

Interlink

The newsletter for Southdown intergroup

In This Issue

Archives has a request for Southdown AAs

The LO Committee has news!

Angie talks about being a Telephone Responder

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Editor's Message

Happy New Year to all members of our Southdown fellowship!

As someone who got sober on 5th January (after a few more days of post NYE "research") - this time of year is particularly special for me. It's also a reminder of how important it is to keep up all the aspects of recovery - from meetings to step work to service.

It's been nice to see some new faces in meetings already this year and to hear of all the ways members of Southdown Intergroup are working on getting the still suffering alcoholics to consider AA.

It's also been heartening to hear that certain positions - such as Greg's Telephone Liaison Officers role - have been filled. With plenty of other Intergroup level service positions coming up this year (more of that in this issue) and lots of calls for help from Health to Armed Forces - 2023 will hopefully be the year to step forward.

Need convincing? Read Angie's lovely account of being a Telephone Responder - a role she has found herself in not once, but twice in her years of recovery! It's also my turn on the hot seat to answer the quarterly Q&A on the perks of being in service.

As always, please do read our LOs and LO Committee updates for all the brilliant work our representatives have been doing to spread the message. Plus a request from Archivist Nick for any old AA material that might be hiding in cupboards at home.

Thank you all for keeping me sober today.

Yours in fellowship,

Lucy S, Interlink Editor

interlink.southdown@aamail.org



OUR CHAIR CHECKS IN...

Progress not Perfection!

Recently at Southdown Intergroup we have been on somewhat of a recruitment drive. This has been fruitful, however we still have some work to do to ensure the ongoing stability of our Intergroup.

It is not long until the committee - myself, Colin and Clare - rotate out of our positions of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. We really need to fill these positions soon in order to give us time to sponsor our successors into the roles. I have found performing this role for the past 2.5 years fulfilling in many ways, and I hope we can find someone who would like to experience this and they can see this as the next step in their recovery. Anyone in the committee would be happy to explain more about these roles to fellows that are interested in stepping up.

We also have several other roles we are recruiting for including for Regional Reps and steering Committee members, plus the Liaison Officers Committee is always looking for members to help in carrying the message - which is obviously vitally important for us.

As always we had really positive engagement from those attendees at the Keep In Touch meetings, and in December we had our annual Southdown Conscience meeting. This was the perfect opportunity for GSR's to contribute and have their say on how the Intergroup is performing; and if and how we can better fulfil our primary purpose. Unfortunately on reflection the committee felt that numbers in attendance were low and that there was a lack of engagement. This along with low attendance by GSRs at the last assembly has the committee concerned. After, all our assembly is the GSR's and without their input we will struggle to instigate change or be guided in our efforts.

Thanks to all GSRs who attended the Questions for Conference meeting and we look forward to your feedback in March.

Yours in Fellowship

Matt, Chair Southdown Intergroup

chair.southdown@aamail.org

"low attendance by GSRs at the last assembly has the committee concerned"

LO Committee Update

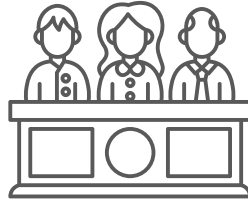
The Committee has made plenty of progress since the last Interlink and it has now been almost six months since it was formed to help the Liaison Officers in their quest to get the message out there to the still suffering alcoholic.

A few highlights from this month's LO meeting include us making connection with organisations across the Southdowns that might be able to assist us in attracting still active problem drinkers into the rooms. For example Moira (Public Information LO) met the Wellbeing Association Chichester District Council and our Health LO Jake is chatting to Petersfield Surgery and another local treatment centre.

We're also looking at new ways to advertise AA - from church and community centre notice boards to adverts in local newspapers and in public places where possible. Thank you to those active LO Committee members who have been busy putting together designs for leaflets and 'Packs of Awareness' for public distribution - there's even a new video which will be going up on the website (keep your eyes peeled!)

One of the main focuses for the next quarter is to extend the LO Committee family to share the load and help spread the message further. Ideas to help attract new recruits include a brand new "Your Intergroup Needs You" flyer which will be available for GSRs to download and print for meetings or share in their WhatsApp groups - there is also an open Zoom meeting planned to invite members of the fellowship to get an idea of what the LO Committee is all about.

Finally, through a lot of persistence from many current and previous LOs, we're on the cusp of setting up a meeting at QA Hospital in Portsmouth - more on that to follow we hope!



Q&A WITH LUCY

What is your role and how long have you been in it?

I am the Interlink Editor and have been in this role since April 2021. I found about about it through my home group meeting and, with professional experience in communications and journalism, seemed like a role I could bring outside skills to other than being a bog standard alcoholic!

What is the highlight of doing this roles?

As the Interlink Editor, you're basically the conduit between what the Liaison Officers do and how the members of the Southdowns fellowship find out about it. I love going to the quarterly LO meetings and getting the updates of these amazing AA members who are pushing themselves in their busy lives to do more and give more in order to save active drinkers from a sad fate. All the while topping up their own spiritual recoveries. It's pretty cool!

What impact do you think doing the role has had on your own recovery?

It just reminds you that the old adage "give it away to keep it" never stops being true. Getting to work with fellows at Intergroup and speak to GSRs and other AA Southdowns members giving back gives me more of a nudge to get off my bum and help. I might know being useful is the best thing I can do for my own recovery, but seeing the joy others get from passing on the message stops me from falling back into selfishness (my natural state of being!)

Liaison Officer's Reports

Archives

For the Legacy, a committee has been assembled to help Lucia publish the articles fellows kindly provided. More on that to follow this year!

Darkness into Light continues its successful run. Members of the Isle of Wight fellowship are currently planning an event on the island using the South East Region exhibition display. The DIL website is currently being updated to include news of all the venues that the roadshow visited during 2022 and is planned to remain online for the whole of 2023. If anyone is interested in bringing this incredible showcase into their local library or public spaces, they can take a look on the website aadarknessintolight.org.uk and get in touch to use the display. Or, if you're simply keen to learn more about the history of AA in the UK, this site acts as a brilliant resource.

For any members working with local prisons, there are some spare Share magazines available for distribution. Please contact Nick H. on archives.southdown@aamail.org to arrange.

Finally, Southdown Intergroup are still looking for an archivist. If you are interested, please contact Nick H for more information (or check out the August 2022 issue where I talk in more depth about the perks of being your archivist for the past 20 years!)

Thanks,

Nick, Archives Liaison Officer
archives.southdown@aamail.org



66th Scottish National Convention
"A New Beginning"
28th - 30th April 2023
Queens Hall, 9 Argyll St, DUNOON,
PA23 7HH
(Travel by road or ferry)
Al-Anon participation throughout the weekend
Registration £15
Pre-Registration is necessary as last year was a sell out
To Register and find out more information about the Weekend Programme, Hotels & Ferries visit:
www.scottishnationalconvention.co.uk
Any questions, email:
convention.snc@aamail.org
Sponsored by all 5 Scottish Regions
Alcoholics Anonymous GB

Friday 28TH,
Saturday 29TH
& Sunday 30TH
April 2023
The Tower Hotel
London E1W 1LD

AA AT THE TOWER
londonaaconvention.com

A weekend of fellowship in the heart of London, overlooking the Thames, the Tower of London and Tower Bridge.

Early Bird Rates Book Now

Pre-book Saturday evening Buffet Limited places

LONDON INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

SPONSORED BY THE LONDON REGIONS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GB



Archive Request

Does your Group or Intergroup Literature box look like this?

Are you holding on to literature and books which were last seen on the ARK?

Are you considering filing old correspondence in your wastepaper basket?

DON'T!



WE CAN HELP

Please look through all your old material and literature and give it to your archivist.

Especially welcome are your personal items, books, badges, sobriety chips, pamphlets, convention paraphernalia, etc

IF YOU DON'T NEED THEM.... Donate them

If in doubt, they can be sorted out.

**JUST REMEMBER THE ARCHIVES MOTTO:
DON'T THROW ME AWAY!
I BELONG TO AA**

All items may be donated at Southdown Assemblies Any queries please ask Nick H.
archives.southdown@aamail.org

Liaison Officer's Reports

Telephones

The Southdown Intergroup Helpline during 2022 handled 4460 calls of which 1075 of those calls resulted in local 12th step action within the Southdown Intergroup.

Unfortunately as we enter 2023, we are still no further forward in finding a replacement Telephone Liaison Officer (TLO). This is becoming a matter of urgency, to ensure a smooth transition and allow a full sponsorship into the role. If a replacement cannot be found we as Intergroup will be faced with no option but to take steps to close the helpline down. This is not a decision that has been taken lightly and will result in the loss of many skilled and highly knowledgeable responders from the Telephone Service. The Southdown Intergroup over the years has always operated a strong helpline and enjoyed a good reputation for the service we provide.

As I enter my last few months of service and would just like to say how much I have enjoyed acting as TLO for the Southdown Intergroup. I am very grateful for all the support that has been offered to me during my tenure in particular from the rest of the Telephone team and the Intergroup committee.

Greg B, Telephone Liaison Officer
telephones.southdown@aamail.org



*"I am very grateful
for all the support
that has been
offered to me
during my tenure"*

Health

We finally had the OK from QA Hospital in Portsmouth to have a room and go in each Thursday to talk to patients with alcohol-related illnesses or on detox who choose to come down and ask for help for when they leave. The nurses are letting all the patients know. I am asking for volunteers from the fellowship for a two-week service, a male and female preferably, but any help is welcome, as this will be ongoing.

We started on Thursday 2nd February, had nobody come! It's early days, so we'll see how it does and keep expectations low but anyone who is able to volunteer and come along can have their own mini AA meeting and be ready to share their experience with people that are suffering. I have Share magazine, info fliers and starter packs in preparation for anybody who seeks help. Ideally if GSRs can mention this in 'any AA business' sections of their home group meetings (particularly those close to Portsmouth). Volunteers can contact me directly and, so far, I have a lot of lovely fellows who are eager to help and it's not a long term commitment which appeals. I will type up something for GSRs to read out at meetings in due course, but currently the rota is filled until May.

Thank you to all of those who have come forward!

Finally I am going into St Richards Hospital in Chichester on 14th March to help with the staff teaching and will report back on any news in the next edition.



Nicky, part of the Liaison Officer Committee

Liaison Officer's Reports

Public Information

We have been successful in donating a pile of AA Big Books to local libraries across the region, there are another 20 across Chichester and Isle of Wight that we have books ready to deliver. The idea is that by donating these books, they become a resource for anyone wanting to know more about Alcoholics Anonymous. We will also be inserting the Points of Interest document to help introduce AA more succinctly. Members of our committee including TLO Greg are chasing round the houses to PAs of Head of Libraries, Head of Stock etc. They are having a think about whether they are accepting donations and will get back to us!

We are also looking to target the many Keep Warm centres opening around the country. As many of these will be or have opened in libraries, we are looking to create posters to reach those still suffering. Same goes for food banks and we have started by reaching out to the Trussel Trust. If anyone has any other suggestions like this, please do let us know.

Lastly, we are looking to reopen conversations with prisons and are starting with the Isle of Wight with two boxes of literature going into Parkhurst, one for each prison (main and satellite).

Moira, Public Information
pi.southdown@aamail.org



"extremely keen for anyone in the fellowship who also served in the armed forces to come forward"

Armed Forces Liaison Officer's Report

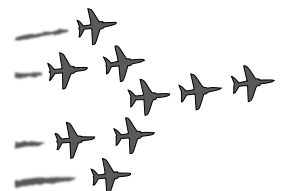
HMS Excellence made a request for assistance including supplying discreet materials such as business cards to share with those in need. We are looking into designing, printing and funding something that might be suitable.

We are still extremely keen for anyone in the fellowship who also served in the armed forces to come forward. It is vital to get the message out there that we have examples of ex-service people in recovery to inspire that first step! If you fit the bill, know anyone who does or can mention this at your local meeting - we would greatly appreciate it.

We have been in touch with the Veterans Café in Ryde about recruiting volunteers and will continue to look for other similar avenues. Again, if anyone knows of similar places or has other suggestions on how to reach those still out there within the armed forces across the Southdowns then please do drop me an email.

YIF!

Kelly, Armed Forces Liaison Officer
keloustep@gmail.com



interlink spotlight

ANGELA K TALKS ABOUT WHAT BEING A TELEPHONE RESPONDER MEANS TO HER

I started telephone responding when I was 18 months into recovery. I had no sponsor and I had not worked the 12 steps (yet!) I did, however, visit a lady in the fellowship who guided me through difficulties in my daily living. She would be on telephone duty, and it was here that I listened to her talking to the caller who was reaching out for help and first knew that I would like to do this service. Although it was done differently back then, the principle is the same, to help the still suffering alcoholic.

This service has been so rewarding for me in many ways. It taught me discipline to put others first for one day a week. It taught me to listen and be patient towards the caller who may be drunk, suicidal or aggressive (as I used to be). And by passing on the details to a willing 12-stepper, it taught me the love members have inside them in order to do service.

The then Telephone Liaison Officer Richard H let me sponsor others in my area into becoming a responder. They would come over to me with their laptop and we would go through everything together. I did this for 12 years with gratitude; and believe it played a huge part in keeping me sober and grounded. Every call reminded me of where I had come from and that AA saved my life.

It is very humbling and a privilege today to be part of someone else's story of recovery. When I have taken a call in my area I not only get to meet them; but experience the joy of seeing them come back to meetings again and again.

My sobriety date is 1st May 2003 and I recently went back to doing service on the helpline. Greg, the current T.L.O, helped me so much to get onto the new way of doing the responding and it works so well. While my health is not 100%, this is AA service that I can do at home.

Greg is due to rotate out of his role as T.L.O soon, and I look forward to working with whoever comes out of their comfort zone and takes on this important role for Southdown Intergroup.

LIF

Angie K. Isle of Wight

