacted in an emergency. When calls can be emotional, difficult and at times abusive there is a duty of care owing to responders that is often not currently met. To improve on this, we can look to the examples of Manchester - where home responders are in touch via WhatsApp, and the London service where Volunteers are in touch using Zoom throughout their shift. There is considerable scope for such systems to facilitate communication between home responders in a national team and beyond. This would undoubtedly be supportive and help Responders develop and maintain a much-improved service.

In August this year there will be a Telephone Seminar held in York to which all RTLOs and TLOs are invited, and the ideas regarding restructuring can be addressed and a working plan developed.

Jonathan P.
GSB Trustee, First Response Sub Committee

Young People Update

As with all disciplines carrying the message of hope has been our primary purpose. 2021 has been another difficult year. Earlier in the year we had a zoom meeting for Region and Intergroup YPLO's as well as holding 3 Sub Committee meetings on zoom.

In August we held a Region Young Persons Liaison Officers meeting face to face in York where we got YP's views on safeguarding. During our meetings this year we have looked at literature and pamphlets available for young people and submitted revisions to the 'Younger people in AA' pamphlet to the Literature Sub Committee who have chosen 4 new stories from the ones collected. The rest of the stories submitted by young people will be forwarded to Share and Roundabout.

In November we held our second Road Show in Leeds. We invited young people to encourage them into service and young at heart members to see how they could sponsor young people into service. The day went well despite the awful weather causing a number of people to cancel.

The Young Peoples section of the AA GB web site is being revamped to make it more user friendly and bring it up to date.

Over the past year we have looked at how we can be involved in the 75th Anniversary Convention to raise the profile of Young People in the Fellowship. Lots of ideas are being put forward to the 75th Committee and many young people have volunteered.

The YP Sub Committee are putting forward names of young people to be considered as speakers at the 75th convention.

Sandi A
GSB Trustee, Young People

Roundabout Update

With the immediacy of the meeting closures due to the pandemic, few groups thought to cancel or renew their Roundabout magazine subscriptions.

The General Service Board moved quickly to facilitate Roundabout being uploaded to the AAGB Website as a free download for the first twelve months, followed by a subscription fee of fifty pence thereafter. The wider Fellowship appreciated this gesture and the more computer competent members were able to share copies with housebound members.

The unopened dusty envelopes, containing the group subscription magazines lying behind closed meetings doors did not go to waste. They were made available when the meetings went live again to newcomers and donated to Prisons, Hospital waiting rooms, GP Surgeries, Pharmacies and any other venue where potential members are in attendance. These were warmly welcomed within the institutions also in lockdown.

New editor, Cath W, lead the editorial team and along with proof readers Moira C and Dilys H and the Link Liaison Officer Ian McN, they continue to review and refresh each edition. Throughout lockdown the Roundabout Subcommittee continued to regularly meet virtually with the Intergroup and Regional LOs and were delighted to meet again face to face at their Workshop at Pitlochry in February 2022. This Workshop produced new and innovative ideas which they hope will ensure Roundabout magazines sustainability in this media age.

The Roundabout magazine celebrated its 70th Anniversary in February 2021 and a celebratory Yearbook was printed to mark the occasion. This has been praised by those members who have already purchased a copy from the literature department of GSO and copies will be on sale at the 75th Anniversary Celebration at the Leeds Arena in June 2022 also. Please visit the Roundabout service and hospitality room at this celebration and share your experience, strength and hope for inclusion in a future issue of Roundabout. A warm welcome awaits you.

The role that the Roundabout magazine has played within the Fellowship, particularly in Scotland but never forgetting our worldwide subscribers, cannot be exaggerated and the Roundabout Subcommittee with the support of the General Service Board and the Fellowship of AAGB will continue to produce a monthly edition of 'our meeting in print'

Terri S
GSB Trustee, Roundabout

Share Update

In spite of the seemingly endless situation, with all its ongoing restrictions, Share, your "Meeting between meetings" continues to thrive. This is down to the dedicated team who have continued to work tirelessly throughout the year to ensure seamless production of the magazine.

The team met online during the year. This included an online seminar in July which our sister magazine in Scotland, Roundabout, was invited to participate in. Lively and topical discussions ensued and it proved to be an immensely enjoyable experience for all who attended.

My sincere thanks go to all Share Team members, along with our dedicated Staff at GSO and all contributors throughout our wonderful Fellowship who have ensured that Share continues to be our “Meeting between meetings”.

The Share team look forward to seeing you all at the 75th Anniversary celebrations in Leeds from 10 to 12 June 2022.

Clive K
GSB Trustee, Share

National Conventions Update

Northern

The Northern National Convention was sadly cancelled in March 2020 and March 2021 as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

The Committee met online on a regular basis with their first face to face meeting (AGM) being held at the Norbreck Castle Hotel in September 2021. At that meeting, it was agreed that the 46th Convention would be held 18th-20th March 2022.

Since then, the committee has worked together in the true spirit of Fellowship to organize and finalise the arrangements for an event that will hopefully put the difficulties of the last two years behind us all.

Barbara O
GSB Trustee, NNC

Scottish

The SNCC (Scottish National Convention Committee) have advised that this year's Scottish National Convention will go ahead face to face at the Stirling Court Hotel this year from May 20th till 22nd.

The venue lies in the grounds of Stirling University with the meetings taking place in the Theatre next to the hotel.

It's an ideal venue and anyone attending will no doubt have a great weekend.

Due to Hotel Covid restrictions the attendance will be limited to 300 so pre-registration will be required. Please see the flyers or visit the AAGB website for details or the Convention email site convention.snc@aamail.org for more information.

We would like to thank all members of the Committee for their continued dedication, especially over the past two years.

Stevie S
GSB Trustee, SNC

Welsh

In 2021, Wales and Borders Region offered a very warm welcome to a virtual convention which was held on the 5th of June. This one-day Convention was thought to be a success by all who took part. A bonus in having a virtual convention was the chance for people from around the world to take part – quite an emotional experience for the Welsh diaspora amongst others.

The planning is well advanced for the Convention to be held on the 27th to the 29th May 2022. The theme will be “*Sobriety – together stronger*” or in Welsh “*Sobrwydd Cryfder gyda’n gilydd*”. There is every hope that this can be a real convention but there are plans to hold it as a hybrid. In part to build on one of the pluses of last year’s virtual convention -- the attendance of people from around the world. We will follow the usual format of having meetings in English as well as a Welsh Language meeting, (there will be simultaneous translation for English listeners). There will be Come and Go meetings and a Share magazine workshop.

As always, all are welcome to this jewel of a convention in the heart of Wales. held at the Metropole Hotel, Llandridod Wells.

Jonathan P
GSB Trustee, WNCC

Parliamentary Events Update

Westminster

In 2021 the presentation was necessarily offered by “Zoom”, facilitating participation by delegates from throughout the U.K. An excellent attendance reflected this opportunity.

The meeting was introduced by our A.A. committee member, being sponsored and chaired by Caroline Ansell M.P.

Alison Keating, Head of Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco at Public Health England spoke on the impact of alcohol misuse on public health.

Female and male A.A. members explained their experiences of alcoholism and recovery. Andrew Wetherall, a Non-alcoholic Board Trustee, spoke on alcoholism and mental health. There were opportunities for questions and answers and ‘signposting’. A face-to-face meeting is scheduled for 12th May, 2022 at Portcullis House, Westminster Parliament.

It will be sponsored and chaired by Dan Carden M.P., the chair of the “All Party Parliamentary Group on Alcohol Harm”.

Preparations are supported by monthly meetings of the organising committee, including: - the invitation of professional and A.A. speakers; agreeing the best time schedule for M.P.s to attend; confirming details of requirements for the event.

THE significant challenge is always attracting delegates and committing their proposed attendance by them obtaining a registered invitation for admittance to Portcullis House, where security is strict. The presentation is prepared for all who are involved in

environments affected by the influence of alcohol, to clarify the help our Fellowship can offer anybody suffering alcohol addiction/abuse. Our General Service Office supervises the invitations. Regional and Intergroup Liaison Officer and Group members are requested to suggest attendance at this presentation to all parties to whom they have been “Carrying our Message”.

Charles R
GSB Trustee

Scottish

It is with regret that I report that the Scottish Parliamentary event has yet again been postponed due to the Pandemic. The event continues to be supported and sponsored by an MSP, the participating speakers on behalf of the Scottish Government and NAT Tom Fox and ex NAT Dr Eric Carlin are primed and available, along with AA members.

Terri Semple
Trustee Scottish Parliament

Welsh

The last event took place at the “The Pierhead”, Welsh Assembly Campus Cardiff on the 25th of November 2021.

The presentation -- whose title was -- “Alcoholics Anonymous: ‘AA and Mutual Aid Facilitation’ “– was hosted by Mike Hedges MS.

The aim was to help professionals and parliamentarians get a better understanding of Alcoholics Anonymous. One of our key objectives is to dispel the myth that AA is in any way a ‘secret society’. While our members are anonymous, our organisation is most definitely not.

The presentation included a welcome and opening remarks from Mike Hedges MS, followed by a response from the Trustee for Wales and Borders Region of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Chair of Wales & Borders Region (Stewart B.) contributed followed by two members of the fellowship sharing their experience strength and hope. We concluded with a Question & Answer session from the floor and buffet refreshments.

One of the notable things about this event was the significant increase in the numbers of Welsh Parliamentarians and their staff attending.

The event was much appreciated by all who took part.

Jonathan P.
GSB Trustee

OPEN FORUM

Adelle welcomed all to the Open Forum which is a non-voting session where delegates get the chance to ask any questions which may not be covered this weekend or about anything you have heard this weekend so far.

Before we get to the questions themselves, I would like to welcome Amanda, Chair of the General Service Board who has a few words to say.

Thank you, Adele. Good evening conference. My name is Amanda and I'm an alcoholic and it's lovely to be here and thank you to Tom for the PI presentation of the video and to Stevie for 75th and it's wonderful to see all the work that's going on. I wanted to come up here and address something head on.

Some of you will have received a letter from a former non-alcoholic trustee and unnamed AA members which may have raised some concerns. I believe the letter was sent to every intergroup Chair and every Regional Chair and it was complete abuse of our Confidential Directory.

We received the original letter and its contents which was only signed by a non AA member on March 21. The contents were discussed by the full Board and the Trustees elect on 30th March who were satisfied that the allegations had no foundation. They instructed myself, as Chair, to file a Serious Incident Report to the Charities Commission to outline this to protect the AA GB Fellowship and the reputation of the General Service Board.

As the letter was not signed by any AA members but by a former NAT it was not appropriate to go into details with this person, we serve the AA GB Fellowship and are answerable to you.

These individuals have questioned the integrity not only of the current Board but other Boards over the last 15 years, they have also questioned the sincerity and commitment of a variety of other service roles within the Fellowship including the Conference Steering Committee. It is not appropriate for me to comment on individual cases here today, however, we have made a collective submission on each case as part of our Serious Incident Report.

Allegations over the transparency of the AA finances and safeguarding concerns have been raised - as you aware Clive, our Honorary Treasurer, gave a full report last night to Conference of our spending and we can assure you that we take safeguarding very seriously. We also take our responsibilities of protecting the personal information and anonymity of members of the Fellowship very seriously and must take action if this is breached.

We are honoured to serve as trusted servants of the Fellowship and take the responsibility very seriously, it's all the more upsetting if AA members chose to make allegations like this anonymously and try to cause disunity at a time when we are privileged to be at Conference and are undertaking the Group Conscience of the Fellowship.

Thank you.

Thank you, Amanda for that update and sorry for eating into the open forum but just for a few moments, just to reference a point that Amanda brought up relating to the integrity of the Conference Steering Committee and Conference in general.

Having been involved with the Conference Steering Committee over the last three years. It's my experience that every single member of the Conference Steering Committee has acted with integrity, commitment, and 100% dedication to their service role.

As Shirley relayed yesterday, this involves a massive amount of work and as a group of individuals, as elected by Conference, they've demonstrated a willingness to ensure the questions selected for Conference truly reflect the voice of the Fellowship.

I'm immensely proud and privileged to have been involved in a Conference Steering Committee, which is why I want to go back to the original focus of this session, which is the open forum and your opportunity to ask the questions at Conference. Thank you.

The open forum continued with questions and contributions from the floor ranging over a wide spectrum of AA's service structure.

The evening ended at 10pm with Adelle thanking everyone for their hard work and asking all to join her in saying the Serenity Prayer, following which the preliminary Committee Reports were distributed and the opportunity given for Regions to discuss these.

SUNDAY 10 APRIL

Adelle welcomed everyone back for the third and final day of Conference and asked everyone to join her in saying the Preamble

As agreed at Conference 1995 each recommendation will be voted on and whether or not it is a two-thirds majority will be recorded.

Adelle then invited the Chairs of the six Committees to present their respective reports which were fully discussed and adopted.

These Committee Reports are included in this report on the pages indicated below:

Committee No. 1	Pages 60 - 62
Committee No. 2	Pages 63 - 65
Committee No. 3	Pages 66 - 68
Committee No. 4	Pages 69 - 71
Committee No. 5	Pages 72 - 74
Committee No. 6	Pages 75 - 76

ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR CONFERENCE 2023

The nomination received on Friday evening was presented and, after a vote, Shirley S (South East Region) was duly elected.

CONFIRMATION OF BOARD MEMBERS

(Amanda S, Chair GSB)

My name is Amanda and I'm an alcoholic and privileged to serve as Chair of the General Service Board of AA GB.

I first came to Conference as a delegate for London Region South in 2014 and saw the Fellowship's Group Conscience in action and from that moment I wanted to keep coming back.

My job today is the ratification of our new Board members, we faced the rotation of seven Board trustees this Conference, so the task of bringing new trustees onboard was a big job, I'd like to thank the Regions for putting forward excellent candidates and the Nominations Committee for their hard work.

I'd like to introduce you to our first new Board member, Non-Alcoholic Trustee, Dr Kieran Moriarty, a Consultant Physician and Gastroenterologist. We are very privileged to have Kieran joining us. He has had a long and distinguished career in the field of medicine with an interest and commitment to the treatment of alcoholism. His personal motto was: "We never give up on anybody, even when they give up on themselves," and he is a great asset to the Board.

Now onto the ratification of our new alcoholic trustees:

Andrina C from Glasgow Region
Charon B from London Region North
Tim B from South Midlands Region
Hamish McS from East of Scotland Region
John C from North East Region
Zelma K from Wales & Borders Region
Levey P from Continental European Region

Welcome to the Board of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain, I wish you well and hope you enjoy your time on the Board.

Now to the sadder part of Conference, the goodbyes, we have 7 trustees who over the last four years have served the Fellowship on the Board - it's been a pleasure to work with them and to get to know them. The trustees have helped steer the Board through the Covid pandemic and have worked really hard behind the scenes serving the Fellowship and each and every one has contributed so much during their time and we as a Board will feel their loss:

Sandi A from South Midlands Region, has served on the Young Peoples Sub-Committee, 75th Convention, Conference Steering Committee, Nominations Committee, Safeguarding Working Group & Committee 6 Diversity Working Group, thank you Sandi for your loyalty, friendship and trust.

Terri S from Highlands & Islands Region, has led the Health Sub-Committee over the last 4 years, also been the trustee for Roundabout, the Scottish Parliament, served on the Nominations Committee and Safeguarding Working Group, thank you Terri for your hard work, loyalty and friendship.

Norman B from East of Scotland Region, has been the trustee for Electronic Communications, he's led the committee through tough times including Covid when our online presence was crucial, thank you Norman.

Mike P from London Region North, who was trustee for Armed Services, Employment, Southern National Convention, Houses of Parliament event and Finance Committee. We met when we both served on the Conference Steering Committee together back in 2016, he carried on last year even when dealing with tough personal circumstances after he had his leg amputated. We are very happy he was able to join us this weekend and the courage he has shown over the last year has been inspiring. Unfortunately, he's had to leave early to get his train because he was feeling really tired, but I just like to say thank you Mike.

Now I move to our two Trustees who are leaving us who are sadly online today:

Erik A from Continental European Region, chaired Nominations SC, Literature SC, AA Service News and he was the European Service Meeting delegate. All of these are big jobs and Erik worked especially hard on Nominations this last year helping to interview incoming trustees and, of course, Conference always gives the Literature SC a lot of work, thank you Erik for your hard work and service.

Jonathan P from Wales and Borders, also online today, chaired Telephones SC (Now First Response SC), Welsh National Convention and Welsh Assembly Event and was a crucial part

of the Safeguarding Working Group, delivering the Safeguarding document on Friday. We are grateful for your hard work and friendship Jonathan.

Pat Mc G from Glasgow Region has led Prisons SC and played a pivotal role in its work, thank you Pat for your loyalty and service.

Thank you, Adelle, for steering us through the business of Conference this weekend. It's gone seamlessly and thank you to all the Committee Chairs, Secretaries and delegates for your service and hard work. Thank you to our overseas observers for being here with us - your presence is very much appreciated.

I'd also like to thank our General Secretary Ranjan and the GSO staff for their hard work this weekend it is very much appreciated.

We also have two birthdays in the room today. The first is one of our non-alcoholic Trustees, Thomas Baldwin. He's actually decided to align himself with AA and he's celebrating his 75th birthday today.

Also, the General Secretary, Ranjan, is celebrating 24 years of sobriety today. Congratulations Ranjan.

I hope to see you all at the 75th anniversary convention in Leeds in June - it will be a beautiful celebration of our wonderful fellowship and the opportunity for us to carry the message of recovery to the still suffering alcoholic.

Thank you for allowing me to be of service.

Close of Conference

(Adelle S)

Thanks Amanda and I would like to give a massive thanks to Keith, the techie guy and his team for keeping us all right. I have been worried about it and it's been really, really seamless. He's been waving frantically at the back most of the time. So, thank you Keith.

At the start of this Conference, I'd asked you to bombard the red dotters with love and support. I hope we've all done that. We heard some lovely words from Jane last night but from my perspective, you're bombarded me with love and support and I thank you.

I now need to say good luck to Shirley for next year. My only advice is never mentioned that there's going to be cake unless you 100% know that there will be cake!

Thinking back to this time on Friday night until now we've made massive strides in AA this weekend, we looked forward and we have also looked back to see what lessons we can learn from the last two years. And when we think about everything that we've achieved, it really stands us in good stead for the coming whatever is thrown at us.

This year we really moved forward in unity. We've had lots of discussion, lots of debate, but it's been done with love, tolerance and understanding. And I'd like to conclude by reading the Declaration of Unity:

Declaration of Unity: This we owe to A.A.'s future;
To place our common welfare first;
To keep our Fellowship united.
For on A.A. unity depend our lives,
And the lives of those to come.

And because I like this, I am Responsible:

I am responsible... When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that I am responsible.

And that is why we've all been here this weekend and given up all of our time and effort because we truly believe in that.

I'd like to close Conference 2022 by standing up and shouting out loud and proud the Serenity Prayer please using a God of how you do or do not understand him:

Serenity Prayer: *God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.*

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT CONFERENCE

The Fifty-Seventh General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain will be held at the Park Inn, North Street, York on 14 – 16 April 2023.

FIFTY-SIXTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2022

COMMITTEE No. 1

CHAIR SHIRLEY S SOUTH EAST REGION

SECRETARY ANDRE M CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

1. **What more can be done to raise awareness that as AA members, especially in a sponsorship capacity, we do not give unqualified medical advice on the treatment of another member, especially concerning the use of prescribed medication for a mental illness?**

The committee agreed that as AA members, our Primary Purpose is to carry the message of AA (Tradition 5) and we are not qualified to offer medical advice. There is already a considerable amount of literature on this topic, for example "Living Sober", "Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered" and "The AA Member, Medication & Other Drugs" which states: 'No AA member should "play doctor"'. If the subject of medication is raised, individuals are advised to have a discussion with their doctor or medical professional.

Awareness of this is essential for the protection of new members, sponsors and the fellowship generally and may have legal and/or safeguarding implications. To raise awareness, we recommend that the Board:

1. Produce a wallet card for the newcomer's pack containing a concise version of the information referred to in the above
2. Produce a table card as above
3. Also consider for a future revision of the safeguarding document, e.g. under '7.0: the New Member' and '5.2: What Constitutes a Safeguarding Issue'
4. Make this explicit on the AAGB website, e.g. banners on the home page
5. Encourage discussion at groups, intergroups and regions by sending electronic material to groups and an item in 'AA Service News'

VOTE: 15 for, 1 against

A minority opinion was raised that there is nothing wrong with sponsors recommending sponsees to have a conversation with their doctor about the possibility of safely stopping medication.

2. **Review proposed amendments and addition to Chapter Nine: "Probation/Criminal Justice Service" of the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain 2019 (page 62).**

This committee is in favour of the proposed amendments and additions to Chapter Nine of the AAGB Service Handbook with the following amendment:

Currently proposed text:

"filling out a 'pink form' if necessary"

Change to:

“also ensuring group registration details are up-to-date, e.g. via the ‘pink form’.”

VOTE: Unanimous

3. Review addition to the GSR maximum term of service language for *Structure Handbook*, p.81 (Conference 2021 – C4, Q1, f)

This committee is in agreement with the suggested addition to the AA GB Structure Handbook (on page 81), to read:

“The GSR should be prepared to serve for a minimum of two years and a maximum of three years.”

For consistency, the committee also suggests that the same change be made on page 80, where it currently reads:

“The GSR should have at least two years’ continuous sobriety and be prepared to serve for a minimum of two years.”

Should be changed to:

“The GSR should have at least two years’ continuous sobriety and should serve for a minimum of two *and a maximum of three years.*”

VOTE: 15 for, 1 against

A minority opinion was recorded that the recommended term of service for a GSR should be two years in order to align with the World Service Manual.

4. Review addition to current *Structure Handbook* chapter, The Group, section 1, ‘Group Meetings’, p.76, *Where to Find AA*, first paragraph, after second sentence.

This committee recognises the importance of the question of keeping meeting directories up-to-date and the responsibility of the groups to provide current meeting information in a timely manner to carry the message. However, this recommendation comes from Conference 1999 but was never implemented. In 2022, this committee believes a more extensive review is required.

We recommend the Board conduct an urgent review/overhaul of the process to support groups updating their meeting details and guidance in the AAGB Structure Handbook, taking into account technologies currently available.

VOTE: Unanimous

5. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2023.

The Committee elected Andre M – Continental European Region as Chair of Committee No. 1 for Conference 2023.

6. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2023.

The Committee elected as Mike C – Eastern Region as Secretary of Committee No. 1 for Conference 2023.

All recommendations on Committee No. 1 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.

COMMITTEE No. 2

CHAIR CARINA H CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

SECRETARY TONY S LONDON REGION SOUTH

- 1. Would the Fellowship share experience and make recommendations on how groups can continue to meet in-person and abide by government COVID-19 regulations, such as contact tracing, vaccination status, whilst being mindful of our Traditions?**

The shared experience of the Fellowship in going back to in person meetings was mainly positive. The committee recognises that throughout Great Britain and Continental Europe COVID-19 regulations have varied and continue to do so. Most groups found it helpful to liaise with local governments/authorities and maintain contact with venues and landlords to ensure compliance.

Based on previous experiences the following practical measures may help groups to continue meeting in person:

- a) Providing facemasks and (alcohol free) hand sanitiser.
- b) Ensuring adequate ventilation.
- c) Maintaining social distancing by using designated seats.
- d) Collecting Tradition 7 money online or leaving the POT by the door.
- e) Updating any changes to the status of the group via the AA GB Website.
- f) Consulting experiences from the Fellowship via Share, Roundabout, regional newsletters, AA Service News as well as local and the AA GB website.
- g) Cleaning routines.
- h) Not serving refreshments.
- i) Collecting contact tracing information with name and number only.

Where Government regulations have been lifted, we still need to be mindful that meetings ought to be a safe space for AA members. This is where the group conscience is invaluable. Individual members' precautions should be respected and accommodated if possible. At the same time, we ought not go above the law to the extent of excluding members, e.g. refusing members based on COVID-19 vaccination status.

The committee felt that requiring proof of COVID-19 vaccination to enter a meeting is not in line with Tradition 3. Where this is a legal requirement, alternative arrangements can be made. This may include having a member available to meet that person outside and provide hybrid or online options.

Contact tracing may be a privacy concern but does not violate anonymity at the level of press, radio and film. Some groups have appointed a group officer who collects members' contact information and keeps it no longer than the legally required period.

VOTE: 15 for, 1 against

Minority opinion was that the answer to the question was in the question, that we abide by Government regulations.

2. Would the fellowship consider how post lockdown the website can evolve to meet its requirements?

This committee recognises that our AA website is an important tool for carrying AA's message. Therefore, it should be accessible, welcoming, easy to navigate and functional.

Extensive feedback from the Fellowship included the following points:

- A. The user friendliness of Meeting Finder and Online Shop could be improved.
- B. The search functionality could be improved.
- C. The website is difficult to navigate.
- D. Some meetings including Online ones can be difficult to find.
- E. Meeting lists across independent websites and the AAGB website are not in sync.

Based on these findings, this committee recommends that the GSB investigate the following

- a) Gather the data about the usage of different sections of the website and analyse it to identify how to improve the user experience and regularly review the content.
- b) Accessibility of the website should be broad and inclusive e.g., for those with visual impairment or different levels of computer literacy.
- c) Improvement of functionality of Regional and Intergroup microsites.
- d) Simplify the Pink form to make it seamless e.g., drop down option in field such as 'no change'.
- e) Standardise the label for meetings that take place in a physical location face to face.
- f) Differentiate the meeting search function for physical and online meetings.
- g) Implement a tool for searching all submitted past Conference Questions.
- h) Set up a feedback form for the Conference Questions e.g., as used by Continental European Region and London Region South.
- i) Assess the feasibility of implementing Meeting Guide technology as used by AA World Services, also accounting for the needs of online meetings.
- j) Liaise with Regions and Intergroups regarding improvements of the website.

VOTE: Unanimous

3. Review Archives Sub Committee revision of Chapter Eleven, *Service Handbook*, pp. 67-71.

This committee reviewed the proposed chapter and recommended the following changes:

Section 11:9, paragraph beginning "In 2021 Conference"

Replace the paragraph with:

"In 2021 Conference recommended that, subject to the autonomy of groups assured under Tradition 4, regions and intergroups should be asked to transfer materials that are 10 years old or older to the GSO Archive at Borthwick Institute. In considering this

recommendation the Archives Sub-Committee has taken note of the points made by the Archives Network concerning:"

Replace the beginning of the next paragraph with:

"As a result, the Sub-Committee has decided that ..."

VOTE: Unanimous

4. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2023.

The Committee elected Adam P, North East Region as Chair of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2023.

5. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2023.

The Committee elected Michelle C, Midlands Region as Secretary of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2023.

All recommendations on Committee No. 2 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.

COMMITTEE No. 3

CHAIR KATHRYN C NORTH EAST REGION

SECRETARY TIM B SOUTH MIDLANDS REGION

- 1. Would Conference discuss and make recommendations on making our language and literature more inclusive, taking into account the numbers of non-binary and gender-fluid members accessing the fellowship in recent times.**

The Committee noted that inclusivity within the Fellowship is already addressed by the long form of Tradition Three, “Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence, we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation” (Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, p.563).

Feedback from the Fellowship indicates a general reluctance to make changes to core literature (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous, 12 Steps and 12 Traditions). However, moving forward, for all publications and online material, consideration should be given to using language more sensitive to non-binary and gender fluid members of the Fellowship.

To quote Dr Bob, “Remember, Bill, let's not louse this thing up. Let's keep it simple!” (Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, p.214).

VOTE: 12 for, 1 against, 1 abstention

Minority View: The last sentence of paragraph two should read, “However, moving forward, for all publications and online material, consideration should be given to using language more sensitive to all members of the Fellowship.”

- 2. Would the fellowship share experience on how, under pandemic conditions, it:**
 - a. has carried the message to members and potential members in hospitals, treatment centres and other institutions;**

As soon as the pandemic restrictions were imposed, there were difficulties carrying the message into institutions. However, the Fellowship responded well at all levels of the Service Structure with members initiating new methods, alongside traditional means, to carry the message into institutions of all types.

Some of the ways the Fellowship carried the message included:

1. supporting online meetings, including access to, and the provision of portable devices where possible;

2. ensuring that rapidly changing online meeting information was kept correct and up to date;
3. making personal contact with the homeless community temporarily housed in hotels;
4. delivering literature into institutions by various means;
5. AA members directly carrying the message into institutions through their employment.

VOTE: Unanimous

b. has carried out PI activities aimed at doctors and other professionals working in these institutions?

The Fellowship's experience of carrying out PI activities with professionals was very similar to that of carrying the message to members and potential members in institutions.

PI activities with professionals during the pandemic included:

1. online PI sessions for professionals;
2. electronic mailshots to multiple healthcare services;
3. outreach activities within police stations;
4. open meeting workshops conducted for medical and nursing students as well as qualified healthcare professionals;
5. establishing contact with outreach team leaders working within the homeless community;
6. supplying literature, posters and other information to pharmacies;
7. starting work with social prescribing link workers;
8. carrying the message on hospital radio.

See Section 4.7 of the 2020 AA Membership Survey (full version) for further information.

VOTE: Unanimous

3. Review addition to current *Structure Handbook* chapter, The Region, section 2, 'The Regional Assembly', p.94, after final paragraph of section / first paragraph of page.

The Committee agreed to accept the addition.

VOTE: Unanimous

4. Review slight deletion to current *Structure Handbook* chapter, The Region, section 3, 'Conference Delegates / Alternates', p. 94, fifth paragraph.

The Committee

1. agreed to the deletion.
2. also recommended that the beginning of this sentence be changed from "He or she ..." to "The delegate..."

VOTE: Unanimous

5. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2023.

The Committee elected Jim K of Glasgow Region as Chair of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2023.

6. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2023.

The Committee elected Ann A of London Region North as Secretary of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2023.

All recommendations on Committee No. 3 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.

FIFTY-SIXTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2022

COMMITTEE No. 4

CHAIR SHIRLEY C EASTERN REGION
SECRETARY JON S SOUTH WEST REGION

1. **Would the Fellowship please consider deleting the second point of the “Just For Today” card, “Just for today I will be happy. Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be”, as it is potentially misleading for newcomers?**

The Committee considered the suggested deletion of line 2 of the Just for Today (JFT) card at length and the overwhelming majority view of the Fellowship was that it should remain. Some positive examples included:

1. profoundly spiritual statement - losing it would adversely affect view of a sober life
2. provides newcomers with hope that they can change their outlook
3. freedom from the miserable bondage of self and finding inner peace
4. many things can be potentially confusing to a newcomer, which reduces as they work through the programme and find recovery
5. it was advice that was a revelation in the early days of recovery and something that many still counsel themselves with on a daily basis
6. The JFT card has been invaluable to countless people in recovery and is the second best-selling piece of literature *in its current state*
7. all items on the JFT card are only suggestions

The committee felt that the quotation provided in the background material did not reflect the context of line 2 of the JFT card. The passage from the Big Book refers to ego and self will. We don't feel the second point in the card is about this, and as a person's sobriety grows, so may their understanding. The Fellowship provided several examples of happiness in recovery throughout the Big Book in responses to the question, eg. pg 83 and 153.

VOTE: 17 for, 0 against, 1 abstention

2. **Review the language for 'One Member, One Vote' addition to the *Structure Handbook*, 'The Group' Section', p. 75, in the paragraphs 'The Group Conscience and Business Meetings' and 'A Home Group' (Conference 2021 – C3, Q3)**

Proposed Changes to Amendments

The Committee believes these proposed changes are in line with the spirit of the original wording and add further clarification:

Amendment to the Structure Handbook, The Group, Section 1 'Group Meetings' / Types of Meetings, p.75 :

The Group Conscience and Business Meetings are sometimes overlooked but they play an important part in our group progress. Some groups schedule these meetings several times a year. Depending on the wishes of the members, they may precede or follow the normal meeting or separate sessions may be arranged. It is suggested that groups have a policy on eligibility for voting and that the Traditions are read before proceedings. Promotion of understanding of the Concepts is also recommended.

Business Meetings provide an opportunity for group officers to report on such matters as progress, future plans, intergroup matters and the financial position. The group may also take this occasion as an opportunity to appoint its officers and to conduct a group conscience meeting – which usually takes the form of a group inventory.

A Home Group is the group for meetings in which members feel most at home. In such groups they accept service responsibilities, sustain friendships and celebrate anniversaries. They are encouraged to participate fully in group conscience meetings. 'It is a privilege to vote on issues that affect AA as a whole' (AA Service Manual for World Service, S25), and it is recommended that **INSERT group** members consider both when and how to vote, and how the principle of 'One Member, One Vote.' might apply. In order that representation is proportionate, it is inappropriate for members to vote more than once on matters concerning the Fellowship as a whole **REMOVE BRACKETS** (e.g. feedback on Conference Questions). ~~Members visiting other groups should consider adhering to this principle of One Member, One Vote, by not taking part in that group's business or policy decisions.~~ **CHANGE TO** *Members visiting other groups are encouraged to adhere to the principle of One Member, One Vote, by not taking part in that group's business or policy decisions.* In this way, groups maintain autonomy and resist **CHANGE TO** *avoid* members of other groups influencing decisions.

VOTE: Unanimous

3. Review Service Sponsorship language for Section One, *Service Handbook*, pp. 7-10 (Conference 2021 – C4, Q2)

The Committee believes these proposed changes are also in line with the spirit of the original wording and add further clarification:

Sponsorship, Service Sponsorship, and Sponsoring into Service **REMOVE** (from the pamphlet '*Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered*')

Essentially, sponsorship is one alcoholic who has made some progress in the recovery programme sharing that experience on a continuous, individual basis with another alcoholic who is trying to stay sober.

INSERT (from the pamphlet '*Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered*')

DELETE Most present members of AA owe their sobriety to the fact that someone took a special interest in them in their early days and was willing to share a great gift with them.

DELETE Sponsorship can be the answer for the person who has been able to achieve only interludes of sobriety. Even if we have many years in AA, we can benefit by asking somebody to be our sponsor.

In addition to sponsorship in the AA programme (e.g. **REMOVE COMMA** helping someone through the Steps and Traditions), it is suggested that new members are also 'sponsored' into service.

Some AA Members may seek a 'service sponsor' who has experience in a particular type of service or role.

Although there ~~CHANGE is no formal definition of~~ *are different ways of understanding* service sponsorship or of sponsoring into service, the two may be ~~understood~~ **CHANGE** viewed in similar terms. **REMOVE** {Some AA members say that service sponsorship is not separate, but simply a part of sponsorship.}

Service sponsorship focuses on AA's Third Legacy of Service. ~~The~~ A service sponsor shares experience, strength, and hope about service roles and positions within the AAGB- **CHANGE** our service structure. *Information on many of these roles can be found within this handbook.* A member may take on **REMOVE** (or be elected or appointed to take on) such responsibilities within the group or further down our inverted triangle – that is, at intergroup and region.

A service sponsor supports and encourages the member in all service activities – ~~regardless of level~~ – and leads by example. ~~The~~ **CHANGE** A service sponsor may suggest opportunities a member might consider in the group or beyond and ~~can~~ help the member gain a deeper understanding of AA's Traditions and Concepts.

~~Service sponsors can also help a member understand the commitment and responsibilities of a service position and determine whether they have the time available and are sufficiently far enough along in their sobriety to meet the obligations of the role.~~ **INSERT** *Service sponsorship helps a member understand the commitment and responsibilities of a service position and whether they are able and willing to meet the obligations of the role.*

REMOVE ASTERISK *Please see also the AAGB pamphlets, 'Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered' and 'Growing into Service'.

VOTE: Unanimous

4. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2023.

The Committee elected Elaine C, London Region North as Chair of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2023.

5. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2023.

The Committee elected Eric L, East of Scotland Region as Secretary of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2023.

All recommendations on Committee No. 4 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.

FIFTY-SIXTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2022

COMMITTEE No. 5

CHAIR RICHARD F LONDON REGION SOUTH
SECRETARY WILLIE D SOUTH WEST SCOTLAND REGION

1. **Should AAGB update the AA Preamble published on its website and in literature to the gender-neutral version recently updated by the AA Grapevine and agreed upon at the 71st General Service Conference (US/Canada)?**

This committee recommends to Conference that the preamble be retained in its current format.

We would like to acknowledge our gratitude for the well-known preamble which offers the comfort of familiarity and common purpose shared by our predecessors.

The responses from the fellowship were split.

The committee vote was based upon the question as written. Many groups reported that the word “people” felt uncomfortable to them, and the question did not give us freedom to write a different form of words, which may have been more acceptable.

1. Many responses referred to Tradition 10 and declared that this is an outside issue. Concerns were expressed about possible dilution of the message through potential changes to language throughout AA literature including the Big Book.
2. The cost implication of changing all the literature was a concern.
3. Issues were voiced around copyright and the Grapevine.
4. Inclusivity is already crystalised in Tradition 3.
5. The principle of Tradition 4 shows us that any group is completely free to use whichever form of words it likes.
6. Most of us (on the committee) did not notice the detailed language in such readings when we were newcomers.

A 2/3rds majority was recorded in favour of the decision.

VOTE: 14 for, 2 against

A minority view was expressed that consideration be given to a version of the preamble which does not include men women or people and promotes singleness of purpose.

“In Alcoholics Anonymous we share our experience strength and hope.....”

2. **Will the fellowship (through Conference) discuss and give further guidance concerning the autonomy and authority of National Conventions and their committees relating to online marketing, AA commemorative merchandise & raffles etc within their venues.**

The committee recommends that the GSB review the “Conventions” chapter in the Structure Handbook 2021 p. 123 to 128 taking into account:

- 1) Recommendations given by Conference 1980 [Committee 5 - Q 6, (see reference text below)], adjusting the language to be clearer in order to conform to the spirit of Traditions, 4, 6 and 7.

1980 : Committee 5 – Q6.

The Committee recognised that it is not possible or desirable to attempt to interfere with the buying of souvenirs by individuals for their personal use or for gifts for others. However, the Committee recommended that the convenors of Conventions and the Officers of Intergroups and Groups should examine the motives of individuals for the sale of souvenirs and the profits involved taking into account the Traditions of A.A. Private individuals should be discouraged from making profits from A.A. members. Any money from the sale of souvenirs should be used for A.A. purposes.

- 2) The background to the question asserts that there are “no relevant guide lines for National Conventions”. The committee did not necessarily agree with this, only that the chapter was ambiguously written.

On p.123 it states “The following guidance suggests the basis for all conventions which contains a planning checklist in Annex A.” This remark is followed by paragraph 1 Local Conventions and then para 2 National Conventions (following from the Annexes). We are happy with the majority of the content, but the layout causes confusion. For example under the section 1. Local Conventions – the information contained in the paragraph ‘Organisation’ applies to National Conventions too.

- 3) The terminology is updated (such as in the section ‘audio tapes’)

The committee also recommends to Conference that National conventions can use either the AAGB website or their own websites for the purposes of online marketing.

The subject of raffle tickets is already covered in Annex A point 7 and 14, including matters around gaming laws.

These points ought to be part of the review of the chapter.

VOTE: Unanimous

3. Review the Employment Sub-Committee (ESC) revision of Chapter Five, *Service Handbook*, pp. 45-49.

The committee accepts and approves the revisions.

A few minor issues were raised:

Comparing old and revised versions can be difficult: Highlighting changes between old and new would be beneficial.

QR codes being consistent throughout the service handbooks

Online resources to be available more clearly.

VOTE: Unanimous

- 4. Review the Terms of Service for Prisons' roles for Chapter Eight, *Structure Handbook*, pp. 57-58 (Conference 2021 – C5, Q1).**

The committee accepts and approves the revisions.

It was noted that although Committee 5 had stressed the problem of lack of definition of named roles in the service in the 2021 report, there was still some confusion, mainly geographical.

VOTE: Unanimous

- 5. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2023.**

The Committee elected Sean M Glasgow Region as Chair of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2023.

- 6. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2023.**

The Committee elected Jeremy M East of Scotland Region as Secretary of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2023.

All recommendations on Committee No. 5 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.

FIFTY-SIXTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2022

COMMITTEE No. 6

CHAIR LEVEY P CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

SECRETARY VIKKI C WALES & BORDERS REGION

1. **Would the fellowship discuss and share experience on the following matters concerning group autonomy:**

When comprehensively discussing these questions, the Committee concluded the following key points.

The Regions returned strong and mixed views on this question with some finding it difficult to answer both parts separately.

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous outline how individual members recover and how the Fellowship functions. The Service and Structure Handbooks provide guidance on these matters.

- a. **How may a group's qualification for inclusion in the AA GB and English-Speaking Continental Europe service structure and local and national meetings lists be determined?**

The term 'qualification,' when considering this question alone is, surely answered in the long form of Tradition 3: Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence, we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.

- b. **How should secular AA groups using a modified version of AA's 12 Steps and AA's 12 Traditions be viewed within the context of the legacy of AA unity?**

Alcoholics Anonymous is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organisation or institution.

The Committee recommends that AA groups use AA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. It also recognises that some groups use modified versions of AA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Provided that they have no other affiliation and do not affect other groups or AA as whole, all groups should be viewed in the same way in the context of the legacy of AA unity.

Vote: 17 votes for, with one against with a minority opinion:

It is important in the context of our Primary Purpose that newcomers be made aware of the importance of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions as outlined in AAGB Conference Approved literature.

2. Would the fellowship discuss the potential benefits and drawbacks of the General Service Conference (GSC) being held online and make recommendations on whether future Conferences should be held online?

Last year's Conference was driven online due to the Pandemic.
There were **benefits**, including but not limited to:

- a. Allowing the Fellowship to explore advances in technology
- b. Saving money
- c. A reduced carbon footprint
- d. Effective use of delegates' time

There were also **drawbacks** to the online Conference:

- A. Technical issues, e.g. poor connectivity
- B. Online fatigue
- C. A lack of IT confidence and knowledge of how online platforms work
- D. Less opportunity for informed debate, bonding and fellowship
- E. There are also concerns that delegates' traditional enthusiasm will not be carried to groups post conference
- F. Limits opportunities to encourage people into service during Conference

Based on the feedback from the fellowship, the **recommendation** is that future Conferences should be held in person with a hybrid option for all committees.

VOTE: 17 for, 1 against with a minority opinion:

We should move towards having Conference fully online:

1. The power of the collective fellowship at in-person Conferences is undeniable, but the purpose of Conference is the work **the** Fellowship asks us to do.
2. An online Conference could serve the Fellowship better by being more flexible, more accessible, more efficient, less expensive, more transparent, and more environmentally responsible, and thus more sustainable.

3. Review additions to the current *Service Handbook* sections 1.6, 'Service within the intergroup', and 1.7, 'Still more ways to serve'.

Background

Additions to sections 1.6 and 1.7 of the Service Handbook.

VOTE: Unanimous

4. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2023.

The Committee elected John S, South East Region as Chair of Committee No. 6 for Conference 2023.

5. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2023.

The Committee elected Mel A, South Midlands Region as Secretary of Committee No. 6 for Conference 2023.

All recommendations on Committee No. 6 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.

FIFTY-SIXTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2022

LIST OF DELEGATES

CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN: **ADELLE S** (Scotia Region)

GENERAL SERVICE BOARD

			COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
Amanda	S			
Sandi	A		6	
Erik	A		6	
Norman	B		2	
Jo	F		4	
Clive	K		5	
Pat	McG		1	
Barbara	O		3	
Jonathan	P		2	
Mike	P		4	
Charles	R		1	
Terri	S		5	
Stevie	S		5	
Gretchen	S		6	
Justin	T		4	
Charon	B	(Elect)	2	
Andrina	C	(Elect)	1	
John	C	(Elect)	5	
Zelma	K	(Elect)	6	
Hamish	McS	(Elect)	4	
Thomas Baldwin			2	
Tom Fox			1	
Mani Mehdikhani			3	
Kieran Moriarty		(Elect)	3	

GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Ranjan B General Secretary

Sharon Smyth

Sophie Wright

Jenny Pryke

Mandy Tervet

Emma W

Anne-Marie S

Angela Varley

**COMMITTEE
NUMBER**

**TERM OF
SERVICE**

EASTERN REGION

Mike	C	1	1
Gerald	M	2	2
Jim	M	3	1
Shirley	C	4	3
Robert	R	5	1
Maggie	P	6	2

LONDON REGION NORTH

Patrick	R	1	1
Marco	L	2	2
Ann	A	3	1
Elaine	C	4	2
Cameron	D	5	1
Gabriel	S	6	3

LONDON REGION SOUTH

Des	C	1	2
Tony	S	2	3
Frank	O	3	2
Ian	E	4	3
Richard	F	5	1
Frank	C	6	1

MIDLANDS REGION

Jane	K	1	2
Michelle	C	2	2
Phil	G	3	1
Janice	N	4	1
Gregory	V	5	1
Chris	H	6	1

NORTH EAST REGION

Lynne	H	1	2
Adam	p	2	2
Kathryn	C	3	3
Jane	C	4	1
Bob	W	5	A
Ian	M	6	2

**COMMITTEE
NUMBER****TERM OF
SERVICE****NORTH WEST REGION**

Charlie	C	1	3
		2	
Peter	M	3	3
Neil	W	4	2
Julie	W	5	1
Angela	S	6	3

SOUTH EAST REGION

Shirley	S	1	3
Eleanor	E	2	2
Robin	H	3	2
Jeannie	M	4	2
Steve	W	5	A
John	S	6	2

SOUTH MIDLANDS REGION

Antony	J	1	1
Alan	F	2	1
Tim	B	3	3
Keith	V	4	3
Mark	H	5	3
Melanie	A	6	1

SOUTH WEST REGION

Nick	P	1	2
Raymond	H	2	1
Iain	W	3	2
Jon	S	4	2
Heather	G	5	A
Caroline	C	6	2

WALES & BORDERS REGION

		1	
Tony	O	2	A
		3	
Janette	P	4	1
Andy	D	5	A
Vikki	C	6	1

**COMMITTEE
NUMBER**

**TERM OF
SERVICE**

EAST OF SCOTLAND REGION

Alison	F	1	1
Anne	T	2	3
		3	
Eric	L	4	1
Jeremy	M	5	1
John	M	6	1

GLASGOW REGION

Fiona	M	1	1
David	M	2	1
Jim	K	3	2
Sandy	C	4	2
Sean	M	5	1
Michael	M	6	3

HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS REGION

Bob	S	1	1
		2	
		3	
		4	
Mairi	B	5	2
		6	

SCOTIA REGION

Jane	R	1	2
Kate	McK	2	1
Matt	A	3	1
David	S	4	A
		5	
Jeannie	F	6	2

SOUTH WEST SCOTLAND REGION

		1	
		2	
		3	
Scott	R	4	A
Willie	D	5	3
		6	

**COMMITTEE
NUMBER**

**TERM OF
SERVICE**

CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

Andre	M	1	2
Carina	H	2	3
Jan	J	3	A
Daniel	G	4	3
Jonathan	P	5	A
Levey	P	6	3

OBSERVERS

Nevena	B	(Bulgaria)	1	1
Archie	K	(Greece)	2	1
Hubert	J	(Ireland)	4	1
Moira	S	(Ireland)	6	2
Izabela	A	(Poland)	3	1
Wlodek	W	(Poland)	6	1
Miguel	L	(Portugal)	3	2
Daniel	G	(Romania)	5	2
Andris	K	(Latvia)	5	1

Glossary of Abbreviations Used

AA	-	<i>Alcoholics Anonymous</i>
AAA	-	<i>Alcoholics Anonymous Awareness</i>
AASN	-	<i>AA Service News</i>
AAWS	-	<i>Alcoholics Anonymous World Services</i>
ASL	-	<i>American Sign Language</i>
ASLO	-	<i>Armed Services Liaison Officer</i>
BSL	-	<i>British Sign Language</i>
CER	-	<i>Continental European Region</i>
CMS	-	<i>Content Management System</i>
CSC	-	<i>Conference Steering Committee</i>
DAAT	-	<i>Drug and Alcohol Teams</i>
ECLO	-	<i>Electronic Communication Liaison Officer</i>
ECSC	-	<i>Electronic Communication Sub Committee</i>
ELO	-	<i>Employment Liaison Officer</i>
ESM	-	<i>European Service Meeting</i>
GSB	-	<i>General Service Board</i>
GSO	-	<i>General Service Office</i>
GSR	-	<i>Group Service Representative</i>
HLO	-	<i>Health Liaison Officer</i>
HSC	-	<i>Health Sub Committee</i>
MOJ	-	<i>Ministry of Justice</i>
NAT	-	<i>Non-Alcoholic Trustee</i>
NHS	-	<i>National Health Service</i>
NICE	-	<i>National Institute for Clinical Excellence</i>
NNC	-	<i>Northern National Convention</i>
NOMS	-	<i>National Offender Management Service</i>
NSO	-	<i>Northern Service Office</i>
NTA	-	<i>National Treatment Agency</i>
ORS	-	<i>Online Response Service</i>
PI	-	<i>Public Information</i>
PLO	-	<i>Prison Liaison Officer</i>
PPS	-	<i>Prison Postal Service</i>
PR	-	<i>Public Relations</i>
P/SS	-	<i>Probation/Social Services</i>
RECLO	-	<i>Regional Electronic Communication Liaison Officer</i>
RELO	-	<i>Regional Employment Liaison Officer</i>
RTLO	-	<i>Regional Telephone Liaison Officer</i>
SPPS	-	<i>Scottish Prison Postal Service</i>
SPS	-	<i>Scottish Prison Service</i>
SSAFA	-	<i>Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen & Families Association</i>
SSASM	-	<i>Sub Saharan Africa Service Meeting</i>
SSO	-	<i>Southern Service Office</i>
TLO	-	<i>Telephone Liaison Officer</i>
TOR	-	<i>Terms of Reference</i>
YPLO	-	<i>Young Peoples Liaison Officer</i>
YPP	-	<i>Young People Project</i>

The Twelve Traditions

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centres may employ special workers.
9. AA as such, ought never be organised; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never to be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.