

**General Service Conference  
of  
Alcoholics Anonymous  
Great Britain**



**FIFTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE**

**14 – 16 APRIL 2023**

***Theme: I Am Responsible***

**Final Report 2023**

General Service Office of AA  
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# FIFTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2023

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# DIGEST OF AGENDA

## Friday 14 April 2023

Opening Session

Committee Meetings Commence

Nominations - Conference Chair 2024

Presentation of  
General Service Board Reports:  
(Session 1)

75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention Presentation  
Finance Presentation  
Literature Presentation

## Saturday 15 April 2023

Committee Meetings Continue

Presentation of  
General Service Board Reports:  
(Session 2)

PI & E Comms Presentation  
Telephones/First Response Presentation  
Race Today Presentation

Open Forum

## Sunday 16 April 2023

Presentation of Committee Reports

Election of Chair for the Fifty-Eighth General Service  
Conference 2024

Confirmation of  
Board Members Elect

Closing Address

# FRIDAY 14 APRIL

The Fifty-Seventh General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain convened in person on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2023 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 – 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 hand sanitiser and masks were available in all Committee Suites and the Henley Suite for those who wished to use them.

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 87 delegates from sixteen Regions of which 1 joined online; 23 members of the General Service Board; Shirley S - Conference Chair (South East Region), Ranjan B, the General Secretary and 7 members of staff from the General Service Office attended. Also in attendance were 12 Observers from the following countries:

Belgium (Flemish)	1
Bulgaria	1
Croatia	1
Denmark	1
Ireland	2
Latvia	1
Poland	2
Portugal	1
USA	2

Total in attendance 131.

## Opening of Conference by Shirley S (Conference Chair 2023)

Good afternoon, Conference. My name is Shirley and I'm an alcoholic. It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Fellowship, to welcome you all to the 57<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous, Great Britain.

Please may we have a moments silence to reflect why we are here and the still-suffering alcoholic.

Thank you.

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 AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA 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"*

It's an absolute honour to be serving as this year's Conference Chair, and I humbly thank you for putting your faith and trust in me.

A special welcome to this year's new delegates, the 'red dotters.' I recall how daunted I felt, during the opening ceremony of my first Conference. I sat in the back row, when momentarily, I had a rush of self-doubt, "*I really don't think I'm up to this!*" Fast forward, to the evening plenary, and I was *now* sitting in the second row, confidence restored, enjoying every moment. The red dot on your badge, is there to remind the rest of us to look out for you, so please do reach out, if you need any help or support, and we'll do our best to make your first Conference an uplifting, memorable experience.

To our returning Delegates, General Service Board Trustees and staff members of the General Service Office - welcome back, and thank you all, for the huge amount of time and service you continue to devote to the Fellowship, not just here at Conference, but throughout the year.

And finally, I'd like to extend a very warm welcome to our Overseas Observers. Similarly, to the new delegates, you each have a green dot on your badge, which again, serves as a reminder to us to look after you. We want you to enjoy your time with us, so please ask if you need help with anything, or have any questions. Last year, Committee One, had the pleasure of the company of the overseas visitor from Bulgaria, and since then, she and I have been working closely together via Zoom, looking at the Traditions, along with various aspects of the GB Service Structure. As so often happens in AA, a special friendship blossomed between us and it was a wonderful surprise to learn that she had been selected by her GSB, to attend again this year. So, Conference, if I may ... a personal, "Welcome Back", to Nevena B from Bulgaria.

**I would now like to invite, Ranjan B, the General Secretary, to read the Twelve Traditions. Thank you Ranjan.**

## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS: I AM RESPONSIBLE**

It's a huge privilege to be serving as this year's Conference Chair. As such, it falls to me to set the tone for this weekend's proceedings, which is a tremendous honour, whilst also being somewhat daunting!

My sobriety date is 10<sup>th</sup> August 2006 and my home group is Newington in West Kent. My struggle with alcohol didn't begin until I had turned fifty. I came into the Fellowship just over six years later. It took me a while to admit that I was an alcoholic and even longer to accept it, but the identification was undeniable - feeling different, 'less than'; people-pleasing; the list goes on. Before coming into the Fellowship, I believed that my character and emotional reactions to life, had been shaped by traumatic childhood events, but I came to understand, that they were also, common traits in the alcoholic.

I grew up in an isolated village in Somerset during the 1950's and early 60's, the fourth of five children. My father was an alcoholic and I was just seven years old, when my mother woke us in the middle of the night and we fled our home under cover of darkness. In the midst of all this, were four children who yearned to feel safe and loved. Mum remarried within a year and four traumatised children, soon became five. Instead of life becoming better, it became darker, secretive and full of fear. My step-father was a bully and often took out his temper on my mum. She suffered in silence, but couldn't hide the black eyes and bruises. My three older siblings moved out as soon as they could, which left just me (10)

and my little brother (2). We were, what would these days be described as ‘an extremely dysfunctional family’, where no-one knew how to give or receive love. I became the target of my step-father’s unwanted attentions. In those days, there was nowhere for abused children to turn and nowhere to hide. *For the next seven years, my safe place became school, and home, my most dreaded.* My escape was a long time in the planning, but a month after my eighteenth birthday, I packed a suitcase and crept away, to commence my nurse training, sixty wonderful miles away. Everything had been carefully planned and executed in secret – the interview, entrance test and, intercepting the postman. I was beyond excited when the postman handed me the letter of acceptance! The relief when I stepped off that train in February 1969 into my new life, will remain with me forever. I was free at last!

It was during my training, that I met and married, my husband John. He was kind and gentle and at last, I came to know what it felt like to be loved and cherished. He too, had had a difficult childhood, and our dream was a simple one - to have our own little family where our children would feel safe and know they were loved; And that’s exactly what we did! We were blessed with two beautiful daughters, who made our family complete. At last, I knew love, and life was good. Nothing could come between us, or so we thought...

I developed severe spinal problems in my early forties, which brought an end to my nursing career and so began the decline in my mental health. With no career and our girls grown and independent, I began to lose my sense of purpose and, despite still having a lot to be grateful for, a dark cloud slowly enveloped me and the days grew long and lonely. I didn’t see any harm in having a glass of wine one afternoon – in fact, it seemed to lift my mood. Little did I know where it could and would, take me. In the Big Book, it says:

*‘To be gravely affected, one does not necessarily have to drink a long time, nor take the quantities some of us have. This is particularly true of women. Potential female alcoholics often turn into the real thing and are gone beyond recall in a few years’*

This was so, with me. In a relatively short time, I went from having that one glass of wine, to drinking anything I could lay my hands on, as soon as I rose in the morning, until I just couldn’t stop! It was beyond all comprehension – I loved my husband and children more than life itself; my childhood prayers for love and security had been answered... As a child, I had found the inner strength to overcome years of abuse and I was proud of what I had achieved since then. *Where was my inner strength now?* My world was being torn apart, yet I continued to drink! I was yet to learn that I had developed a mental obsession with alcohol that could only be overcome by a power greater than myself. I had lost the power of choice.

In six short years, alcoholism annihilated *everything* that was good in my life; everything John and I had so lovingly built together. I lost his trust and respect, and that of my children and friends; I hurt the people I loved most and walked away from my 34-year marriage - *just so that I could drink!* Eight horrendous months later, I was devoid of any self-respect and couldn’t see any way back. Still unable to stop drinking, I finally lost the will to live, and in the blink of an eye, I selfishly decided to end my life. With what could only be the work of a Higher Power, I was discovered the following morning - without a pulse and not breathing, literally seconds from death! In respiratory and renal failure, I was admitted to intensive care, where I was put on life-support and my family were told to expect the worst. Despite learning that I had suffered four cardiac arrests that day, and how lucky I was to have survived, when I was discharged from hospital, *I continued to drink for another ten months!*

Full of shame and remorse, I attended my first AA meeting in June 2006. I really didn’t want to “keep coming back”, but I did, because I desperately wanted my family’s forgiveness; And, I didn’t believe you when you said it would work, but with time, the message gradually trickled through to my reluctant brain and I began to listen when others shared their stories and how they had found recovery in AA. So began the glimmerings of hope.

Mine is a story of healing – broken trust takes a long time to regain; but one day at a time, I haven't taken a drink for almost 17 years. We slowly rebuilt our life together, and over time, our family has become whole again. Today, my daughters tell me they love me and are proud of me. In sobriety, I have been blessed with five beautiful granddaughters, who have never known Grandma to drink, and LIFE IS GOOD. I shall be forever grateful that AA was there when I needed it – without it, I really don't think I'd be alive today. I have a responsibility to give back, what was so freely given to me. This, I do through service – our third Legacy. Service has been the backbone of my recovery.

As Conference Chair, I was tasked with choosing the theme for this year's Conference. I chose "I am Responsible," because this is something I'm passionate about. I believe that each AA in recovery has a responsibility to repay their debt to AA, through service. I wanted a theme with a message that would resonate with the Fellowship; something that might encourage more people to think about becoming actively involved in service of some kind. All of us here, in love and service this weekend, clearly share the same commitment to give something back, otherwise, we wouldn't be here! Sadly however, there will always be some, who are happy to let 'somebody else' shoulder the responsibility for keeping AA alive and moving forward. If my theme stirs even a few of the 'takers' to become 'givers', it will have achieved its purpose.

Since coming into the Fellowship, I've heard people share their experience and their strength, and have witnessed that flicker of hope in the eyes of the newcomer. Recovering alcoholics continue to inspire the still-suffering alcoholic in a unique way because we have walked in their shoes, and we understand the utter despair of untreated alcoholism. We can gain their confidence by openly sharing our own journeys - out of the darkness, into the light.

During the mid-sixties there was great emphasis on the responsibility of the Fellowship as a whole to work together, to carry the message. The Responsibility Statement was written by former AA Trustee, Al S, for the 1965, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention in Toronto. The Convention theme was, "AA's Responsibility" and in the souvenir book, Dr Jack Norris, (*NAT and Chair of the GSB from 1961-78*), wrote:

*"We must remember that AA will continue strong only so long as each of us freely and happily gives it away to another person; only as each of us takes our fair share of responsibility of those who still suffer, for the growth and integrity of our Group, for our Intergroup activities, and for AA as a whole. It is in taking responsibility that real freedom and the enduring satisfactions of life are found. AA has given us the power to choose – to drink or not to drink – and in doing so has given us the freedom to be responsible for ourselves. As we become responsible for ourselves, we are free to be responsible for our share in AA, and unless we happily accept this responsibility, we lose AA"*

Just a few months later, Bill W, shared his growing concern, lest AA's success should lead to complacency as to the immensity of the task ahead - to help those alcoholics still beyond our reach, and of the huge responsibility with which AA will always be confronted. (*The Language of the Heart*, pp328-334), He wrote:

*"There are millions of alcoholics in the world, and there will always be, alcoholics, who are able, ready and willing to get well, if only they knew how! Our first concern should be those sufferers that we are still unable to reach. Clearly, all these sufferers need to know what alcoholism is and to recognise that they are so afflicted. Being thus readied, they need to be brought within our reach by every resource of PI and word of mouth, that will tell them exactly what steps they can take in finding the road to recovery."*

This is as true today as it ever was – AA can never afford to become complacent! Thanks to those AAs who came before us, millions of 'hopeless drunks,' *including you and I*, have found sobriety and turned



our lives around. Our work will *never* be done - there will always be more to do; And for that, *we are all responsible!*

Our Legacy of Service is the lifeblood of this incredible movement, and this weekend, we have come together once again, to take the collective conscience of the Fellowship. As long as we remain united behind our Primary Purpose, so shall we continue our work to take AA forward in this ever-changing world. Every recovering alcoholic, who got well in AA, has a responsibility, in Bill W's words. 'To see that the sun never sets upon Alcoholics Anonymous.'

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.

Thank you

## INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS

It's now my pleasure to formally introduce this year's Committee Chairs:

Committee 1:	Andre M	Continental Europe Region
Committee 2:	Adam P	North East Region
Committee 3:	Jim K	Glasgow Region
Committee 4:	Elaine C	London Region North
Committee 5:	Sean M	Glasgow Region
Committee 6:	John S	South East Region

I would now like to invite Alternate Conference Chair, John S, to give his Conference Steering Committee report.

## CONFERENCE STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

In September 1980, after years of drinking to oblivion, drunk driving, physical incontinence and spiritual bankruptcy, I finally reached the tipping point and received the gift of desperation. On September 9, 1980 I went to the addiction unit of the Maudsley Hospital in south-east London. Hands shaking, vision blurred, I was ushered in to see a young doctor. I explained to him that I had decided to stop drinking and asked for the pill or the injection which would cure me. He smiled and told me there was not such thing. "But," he said, " I would recommend that you attend Alcoholics Anonymous. You are in luck. There's a meeting here tonight. And I would also recommend that you don't take a drink between now and then."

I said "But I've got a full bottle of Scotch at home".

He said: "Pour it down the sink".

I went back, and I did pour it down the sink. As I did so, I was thinking "This is a really stupid idea. I'm going to regret this" But I did pour it down the sink, and that was a miracle. A day at a time, the miracle continued to happen for me, and I managed first to remain dry, and then achieve sobriety.

Fast forward to 42 years later and here I am, involved in the Conference of our amazing Fellowship. It is the culmination of a path of service which began with being the ashtray-cleaner for my home group - those being the days when smoking in meetings was not just permitted, but virtually compulsory. Either you smoked yourself, or you inhaled everyone else's smoke. In due course I moved along to become group tea-maker and then treasurer. When I became group treasurer the outgoing treasurer passed me the accounts book. She had written in the front "Service keeps me sober. Thank you for making me your treasurer and keeping me sober". And that has been something of a mantra for me ever since as I became involved in intergroup and region and then Conference, first as alternate, then delegate, then committee chair. It all underlines the theme for this year, selected by Shirley: "I am responsible" - crucial both for the Fellowship as a whole and for those of us who keep sober by accepting a measure of responsibility, and doing service.

So, on to the activities of the Conference Steering Committee (CSC), We met for the first time on zoom on 27 May. Shirley (as Conference chair) took the chair. The chairs of the various committees for Conference 2023 were all members: Andre M (committee 1) Adam P (committee 2), James K (committee 3), Elaine C (committee 4), Sean M (committee 5) and myself, John S (committee 6). Two trustees had been appointed by the General Service Board (GSB), Tim B and Jo F. Ranjan B (general secretary) and Sharon Smyth (conference organiser) were present to assist us. We decided that the two trustees should be voting members; Ranjan and Sharon were non-voting members. I was elected as alternate Conference chair, and Andre as minute taker.

Ranjan briefed us on the history of the Conference Steering Committee (CSC) and talked us through the guidance notes which place emphasis on the need for clarity and accuracy of the questions, and the factual nature of the background material. We were reminded by Shirley of the Conference Charter. It was stressed that the proceedings of the CSC had to be confidential to ensure that undue pressure was not placed on its members during proceedings. That also means that all members of the Fellowship get access to the Conference Questions at the same time in December. We reviewed the Terms of Reference which govern the proceedings of the CSC, making one minor revision to TOR 3. We considered a matrix which sets out the recommendations of Conference 2022 and noted that all the tasks arising had been assigned.

We then looked at the agenda for Conference 2023. The question of whether laptops and tablets should be permitted in the committee rooms was discussed and it was decided that they should not. It was agreed that delegates would be informed of this well in advance, and that boxes would be provided for recycling paper. We discussed the possibility of displaying the committee reports on the screen during the presentation by committee chairs in the final session of conference. It was agreed to investigate and decide at a future CSC meeting. (On later investigation, it was found that it would not be feasible). It was agreed that, in order to make background material more accessible, there should be a link to the document library in the material distributed to delegates and in AA Service News.

Our second meeting spanned two days in September and took place at GSO in York. Hamish McS replaced Jo F as one of the trustees.

The main business of this meeting was to consider the 66 questions which had been submitted by members of the Fellowship by the stated deadline of August 31. All of the questions were anonymised so we could concentrate on their substance rather than any personalities involved. We reviewed them all, applying the Terms of Reference which are circulated at the same time as AA Service News. Anyone who had prior involvement in a question declared their interest and opted out of discussion of that question. Some of the questions covered similar topics and where this was the case, we either selected the one which encapsulated the topic best, or combined two or more. By the end of that meeting we had three piles: 'Yes', 'No' and 'Maybe'.

We met again in York over two days in October. We now decided on the final selection of the questions to be discussed at Conference. We tried to ensure that each question was clear and unambiguous, and that sufficient background was provided which was accurate and did not tell people how they must decide the question. The chosen questions were then allocated to the six committees - three per committee. To these were added items to amend literature arising from previous Conference decisions. We also considered the Conference matrix, which sets out the action taken by the General Service Board in relation to recommendations of the previous Conference. We concluded that each of the decisions had either been implemented, or that progress was being made in implementation. Finally, questions were allocated to pairs of members of the committee to provide reasons for the decision to those who had submitted questions which had been rejected.

Groups, intergroups and regions moved over the ensuing months to discussion. The aim is to ensure that delegates and the committees are fully informed of the experience and views of the Fellowship so that this can be properly reflected in the decisions of Conference.

In February the Conference Steering Committee met again to deal with any final decisions as to the running of Conference. We also reviewed our own work, including the application of the Terms of Reference and any recommendations to be conveyed to our successors.

I have felt privileged to have been able to do the service involved in membership of the CSC and have enjoyed the experience of being alternate Conference chair. My thanks to you all for helping to keep me sober for another day.

John S  
Chair, Committee 6.

Thank you, John.

## **ORIENTATION**

I would like to invite Ranjan, 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 – 28 – 30 April  
Welsh Convention – 2 – 4 June  
Southern Convention – 1 – 3 September  
Northern Convention – 15 – 1 March 2024

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.

A simple majority is a recommendation to the Board to take any necessary action and a proposal that carries a two thirds majority of the vote is binding on the board.

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**

It's almost time to start your committee proceedings. There will, I'm sure, be some lively debate and differing opinions, as is only to be expected when discussing important Fellowship business, but as with all AA matters, we have a framework of Traditions and Concepts by which we are guided. We have all been around long enough to know that good old common sense alongside, patience, tolerance and love, enable us to carry out our service to the best of our ability. By the close of proceedings on Sunday, as a united body of trusted servants, we will have shouldered our responsibility, in taking the conscience of the Fellowship for the common good of Alcoholics Anonymous, both today and in the future.

I wish you all a great weekend and a great Conference.

Please help me close the session with the Declaration of Unity, followed by the Serenity Prayer:

### **Declaration of Unity**

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

### **Serenity Prayer**

**God... grant me the Serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change,  
Courage to change the things we can  
and wisdom to know the difference.**

***Thank you, Conference – I'll see you all back here for a prompt start at 7.45pm***

## Friday 7.45pm Second Full Session

Shirley welcomed everyone back and opened the second full session of Conference at 7.45 pm with a moment's silence to reflect on why we're here and still suffering alcoholic and the Preamble. Shirley then asked for nominations for Conference Chair 2024 before handing over to Amanda S, Chair of the Board, to introduce the General Service Board Reports.

### NOMINATIONS FOR CONFERENCE CHAIR 2024

The under mentioned were proposed and seconded for the Chair of the Fifty-Eighth General Service Conference 2024:

Caroline C	- South West Region
Elaine C	- London Region North
Sean M	- Glasgow Region
Adam P	- North 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

#### Introduction

(Amanda S, Chair GSB)

Good evening, Conference, my name is Amanda and I'm an alcoholic.

It is my privilege and honour as Chair of the General Service Board, to introduce the Board reports to Conference.

Firstly, a warm welcome to each and every one of you, especially our first year delegates, I hope you get as much out of it as I did when I was a red dotter.

I'd also like to thank our overseas observers, we have 12 joining us this year from Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Ireland, Latvia, Poland, Portugal and our friends from the World Service Office in New York, Racy and Bob, we are very pleased to have you with us.

I'd also like to thank Shirley, Conference Chair and the Conference Steering Committee for all of the hard work they have done over the past year.

My thanks to the General Service Office staff, led by our General Secretary, Ranjan, for their ongoing work, commitment and support and also to our staff at our Northern and Southern service offices.

I'd also like to thank one of our non alcoholic Board Trustees, Thomas Baldwin, who is rotating out of service this weekend. Normally I would be thanking him on Sunday at our final session but Thomas will not be with us, so I'd like to put on record now, the gratitude of the Board and the Fellowship for his four years of service on the Archives Sub Committee and the Nominations Committee. Thomas, who came to the Board as a professor of philosophy at the University of York, was able to bring his experience to assist the Board, which he did greatly.

His most notable contributions were the management and curation of the GSO archives to the Borthwick Institute and the archives display in Leeds for the 75th anniversary.

We had quite a change following Conference last year on the Board as 7 Trustees rotated off the Board and 8 new members arrived, but despite having so many newcomers to the Board they quickly found their feet and have worked hard this year to implement the recommendations from Conference 2022.

Tonight, we will have reports from our Vice Chair, Stevie, and Honorary Treasurer, Clive, on the 75th Anniversary Convention, followed by the Honorary Treasurers report on the finances and we will conclude with our Trustee for Literature, Justin.

Tomorrow we will hear from Tom & Tim, Trustees for PI & E Comms, who will be presenting the work so far on the new look website which is an ongoing project which was a recommendation from Conference last year.

We will also hear from Levy, Trustee for Telephones and our First Response Sub Committee. And Jo, who is overseeing another Conference recommendation, our Race Today working group, will report on the work that has been carried out in the last year.

But before I hand over to the Trustees I'd like to tell you a little bit about the impact our 75 year celebrations had on our Fellowship. It was a truly momentous year where we saw the spirit of the Fellowship in action.

As a result of our celebratory year we were given the opportunity to take part in a documentary on our Fellowship.

That documentary was not something we did without a lot of thought on how it could happen within the bounds of our traditions and especially in keeping with our tradition of anonymity. We knew that if we were able to follow our guiding principles it could help reach out to the still suffering alcoholic and save lives.

The production company we worked with and put our trust in gave us their word that it would be a celebration and insight into our world and that anonymity would be protected at all costs.

The main contributors' anonymity was protected by using ground-breaking deep fake technology and this was made a feature of the programme.

The documentary went out in December on prime time BBC2 and the positive impact was immediate. Our website saw a 53 per cent rise in traffic, our helplines, chat now and online responders saw a big rise in calls from the still suffering alcoholic and our meetings had newcomers arriving as a result of the TV programme.

Tonight, we have with us a new NAT who will be ratified on Sunday who applied to join our Board after seeing the documentary, so moved was she by it.

We've had enquiries from the Fellowship in both America and Australia and around the world about how we went about this - the results from this piece of work carried out by the Board has been truly remarkable.

Another massive benefit that came out of the 75th convention was the record number of people applying to join our Board Sub Committees as a result of meeting the Trustees and members at the convention and seeing the work that they do.

Anyone interested in joining or finding out more about the work of the sub committees is invited to join us tomorrow between 4.30 and 5.30 in the Regatta Suite.

Another Conference recommendation from previous years that has been a great success this year has been the formation of the diversity working group called Race Today, already this working group is making an impact and you will hear more about that tomorrow.

What the past year has shown is the unity and gratitude of the Fellowship and we as a Board trust that this Conference, the conscience of the Fellowship, will guide us through our next year.

I'm now going to hand over to Vice chair, Stevie and Honorary Treasurer, Clive for their report on the 75th Anniversary Convention.

Thank you, Conference.

## **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention**

(Stevie S, Vice Chair and Clive K, Honorary Treasurer GSB)

Good evening Conference. My name is Stevie. I'm an alcoholic and it's lovely to see you all here. The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention was a wonderful event and it was great to be involved in it. I will go through a few things first and then I will pass over to Clive and he will do some of the finances and then he'll pass back to me and I'll take you through some of the projects that have been going on over the year that were part of it. Then if anyone has any questions please feel free to do so as we are open for questions.

When I joined the Board in 2018 it was a shock to become Vice Chair, it really was and it was a shock to be on the Board in the first place and then when they told me that the responsibility was taking on the 75<sup>th</sup> Convention and I thought what experience have I got of that. It took me back to 1982 and I remember I was early in sobriety and I was invited to a member's house, Plumber Jimmy from Cumbernauld, and on the wall he had this picture, and I asked him what and it was Seattle, the International Convention. Jimmy had been to it and was telling me how wonderful it was and he said to me you will love when you get to these things Stevie. A pal of mine who lived in London, Robert N, who was a great member of the Fellowship and who sadly died a couple of years ago, phoned me up and asked if I would like to go to Minneapolis for the International and we went and straight away he had me doing service. I wasn't a guy who really did service, I did my bit, but Robert always insisted that we do service wherever we went. We went to every International after Minneapolis and he said we do service, we do service, we do service. It became good fun and that was the experience that I had. I knew that these big Conventions can be great fun when you bring the service element into it and the unity it creates within the Fellowship is massive and the ripple effect of that is massive.

I got involved in the Committee and shadowed the last Chairman for a year and then Clive joined us. All the work had been done, the Arena had been booked, the ideas were already there – there was talk of doing the book and talk of doing a historical walkway and that's where Clive and I got involved and I will talk more about the projects after Clive has done the income.

You will have seen in the Conference Board reports you have in your packs, reports from the Sub Committee members from the Committee which was elected by Conference. I asked them, out of curiosity, how many hours did you think you worked on the Committee. I asked them individually just to get an idea and a feel for it as I knew how much I was doing and we worked out that each Committee member worked for approximately 1200 hours of service which is quite remarkable. If we were to outsource that you would not get any change out of 300K. We got a book and a historical walkway and also, we got a website, a remarkable amount of work. It's over to Clive now for the figures.

Good evening, Conference. My name is Clive, I'm an alcoholic and very grateful to be here and welcome you all and it's lovely to see you. Hope you're enjoying it so far, as much as I am. These are the headline figures:

## Summary of Finances

### Headline Figures for Income and Expenditure

• Total Income	<b>£167001.11</b>
• Total Expenditure	<b>£195,937.95</b>
• Profit/Loss (as at 21/03/2023)	<b>-£ 28,936.84</b>
• Tradition 7 Contributions	<b>£5266.49</b>

And so that gives us a loss at the moment anyway, as at 21st March of £28,936.84. Which I think given the circumstances that we've experienced in the last three years is amazing, really with the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis that is hitting everyone. I've put Tradition Seven contributions on and these are the contributions that were taken at the collections over the weekend of the convention. That's listed separately because as we know any Tradition Seven contributions goes directly to the GSO, and that's accounted for elsewhere.

### 75th Anniversary Convention Finances

(All Figures below are included in the Headline Figures above)

Income		Expenditure	
		1.Venue	£71,234.26
Ticket Sales	£103,105.84	2.A/V Equipment	£50,125.74
Book &		3.Accommodation	
Merchandise Sales	£ 55,157.32	For Committee	£15,021.67
Raffle Tickets sold	£ 8,737.95	4.Merchandise	£47,228.09
		5.Sundries	£12,328.19
<b>Total</b>	<b>£167001.11</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£195,937.95</b>

### Notes to go with the above figures:

1. This includes St Georges Conference Centre.
2. This is for the excellent A/V facilities provided over the weekend.
3. This is for the Committee's accommodation costs for the weekend of the Convention. All other Committee costs were included in previous Annual Reports.
4. This includes merchandise shipping costs.
5. This includes Raffle Costs and Card Reader costs. (£2,840 Raffle costs).

So, as I say, it was a wonderful event and on a personal note, I'd like to thank Stevie for all his hard work, the committee as well as the GSO staff who did sterling work. I found it a truly amazing weekend and I got involved with the fun run. I was really impressed at the number of people who turned up and there was a group photo and there's about 50 people who turned up and I came in last with the chap who organised it,



who was kind enough to wait for me. But it was all good fun. It really was and there were so many highlights. I think it's left a great legacy. It's not all about the finances really, I'm sorry I'm rambling a bit here, but Stevie will go on and explain a lot of the other good stuff that went on so I will leave it here.

I hope that's been helpful. I've answered some questions from the fellowship by email in the last couple of weeks or so, and I hope all of that's been helpful. So thanks very much for your ears, and enjoy the rest of the weekend.

Whilst our 75<sup>th</sup> with an opportunity for celebration it was also an opportunity for our Fellowship to work in Unity, Service and Recovery creating a legacy for future events.

Our 75<sup>th</sup> Committee worked in Unity and Service with our General Service Board together with GSO staff, all GSB Sub committees and all Region Assemblies on multiple projects. Those are easy words and sometimes the actual doing of them is harder and takes an awful lot of effort and the challenges were getting everyone pulling in the same direction and getting people to understand what we were trying to do, that it was a 75<sup>th</sup> but it was going to be celebrated with service and it was always about people involved in service.

The speakers all came from the Regions and were in service in the regions, the chairs for the meetings were the chairs from the national conventions and they put the speakers forward and everyone in service had the opportunity to speak at the event and their names were drawn out of a hat.

You get the controversies, but the great thing was that everybody pulled in the same direction eventually you would sort things you know, and different aspects of it.

The Archives really kicked it off I suppose and working with the Archives, Share and Roundabout Sub-Committees, the 75th produced our AAGB 75th Anniversary book.

This required all Regional Archivists and Regional Execs. to provide an overview of their regional history. It did require a lot of communication with every single region in the country, all the information going back and forth, and corrections and it took quite a few years to achieve to get it all together. It was a great piece of work and actually fulfilled something that conference had tasked the Board with doing in around 2013. Conference had asked for an AAGB history book and one was produced but it was rejected so that exercise was never completed. This went an awful long way to doing it. If you've not got a copy, get yourself a copy that gives you the history of all your regions and it's a wonderful piece of work.

The 75th Committee working with all Regional Archivists produced the Historical walkway .... one of the features of our weekend which required a massive amount of work. Again, working with Archivists getting all the design work done. Claire, on the committee, worked endlessly getting all that done and put a massive amount of effort into it, asking for information and changing information. and things like that, but it was done in the spirit of unity and service.

There are still some banners left I think that haven't been collected. We did ask Regions to pay for the banners, some did and some didn't, but the banners are there for use in any public information events you are doing. So please if your Region has not collected your banner from us it can be sent out. I know that we've made a new one for the Highlands and Islands and I think it's already arrived and ready for collection.

The Archives Sub Committee held an exhibition over the 75th weekend at Leeds Museum which was open to the public and those in the fellowship. The Leeds Museum was a venue for many of our meetings over the weekend - Race Today meetings, LGBTQ+ meetings, Polish Meetings and all were very well attended.

I genuinely believe that if we intend to hold one of these every five or ten years or whatever we choose there should be an exhibition that's open to the public. We've got that really from what they've done up at Calvin Hall in Glasgow. That was the first one anywhere in the world, the first exhibition in a museum and it worked really well up there. So, it was repeating what was learnt from the experience of others, repeating that experience and that's what we did with this.

Our Comms/PI Sub-Committee had responsibility for our VIP event held at the Leeds Museum and the attendees included the Mayor of Leeds with many professionals from health and prisons and that went well. We would have liked it to have been better but given the circumstances, people were still a bit reticent in terms of Covid, even the professionals, to attend things that they were invited to.

The Comms/PI were also responsible for many Radio Interviews, both in the lead up to the event and over the weekend with Leeds and Yorkshire Radio. The man for that was Mr Tom Fox and he does all that for us and I am sure that many of us have had the pleasure to listen to some of Tom's radio talks which are absolutely marvellous.

The Comms/PI Sub-Committee together with Archives and our GSB Chair produced our 75th video. Archives wanted a new video as the last one they had was around 2003/2004 and they felt that was a bit dated. PI were wanting one that would reflect gratitude and the 75<sup>th</sup> wanted a video was well. So, we thought why don't we combine these and make a video that covers all that ground. The video that was produced was the one that was approved at Conference last year and then shown at the 75<sup>th</sup> for its first 'maiden voyage'. Again, it is there for all PIs and Archivists to use as a tool to help you carry the message. Please use it as it is a great piece of work.

As Amanda has already touched on, during this time Comms/PI were also heavily involved on the production of the BBC documentary which was shown in December 2022. It was terrific and hats off to everyone involved. Thank you very much for that.

Part of this unity and service was working with the North East Region and West Riding Intergroup in the lead up to the 75<sup>th</sup>. Our Prison Sub-Committee together with the 75th Committee, NE Region and West Riding Intergroup worked on the re-establishment of our contact with the Prison authorities responsible for Wakefield Prison.

The result of this was the attendance of the Wakefield Prison Governor at our 75th where he was presented with an Anniversary copy of the Big Book.

We now have one AA prison sponsor with access to Wakefield with the hope of more to follow.

Our Young Peoples Sub Committee used St Georges as a base for their Roadshow and meetings and there were hundreds of them and seemed to come from all over Europe.

St Georges was also the base for our early birds meeting that was hosted by West Riding Intergroup.

GSO held a Roadshow here and generally GSO Roadshows are held at Regional Forums and these can be a bit hit and miss with attendees and it was an ideal opportunity as there was the anniversary cake at St. Georges, so everyone was there for a bit of this cake and it turned out to be the best attendance ever! Ranjan presented this along with the staff and it went down really well and helped the Fellowship understand more about what is done at GSO.

Al-Anon meetings and our evening singalongs were held here as part of the entertainment.

We were a bit concerned about having three different venues but I think it worked really well, having three different options for people to go round and enjoy the whole thing.

The manager at St Georges says that staff were showing up for shifts.... without pay ... just to be part of our weekend.

All our Board Sub Committees had rooms within the Leeds Arena where all members could attend to gain a better understanding of the work carried out by our Sub Committees.

All were well attended - the upshot is that more members than ever before have been applying to join our Sub Committees, which has been ongoing.

The Leeds Arena advised that their staff had never been treated with as much respect for any event.

### **In Summary**

The City of Leeds played host to over 3000 AA members. Our positive impact withing the area cannot be measured in terms of carrying the message to the still suffering Alcoholic. However, going by the feedback we received we are sure that many would consider recommending AA. That ripple effect will go on, not just for this year, but for many years.

I genuinely do believe that what I see every time I go to one of the internationals in the States is that immersing AA into an entire city and making a massive impression is a great thing for fellowship, it's a great thing, that helps create an awful lot of growth.

I've spoken to people in Leeds since the 75th took place. One of the things they say is they didn't have many young people in AA in Leeds and West Riding Intergroup prior to the 75th and now they say it's going fantastic. Their meetings are going very well. There's been a massive upsurge and it's also happened in many other parts of the country. So I would like to thank you all for that. To all of you who participated and did service for it, thank you all very much.

I would ask, with Conference's blessing, I would like to write to all the Committee members thanking them for their contribution. I think that would be a nice thing for us, as a Conference, to do. They were your committee, Conference's committee, and if you are happy with that I will more than gladly reach out to them all. Also, for the 75<sup>th</sup> Committee to finalise the Terms of Reference for future events which will need to be accepted by the Board. Thank you.

On behalf of our 75th Committee we would like to pass on our thanks to all who contributed towards making our 75th Anniversary a wonderful weekend.

We would also like to thank the Fellowship and Conference for giving us the opportunity to be involved with the 75th Anniversary.

A wonderful experience.

## Finance

(Clive K – Honorary Treasurer GSB)

Good evening again Conference, my name is Clive, I'm still an alcoholic and I have been privileged to be your honorary treasurer. The person stood next to me is Gretchen, who is from London Region South, and she is going to shadow me for the next year when she will take over when I rotate next year.

Gretchen has been very helpful to me and I would just like to thank the Finance Committee as well for all their help over the last year and also the GSO staff, especially Ranjan and Mandy, and Caroline who works in the Accounts Department in GSO.

This presentation is an overview of the Charity's finances for the last financial year. For anyone who may not know AAGB's financial year begins on the 1<sup>st</sup> October and ends on 30<sup>th</sup> September every year and there's nothing we can do about that, it's a historical thing.

The objective of this is to provide an overview of the 2021 – 2022 financial year compared to the previous one of 2020 – 2021 and examine various financial trends.

We have all lived through yet another challenging year. The Fellowship has risen to the challenges posed by the current uncertainty in society post pandemic and now, of course, we are hit with the cost of living crisis. We as the Trustees of the Charity would like to say a big thank you to you all for your continued generosity and service.

Just a bit of history for you. The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain & Ireland) Ltd held its Inaugural Meeting on 29 June 1957. It became a Company limited by Guarantee on 16 July 1957. It has been listed in Companies House Register since then. The First General Service Conference was held in 1966 in the Midland Hotel, Manchester. Following a resolution from Conference 1968, the General Service Board (GSB) assumed all services to the Fellowship, thus becoming the Custodians of the AA Traditions in Great Britain & Ireland. The Company was registered as a Charity on 19 March 1969.

In 1977 the Irish Service Structure was established separately and the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain) Ltd was registered with revised Articles of Association. Thus, the GSB is the Charity recognised by the Charity Commission and the Fellowship is recognised by the Charity Commission as independent affiliated groups having no constitution of their own. The General Service Board remains as the chief service arm of Conference, having the tremendous and humbling responsibility of being Custodians of the AA Tradition in Great Britain and English-Speaking Continental European Region.

The GSB 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.

The General Service Board holds three 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 royalties 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.

The investment company we have been using now for a number of years is **Churches, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA)** who 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 which is by Voluntary Contributions – Group and Intergroup contributions, Conventions; Legacies; Gratitude Week which as we know is held around the 10<sup>th</sup> June each year and that was started in 1988 and approved by Conference that year. It came from an idea by Chiltern & Thames Intergroup and used to be called Sobriety Week and they changed it to Gratitude Week; Personal contributions (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.*

## Fund Income & Expenditure

Totals	Financial Year to 30 / Sept / 2022 £'s	Financial Year to 30 / Sept / 2021 £'s
INCOME	1,852,346 <small>An increase of 527,867 from 2020-21</small>	1,324,479
EXPENDITURE	1,823,469 <small>An increase of 637,973 from 2020-21</small>	1,185,496
SUR / DEF	<b>28,877</b> <small>Before losses on investments of -81,974</small> <b>(53,097)</b>	<b>116,293</b> <small>Before gains on investments of 121,358</small> <b>260,341</b>

The headline figures above for the financial year ending 30th September last year the income was £1,852,346. So that was an increase on just over half a million from the previous year. The expenditure was £1,823,469. That also is an increase of £637,973 compared to the previous year, 2021. So our surplus / deficit is £28,877 that's before losses of investments of £81,974. Investments of course can go up and down as we all know. That's our deficit of £28,877 compared to last year's surplus before gains on investments of £116,293.

### 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: £703,715

## **Cost of Publications**

Represents all external printing of items on the Literature Stock list plus Share & Roundabout  
Purchasing of Literature costs: £249,195

## **Comparison of Figures with Previous Year**

	2021-22	2020-21
Income from Publications	= £703,715	£457,315
	LESS	
Cost of Publications	= £249,195	£172,484
Surplus	= £454,520	£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
- Stationery, 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**

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 (£2,279,336). AA & CC recommended practice.

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

We don't touch the other two accounts, the restricted ones. We can't spend any of that money here in the UK so our account really is the open one.

### **Prudent Reserve Calculation 2022-2023**

Total Expenditure 2021 to 2022	£1,823,469
One Quarter's Operating Fund	£455,867
Charities Required Total Reserve	£2,279,336

#### **Taken From 2021 / 2022 Audited A/c**

ASSETS: Investments & Cash – Creditors	£2,250,265
LESS	
Warranty 2 level (W2)	£2,279,336
Capital over & above W2	<b>-£29,071</b>

*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 2021	£871,604
Capital over & above W2 2022	(£29,071)
Increase on 2020 to 2021	<b>£899,675</b>

The above shows that our surplus over and above the prudent reserve has been fully deployed on Primary Purpose work during 2021-22.

In addition to this, as society has opened up again post pandemic, so our expenditure has increased with the resumption of service meetings at GSO and the associated travel and accommodation costs.

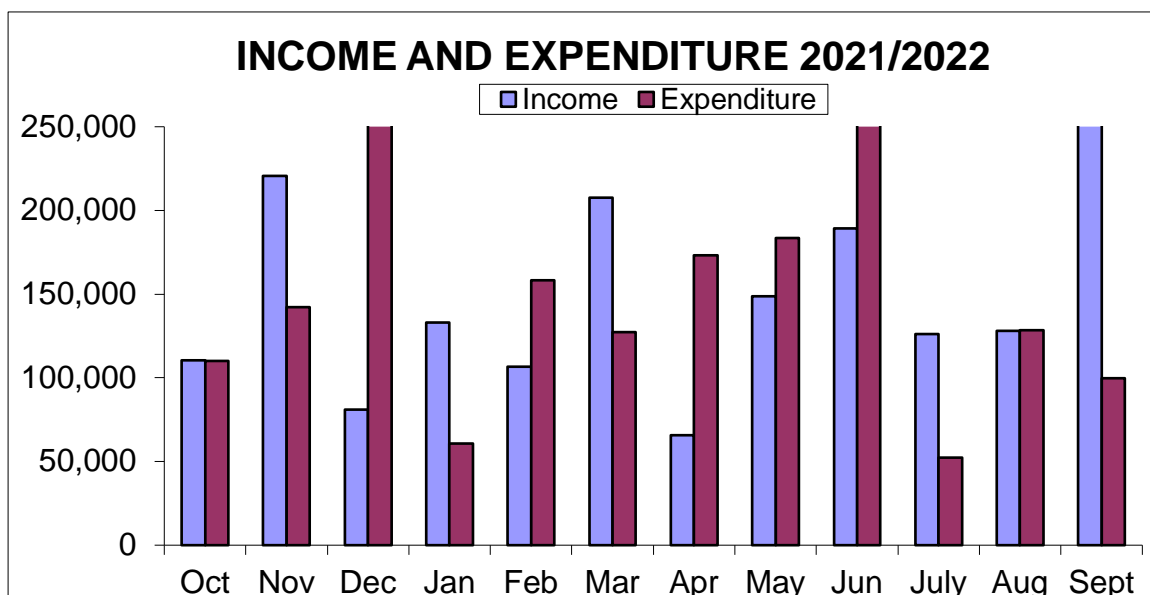
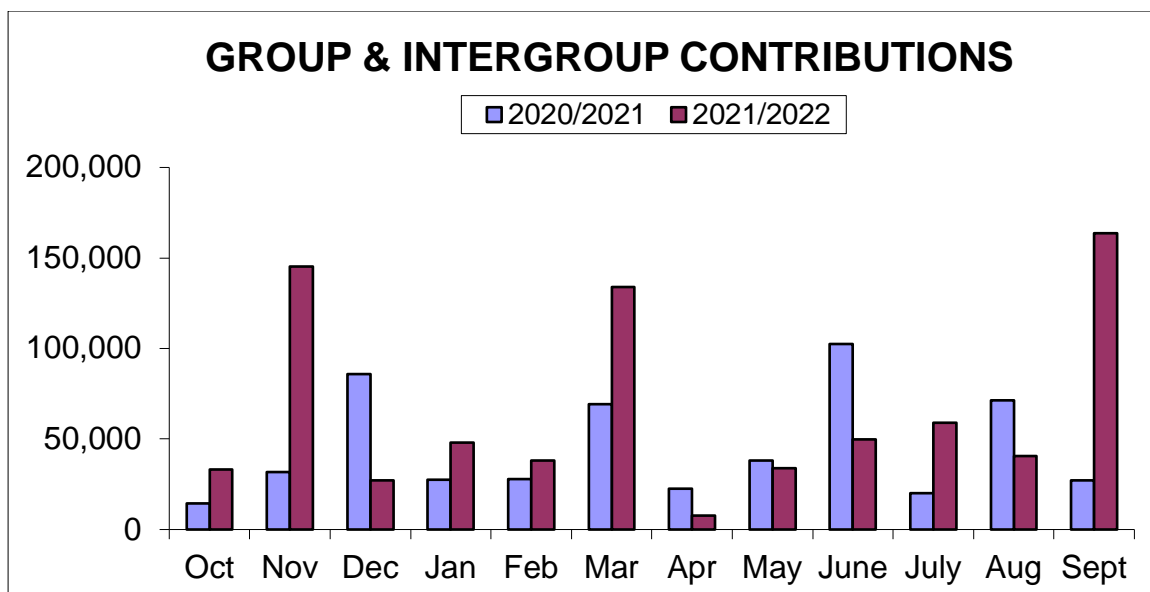
Please continue to send your surplus funds at regular and steady intervals, through the service structure to GSO.

This will ensure that we can plan and carry out the Primary Purpose work that the Fellowship, through its Annual Conference, asks us to do.

Please do come along to the Finance Seminar on Saturday 24 June 2023. This is open to all Intergroup and Regional Treasurers and those interested in taking on these roles. It will be a hybrid event to ensure maximum participation and inclusivity.

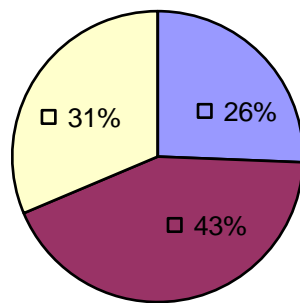
Next, it's the graphs and Pie Charts and they show:

- Annual Group and Intergroup Contributions to GSO
- Income and Expenditure
- Allocation of Total Expenditure
- Sources of Total Income
- Group and Intergroup Contributions 2011 - 2022



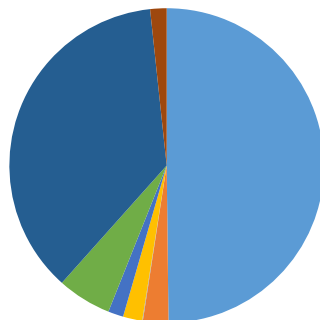


### TOTAL EXPENSES 2021-2022



■ PUBLICATION ■ FELLOWSHIP ■ ADMIN

### TOTAL INCOME



■ Contributions inc grat  
■ Personal Gift Aid  
■ Conventions  
■ Interest on Investments  
■ Conference Income  
■ 75th event  
■ Publications  
■ CJRS RETURNED

Our total income. As you can see the biggest bit is fellowship contributions, personal Gift Aid, Conventions is there, interest on investments and the 75<sup>th</sup> is the green one. Publications is the next largest in dark blue.

## GROUP & INTERGROUP CONTRIBUTIONS 2011 - 2022

	<u>2011/</u>	<u>2012/</u>	<u>2013/</u>	<u>2014/</u>	<u>2015/</u>	<u>2016/</u>	<u>2017/</u>	<u>2018/</u>	<u>2019/</u>	<u>2020/</u>	<u>2021/</u>
	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
October	26,221	38,341	28,060	26,214	30,591	32,155	108,268	27,063	15,069	14,485	33,165
November	52,863	26,040	44,317	16,656	20,384	55,447	26,366	79,647	44,274	31,717	145,144
December	52,492	66,029	30,585	50,712	85,807	44,007	46,905	29,824	96,429	85,693	27,101
January	62,529	44,671	41,951	70,085	60,297	26,315	49,387	39,768	19,610	27,519	48,182
February	37,583	32,164	44,496	32,456	40,084	92,820	44,679	17,295	61,792	27,935	37,990
March	75,140	105,825	81,888	108,065	86,854	99,720	74,569	73,791	60,954	69,135	133,881
April	62,461	45,608	48,917	18,771	44,648	7,922	32,412	12,296	36,579	22,626	7,705
May	59,300	59,661	34,608	33,452	38,590	61,075	21,900	24,702	47,344	38,151	33,814
June	102,802	46,531	54,724	94,833	65,356	71,196	85,223	168,473	41,521	102,400	49,683
July	70,474	51,637	35,224	30,374	34,374	60,493	71,332	15,379	45,941	19,919	59,151
August	36,327	48,456	15,748	36,980	47,229	51,791	26,703	39,129	57,446	71,181	40,603
September	85,582	102,400	115,127	126,085	119,663	60,305	83,864	76,860	98,506	27,143	163,754
	723,773	667,363	575,645	644,683	673,877	663,246	671,608	604,228	625,465	537,903	780,173

If anyone would like a copy of this presentation then I am happy to send it out. I'd just like to thank the Finance Committee who have been a great help each quarter when it meets, the GSO staff and my fellow Board Trustees for their support and you really, for making this job really worthwhile. It's one of the most important jobs in AA and the more it is spoken about the more it demystifies it and I am looking forward to hosting the Finance Seminar here in York in June.

I spoke to a previous Honorary Treasurer at one of the 75<sup>th</sup> Sub Committees, I pulled him aside and said I was thinking about doing one of these Seminars and putting it to the Board and he said go for it. He's held one ten or twelve years ago and said it was really informative and got a lot of people involved. We spoke about it at the Regional Treasurers Meeting in January and everyone was very enthusiastic and I think it is going to be a great event. Thank you.

### Literature

(Justin T))

Hello, my name is Justin, I'm an alcoholic and I'm the Trustee for Literature until Sunday. We're going to just have a quick look at two things. We've got an item for Conference approval which you had sent out in your pack, way back in December. On which we've had feedback from the Fellowship, which we've digested some which we've incorporated, some of which we haven't. I'm also going to give you a bit of an update on news from the Literature Sub Committee.

So first off, there's an item for Conference approval 'Sponsorship into Service'. I know from conversations I've had over the length of well, this afternoon basically, as long as Conference has been going on this weekend, that people have found it interesting and hopefully can see a use for it which is always gratifying. We've got a few alterations to the draft that was sent to you, and if you feel like getting out your copy from your conference pack, you can make the changes. The first one is on page three in an article called 'Sponsors Galore!' by Robert and eagle-eyed observers will note that on the paragraph that starts - sometime later I

became the GSR general service representative of my new home group. Eagle-eyed observers will know from a previous Conference that we made a decision, or you made a decision, that in this country, we'd refer to it as a group service representative. So, we're following Conferences guideline there.

The next change is in an article called 'Sponsorship by Example', by Laura these are all pseudonyms by the way. It refers to two items where she's made a pun around responsibility. And some people including her when she reread it found it a bit clumsy so she sent me a note saying Page 2, para. 2 and Page 6, para. 3: "Can I suggest that the term 'respons(or)bility' be altered to 're(sponsor)bility'? (Also 'respons(or)ble' to 're(sponsor)ble')". She sends her apologies to conference for what she now regards as a mistake.

We had some responses from the feedback which sadly missed the cut off dates but rather than my initial reaction of just feeling peevish about that I thought we've got to get the best possible pamphlet that we can, so we met again as Literature Sub Committee to discuss it. The two words which perhaps were a little problematic, are on the first page in the first paragraph and should be easy to find. In which it says new members will find that the selflessness and selfishness which characterizes the alcoholic will be overcome, they weren't happy with that word by doing service and cooperating with their fellows in a common enterprise. It was felt this could be made a lot more simple and clearer by saying will be reduced by doing service and cooperating with their fellows in a common purpose. So it's a slight change in meaning and also a slightly clearer description.

Things we didn't incorporate, and we wouldn't normally do this but as we only have one item for this Conference. It was use of the word 'groom'. And it was put forward that maybe that was a bit suspect. We, however, felt it was just a connotation rather than a definite implication. We also had a logistical problem in that we would need to go back to the author of this article to ask for their approval to change the piece because it's their experience. So we've decided to keep that.

It was also proposed by one group that we add a graphic to the pamphlet detailing required periods of sobriety and brief descriptions of roles at group level which I think is really important information to have and the Literature Sub Committee agree totally on that, but we didn't feel it belonged in this pamphlet. Part of this pamphlet is talking about not only service at group level, but at intergroup, regions, subcommittees, boards, World Service meetings, you name it. And if we put all that in, it would be a bit of a nightmare. However, we the Literature Sub Committee have resolved to try and work on something like that that can be incorporated in a future edition of the Service Handbook.

I'd like to thank everybody who got involved in this pamphlet, it came from a Conference decision in 2021. We had hoped to present something fairly swiftly but there was still a couple of things that needed tidying up at last year's Conference in the Handbooks and until we had that fully agreed we couldn't conclude our work on this. Also, we had to do a little bit of arm twisting to get more contributions from the Fellowship.

So, thanks to those who submitted articles and their experience, thanks to those who gave feedback on the draft that went out, it was all read, digested and we believe processed appropriately. Thanks to the Literature Sub Committee who really grafted on this as they graft on virtually everything that comes our way. And I think it's time for a vote. So, if you like it, you know what to do.

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

Thank you very much. The literature is a complete waste of time if we don't use them. So, if you like it, please show it to people in your region, your intergroups and your groups.

Now, a quick run up of what we've been doing on the Literature Sub Committee and what we're planning to do for the rest of the year.

We did a lot of follow up from Conference last year. We created, as requested, a table topper and white cards on medication and we used wording previously approved by Conference so we were able to go straight ahead and do that and these are now available from GSO.

As part of last year's diversity recommendation, we have undertaken a review of the Handbooks for gender neutral references. So, without it being too clumsy, we've changed references to him, or him and her, to say just they and while his, and his her, have now become their. This is something that US Canada did and continue to do. We're all happy that it still reads clearly and isn't clumsy, as I said.

We've also been through checking and updating any factual inaccuracies. Some bodies whom we mention have changed names or changed addresses.

We've gone through to make sure that things adhere to our house style for literature. So use of capitalization and we've ensured that punctuation is consistent. So that's what we've been doing.

We are continuing work on a mental health and AA pamphlet which will be presented at Conference next year we hope. Again, this is work that has required submissions of people's experience from within the fellowship. And for those people who've stepped up and offered something, thank you very much. We put appeals out, both on the website and in AA Service News and if you feel you have something to say about the topic, please get in touch with the new literature trustee.

As a follow up to the work on diversity we've set in place a system where we will review every literature item prior to any reprints, both for the gender-neutral language that we talked about earlier, and also to apply the AAGB family look, which is new speak for branding guidelines and probably a lot more about what we are as a fellowship. If you'd like this presentation, this is done using the branding guidelines and this template is available on our website, imagine that.

We've also provided support to GSB Sub Committees for their pamphlets and Service Handbook Chapter revisions. We've supported Birmingham intergroup who have undertaken initiative to produce a pamphlet appealing to more diverse communities. They have a community liaison officer at Birmingham Intergroup and we've been helping him out in how to structure a leaflet that maybe appeals to a particular group.

This is where I'm maybe ought to apologize. We also helped prepare five literature submissions, which have gone to committees for review. If you're in Committee 6 you probably don't hate me as much as some of the other people might.

Other things that we've got in the pipeline for the next year. The Board agreed that the Handbooks are quite hard reading, the text is dense and to me it looks like the terms and conditions on a guarantee for a washing machine. We want to make both Handbooks a little bit more engaging and readable and that doesn't mean by rewriting it, that means by laying it out in a slightly more accessible way with more space. We have very long lines at the moment, it's about 80 characters to a line and 65 is kind of the maximum. So that's one thing that we're looking at.

We are looking at a revision or an update on a little piece of literature called The Little Book, which some of you may know and some of you not know, but it incorporates many of the short extracts of

literature which people read out at meetings or that they would like to have for their own personal use, you know the various prayers, promises etc, etc. The Irish Fellowship have a very similar publication called 'Meeting in a Pocket' and I know that quite a lot of copies of that are doing the rounds in Britain as well, so the Literature Sub Committee are looking at creating an update on that which hopefully will be of use to the fellowship.

We're doing more support for more service Handbook Chapter updates. You may have noticed there's nothing in the Service Handbook about Share or Roundabout and hopefully that'll be remedied in the next year.

And, of course, the Literature Sub Committee will be inundated with follow up requests from this weekend. Also it's not just will the Board get a pamphlet organized on this, it's every piece of wording that committees create. If it applies or changes something that's in the Service or Structure Handbook, we have to reflect that and present it back to Conference as rejigged text for next year.

A little bit of news from the World Service Meeting. I was very fortunate in being able to attend the World Service Meeting planned for Japan and ended up in being in my spare room although I did have a takeaway Sushi from Tesco!

A few things that people might like to know about what's going on around the world, in particular, in US and Canada. They're working on a plain and simple Big Book with contemporary language and references. We don't have a delivery date for that. As you may know the US Canada Conference occurs at the end of this month. I'm sure progress reports will be issued then and in due course we'll hear about that and report back to you. But I think it's quite an interesting initiative that people would like to be aware of.

US and Canada is also working on the fifth edition of Alcoholics Anonymous. One of the other delegates asked if it would contain international stories and what we got back was that the remit for US Canada is to create a book which offers identification for alcoholics within their own large and varied territory. They have lots of different ethnic groups and different backgrounds and trying to make it 'one size fits all' with something from Australia, some from New Zealand, something from here, etc, etc. is not what they're about. If we feel that the Big Book stories need to be more relevant to our own fellowship, and perhaps most importantly, our still suffering alcoholics within our territory. Then really the ball is in our court. Then maybe someone will feel strongly enough to want to put that to Conference in future.

So once again, thank you very much on behalf of the Literature Sub Committee, and I'd just like to introduce Jo, would you mind standing up just for a second. You'll see more of Jo tomorrow and Jo replaces me as Chair of Literature. She has sat on Literature before, and she's very well versed in what's required. She will be very good and I thank you, Jo, for all your support. Back to Shirley.

Shirley thanked everyone for what was a very productive evening and reminded everyone about the Sub Committee drop-in session being held on Saturday between 4.30 and 5.30 for anyone interested in joining a Sub Committee in the future.

Shirley closed the session asking everyone to join her in the Serenity Prayer.

## SATURDAY EVENING

### Continuation of General Service Board Reports

Shirley welcomed everyone back, asked for a moment's silence to reflect why we are here and remember the still suffering alcoholic., invited everyone to join her in saying the Preamble and went on to invite Tom Fox and Tim B (GSB) to commence the continuation of General Service Board reports.

### PI & E Comms

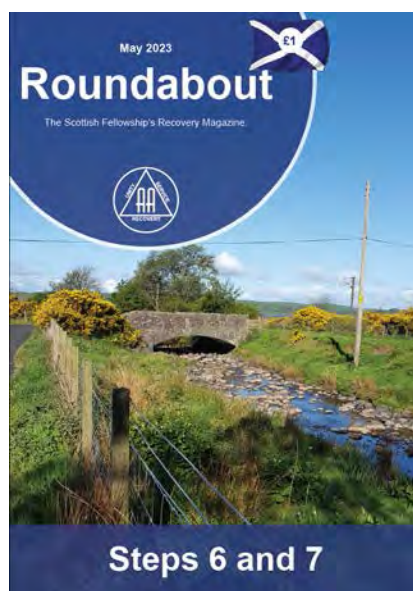
(Tom Fox and Tim B)

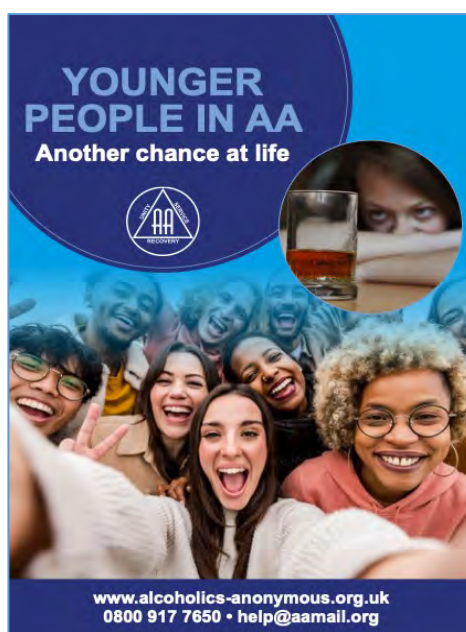
Good evening, Conference lovely to be here again. I start with the good news. I'm not going to be speaking for very long, which I'm sure will be a source of great delight to you. Well, the bad news is I do the first bit.

I want to reflect on some of the things that we've been doing as a committee over the year and how that has flowed from what the Conference has been asking of us. This time last year we unveiled the new brand guidelines / family look, I prefer that term for publications for AA and how we would try to create a coherent look so that people knew when they were picking up any publication that it came from us. That look we have included in the new website. Share, Roundabout and AA Service News are now using that look.

We will apply this look to reprints of publications, because we're not going to pulp 10s of 1000s of pounds worth of publications just to rebrand it, as new editions are coming out and new publications are coming forward., then we will apply that look to them and I'm sure you will all agree that is a sensible use of the resources of the Fellowship.

Here's what it looks like on Share and Roundabout, copies of which are available from a service desk near you:





And we now have that look on AA Service News and this is a publication that we are reviewing at the moment for Younger People in AA using Conference approved material, but to give it the look consistent with the other materials that we're producing.

I can't let the occasion pass without talking about the BBC documentary, although Stevie very helpfully last night stole just about everything I was going to say and may I say that's not for the first time! I think it gave a very positive view of the fellowship. It was very well received. I have to tell you that I was summoned to a number of meetings before it went out to give account of myself and explain how dare we do something like this. I waited until after it was broadcast to attend these meetings, most of which turned into love fests. It was wonderful. I felt like a rock star.

We got increased web traffic and we've had some fantastic feedback from local groups and there's been interest from as far afield as Australia and the United States.

I'm going to try and tell a story now without choking up and I've not managed it so far, so I hope I manage it tonight. Immediately after the broadcast, I got a phone call within five minutes of it being broadcast from someone I've known professionally for over 30 years in tears, he'd been watching the programme. He's been troubled with alcohol addiction for the past 25 years and he's never done anything about it. We got him to a meeting the next day. He's still going and for me when we set out on this journey, we said if we could save one life it was worth it. Well, I know of one I think we've saved and I know that other people have had similar experiences.

It was a difficult project. It was hard work. We put a lot of thought and energy into preserving the Traditions of the fellowship. I think we did it. And I think we did it in a way that we should be proud. I can't let the evening pass without a huge thanks to the members of the fellowship, who made this possible, not just the ones you saw on the programme, the many dozens of them who spoke to the programme makers, and who took the programme in an entirely different direction from the conception the programme makers had and a direction I think we can all be proud of. So, thank you very much. Thank you very much fellowship. I don't know if anybody's here that was involved in it but certainly people here who I spoke to pre broadcast, who had real concerns about it, and who were really delighted with what they saw and we should be very proud.



I also want to mention some of the other services that we have available and are under the remit of the committee, the help desk, the file store and Workplace available to all AA service group users for nothing. It's our version of a kind of internal Facebook for storing files securely and for having a collaborative workplace with the others doing service. If you want to get one see Tim, he's the man that will be able to tell you how you can get a workplace area for yourselves. We also continue to support microsites. With the help of the Northern Service Office, make sure that people can have generic AA email addresses. Those of you within the structure should not be committing emails to the airwaves that are not within that AA structure. There's a whole variety of reasons for it, but they're there, they're available, please use them.

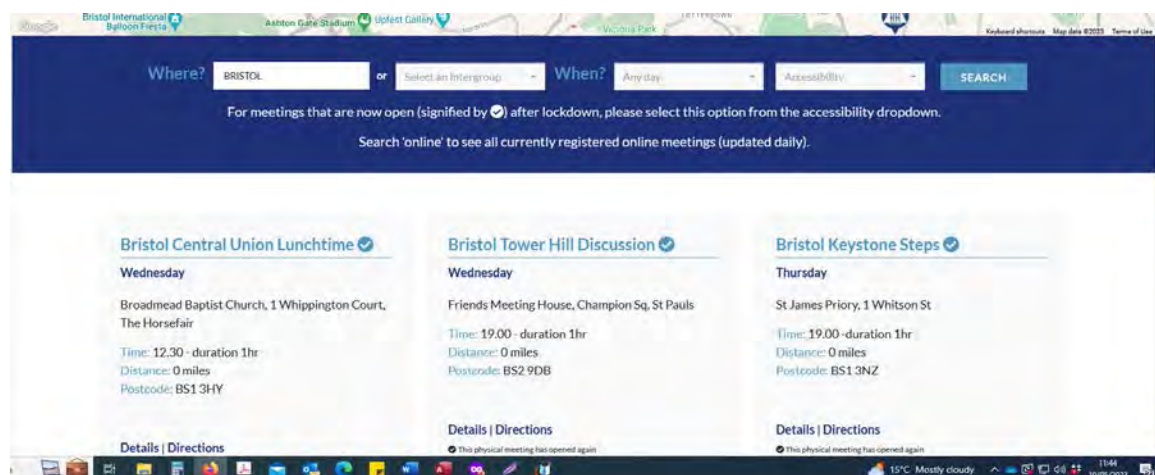
On to the main part of the proceedings. Last year at Conference, we were given requirements that we had to take into consideration for revamping the website. It needed to have a user-friendly meeting finder, and an online shop that was more accessible, easier to use, they wanted improved search functionality, improved navigation, and the ability to better sync meeting lists across independent websites and the AAGB website.

We've taken that as a template. Doing this is a big job. It's going to take us a fair amount of time, hopefully by the end of this year. What we wanted to do is get it right, rather than get it quick and we wanted something that we could show you today.

Now, before we show you it, this is not the final product, it's nowhere near the final product it's simply some pages to give you an idea of what it's going to look like and what it is going to feel like. It's clunky, it doesn't work like a website, it's just a demonstration.

We've used the brand guidelines throughout the website to continue that family look. We've got improvements in accessibility, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines too. Better navigation. We've got a new meeting finder. We've looked at the issue of the pink form and how we can make that easier for groups to use and that's still work in progress. And we're improving the availability of the site search engines, so the site renders itself more quickly to those looking for information and support. Now, we're going to show you the new website.

Good evening, Conference. My name is Tim and I'm an alcoholic. It's lovely to be here and good to see you all. So, as Tom mentioned, what we've got for you this evening is a representation of the design features of the new website. It's what the project team has taken a long time to work over. We've taken our care and time over it. But I thought we'd start off with reminding you with what we have.

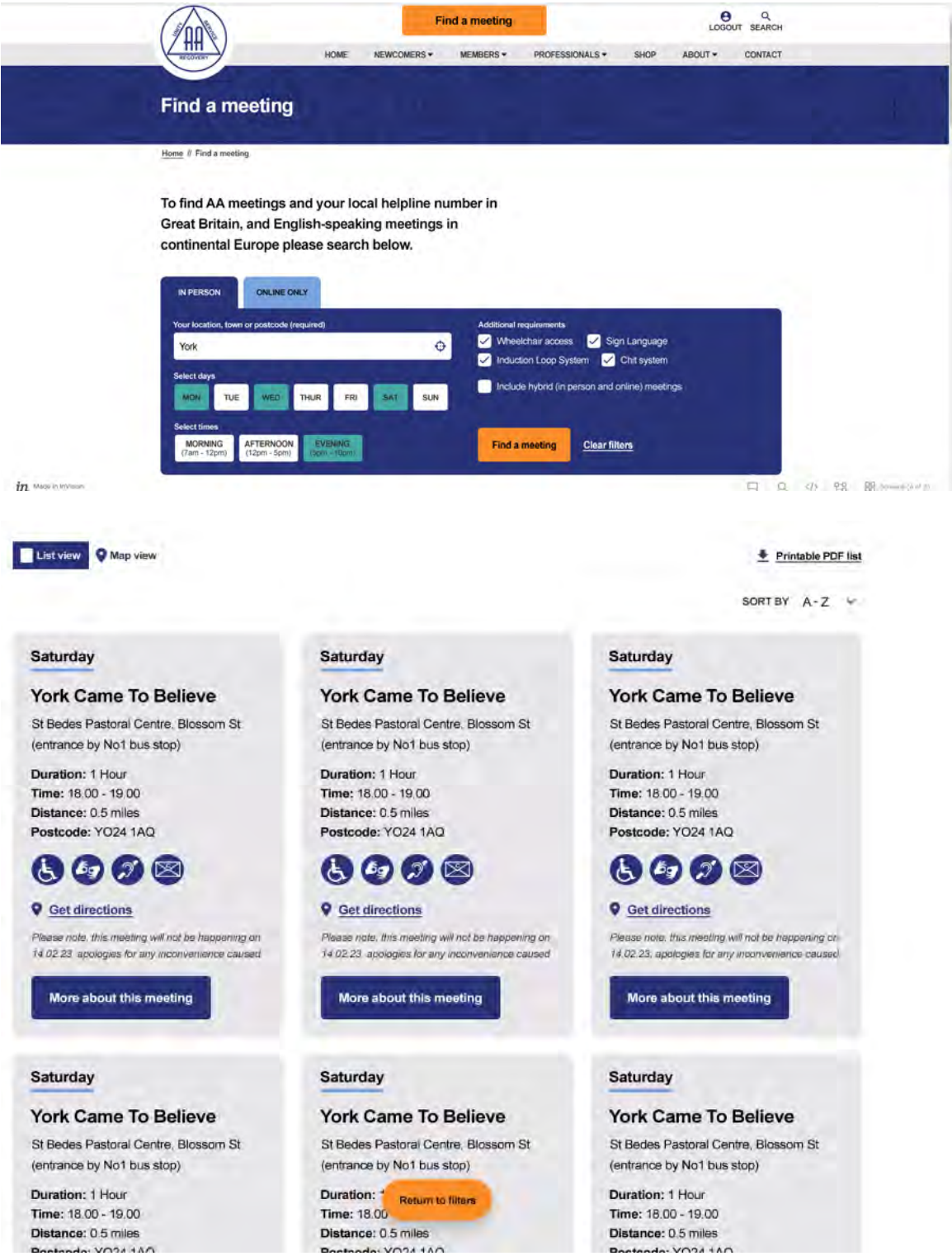


We're all familiar with this. So search for a meeting takes you to the meeting. It's all a bit clunky. And you have lots of lovely meetings to choose from. This is Bristol where I come from, so we know there's a lot



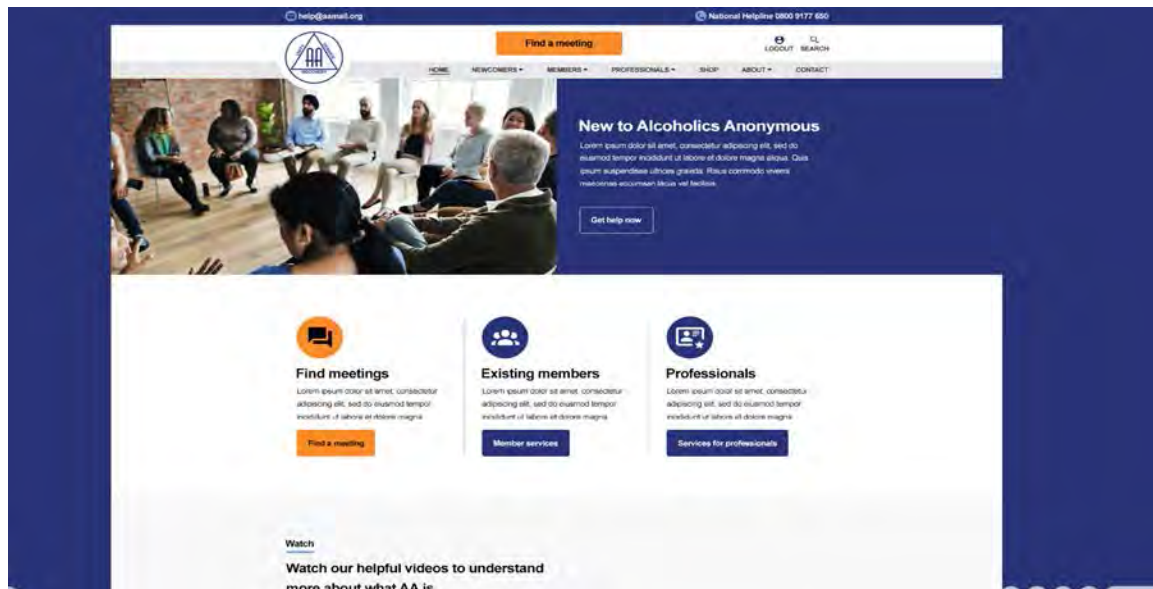
there and the navigation is difficult. This was one of the things we are asked to improve and we're asked to improve the meeting finder in particular.

I've got three different user journeys that I'm going to show and run through with you. First one is about the meeting finder, the second one gives you a flavour of what the shop will look like and the third one is what the team is calling a flex page. It's a journey to a flex page and that is really just a template that we can then use for content and placing different types of content anywhere in the website. We'll start off with the meeting finder one.



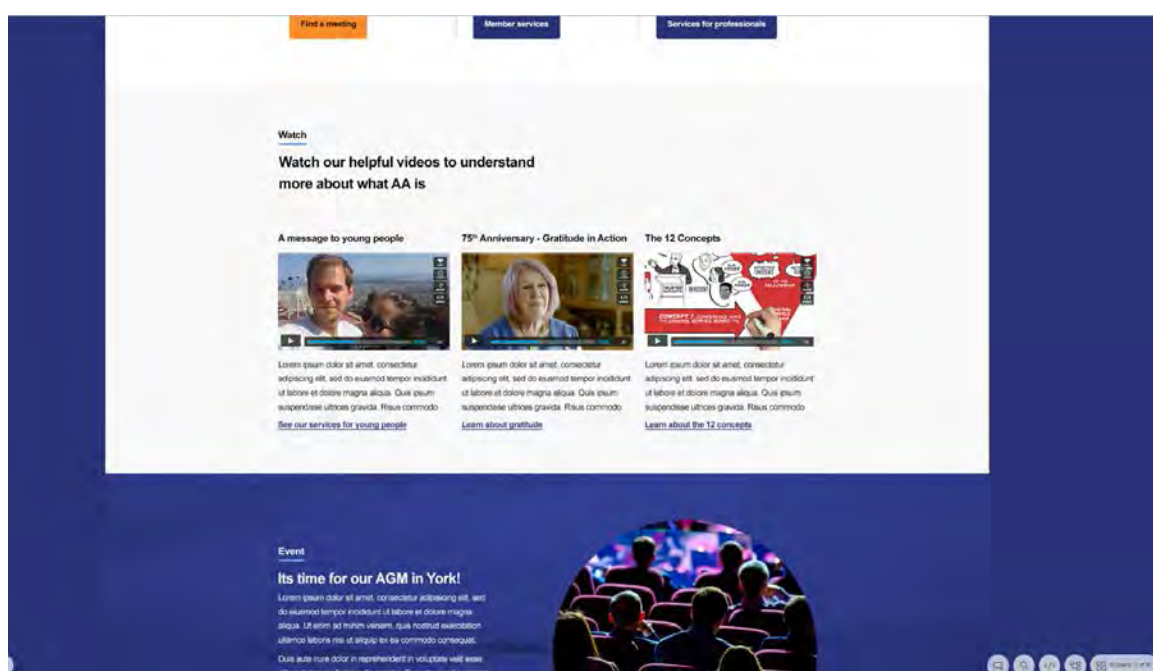
This is using the design features of the family look brand guidelines. You can see it follows the colour scheme throughout. Navigation has been improved and is consistent throughout the whole website. So instead of having the different ways of navigating on the old website, you can see at the top we have an index navigation bar. There's a homepage which will always take you back here.

There's a search facility which will allow search across the whole of the site. We still are working on that and finding out the best way of doing it because there are several different approaches we can take.



Our main audiences which are newcomers, members and professionals and the other main sites keeping in mind that from the analytics that we've already carried out, the meeting finder is by far the most visited page on the whole of the website. The shop is also an important and well visited page for us. We also have replicated that, again, it's just a mock up at the moment. This may not be the way the final site looks.

We have a big section for newcomers because we want to attract newcomers and make it easy for them to find what they're looking for.





#### Discover

### About Alcoholics Anonymous

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[Learn more about the organisation](#)

#### Archive

### Visit the archive

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[Visit the archive](#)



#### Shop

### The Alcoholics Anonymous shop

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[Visit the AA shop](#)

#### Help and support

Call our National Helpline FREE on  
**0800 9177 650**  
Email our support team  
[help@aaemail.org](mailto:help@aaemail.org)

#### The AA meeting finder

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[Find a meeting](#)

#### Login or update your basket

[Login](#)

[View basket](#)



[HOME](#)

[NEWCOMERS](#)

[MEMBERS](#)

[PROFESSIONALS](#)

[SHOP](#)

[ABOUT](#)

[CONTACT](#)

We have the meeting finder, existing members and professionals and then we can put in additional sections so we can have sections including videos, which will play in in the browser, rather than popping out and playing elsewhere. We can put in other sections like perhaps our events where it can take it to a list of

events. Those events can be added to a calendar. They can show more information and more details on those events and different features about Alcoholics Anonymous, the archive, these are just example features but they give you a flavour of the type of thing we can put in different pages it across the site. The sho link towards the bottom there and then at the very bottom of the page again, we replicate what we've got at the top to make it easy to navigate so you don't have to scroll all the way back up which is one of the drawbacks that we've got with the existing site.

At the very bottom you can see we've still got that index, index page or the index links to take you straight from here to wherever you want to go on the website.

The meeting finder, see above, is what we've got to make a simple, clean and efficient meeting finder. We have some tabs. in person meetings. One of the requirements we were asked for was to make a separate facility for online meetings, so we split those out, but they're right next to each other and easy to access. You can see the various features there, you can put in a location and if you click on the target, I suppose is the best word for that, it will, if you've got Location Services enabled if you're on a mobile device, it will take you to your location. It will also do that if you have location services on your laptop.

There are options where you can filter by day, you can choose your time slot, and then if you have some other accessibility needs, you can tick the various ones that you want, click find the meeting and it will go away and find the meetings for you. So again, we've incorporated the family look so we have the same colours throughout. These colours are part of the Accessibility Standards, the current Level 2 Government Standards, so they're used throughout the website.

Little touches mean quite a lot. So, one of the things is an orange Find a Meeting button. You'll see that all throughout the site. Whenever people are trying to look for a meeting, if they visit the site more than once they'll see the same thing and hopefully that makes it easy for people to find the meeting, wherever they are, or the meeting finder. Clicking on that, again, shows that first list of the meetings that meet the search criteria that you've put into the system. Instead of having the endless scrolling that we have at the moment. You end up with 12 of these cards, we call them cards and it starts off presenting them to you closest first and moving away and distance as the default view. But you can change it to a map view if you like and that will be a representation on Google Maps if that's what you want to see. There's also an option on this page where you can download that list as a PDF file. You can present it as a PDF, which you can either download or you can print straight from your browser. Depends on how you have your device setup.

As we go a bit further down, you can see the number of cards and we have this Return to Filters option there, which on the live site will be something that scrolls with you as you go up and down the page. Again, to help navigation and it will always take you back to your filter search where you can either cancel that search or redo another one. And then clicking on the detail on one of these cards takes you into the detail for that particular meeting. So it has the same information. That's our starting point because we have good information for our meetings. As long as the groups update us and it's vital that we do get that information updated. It shows you the details in more detail for that for that particular meeting. It also shows you any of the accessibility facilities that are available for that meeting using standard symbols, recognizable symbols that are across websites, so they're familiar.

You get Google Maps, and again, you can click on a link to actually get those directions again, as long as you have location services switched on, on your device. The local helpline which is part of the data that we have against each meeting, if it's been provided, then it's available. If there is a local helpline that is shown for the meeting which again, if you're a newcomer, it may help you be able to find someone to speak to or get more information.



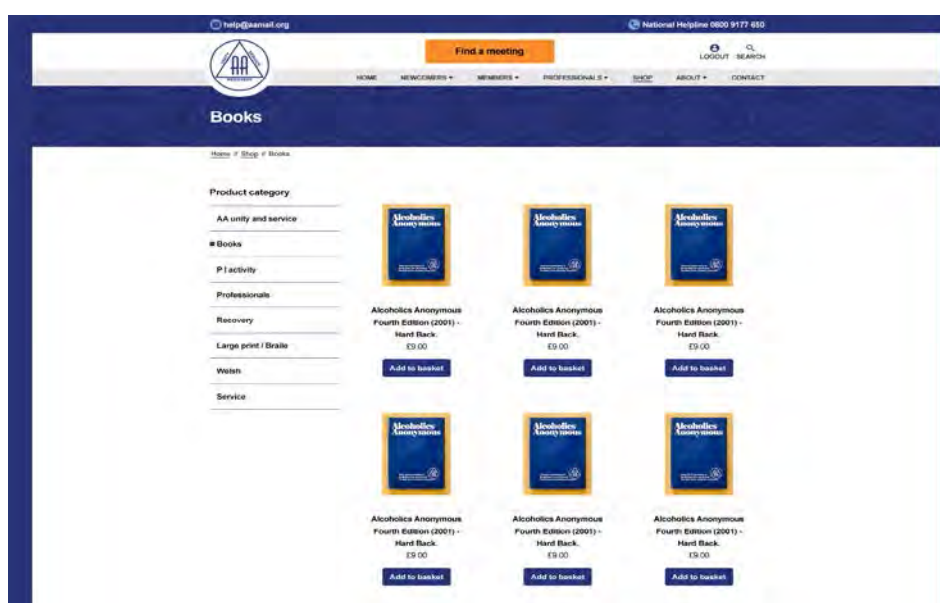
We have links to the common and standard social media apps, so if you're on a mobile device, for instance, and you click on one of those links, and you're already logged in, it will take you straight to that page where you can then share that information with whoever you need to. And also, you have an option to add that detail for that day to your calendar, default would be iCal but you can always choose your Google calendar as well and then it will put it straight in as an entry, which is all standard.

The whole point about what we've got here is we've got a modern, flexible and adaptable customizable website. It's a WordPress based site which is used by millions of websites across the world so it makes it portable as well. If ever we need to move it or if ever we need to change it, we have that remit to be able to do that in house, which gives us so much more flexibility than we have at the moment.

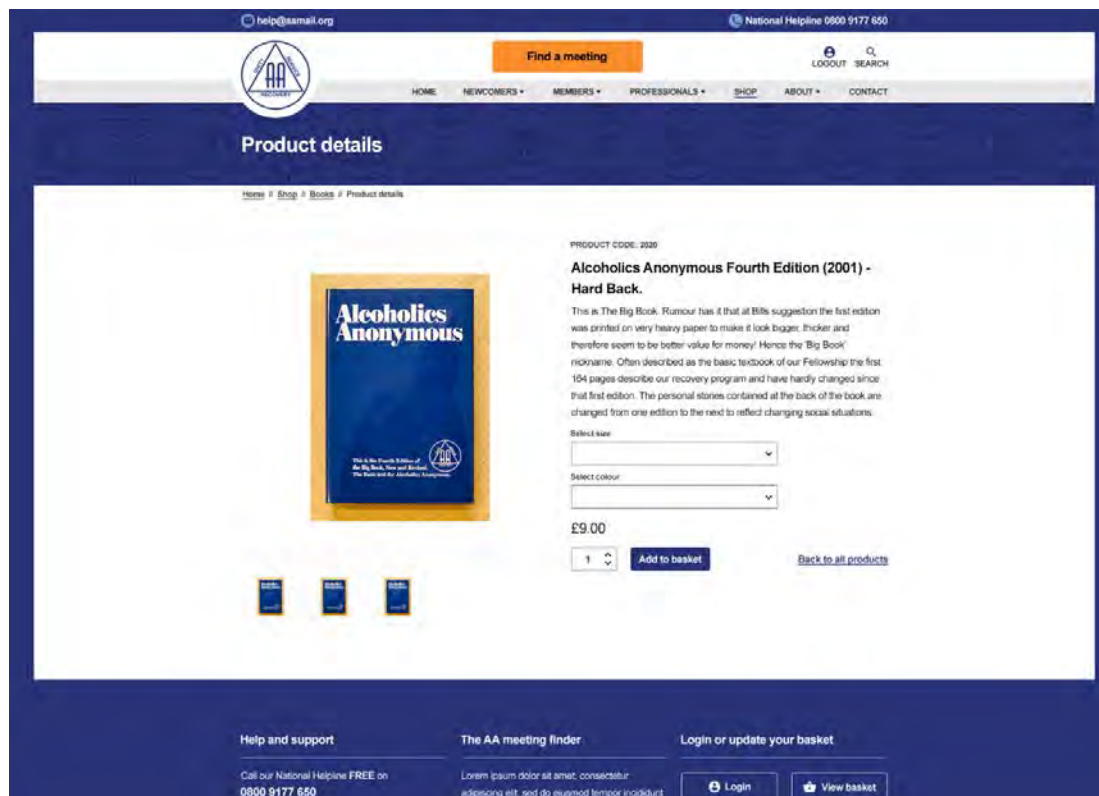
We've got some other information at the bottom and we've chosen just to put some information to explain the difference between our meetings which we think is helpful. Doesn't have to stay in this position. It's just a representation to show you what we can do. So that's the first workflow.

And again, at the bottom, we've got the same navigation so we have that same look and feel to help people navigate in all the way through.

The next one is the shop.



We click to the shop and what we're using for the shop is something called WooCommerce, which is a standard WordPress plugin. Again, the out of the box functionality for WooCommerce is far more than we already have in terms of the functionality for our existing shop. We won't be restricted to PayPal for instance, we won't need to have a minimum of 1p on items that are free, which is always a bugbear, so we'll have that type of flexibility out of the box and of course we can always add to that and we can customize it. You can see how the presentation is cleaner and just easier to navigate, they're easier to see and nicer to look at.



Selecting on an option can take you into the detail where you can actually order various quantities. We have the facility to do things like if we have multiple language versions, we could set that up as one product but you just choose the option that you want, which cuts down on the number of items on the store and makes it easier to navigate. If we have different visual representations and we can also add those which we can't do at the moment. So that is the type of thing we'll have on the shop.



This is just an index page, but it gives you an idea where we can put tiled information. So, we've got different ways of presenting information in bite sized chunks, which can attract people's interest and allow users to then click on these things and get more information and drill down deeper into the website when the whole time they can come back. It's always easy to navigate back to where you are so you don't get lost in the website, which is one of the things that can happen with our current setup. So when you're on an index

page, the navigation bar on the side reflects what you have on that page, it gives you another way of navigating around the information that you're looking at.

This is what we call a flex page. This is just a template. This is our base template to then create content to put wherever we want in the website and it just shows you the flexibility. We have a navigation bar which can be designed and customized to suit. You can put text, you can put pictures, image galleries anything you want.

Down the side we have what are called widgets. Widgets are really just a link to more information, but we can colour code them so we can make them attractive. Again, the accessibility standards are kept throughout those so the colours can be recognizable by people with accessibility needs.

We can put in videos which and which will play within the browser rather than having to pop out We have accordion views, this is one that is not dynamic, but this is where it could be used for FAQs for instance or if we put trying to put information about 'Are you an Alcoholic' would be a question might be this headline. They can pop it open and get a bit of information to answer that and If they're then interested there's a standard button or a link that will take them to another place in the site so they can get more information.

So, it's leading people where they want to go and keep in mind that this site is optimized for search engines. We can also track the users much more effectively than we can now. We can monitor the usage and we can tailor the site as we see the use develop so that we can make it more responsive and more flexible and meet the needs of the people who are visiting, whether they be newcomers or existing members, or professionals or whoever.

## **Telephones/First Response**

(Levy P)

Good evening, Conference and just to follow up on what Tim and Tom said, telephones also had a mission that was set up by Conference and we started working on that last year.

### **The National Telephone Sub Committee background since Conference 2021**

The Sub Committee has worked on the task it was set to improve the National Helpline, Safeguarding, Training and other procedures involved with keeping the fellowship and callers to the National Helpline safe.

During this time, the Sub Committee was merged with the Online Response Service and the Chat Now Service as it was thought these two service sectors would benefit more from being combined with the Telephone Service as all three are concerned with first contact with the suffering alcoholic, however, on yearly review, it was decided that Chat Now and Online Response Service would have their own Trustee, but would meet regularly with the Telephone Sub Committee to discuss mutual interests.

We have had one of these meetings already this year, and it was very beneficial for both parties.

### **What we worked on:**

Training, a Working Group was formed which was composed of members of the Sub Committee and experienced TLOs to produce guidelines for telephone volunteers, which helplines could use to ensure their safety and the safety of the callers.

This was the recommendation from Conference:



The Committee recommends that the General Service Board request the Telephone Sub Committee and the Literature Sub Committee to review Chapter 10, especially with regard to the use of mobile phones and new technologies. We would also recommend that this opportunity to be taken to review the national telephone service as a whole.

The National Helpline. The Working Group of the Sub Committee identified regular problems which the national helpline encounters dealing with call:

- No volunteers in place
- Service suspension
- Service availability
- Instantaneous hangups
- Unchecked answer phone messages
- Constant engaged tone

A Working Group of the Sub Committee was formed to answer the questions posed by Conference 2021 of improving the existing helpline. The Sub Committee is still working on this, but considers it has found a solution which may solve the problems local help lines have encountered as more callers use mobile phones to contact the 0800 number.

The Working Group identified regular problems, which is National Helpline encounters dealing with calls. But the biggest problem which the National Helpline faces in going forward is the diversity of service providers which each of the helplines use, some are tied into contracts which will take time to expire. We see the way forward as a smooth transition from those helplines who want to be involved, to roll out the hub immediately for them and let others gradually join the hub as their existing contracts expire.

Since 2021, the Sub Committee has concerned itself with resolving the task it was set to improve National Helpline and the literature for advice on abusive callers and safeguarding and training.

We're still working on most of these tasks as the fellowship must understand the massive undertaking like improving the overall service of the 0800 number is not something that can be undertaken easily. This was hindered further by a two-year lockdown caused by the global pandemic. It must be investigated thoroughly before any system is implemented, which might remove the autonomy of helplines or damage the system in the process.

We have approached several companies with their views and options of how we can improve the service. Many of them have been following a similar strand. A national hub, which then distributes calls to local helplines will be the simplest, most cost effective and easiest option to implement. But there are many complications which we must overcome before we can get to that stage. Principally, it is the agreement of those responsible for maintaining those helplines who perhaps because of the seminar in October 2022 failed to understand what the mechanical approach this would be.

The 0800 number has many problems since the introduction of mobile phones. The main problem is calls not being routed within the area where the original caller is based. This means that to return the information about the call, it can go through up to three hands, slowing the response time to reconnect with the caller.

Other problems are personal answer phones where messages are left with details of suffering alcoholics or other callers which are then lost. Difficulty in parking or blocking persistent or nuisance callers. Responders not logging off, mechanical failure, invoices not being paid, etc.

Accordingly, a working party of the Sub Committee was formed to investigate solutions to these problems.

The systems we are investigating is not a drastic change in the way the present service works, but it is a change which may affect the suppliers of the local helplines. Our impression from the feedback received is that some of the fellowships still does not understand what we are proposing, which is obvious since we only received 13 responses to the feedback survey we sent out.

Therefore, we decided that we will go through the Confidential Directory and speak to all RTLOs or TLOs is listed in there introducing ourselves and asking what they thought of the service at present and how they think it could be improved. Then explain the system we are proposing and asking if there's anything that they're unclear about or perhaps if they could suggest improvements themselves. We are still in the process of doing this.

From the very beginning, we always knew that this was going to be more of a PR problem than a Telecoms problem, especially when helplines may be fearful of losing their autonomy of their telephone service if this is not explained correctly to them.

There are mainly two main suppliers: Tamar Communications and BT. We have found that many Tamar customers were previously BT customers and became unhappy with the quality of service, the cost and duration and flexibility of the contract. All of the Tamar customers who we spoke to (so far) are very pleased with the service that they have.

We have approached five telecom companies and they were all given the same specs for the service:

1. To provide us with a system which could not interfere with the running of the local helplines, so there will be no noticeable differences of service at each individual helpline. The only change would be separating those helplines who wish to join the hub from those that don't.
2. We also had to have a system which will disable the responder's personal answering service when on duty. Some calls are lost due to personal answering machines.
3. The system would be able to block or park nuisance callers very quickly. Presently, the 0800 number can only block calls the next day. Nuisance callers are popular – we had one nuisance caller that sometimes called 300 times in one night and this stops the suffering alcoholic from reaching one of the responders. That's the main thing and it's very costly to the fellowship.

All copper wire exchanges are being pulled out of BT's network by 2025. Any network still on the old system will have to change over before this time. We have been reliably informed that support for any companies which still use copper-based systems will be stopped from September 2023 and the plug will be pulled for all networks in 2025.

### **In Summary**

After speaking to several TLOs, it's extremely important that we ask them what their problems are as we proceed, although many of the grievances which have been brought to us can be local helpline problems. We must be very careful not to overcomplicate any new system. Although it has its flaws, we do not want to replace it with a Behemoth. From conversations with RTLOs many realize that an initial step towards improving their own local service, which directly benefits the National Helpline, is the merging of smaller helplines. This means fewer licenses nationally, thus decreasing cost.

Rationalize existing helplines and reinforce the reasons why rationalization is necessary.

Produce a detailed brief for Telecoms companies with an overview of the existing structure and a clear description of our needs.

The basis of any structure like this is good communications. An up-to-date Directory of all contacts in the Helpline Structure is essential. We've found the present Confidential Directory to be very ineffective.

Conference to be provided with a report on the present situation and the complication of the question asked, even though it appears simple. The Sub Committee have found that the answer is so complicated it needs the entire cooperation of the Regions and Intergroups to complete.

This cannot work or progress much further without the co-operation of all interested parties.

We are also in agreement that when the system launches it may be necessary to appoint a dedicated member of staff to oversee the administration of the 0800 helpline.

Any improvement on the system must ensure that it's simplified and future proofed. This will mean that it should be easy for any TLO to transfer the responsibilities without having to concern themselves with the responsibilities of the NTSC. We will continue to contact members of the Regional Telephone Service helplines throughout the UK, keeping them up to date with our progress.

It's been a lot of work. I was put into this last year and when it came to telephones I was lost. I really knew nothing about it. And I'm really, really grateful for the Sub Committee that I have had the privilege to work with. They have carried me this past year and they have taught me a lot.

We went through a training document and it wasn't easy. We provided the TLOs and RTLOs with a safeguarding document. It's very important to us that we protect the still suffering alcoholic and at the same time protect the responders. We have a responsibility.

We have been keeping track of a lot of the calls and we've been doing statistics. I didn't want to put the statistics into this because it's a lot of information. We're able to monitor the calls. We're able to see exactly where calls are coming from and we're keeping track of all this.

This is something moving forward, it might not seem like a lot, but it's been a lot of work this past year. Implementing this hub is not going to happen overnight, just like the website. There's still a lot of work to be done. A lot of T's to be crossed and a lot of I's to be dotted.

Just like with the website, when we proceed with this, we want to make sure that it's future proof and I mean, we don't want to leave anything up for chance.

So once again, I want to really thank the Sub Committee that I've been working with because they have been a tremendous help. They have taught me a lot in this past year and I definitely could not have done any of this without them. There's a couple of members of my committee here this evening and I want to say a special thanks to them. I will pass this also on to the ones that aren't here. Thank you everybody.

## **Race Today**

(Jo F and Ranjan B)

Good evening, Conference. My name is Jo and I'm an alcoholic and it's really nice to be here with Ranjan who you all know. Amongst other disciplines, I've had the privilege of working on the Race Today Working Group. It's been really, really exciting and very revealing to me personally.

My presentation outline really is to why look at race in AA specifically. Look at the Race Today working group and what we've done so far. So why look at race in AA today, the Fellowship is open to everyone, isn't it?

The AA Survey from 2020 suggests that only 2% of its members identified themselves as coming from minority ethnic communities.

Whereas the UK census from 2021 there was 18% of people identified themselves as coming from ethnic communities. So, there's a bit of a disparity there and Conference quite rightly, in 2021 Committee Six, Question One asked the question, how to reach out to alcoholics from black, Asian and ethnic minority communities, as the current membership of AA is predominantly white. You only have to look around the room to actually see that and certainly from a service perspective.

The summary of Committee Six recommendations were to have literature in different languages the Big Books in different languages and fortunately, we do have that and leaflets in different languages.

Use our magazines as vehicles to further carry that message, for example, having sets of information coming from specifically minority ethnic community groups.

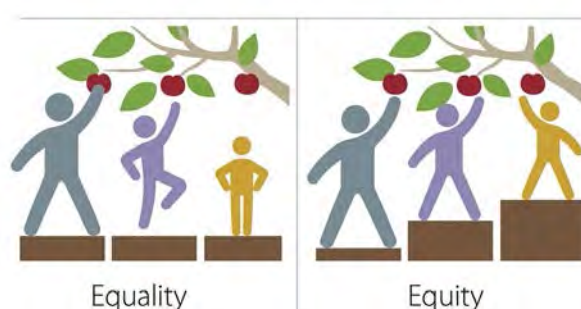
Use more of the website which hopefully we can in the future.

Use Public Information via intergroups and regions.

And I think this is really, really interesting. Use the experience, strength and hope of existing members from minority ethnic groups ... take cultural differences into account.

Before we move on to the work of the Race Today working group I think another reason why I think it's important is equity really, as white people we walk into a room and it's full of white people, but people of colour don't necessarily see that and I think it's providing just that little bit of extra help to actually help people feel comfortable and engage and keep them coming to the Fellowship.

For example, a recognizable community, an extra hand or you know, as this little diagram below suggests, a bit of a leg up really so we're all picking cherries at the same level.



That's the only way I could sort of describe it, from my perspective anyway. And this is already happening through a 'Gateway' online meeting which was established by the AA Community Development Officer, Birmingham and where it's an online meeting where people from the Punjabi communities meet and talk about AA and share their experience strength and hope. Stuff like that, everything that happens in a normal AA meeting but they're with people of the same colour, and it means that there is a stepping-stone to AA as a whole.

The Race Today working group was established in May 2022. And it comprises members who are drawn from the Fellowship as was suggested by Committee Six. There was a bit of an elephant in the room to begin with. It's like, how do we talk about this? From my perspective, it's like, well, how do I say this? You know, what's politically correct? Will I offend someone, that kind of thing. But, we laid our cards on the table and said this is what we're here to talk about. Let's talk about it.

The working group aims to help people from minority ethnic communities access the fellowship, and actually stay within the fellowship, thereby meeting our third tradition because clearly, the statistics show that from those communities, we're not actually meeting our third tradition. So, we realise it's going to take a long time, certainly from the information that has been shared on our online conventions.

Our first Race Today Convention that specifically covered race was held on the 22nd of October 2022. 91 people attended the event overall, 74 people were members of the fellowship with the remainder comprising of the committee, trustees from the UK, US and Canada and a poll was taken of the attendees ethnicity, and 50% presented themselves as coming from minority ethnic communities and 50% white. It was really interesting because we had people from all over the world attending and it was interesting to hear that mix of voices.

Workshops were held to explore why people from minority ethnic communities didn't necessarily attend AA, what were the barriers to entry? We heard some very painful and emotive stories from people who felt excluded because of their race, because of their color and or culture. Some people opened up for the first time to talk about the prejudice they felt in some of the rooms up by being ignored and from an American example, was that they overtly displayed the Confederate flag within the meeting.

The second convention was held on the 25th of March in the month just gone, and again, it was looking at access and retention to people coming to the fellowship from minority ethnic communities.

Some of the outcomes were:

- Greet well - no matter who
- Carry the message out to different communities via intergroups and regions (also suggested by Committee 6)
- Language and political correctness can be a barrier – sit down together quietly and ask
- Like with like meetings – equity
- Mentoring / sponsoring people into service
- Network created so people can talk all over the world and share best practice

### **Next Steps ...**

We're going to hold our next Race Today meeting at the London workshop at the end of this month.

Well, there's now not going to be a workshop at the Birmingham Convention and the Race Today Online Convention, that's our next online convention, will be held on 30<sup>th</sup> September of this year.

### **In Summary**

- It is not always easy but please don't be shy
- Let's try make it easier by extending that extra hand of friendship
- Lastly, though not least, a massive thank you to the Working Group / volunteers who have contributed to the journey so far

So that's really it and I just wondered if there were any questions for Ranjan and myself. Thank you.

*Time was given at the end of each presentation for questions to be asked from the floor.*

## **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention Update**

### **Introduction**

In 2016 Conference voted to hold a 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention in 2022 and asked the Board to form a committee that included members from across our Regions that had the experience of serving on our National Convention Committees.

This was carried out and in 2017 the committee was ratified by Conference.

One of the aims of the Committee was to be self-supporting financially.

To this end the Committee viewed many venues and selected the Leeds Arena as the venue that gave us the best value. Our contract with the Leeds Arena was signed in 2018 and the work of the committee started to take shape.

Our projections were for 4500 to 5000 members attending which would be around 7-8% of AAGB attending which as a pre-covid figure was realistic.

Other aspects that the committee believed to be paramount were:

- To have the event affordable for most of our Fellowship.
- To Carry our message to the still suffering Alcoholic over the course of the Convention.
- To work in Unity with our Fellowship across all Regions for our 75<sup>th</sup> event
- To have all sub-committees within our Service structure attend and engage the Fellowship at large over the weekend.

As a committee, we can report that in many ways we exceeded all our expectations of the above. Sadly, the aim of being self-supporting was not met which gave many of us on the committee sleepless nights. We believe that Covid and the financial situation during 2022 hindered our drive to be financially self-supporting – please see the financial report below.

The dedication and effort of the Committee helped to achieve an attendance of approx. 3200, which given the circumstances, was excellent.

Below you will also find reports submitted by all Committee members of their experience as part of the 75<sup>th</sup> Committee together with a conclusion which includes some highlights.

Stevie S  
Vice-Chair, GSB.

### **Finance**

I'm Clive and I'm an alcoholic. I'm also privileged to serve you as your Honorary Treasurer. As part of my duties as Hon. Treasurer of the Board, it was a great privilege and pleasure to work alongside Nick R who was the Treasurer of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention Sub Committee over this most momentous of weekends.

Before I get straight into the figures for the Convention, I would like to give a brief background to the event. Conference 2016 passed a resolution that requested the General Service Board to organise a special convention to be held in 2022 to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fellowship in Great Britain. One of the hopes for this convention was that it should aim to be self-supporting. We feel that whilst this memorable event did not prove to be as self-supporting as we had hoped, many other non-financial benefits were realised and indeed unexpected. One of these was the fantastic 5K fun run which was organised by Dean S, one of our Leeds based members on the Saturday morning of the weekend. **It is extremely heartening to remember that all these benefits were realised despite emerging from the covid 19 pandemic and the ensuing cost of living crisis.**

The Board went about setting up a Sub Committee to plan and organise this event with its unwavering support and also the wonderful support of the Fellowship through the Intergroups and Regions.

One of the first tasks of the Sub Committee was to find a suitable venue in a place which could be easily accessible for the Fellowship. Many Cities were looked at including London and Glasgow but their costs ranging from £200,000 to £350,000 were too prohibitive. The Committee decided upon Leeds as the Arena offered favourable amenities at the most reasonable cost, compared to the other quotes which were sought. The St George's Conference Centre was also used during the weekend, along with the Leeds City Museum for the Archives exhibition.

Please see below the costs for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary convention.

As you will see, as it stands, we currently have a £41K loss approx. With a residual stock value of £106K approx. of stock.

The stock comprises our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book of which we have 2833 left in stock from a print run of 6000. Total sales value will be £19,831.00 and we would expect these to sell out over the coming year, at which stage we will look at a possible future print run.

We have 837 copies of our Big Book with the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary cover which has a sales value of £6,696 again these can be purchased from our online shop and should be available at our National conventions this year. The remainder of the stock value is merchandise... £79k approx..... the sale cost of which can be discussed with our General Secretary based on volume.

TOTAL RECEIPTS	154,673.21
TOTAL EXPENSES	195,937.95
<b>P+L @ 17.01.23</b>	<b>-41,264.74</b>
RESIDUAL STOCK VALUATION	
ANTICIPATED FUTURE SALES	106,284.09
<b>FUTURE P+L</b>	<b>65,019.35</b>

<u>TICKET SALES</u>	<u>MERCHANDISE</u>	<u>RECEIPTS</u>
103,105.84	51,567.37	<b><u>154,673.21</u></b>
VENUE + EVENT EXPENSES	143,445.85	
MERCHANDISE	49,684.03	
TICKET CHARGES + REFUNDS	48.00	<b>EXPENSES</b>
OTHER EXPENSES	2,760.07	<b><u>195,937.95</u></b>

### Secretary

I joined the committee at the beginning attending the first meeting in January 2017 as one of the six elected members, in non-rotational positions. The Vice Chair of the Board, the position that chaired the committee, was due to rotate in April 2017, so we had the next Vice Chair-elect present as well, who was due to carry on the chair duties on the committee. The other position held by the board was the treasurer, this post was due for rotation the following year, so come April we had another trustee join us as an observer for a year.

I felt lucky that my journey in service had led to having a wide range of friends throughout the country and that included all the trustees involved and three of the other six committee members. That certainly helped calm my nerves at the first meeting.

Having served on a sub-committee with one of the trustees my earlier experience as secretary was noted and the rest of the team was more than happy that I took on this role.

I set about ensuring we all had each other's contact details, set up mailing lists, arranged aa email addresses with support from GSO and the Scottish Service Office, and a standard agenda. Although I don't think we ever really followed the agenda, concentrating on matters of importance each time we met helped keep us on track.

In our first meeting, we set out terms of reference in line with our remit and normal GSB/GSO business. Further discussion was had about where and how we would put this on and that was covered in later meetings.

Consideration of venue needed to be on many levels, price, location, and accessibility both for travelling and at the venue. Transport networks, whether by land, air or sea. We had to consider members from the far North of Scotland and the furthest South of England or the furthest west in Wales.

Locations looked at were Glasgow, Newcastle, Harrogate, Bolton, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, London and others.

Eventually, Leeds First Direct Arena was chosen as it ticked more boxes than the others, but it is fair to say, it didn't tick them all – I didn't know at that point that I would be living in Leeds by the time the Convention came around.

Having settled on Leeds and confirmed interest in the venue we had contract discussions, as a committee we had a hand in this, but the General Secretary had to have overall responsibility as Fellowship money was involved.

A budget for the event was made which was very quickly scaled back taking into consideration our task of aiming to be self-supporting. We needed to estimate numbers and used average attendances of all the national conventions and larger events nationally making a figure of around 4,500 our budgeted attendance target.



In considering the price of the event we looked at the International Convention pricing but felt this would be too high for our membership and by looking carefully at the budget and our numbers agreed on the pricing structure.

A website was designed to start promoting the event and sell the tickets and that left us free to start looking at the events of the convention, sadly at this point the Lockdown hit and it was difficult to progress anything, ticket sales ground to a halt.

We continued meeting on Zoom, but it was hard to complete any actions with the uncertainty around when we would be able to meet.

Lockdown eventually eased and we started progressing things further.

Andy H, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub Committee

### **75th AA Anniversary Convention Report**

When I heard the Fellowship had agreed at Conference that there was going to be a 75th Anniversary Convention I was very excited by the prospect and so asked my region to support my nomination having experience with local conventions and the Southern National Convention I was accepted onto the Committee. Knowing it was a 6 year commitment was daunting and little did we realise at the time what the future would bring us as a Committee.

We spent the first 18 months on a feasibility study, working out where the best place would be to hold the Convention, what type of venue and how much it cost. Then set up the fundamentals, the website, the publication, and the outline of the programme. Things were progressing well when COVID hit and as a committee, we had to adapt to meetings online and focus on the tasks we could do.

### **Website**

With my experience in setting up websites, I happily accepted setting up the 75th Anniversary website. When we first launched the site and set up the counter with the number of days until the Convention Weekend it seemed so far away. Using the website not only to provide information but also for registration, volunteering and a way for members to contact us as a Committee asking a range of questions and providing some great ideas. Having Gillian and Angela from GSO support me in answering all the enquiries and updating the website was such a great help.

Adding new ideas, such as asking for peoples recovering songs to take part in the fun run and joining the choir meant that the Fellowship could be a part of the Convention in so many different ways.

Answering some of the questions and concerns from fellow members led me to arrange to meet a couple of ladies who were travelling and staying on their own in Leeds. Meeting for coffee at the Hotel, just two alcoholics talking to one another, sharing our experiences and realising our similarities has meant I have a new lifelong friend in Tracey D.

### **Volunteer Coordinator**

We had over 400 people register to volunteer both before and during the Convention. Having the volunteers register through the website, selecting which service they would like and when they were able to complete their service helped us as a Committee to organise meetings with their volunteers. With the lockdown, this meant all the volunteer meetings were held via Zoom meetings. Meeting people from across the AA GB was great fun, the volunteers were so enthusiastic and had such great ideas for the information they needed. The request for volunteers

to help on Thursday to pack the “Goodie bags” was a concern but true to form the Fellowship answered the call and the vans were unloaded, and all the bags were packed in such a quick time and the room was filled with laughter.

The volunteer coordinators for each service area were such a great help and Angela from NW was a massive support with the Greeters and her team never stopped providing a warm welcome to the Convention.

Jim T’s registration coordinators never said no and covered not only registration but the cloakroom and helped train the other registration volunteers.

Being able to meet the volunteers in person after seeing them on the screen in many Zoom meetings was amazing, ensuring they had their T-shirts, introducing them to their coordinators and being able to thank them for their service with a 75th coin was a joy.

### **75th Ambassadors**

Having ambassadors for each of the regions helped with gathering ideas from each of the regions, putting the ideas and feedback from each of the ambassadors into a newsletter after each of the meetings meant they had all the information they needed in a way they could share it with their regions and intergroups. I always looked forward to the Zoom meetings hearing how they were helping to register members, having stands at their local conventions and spreading the message about the Convention. Many of the Ambassadors volunteered to take up service at the Convention from helping to set up through to being the Newcomer ambassador by Billy the Post.

Having these meetings during lockdown helped me personally break up the monotony of long work hours and always raised my spirits and enthusiasm for the Convention.

### **75th Historic, Service and Gratitude Banners**

I can't express how much I enjoyed this piece of service as it allowed me to learn about the history of AA GB from across all the regions, intergroups and service areas. The bullet points were provided by the 75th Ambassadors, archivists, GSB Board members and the National conventions. It was so difficult to limit the information and pictures to fit on one banner as we were sent so much and I would have used it all but needed to have the information fit onto one banner.

Reading all the different messages of gratitude for the Fellowship you can't help but feel the gratitude yourself and although we come from different areas, and backgrounds and are different people the gratitude we have for the Fellowship is so similar.

Seeing all the completed banners in situ along the walkway in the Arena was a real highlight that I took so many pictures and knowing that they will be used again and again providing a real legacy from the 75th Anniversary Convention.

### **Floor manager**

Working with Andy on the Committee meant we could share the pre-work required. Andy covered all the Risk, Health and Safety requirements and I worked on the presentations for the AV company.

Over the Convention weekend, the Committee did very long days from Thursday through to Sunday, from the setting up to ensure the event went smoothly and working closely with the staff at the Arena, security and the AV company. All of the different companies who were involved said they learnt so much about what AA, Al-Anon and Alateen do and just as importantly what we are not, meant that we not only spread the message to other members but to those who can pass on the message to family members and colleagues.

Being a part of the 75th Anniversary Committee will stay with me forever as one of the best pieces of service I have been privileged to be a part of. I want to thank the other Committee members for their support and service during our time together.

I hope the Conference can see that the 75th Anniversary Convention accomplished the true spirit of Recovery, Service and Unity.

Clare B-D, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub Committee

### **Floor Manager**

I had been selected with another member as Floor Manager, I have experience in building management, so that made sense as we needed to liaise with the Arena about Risk Assessments for all our activities and I was able to do this and understand theirs.

In all areas, we got lucky that a member of the committee had some knowledge of the skills required, a committee treasurer with a business background, an IT person to help with the website, someone to source merchandise etc. It all fell together.

The last months of organising were hectic, sourcing alternative venues for extra activities and for me further risk assessment writing, site visits, and arranging the audio-visual requirements for the event.

Another committee member arranged a volunteer task force to support requirements at the event, we couldn't have managed the event without those members who gave much of their time at the event.

As Floor Manager, I supported our partners in Al-anon in the Risk Assessments for the venue at St. George's that they would use due to the space constrictions at the Arena. I also supported the local Intergroup in looking at the venue prior to the early bird meeting that they arranged and hosted. It helped that I was part of that Intergroup and knew the members involved who set the scene for an excellent start to the weekend.

I had a wonderful experience being part of this committee and delivering on what we were tasked with.

The numbers in attendance were lower than we had initially hoped prior to the lockdown, and it is not surprising that as we emerged from lockdown many were still nervous on health grounds or financially affected. There was also the cost-of-living crisis starting as the date loomed, so it is no surprise that numbers were lower than we could have expected, however, our planning had aimed and without the unexpected backdrop, could have been fully self-supporting.

Thank you Fellowship for giving me this opportunity.

Andy H, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub Committee

### **Registration Report**

Being involved with the Registration procedure has been a delight as well as a much-appreciated learning process with procedures that I was thankfully shown by Gillian in the General Service Office. Developing ways of accessing and developing our CMS application in order to attend to members registering from our Fellowship, Al-Anon, Alateen, visitors and the under twelves. Not forgetting the total numbers attending our anniversary convention.

As we developed our procedures, with the help of Claire, one of the measures applied was having Convention Coordinators who met and got to know one another at online meetings prior to the event. In particular, these guys, John BD, Carrol, Nick, Mark, and Chris came together throughout the weekend of the convention to do extra shifts on Registration, which they did without complaint along with other thoughtful eager beavers who took the place of members who couldn't make it. For the Coordinators and others, this began on Thursday with the packing of our "goody bags"!

I was elected by the General Service Board to serve on the 75<sup>th</sup> Convention Committee because of my experience of Intergroup One Day Conventions and the Northern National Conventions when serving as a Board Trustee and Chair of one of the sponsoring bodies, North West Region. I was reminded once more that an elected committee when coming together to ensure the success of any event would be better served with the participation of the Fellowship.

The many members who responded to our invitation to fill in forms stating what they would prefer at our event, who later became involved and helped make the celebration a spiritual if not a financial success I thank you all for the opportunity of being a part of something rather special, a celebration of 75 years of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain, one day at a time.

Jim T, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub Committee

#### **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Publications Group**

At the beginning of August 2018, what was to become known as the Anniversary Publications Sub-Committee met at York for the first time as a committee to begin the process of coming up with the way forward to best implement the writing of the history of our Fellowship in Great Britain since 1947. (The 75<sup>th</sup> Convention Committee had already been elected after Conference 2016).

Representing the GSB and Chair of the committee was Clive, Hon. Treasurer, Stuart Share, Martin B, Archives, Ranald, Roundabout, and Jim T representing the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. Later, due to rotation on the Board, Stevie, Vice Chair of the GSB and Chair of the Convention Committee joined our happy band on the Publications Group.

To continue the practice of inviting the Fellowships' involvement, we decided to divide the responsibility of contacting all sixteen Regional Archivists along with the possibility of the participation of the constituent Intergroup Archivists. Not forgetting those members who kindly offered material, almost forgotten, that was safely lodged in lofts and garages.

Although all the information pertaining to writing our book was available for the committee to put to use we decided the Fellowship working together as above, to bring about all our Group, Intergroup and Regional Histories had to be the way forward, and it was.

Contacting the Fellowship and explaining the process in which to bring our book together took time and effort but we were greatly rewarded by the growing enthusiasm of everyone involved. The book continued to be assembled throughout the pandemic beginning in 2019. The committee continually meeting online at differing times to suit members' working schedules while frequently contacting Regional/Intergroup Archivists along with Share and Roundabout editors/committees, updating one another on the progress being made along the way.

Binding the manuscript together, with the continued efforts of everyone involved, our publisher Mark Comer investing both his patience and professionalism in doing *final* after *final* amendments plus assisting with our Timeline for the book cover which included evidence of a loner in Glasgow in 1946 who had contacted GSO New York for help.

Being involved in the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Publishing Group gave all who participated the opportunity to work with each other from different parts of the country, most of whom had never met previously. A delight in all aspects but in particular, the finished article.

Jim T, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Publication Sub Committee

### **Stage Manager**

I would like to thank the Midlands region for my nomination and the board for accepting me into the committee for the 75<sup>th</sup> Convention.

### **Convention position (Stage Manager/Speaker Secretary)**

My role which was decided after some 4/5 meetings was as Stage Manager which was to organize the platform speakers and agendas for the convention, with all honesty this specific role did not start to get busy up until probably some three years before the convention. If I look back and think is there anything that could have been done earlier, I don't think there was as we did not want to set the agenda too early and ask the fellowship for speakers years before the event.

### **Choosing the Chairs**

When we looked at how we could be fair with choosing speakers and chairs I think the decision of having the national convention chairs as the chairs of meetings was the right decision and if future conventions are to be organized then I think this would be the fairest way forward in using the national convention chairs as the chairs of each platform meeting and then for the final meeting using the convention chair as the chair.

### **Choosing the Speakers**

When choosing the speakers, we felt the best way of doing this was to ask each region to nominate 2 women and 2 men from their regions, then based upon the number of speakers needed we would pick out of a hat the speakers based upon the regions nominations and making sure we had good representation from each region and an equal amount of men and women.

When it came to the old timers, we decided to make an announcement at the convention for people with 40 years of sobriety and we would have 8 speakers one for 10 minutes each and this worked well.

Based on the above for both the selection of chairs and speakers I think this was the fairest way and involves the whole of the fellowship.

Andy G, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub Committee

### **Merchandise**

Originally, we looked at using a merchandise company in Leeds as we felt it would help the city, we were going to hold the convention in but when benchmarking prices, we found that the cost was double, so we went direct to China to get costs and we reduced the costs by over 50% and below are the timelines we used to purchase the merchandise:

- |  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Agree on what Merchandise will be used.           | 2 years before convention |
| 2. Agree on what quantity.                           | 2 years before convention |
| 3. Gain costs and design from China.                 | 18 Months before          |
| 4. Agree on costs and quantities with the committee. | 10 Months before          |
| 5. Order items from China                            | 8 Months before           |

The above was done due to the 30 to 40 days manufacturing time and due to the amount, the sea freight timing was roughly 8 weeks and therefore the process in total of about 3 to 4 months, this

meaning we had all the merchandise in York for roughly March time.

When we looked at what to sell, we did ask around the Fellowship, but I do think overall we could have involved the fellowship in a better way to find out what they would have wanted, we choose the usual things such as coins, keyrings and mugs which all sold well.

We reviewed what to order, apart from the high-value items such as T-shirts and bamboo mugs of which we ordered roughly 500 of each of which sold well all other items we ordered on what we thought we would have attended the convention which was 4,500.

Sadly, this was not the case and therefore we had stock remaining which we due to not hitting the numbers and at the time Covid and cost of living.

I think if we had hit the proposed numbers probably about 85/90% of the stock would have sold, sadly, we did not get the numbers we had hoped, but I do believe the merchandise people were pleased with and should be offered again in future conventions.

### **Summary**

I think overall the convention was a success with many good points, as a committee to be completely honest certain parts of the committee worked together as a team and others did not, but I suppose that's people within a team over a 5 years, but this had an impact on the team overall sadly.

I think having the committee for 5 years was too long and the disruption of then having 3 different treasurers and chairs also didn't help and this should be looked at.

My point above is not a bad point but a point for improvement, due to the length of the committee we had 3 chairs and 3 treasurers all of who have their way of doing things which is fine, but this did cause problems along the way, and I think if the term is reduced then perhaps it could be we keep the same board members on the committee for the duration.

The 4 meetings a year were perfect and prefer face-to-face to build up the team and covid certainly didn't help this and I think did affect the team's togetherness and output due to only being able to have team's meetings. Then of course, once we reached 12 months before the convention the frequency of the meetings increased which was needed and a good thing, this also included meetings at the arena which was good for the team to see all together.

I think the Leeds arena was an amazing venue and the PA company did an amazing job and the weekend went as well as it possibly could, but my thoughts were that it was sad everyone was not together. I am not saying where we choose was not amazing but it was high cost and there are many venues out there with a main arena holding 5,000 but then also having 5 or 6 other rooms that can hold 200/300 people and then this would mean that everything could be located under one roof and easier to manage.

Overall, an amazing experience with some amazing people and something I will never forget, thank you to all the Fellowship, the 75<sup>th</sup> committee and the GSO staff.

Andy G, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub Committee

### **Report on Shops at 75<sup>th</sup>**

From the early morning start, both Teresa B and Jo F worked tirelessly to dress and stock both the Literature and Merchandise stalls.

By 12 o'clock we were ready to open the shops and commence sales. As the shops were only open when there were no meetings in the main arena, the short periods of opening produced pronounced periods of busyness which the volunteers coped with really well as the training periods were very short. Thank you to you all.

GSO kindly provided staff to man the Card sales while the team of volunteers served the fellowship with cash sales. The pre-order sales sheets made buying and paying for the required items simple and quick, and despite the limited space, made the whole operation efficient. I cannot thank both Teresa and Jo for the hours they put into making it a slick operation.

Laurence C was hidden behind the scenes collecting and counting the finances for all operations and very efficiently produced the final counts required each day.

The 75<sup>th</sup> merchandise sold well and there were many comments on the quality of the products.

Probably the best-selling item was the special edition of the big book carrying the 75<sup>th</sup> logo on its sleeve, although much other literature sold well.

I think the shops provided exactly what the Fellowship wanted, and I thank all those involved in creating a wholesome service to the Fellowship.

Nick R, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub Committee

### **Accommodation**

My role as a committee member was to run the raffle and look at accommodation the latter was to look at possible camping sites that would be suitable for our members. I came up with the idea to get in touch with the camping and caravan club as they do temporary camping sites and are very well priced. They confirmed that they would have some of their sites available at the time that we would need them we could put this information on the website.

### **Raffle**

The raffle was a longer process. First, we had to come up with a design for the tickets and get some quotes from printers once this was completed, we then looked at prizes. Having gone back to see what others had done in the past and wanting these to express the concept of the occasion we felt the prizes should be meaningful and something would be cash prizes, but we also recognize the danger that this could cause if a newcomer should win and that's when the Amazon gift cards came to the front, as these would be sent out by GSO it would give the winners time to think about their good fortune and put things in place and as a gift card, they will be able to choose what they needed and not try to get a large flat screen television home on the bus.

All in all, the sale of the tickets went well but not great as some of the volunteers never showed up, but some of them did extra time. All the volunteers did amazing, and it was a pleasure to work with them and they were impeccable and a great reflection of the Fellowship.

Ron G, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub Committee

### **Young Peoples Exhibition at the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention**

The Young People Sub Committee not only hosted a VIP room at the main venue at the 75<sup>th</sup> Convention in Leeds in June 2022, that was open to talking to people about what the Young Peoples Initiative was doing and how they could get involved, but they also put on an exhibition St Georges Conference Centre, one of the other sites for the 75<sup>th</sup> Convention activities. The exhibition highlighted the history of young people in AA. The exhibition included historical information and images of what has been going on for young people in AA over the years and a

timeline showing how it has gotten to where it is today. They also held a meeting on both days and the meetings were extremely well attended.

The activities of the subcommittee and other young people volunteers at the convention have sparked more interest in getting young people's meetings and activities started across the country and attendance for the Young People's Seminar later in the year was very good and productive as a direct result of the success of the activities at the convention.

Gretchen S, GSB Trustee for Young Peoples Sub Committee

### **Archives Exhibition at the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention June 2022.**

Early in 2022, the Archives sub-committee looked at several possible venues for an exhibition of materials from AA's archives to accompany the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention in Leeds. Once we discovered that we could use Brodick Hall, the central hall of the Leeds Museum, for our exhibition; there was no need to look further. The museum is a fine Victorian building, located near the Leeds Arena where the convention took place. The museum had no spare secure display cabinets for the display of original materials, so instead, we created high-quality reproductions of photos, documents and pictures on roller banners for the exhibition together with explanatory texts concerning them. This technique enabled visitors to view and read about the documents, photos (etc.) much more easily than if they had been locked into traditional display cabinets, and although one or two visitors to the exhibition expressed disappointment at not being able to see originals, most visitors were happy with the way in which the exhibition was mounted; we invited visitors to provide feedback concerning the exhibition, and we received about 200 comments, which were universally enthusiastic. A further advantage of using roller banners for the display is that they can be easily reused on other occasions. Indeed, in our exhibition, we included three banners concerning the development of AA in Scotland which had been created for the Kelvingrove exhibition in 2017. We also took advantage of the excellent video facilities at the Brodick Hall to show AA videos which were set up in a two-hour loop programme. Most of the videos came from the AA Archive and included the excellent historical video 'The Journey of Discovery'; we also included a video prepared by the Leeds intergroup concerning the development of AA in Leeds and the video created specially for the 75 Anniversary Convention. As a result, most of those who came to see the exhibition took the opportunity to view some or all of these videos, which, they said, significantly enhanced their visit to the exhibition. We did not keep a tally of the number of visitors to the exhibition, but the Hall was often full on Saturday; I would guess that in total about 600 people came. On Saturday the Hall was in fact used as the location for the AA LGBTQ+ meeting which had been scheduled for a different room in the museum, but which was so popular (with about 150 people wanting to attend it) that the meeting had to be moved to the Brodick Hall.

Two final points concerning the exhibition: first, the Leeds AA intergroup had organised a separate exhibition concerning the history of AA in Leeds, which was located elsewhere in the museum and was on display until the end of the year. This attracted considerable admiration and several visitors to it said that they would try to set up similar exhibitions in their own local museum.

Second, it is important to put on record the help we received from the staff at the Leeds Museum, both in allowing us to use the museum in the first place and in managing the large numbers of AA visitors during the Convention. We, the Archives sub-committee, thought that the Archives Exhibition at the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention was a great success!

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



## **Conclusion**

The weekend of our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary started on the Thursday when the Committee, GSO staff, and many of our Fellowship Volunteers met at St. Georges, one of our venues for the weekend to pack up all the welcome packs for the weekend.

The packs included our new AAGB book which covers the history of the Fellowship in GB. This book was a labour of love for many and it's thanks to all who worked tirelessly on the working group with representatives from Share and Roundabout and the 75<sup>th</sup> Committee together with all Regional Archivists.

On Thursday evening we got off to a wonderful start with support from the members of West Riding Intergroup who held our evening early birds meeting attended by a good few hundred of our Fellowship.

Over at The Leeds Museum our Archivists and volunteers had been busy setting up an excellent exhibition which was open to the public as well as the Fellowship for the weekend and would be the venue for some great meetings over the weekend, our thanks to all who freely gave their Service for the weekend.

On Friday prior to our opening at Leeds Arena, we held a VIP event at the Leeds Museum which was attended by the mayor and invited guests.

On Friday Morning it was an early start for the Committee along with our many Volunteers, GSO staff, all Regional Ambassadors and Trustees to get the Arena prepared for the Fellowship arrival at 3pm.

For myself, it was a pleasure to set up our Historical Walkway another element that involved all Regions and many Intergroup Archivists with local research work to put this wonderful display together. Please note we still have some of these at GSO for those that did not take them home.

By 3pm we were ready to start with Registration. The enthusiasm of all was infectious and all the training hours of the Committee, GSO and Volunteers paid off.

On Friday evening our Chair of the Board got us underway with a warm welcome and the first viewing for the Fellowship of our History and Gratitude Video, specially prepared for our event. A terrific achievement by our PI E Comms Sub Committee and all who participated.... let us hope we all make good use of this video over the coming years.

We followed the video with a special guest. The Governor of Wakefield prison attended to receive a copy of our special Anniversary Big Book. Wakefield was the first prison to welcome AA back in the day, and the Governor made a commitment to re-engage with AA following his experience.

During the build-up to the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention our Prison Sub-Committee and West Riding Intergroup worked with local Prison staff to re-establish the relationship with Wakefield.... long may it continue.

As reported all Speakers and Chairs for the weekend came from our Regions and National Conventions and all meetings were well attended, our thanks go to them all.

Weekend entertainment came from Volunteers at the singsong and discos both at St Georges and the Arena.... You all did an excellent job and showed that service comes in many forms.

On Saturday morning there was a Fun Run for all our fit members, organised by local members, which was well supported and enjoyed by all. Thanks to the Volunteers for arranging this event.

At the Leeds Arena, Saturday was full on with meetings. Our Trustees and Volunteers staffing the sub-committee rooms were kept busy and thanks to their commitment we can advise that the GSB has had more members wanting to join Board Sub Committees than ever before.... many thanks.

Saturday evening saw the countdown and it was wonderful to witness so much sobriety from a week to about 63 years.... great fun makes me smile to remember it.

Our shops for Literature sales and memorabilia sales kept up with the constant demand.

Over at St Georges on Saturday we had a Young Peoples event running throughout the day...added to this was probably the best attended GSO Roadshow hosted by Ranjan our General Sec. as well as a 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday cake!

I'm told that the YP event has had a great positive impact within Leeds AA as well as throughout the country.

Also, at St. Georges on Saturday Al-anon held their meeting which was well attended. Originally Al-anon was to have held their meetings within the Leeds Arena but sadly the space allocated was taken away from us due to fire safety concerns.

Over at the Leeds Museum on Saturday, meetings continued for our Polish members as well as diversity groups and LGBTQ members which were all well attended.

Sunday saw another enjoyable day starting with our Oldtimers meeting and going through to our Spiritual meeting with a great choir... all volunteers, who first got together on Saturday evening for practice. Think we had about 50 and there were slight concerns that the stage couldn't hold the weight...Thanks to you all, you were great to listen to.

We closed our Anniversary event by saying the Serenity Prayer in the many languages of those who attended.

Another additional benefit of our 75<sup>th</sup> was the production by the BBC of a documentary about 75 years of AAGB. The programme was aired early December and will be available on iPlayer for the next year. We believe that the programme showed our fellowship in a good light, and we pass on our thanks to all that gave their time and commitment. Following the airing of the programme our website was visited by (17,000) ...seventeen thousand new visitors over 2 days... let's hope it is the start of a new beginning for many.

As Chair of the Committee, I would like to thank Conference and all who attended or contributed to our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event on behalf of the Committee.

### **Finally**

Each member who attended was a great ambassador for AA. The thanks and praise we received from the Arena staff, St. Georges, Leeds Museum, Hotels, restaurants, and the people of Leeds, it makes you proud to be a part of our Fellowship.

Stevie S, Vice-Chair of GSB

## **AA Service News Update**

AA Service News has showcased new AA branding requested by Committee 2, Conference 2019. The publication is a radical departure from the former AA Service News that has been produced over a considerable time. We hope you like it.

AA Service News continues to be published quarterly, carrying details of Conference Questions and outcomes, together with Parliamentary events across the UK, and news of other notable service events. Your articles on AA service, and now your pictures, are always warmly welcomed. During the pandemic, AA Service News was produced in a digital only format, and has continued in this vein. The publication is emailed to those individuals, groups, intergroups and regions with a generic AA email address. As always, AA Service News is placed on the AAGB website, and in AA website Document Library. Many thanks to all contributors.

Jo F, Trustee and Louise Foxcroft, Non-Alcoholic Trustee

## **Armed Services Update**

The Armed Services Subcommittee met five times this year three online and two at GSO. The Subcommittee continues in its primary role to support ASLOs and RASLOs.

The Subcommittee continues to maintain the Armed Services 12 step list which is now on Google document and is available for telephone responders.

Members of the sub-committee attended the Scottish National Convention.

The Subcommittee would like to update the existing relevant Armed Services literature and are actively seeking armed service members to contribute to this.

Members of the subcommittee with the assistance of volunteers ran a drop-in room at the 75th convention Where several members expressed an interest in contributing to the new literature and or getting involved in the service structure.

There are a number of vacancies on the sub-committee which if not filled may impede the ability of the sub-committee in its primary role to support ASLO and RASLO.

John C  
GSB Trustee, Armed Services

## **Employment Update**

To offer regular support, encouragement and enthusiasm to all Regional Liaison Officers, or their representatives, our active committee would welcome additional members. Principle requirements include a familiarity with our Traditions and experience of our service structure, including at Region.

A 'Flyer' inviting application for sub-committee membership was distributed at Conference 2022 and the 75<sup>th</sup> Celebration.

An article will appear in the next edition of AA Service News suggesting the journey of service and experience in Employment offered by our Fellowship in preparation for sub-committee membership.

Our quarterly sub-committee meetings are held face-to-face by choice; we have continued to meet briefly on Zoom each month to update and support each other. We have particularly valued refreshing our fellowship over an evening meal after our committee meeting.

At the 75<sup>th</sup> Celebration we continuously serviced our 'Employment' room presentation; interesting interactions being received.

Our June annual workshop for Regional Employment Liaison Officers was pleased to invite and welcome several representatives from Regions as well as the few Employment L.O.s in service. This gave very encouraging active and diverse sharing of employment experience.

Preceded by a rehearsal a few days earlier, our Employment Liaison Seminar on Zoom in October encouraged national delegates, offered a diverse agenda, and received positive appraisal from participants. Our subcommittee members chaired the meeting; talked about experience as an Employment Liaison Officer, resources available to an ELO, the Traditions and anonymity for the ELO; Services to employment, the subcommittee work; and the "Blue Light" initiative. "Blue Light" experience was given by the Humberside Police Wellbeing Team Manager; and an AA member who related experience of active alcoholism in the Fire Brigade and recovery with AA whilst progressively regaining working ability. A "Safeguarding" update was offered by a Board Executive member.

At the request of Midlands Region in August we presented a workshop to raise enthusiasm for serving as an Employment Liaison Officer.

The Plymouth Intergroup invited us to present an Employment Workshop at their September Assembly - with follow up Shares at later dates.

Our review of Employment Literature is underway. the ESC generated pamphlet "Now that I'm an Employment Liaison Officer - What do I Do?" is being reviewed by the Literature SC before submission for Conference approval.

Our Terms of Reference is updated. Our team maintains stimulating enthusiasm.

Charles R  
GSB Trustee, Employment

## **Health Update**

2022 continued to be a challenging year for Regional and Intergroup Health Liaison Officers as the pandemic impact on access to hospitals and GP surgeries has taken a long time to change. The successful Open Meeting Workshops have continued throughout the country, reaching trainee doctors and nurses, carrying the message of AA and recovery.

The Health Subcommittee (HSC) have continued to support the HLOs through the website and at the annual RHLO meeting in November. Intergroup HLOs were also able to attend this online and valuable experiences on how to re-engage with the medical profession were shared.

The HSC have updated Chapter 6 of the AA Service Handbook, and this will be presented at Conference 2023. A new pamphlet "A Guide for the Health Liaison Officer" has been produced and this will be available in 2023.

Barbara O  
GSB Trustee, Health

## **Prisons Update**

It was decided last year to work as a joint discipline Prisons, Probation and Criminal Justice as a trial to see if it would work to our advantage as the two disciplines are closely connected with the work that we do and the lack of people on both subcommittees and liaison officers. However, it was found although we need to work closely together that people had more knowledge of either Prisons or Probation and found that with the volume of work it was easier to split into two groups to get the work we needed done. It was decided at the Board meeting in January to revert back to the two separate disciplines and meet at the same time when in York to share our ideas.

### **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

There was a room dedicated to Prisons to show our members the work AA does in Prisons. Our prison banner outside the room and inside there was a history of Prisons in the UK on show along with our literature, a description of the role of a liaison officer, adverts for our prison postal service, some letters written by the prisoners attending the meetings inside and the prison video on show. There was a prison liaison officer there to answer questions.

### **The Prison Subcommittee**

Our first meeting was due to be held in June but due to the rail strikes that was held online and three in person in September, November and February.

Sadly, there are only two members on due to rotate out in February and I would like to encourage members of the fellowship to think about joining us. Along with myself we have Tom Fox a NAT on the committee.

We have been looking at updating the Service Handbook to make it more gender friendly and updating the prison files in the online document library.

### **Zonal Meeting**

A Zonal meeting was held in Bristol in November where anyone with an involvement in Prisons and Probation who could travel there and back could attend. We had 14 attendees along with Trustees, myself and Hamish, and Andrew C our subcommittee member. The day was enjoyed by all and many questions answered. The main topic was queries about clearance for entering the prisons.

### **Seminar 2023**

On 1st July we will be holding a joint Prison, Probation and Criminal Justice seminar at the Park Inn, York. I would encourage Liaison Officers to attend to gain more knowledge and have their questions answered.

Zelma K  
GSB Trustee, Prisons

## **Probation / Criminal Justice Service Update**

Probation / Criminal Justice Service liaison officers (LO's) have been making progress, post covid lockdowns, recent figures show that 515 Alcoholics Anonymous Groups in GB now offer the 'chit' system. Service work locally is increasing with enthusiastic members encouraging cooperation with the professional community. Amendments to the Service handbook were agreed at Conference and have now been published. The Probation Sub Committee has reviewed and updated the Starter Pack for liaison officers and updated Probation/CJS sections on the website with our Webmaster's assistance. A new generic contact email address has been put in place, to avoid confusion and increase effectiveness, providing a central point for members and outside

agencies to contact the Sub Committee. Service roadshows took place at the Scottish National Convention in May and 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention in June with LO's and Sub Committee members providing great service and encouraging participation. Presentations were given online at the request of Plymouth Intergruop in June and HM Prisons and Probation Service (HMPPS) for their Approved Premises Managers in September. The latter has initiated a cooperative project to increase and reinvigorate connections on a local and national basis raising awareness of AA services. Recently cooperation has been taking place providing information to HM Courts and Tribunal service (HMCTS) to aid in Court users being signposted to Alcoholics Anonymous. Regional and Intergruop Service at the Glasgow Alcohol Court has necessitated the formation of a committee to continue this valuable initiative and a successful presentation to Justices of the Peace took place in October. The annual Regional Liaison officers meeting took place on 30<sup>th</sup> September / 1<sup>st</sup> October and was very well attended.

Two joint Sub Committee meetings took place with Prisons during the year, one online and the second in person. One joint zonal meeting took place in Bristol in November with enthusiastic participation from the local Intergruops and Regions. Following a year's trial of the Probation Sub Committee being joined with Prisons, all members of both requested to the Board that the separate committees be reinstated, and this has subsequently been agreed. This will assist both committees in their service to concentrate on their own disciplines, whilst having separate meetings held at the same time to allow for cooperative working where appropriate. Terms of reference have been amended.

Probation literature is being reviewed following requests from LO's and the probation members are actively working on this. A Joint Seminar with Prisons is booked to take place on 30th June/1st July 2023 in York. The Chief Probation Officer has been invited to speak as well as professionals from HMPPS and HMCTS being invited to attend. It is hoped that a senior representative from Criminal Justice in Scotland will also be able to attend.

Hamish McS  
GSB Trustee, Probation / Criminal Justice Service

## **Roundabout Update**

I attended several zoom meetings, before Conference 2022, with Terri, Roundabout Trustee, to introduce me to the Roundabout Sub-committee. I then attended the Roundabout Workshop in Pitlochry on 26/27 March 2022 where I met Cath, Editor, Ian, Link Officer and Dylis and Moira, proof readers, in person. We had an induction/training session and many good points were raised to be included in the Roundabout magazine. We also discussed how to encourage members to subscribe to Roundabout.

A zoom meeting was attended by the Sub-committee, on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April, to talk about the arrangements for the Scottish Convention to be held 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> May in Stirling Court Hotel, University of Sterling. Three members of the sub-committee and I attended the convention. The Roundabout banner and back issues of the Roundabout were picked up from the Northern Service Office and taken to the convention. A survey, compiled by the sub-committee was taken to allow Roundabout to cater for all members. Members shares were also be recorded and written up later for the Roundabout magazine. At the Scottish Convention 4 interviews and 2 shares were recorded. Those who completed interviews and shares stated that they preferred to record rather than type.

A visit was arranged to attend the Direct Leeds Arena where the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention is being held. A video was taken of the room which the Roundabout Sub-committee used. This was

forwarded to the committee to familiarise themselves with the layout before attending the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in June 2022.

We discussed the arrangements for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention in Leeds which was attended by myself and the four members of the sub-committee. Expenses were discussed for this and it was decided to submit a sub-committee budget form to cover this. Again a survey was taken and members shares recorded, at the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary convention, for the Roundabout magazine.

The Roundabout banner and back issues of the Roundabout were picked up from the General Service Office and taken to the convention. A survey, compiled by the sub-committee, was taken to allow Roundabout to cater for all members. Again members shares were also recorded to be written up for the Roundabout magazine. People came forward to sign up for Roundabout subscriptions. 100 surveys were taken to Leeds. More recent back copies of the Roundabout were available free. All pages of the June Edition were laminated and displayed to draw attention to our location.

The sub-committee felt that the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention was a wonderful idea and allowed us to inform the fellowship of our services.

Roundabout was invited to the one day Convention in Dundee on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and Iain, Roundabout Link Officer, and I attended. The Banner and Survey was used at this convention. Iain, Roundabout Link Officer reported that it was very successful with people interested in purchasing the Roundabout and he also taped 3 shares.

Moirra attended the Cumbernauld One Day Convention on October 15<sup>th</sup> to assist at the Roundabout Display, the day went really well.

Cath attended the Fort William Convention in November.

Gordon (RLO, West Lanarkshire Intergroup) and Jim (RLO, Monklands Area Intergroup) were given 25 cards, 100 flyers. Iain, as Link Officer will make sure they receive more cards and fliers when needed.

It was decided to use historical material from the 75th anniversary literature in our Roundabout. Moira is collecting only Scottish history to start and we will ask readers for feedback.

Terms of Reference state that the Roundabout subcommittee should have 4 meetings every year. We have had 3 zoom meetings, in April, May and July, and 1 workshop so far.

It was decided to hold the Annual Intergroup/Regional Liaison officers meeting in Renfield St Stephen's in Bath Street on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Another sub-committee meeting was arranged to discuss a format for this. Stephen, the Fellowship Calendar and Diary Editor, the Trustee for Share and the Share editor were invited to this meeting.

A date for a workshop/ training session for the Sub-committee in late summer 2023 is still to be arranged.

I hosted the Roundabout sub-committee meeting online on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

The committee had heard that changes were to be made to the front cover of Roundabout. Some of the committee members were unsure if we could still use a photograph on the front page. I was asked to make enquiries and report back to the subcommittee. After contacting Tom (Fox) I was assured that we will still be able to use a photograph on the front page.

I received an email from Julie stating that she orders 1,400 Roundabouts per month and that approximately 1,380 are sold per month but that this can vary.

I attended the Nominations committee online meeting to observe Stephen being interviewed for the Fellowship Calendar and Diary Editor. It was a very interesting interview. I have learned that this position is linked to the Roundabout and Share committees. I would like to thank Barbara and the rest of the Nominations committee for including me in this.

Andrina C  
GSB Trustee, Roundabout

## **Share Update**

The SHARE committee has worked hard throughout 2022 to continue to bring you the best possible version of our 'meeting between meetings'.

It was great to see so many enthusiastic fellows join us at the 75th Convention. The team threw themselves into making the SHARE VIP Room an interesting and inviting space, creating bookmarks, wallet cards and history banners, as well as a PowerPoint presentation. Our Editor was on hand the whole weekend to welcome visitors, answer questions and encourage submissions. It was a tremendous success and as a result, all vacant positions in the SHARE SC were filled. We also noted an increase in the volume of articles submitted.

We have had two virtual sub-committee meetings in the past year, and one physical RSLO meeting at GSO, which we opened up as a hybrid meeting to invite intergroup liaison officers to join us online. There was plenty of discussion about how to spark more interest in the SHARE service position at regions and intergroups. We will continue with this inclusive type of meeting moving forward in the hope that more people will join us.

Our Editor, who was very busy in the latter half of '22 getting to grips with the changes in the style of SHARE (as requested by Conference 2019), unveiled the new look edition in January 2023. Although it is still very much our beloved magazine, we think the 'spruce up' looks fresh and attractive, and feedback from the fellowship is that it's definitely a welcome change.

Some of you may have already noticed that we now have a link on the AAGB website that takes you directly to the SHARE feedback form. All comments are read by the Editor and actioned accordingly. Your feedback is important to us.

My gratitude and admiration goes out to everyone on the team for their hard work and commitment to meeting all deadlines and producing a wonderful magazine.

Charon B  
GSB Trustee, SHARE

## **Survey Update**

The Survey Sub Committee has been a very small working group for most of 2022 but has just recently welcomed a new member onto the committee which means the committee currently has four members and the trustee Chair. The committee are still looking to recruit two more members who have some experience in delivering surveys or just a keen interest in the survey and how it can benefit the fellowship.



The committee has been working hard on an info-graphic based leaflet to report some of the results of the 2020 Survey. This leaflet has taken some time to get off the ground, but the results should be ready to use for PI purposes in the new year.

The committee have also been busy putting together a timeline of work for the 2025 Survey that includes four phases of the process that will begin in 2023/24 with deciding on content of the questionnaire and survey design to the final reporting and dissemination of the results in 2026. The timeline and the leaflet should be complete in the next few months and then the work will begin to put the questionnaire together.

Gretchen S  
GSB Trustee, Survey

## **Young People Update**

The Young People Sub Committee has had another busy year. They hosted a 'room' at the 75<sup>th</sup> Convention in Leeds in June 2022, as well as holding two very well attended Young Peoples meetings and an exhibition of the history of young people in AA. The exhibition included historical information and images of what has been going on for young people in AA over the years and a timeline showing how it has gotten to where it is today. Both the meetings and the exhibition were held at the St Georges Conference Centre, one of the other sites for the 75<sup>th</sup> Convention activities.

The committee held a seminar in September 2022 in York which was very well attended by enthusiastic RYPLOs as well as intergroup YPLOs. There were speakers from AA and someone from the University of York student union who has worked with AA in the past and talked about where the needs were from his perspective. There were several inspiring AA speakers sharing their experience of bringing the message to young people in AA.

The committee had two members rotate out this year and gained three new members. The recruitment of the new members was mainly down to the enthusiasm for the work that came about from the seminar.

The committee decided to hold a roadshow in Cardiff, having heard the fantastic report of the success of the road show in held in Leeds in November 2021, with Leeds going from a city with virtually no young people's meetings to several meetings across the city and other activities going on. The committee chose Cardiff as it looked like there were very few young people's meetings according to the online meeting finder on the AA website. The roadshow will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in April 2023.

Gretchen S  
GSB Trustee, Young People

## **Parliamentary Events Update**

### **Westminster**

The Westminster Parliamentary Event Committee delivered a very well attended face to face event in the Atlee Suite in Portcullis House on 12 May 2022. The event was sponsored and hosted by Labour MP for Liverpool, Dan Carden. The two non-alcoholic professional speakers spoke highly of what AA had to offer and the AA speakers shared their experience strength and hope as well as talking about how AA is addressing the diversity issue and working to make the fellowship more welcoming and open to people of all different cultures and background.

After a brief summer break, the committee has reformed with new members and is well into the planning stages for the Westminster event for 2023, which will be held in Portcullis House on Tuesday 16 May 2023. The MP sponsor this year is Steve Brine, Conservative MP for Winchester.

The professional non-AA speakers have not yet been chosen but emails have gone out to the fellowship asking for people to get in touch with their health professional contacts and urge them to invite their colleagues who would benefit from hearing more about AA. This year, like every year, the emphasis is on getting health professionals and people who come into contact with the still suffering alcoholic and who don't know much about AA to come along to hear what AA has to offer. This is not an event for AA members or even the people we already work with in our PI initiatives although we rely heavily on them to encourage their contacts and colleagues to attend.

Gretchen S

GSB Trustee, Westminster Parliamentary Event

### **Scottish**

The Scottish Parliament event is now booked to go ahead on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023, following two years of this event being affected by COVID restrictions and again being rescheduled this year we are delighted it is finally going ahead. The theme is Alcoholics Anonymous Awareness, and we have four confirmed AA speakers and one of our Non-Alcoholic Trustee's, Mr Tom Fox. The emphasis will include the different ways that members came to AA from differing backgrounds and our speakers experience will give wonderful examples of this, carrying the message that Alcoholics Anonymous is available to all who suffer from alcoholism. An address from our Sponsoring MSP will be followed by our speakers and a question-and-answer session.

The committee comprises 2 Regional delegates from ideally all 5 Scottish Regions, and we are still looking for delegates from 1 Region. The committee decided a more structured approach would benefit the event and has agreed terms of rotation and record keeping. Administrative assistance is provided by the Northern Service office, and we are grateful for our workers there's support as well as support from staff at GSO. We would invite all members to suggest suitable Professional invitees through their Regional Delegates or directly to the committee for this event.

Hamish McS

GSB Trustee, Scottish Parliament Event

### **Welsh**

The Annual Presentation at the Senedd took place on Wednesday 26th October 2022 in the Pierhead building. It went very well indeed and numbers were up on last year with a good turnout of Professionals, four Politicians and a member of Senedd Staff.

The aim of the presentation is to impart a better understanding of AA to professionals and parliamentarians.

I am grateful to Peredur Owen Griffith MS, of Plaid Cymru, for sponsoring and opening the event. Ranjan gave an introduction of AA and the General Service Office. I am the Trustee for Prisons and gave a short talk on AA within Prisons and the importance of AA being allowed into them. Followed by two AA speakers Charlotte and Vikki who gave their experience, strength and hope.

We opened up the floor for Questions and Answers. Followed by a buffet.

For Terry B, who Chaired this event on behalf of Wales and Borders Region, this was his last event and has now rotated out and will pass this onto Graham S. Many thanks to all involved and making this event a success.

Zelma K  
GSB Trustee, Welsh Senydd Event

## National Conventions Update

### Northern

The Northern National Convention was held in March 2022 at The Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool with an attendance of 883. This was the first Northern National Convention for three years and was a resounding success. Over the year the committee have met regularly, and their AGM was held in Blackpool in September. Arrangements are in hand for the next Convention, which is to be held 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

Barbara O  
GSB Trustee, Heath and NNC

### Southern

The Southern National Convention 2022 was held at the South of England Event Centre near Burgess Hill in West Sussex over the Weekend of the 30th September to the 2nd October. Rather fittingly, after the previous two Conventions were cancelled due to Covid, the theme was **Happy Joyous and Free**.

This was the first year at this new location as the previous venue in Hayling Island became unavailable during Covid. The Committee worked incredibly hard to find a new venue and considerable time and effort was required to locate and secure the South of England Event Centre. The amount of time available for initial preparations and publicising of the 2022 event was significantly reduced as a result. Nevertheless, just under 300 people attended over the weekend, everything ran smoothly and much positive feedback was received during and following the Convention. The new venue has a great layout, camping facilities, free parking, and plenty space for members to meet and chat. A full programme of meetings was held over the weekend, with Al-Anon participation. A very informative and well attended Chat Now workshop was presented by Casey C on the Saturday afternoon.

Convention 2022 was self-supporting with a small surplus available for the 2023 Convention. This will be held at the same venue with a theme of **Recovery, Unity and Service**. The Committee is pleased to announce that the Convention this year has been brought forward to the weekend of the 1st - 3rd September 2023. The earlier and (hopefully) warmer drier weather will allow more campers and caravaners to take advantage of the ample on-site camping facilities. Early Bird tickets and pre-registration is available on the Convention website (<https://aa-snc.org.uk>)

Work has already begun on the 2023 Convention and there are several places available on the Convention Committee. If you would like to take part and do service on the Committee and you are in Eastern, London South, London North, South East, South West or South Midlands Region, please put yourself forward for nomination at your Region. The Committee is friendly, welcoming and excited about putting on a great Convention in 2023.

Tim B  
GSB Trustee, Southern National Convention

## Scottish

The 65th Scottish National Convention, was held at Stirling Court Hotel from 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 2022. After initial challenges due to Covid 19 restrictions the Convention went ahead and was a sell-out success at capacity of 350, largely due to the unwavering and determined efforts of the committee. Online registration was used on the dedicated SNC website.

The convention took its regular form of meetings being hosted by each Region, with a Young Persons and Old timers meeting, the Saturday night meeting was open including an AI Anon speaker and rounded off with a sobriety countdown. AI – Anon also had their own meeting room and meetings were well attended. A calculation worked out 3000 years of sobriety were present over the weekend. The conservatory at the Hotel was given over to invited service disciplines, Roundabout, Health, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary convention, Prisons and Probation/CJS, Armed services, Archives, and a literature table.

The Committee met in person and online throughout the year and continue to do so providing dedicated and enthusiastic service. The planned 66th Scottish National Convention is to be held at a new venue due to increased demand for space and a change of business plan for the previous venue. The committee has booked The Queens Hall, Dunoon which has capacity in the main hall for 450. The 66<sup>th</sup> Scottish National Convention will take place 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023, we thank you for your continued support and look forward to welcoming as many of you there as possible.

Hamish McS  
GSB Trustee, Scottish National Convention

## Welsh

The Welsh National Convention was held in person at the Metropole Hotel Llandrindnod Wells on the 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> May 2022 with 143 attendees.

The theme of the Convention was Sobriety - Stronger Together or in Welsh Sobrwydd Cryfder gyda'n gilydd.

The Convention included a Welsh speaking table top session with simultaneous translation. Come and go meetings, entertainment and a Sobriety tree. The feedback was positive. The dates for 2023 are the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> June.

Zelma K  
GSB Trustee, Welsh National Convention

## OPEN FORUM

Shirley 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 they have heard this weekend so far.

The evening ended at 10pm with Shirley 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 before heading back to their Committees at 11pm.

# SUNDAY 10 APRIL

Shirley 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.

Shirley then invited the Chairs of the six Committees to present their respective reports which were fully discussed and adopted and as much time as was possible given for minority opinions to be heard.

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

Committee No. 1	Pages	70 - 72
Committee No. 2	Pages	73 - 80
Committee No. 3	Pages	81 - 90
Committee No. 4	Pages	91 - 93
Committee No. 5	Pages	94 - 98
Committee No. 6	Pages	99 - 101

## ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR CONFERENCE 2024

The nomination received on Friday evening was presented and, after a vote, Sean M (Glasgow Region) was duly elected.

## CONFIRMATION OF BOARD MEMBERS

(Amanda S, Chair GSB)

Good afternoon, Conference. My name is Amanda and I'm an alcoholic and we are almost at the end of our proceedings. Firstly, I would like to congratulate Sean on becoming Conference Chair 2024. Thank you all for your participation and making this an enjoyable and fruitful conference and showing a degree of love, patience and tolerance. It's always a privilege to see the group conscience of the fellowship in action.

It's my job as Chair of the General Service Board to confirm our new Trustees who are joining our board, to introduce them to you and let you know the disciplines they've been allocated.

The first is Holly A from South West Region who will be responsible for Young People and First Response.

Now to our Non Alcoholic Trustees who bring balance to the Board by providing an outside perspective, and they don't do service to help keep them sober, but they each have their reasons for joining us and for that we are extremely grateful.

The first is Emma Gibson, who applied to join us after seeing the BBC documentary and her experience as an Auditor will be very, very useful to us. She'll be serving on the Finance Committee and AA Service News.

Next, we have Henry Lowe, who works as a fast-track Civil Servant and at 24 is our youngest ever Non Alcoholic Trustee. He will be serving on Young People, Employment and the Parliamentary event.

Finally, we have Ranjana Bell, who has extensive experience in working with charities and will be serving on the Nominations and the Race Today Working Group.

On Friday we said goodbye to our Non Alcoholic Trustee Thomas Baldwin and I'd like to put on record again our thanks for his service.

Now I must announce my own departure from the General Service Board. It's truly been a journey of self-discovery, growth and joy and it began here at my very first conference in 2014 when I was a red dotter for London Region South.

Coming to conference for the first time was like finding the missing piece of the jigsaw puzzle. I gained a greater understanding of how the group conscience of the Fellowship worked. Following that conference, I applied to join the PI Sub Committee where I was able to use my experience of my day job in the media to AA's benefit. I later had the privilege of serving as Conference Chair.

When the trustee role came up, I was put forward by my region. I became a Trustee six years ago. One of the highlights was that I got to come to conference again. I looked after the Young People's discipline and enjoyed every minute of it.

When the Chair of the Board position came up. I was nominated. I thought long and hard about taking it on as it's a very demanding role but I knew God has never given me anything I can't handle. The last two years of being the chair has given me the opportunity to learn more about the fellowship and about myself and to learn not to take things too personally.

I'm so grateful for the opportunity to be able to serve. Service at the bottom of the triangle can often be challenging, but what I have seen first-hand is a dedication to this fellowship from our members, those on the General Service Board and those on our Board Sub Committees. Also, it's been a joy to meet fellow AAs from across the world due to my participation in the World Service meeting and the European Service meeting and to have our Observers that are here today.

When I joined the Board there was just four women here and today I'm pleased to say we have nine female board members and more younger board members.

Special thanks go to our Vice Chair, Stevie, for his role in guiding the 75th Anniversary Committee and delivering a successful convention that brought unity and an awareness of AA to the outside world and to our NAT, Tom Fox, for communicating so brilliantly the message of AA through the media on a regular basis.

I'd like to also thank Justin, Tom, and Pab K from the PI Sub Committee for their hard work on the BBC documentary and of course the wonderful members who stepped up and took part.

I'd also like to thank Ranjan, Sharon and all the GSO staff who have supported me over the past few years. I shall miss you all and a big thank you to Shirley, Conference Chair for steering us so well over the last few days, it's a tough job, it's a tough gig, I've done it.

I'd like to introduce you now to the incoming Chair, Justin, who has been shadowing me for the past 18 months. Justin brings with him a wealth of experience, and more importantly, a kindness and it's been a privilege to get to know him and I know that AAGB will be in safe hands with Justin guiding the Board.

And lastly, I want to thank you all for representing the conscience of the Fellowship and bringing it here this weekend. Thank you, Conference.

A few words from Justin:

Hello, thank you very much for the privilege and the responsibility that's been given to me and I'll see many of you here next year. The upside-down triangle means that this is not a job that means any one person runs anything, I'd rather liken it to being a sink strainer where everything ends up but we'll see how that goes. Could you please just show your appreciation for Amanda and all the very hard work she's done for us all.

## **Close of Conference**

(Shirley S)

Conference 2023 is drawing to a close. United, behind our Primary Purpose, we have worked as one, and accomplished much. Thank you to each and every one of you for playing your part in taking the annual conscience of the Fellowship and taking AA forward. I came to AA in search of a solution for my drinking problem, but never, in a million years, did I expect the multitude of gifts I have received. AA has given me, and continues to give, so much more ... and all I'm asked to do, in order to keep it, is to do my bit to help carry the message of recovery to the still-suffering alcoholic. Such a small cost, in repayment for my life and my family!

I hope you have all had as incredible, and memorable, Conference weekend as I have.

Before we go, there are a host of people I'd like to thank:

- First and foremost, the Fellowship – to those members that took the time to submit questions and to groups and individual AAs, for carefully considering the questions and providing such comprehensive feedback
- A massive thank you to the Trustees of the General Service Board, for continuing to devote so much of their own time, and who work tirelessly throughout the year, on behalf of the Fellowship
- Thanks to Sharon, our amazing Conference Co-Ordinator, for organising yet another excellent AA GB Conference – we couldn't have done it without you, Sharon!
- Thank you to the members of the GSO team, who have been quietly and efficiently beaver away in the background all weekend, putting everything in place and ensuring that things ran seamlessly
- Also, a big thank you to Keith, our excellent audio-visual technician
- To our Overseas Visitors, thank you for your participation. I hope you have enjoyed your time with us and have found it a rewarding experience
- My personal thanks go to Ranjan and Sharon, for all the support and guidance they've given me over the past year, in my role as Chair of the Conference Steering Committee, and also, for all their help and encouragement this weekend
- Huge thanks to my fellows on the Conference Steering Committee:
  - Committee Chairs: John, Adam, Jim, Sean, Elaine and Andre, for their diligence and hard work over the last year, and for steadfastly steering their committees through the challenges of this year's submissions and subsequent recommendations to Conference – it's not an easy job, but brings monumental rewards, both to the Fellowship and to our personal recovery

- Board Trustees: Tim and Hamish, for the benefit of their experience, ongoing support, and full participation in the 2023 submission selection process
- Again, Sharon and Ranjan, for the benefit of their experience, logistical support, advice and assistance with the development of this year's Conference itinerary
- To you, the Delegates - thank you for all your hard work, throughout the Pre-Conference process, here at Conference this weekend and in advance, of the Post Conference period. When you go home, please do share about your service experience and the important message behind this year's Conference theme
- To those Delegates who are rotating out this year - thank you all for your service. I hope that yesterday's Sub Committee "drop-in," went some way to encouraging you to give some serious thought to putting your valuable experience to good use, as a Sub Committee member
- My final thanks, on behalf of us all, go to the hotel staff for looking after us so splendidly again this year

It's been a joy to spend this weekend with you all. Being your Conference Chair has been one of the greatest honours of my life and I humbly thank you for allowing me to be of service.

Congratulations to next year's Conference Chair, Sean. I wish you and the new Conference Steering Committee, all the very best for 2024.

That concludes the business for Conference 2023. I wish you all a safe journey home.

To close, please join me in saying the Responsibility Statement, followed by the Serenity Prayer:

***I am Responsible...***

***When anyone. anywhere,  
Reaches out for help,  
I want the hand of AA  
Always to there.  
And for that: I am responsible.***

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***

Thank you.

## **DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT CONFERENCE**

The Fifty-Eighth General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain will be held at the Park Inn, North Street, York on 12 – 14 April 2024.



## FIFTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2023

### COMMITTEE No. 1

CHAIR            ANDRE M            CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

SECRETARY    MIKE C            EASTERN REGION

1.    **In the interests of transparency and consistency, could Conference discuss how open GSB expenditure and investment accounts are, and whether they are presented in a way that is useful and easy to understand for the wider Fellowship, thus giving members an insight of how funds are spent?**

This committee recognises the need for transparency and consistency in the financial reporting from the Board whilst acknowledging their legal responsibilities as trustees of the charity. For example, in both the annual and quarterly accounts.

This committee recommends:

- 1)    Using a consistent and plain English format for quarterly reports and suggest these are distributed widely through regional treasurers to the wider fellowship.
- 2)    Where possible use simple and easy to understand graphics.
- 3)    More commentary and itemised detail on primary purpose work and other spending be provided on the web site to aid understanding of quarterly accounts.

The vote was unanimous.

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

2.    **Would Conference discuss and make suggestions as to how the Question for Conference selection and process could be made more open and democratic?**

This Committee recognises the good work done in the Conference Steering Committee (CSC) and the difficulty of the task. Feedback from the fellowship showed whilst some are satisfied with the current process, others felt improvements could be made to make the process more open and democratic. Specific suggestions for improvement were:

- 1)    CSC to produce a summary of the conference process and an overview of the rejected questions to be published in AA Service News (AASN).
- 2)    General Service Board to support the fellowship in raising awareness at group level (e.g. using existing literature, workshops and prominently on the AA web site).
- 3)    CSC to give more detailed explanations as to why questions were rejected including minority opinions.
- 4)    Remove the “catch all” criterion 12 from the terms of reference – “submissions not accepted for reasons other than the above”.

- 5) Reduce board representation on the CSC from two trustees to one trustee – general secretary to remain.
- 6) CSC to seek clarification of proposed questions and/or background from the questioner where practical and as required, also when combining questions into composites.

The vote was unanimous.

*Conference approved this recommendation by a simple majority.*

3. **Considering the Board's "surplus funds" (Conference 2022 Report, P14), can the Fellowship discuss and recommend how the Fellowship may better spend money locally and the Board nationally, to carry the message using these funds?**

Whilst recognizing that the annual surplus/deficit fluctuates, the consensus within this committee is that funds are best spent on local initiatives at group, intergroup and regional levels. However, this committee felt that in some cases this question relates more to vacant service positions across the fellowship rather than financial considerations.

This committee recommends:

- 1) Encouraging participation in service through greater sharing of successful primary purpose initiatives at and across group, intergroup, regional and national levels – e.g. regular service meetings and seminars/roadshows.
- 2) Request GSB to collect and publish case studies of successful primary purpose activities on the website/AASN etc.
- 3) Make use of electronic media - e.g. social media, media ad campaigns.
- 4) Encourage groups and intergroups to do their own local outreach work including liaising with relevant professionals, before sending surplus monies down the service structure.
- 5) General Service Board to continue to work on larger-scale and inclusive activities that best support the efforts of groups, intergroups and regions to carry the message e.g. improvements to the website, provision of templates for Public Information, production of videos etc.

The vote was unanimous.

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

4. **Review revision of 'Location of the Conference', AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain, page 104, (Conference 2022, Committee 6, Question 2).**

This committee recommends the proposed revision.

The vote was unanimous.

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

**5. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2024.**

The Committee elected Peter N from North West Region as Chair of Committee No. 1 for Conference 2024.

**6. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2024.**

The Committee elected Patrick R from London Region North as Secretary of Committee No. 1 for Conference 2024.

## FIFTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2023

### COMMITTEE No. 2

CHAIR                      ADAM P                      NORTH EAST REGION

SECRETARY              MICHELLE C                  MIDLANDS REGION

1. **Would the fellowship review the practice of singing religious songs/Christian Hymns at AA meetings, particularly at National Conventions and Special Events and Conference make recommendations for guidance on this subject.**

The shared experience of the Fellowship in the practice of singing religious songs/Christian Hymns at AA Meetings, particularly at National Conventions and Special Events is varied.

The following experiences were shared:

1. Christian hymns/religious songs currently used can put people off. One newcomer being put off is a potential life lost.
2. This practice could be seen as discriminatory to other faiths; AA should be non-denominational and should not affiliate with a particular belief.
3. Singing contributes to the feeling of fellowship.
4. There was discussion about 'God of your understanding' being contradicted. However, this was felt not to be relevant to this question.
5. Many members had not experienced this practice at AA meetings.
6. Different songs mean different things to different people/communities.
7. A substantial majority of responses received were against the singing of religious songs/Christian hymns.

The committee recommend the following guidance:

1. Our Preamble clearly states what AA is and what it is not. We are spiritual, not religious. Therefore, it was felt that religious songs/Christian hymns ought not be sung as part of AA meetings, national conventions and special events.
2. Neutral 'uplifting' songs, agreed by the Group Conscience of the event, could be used.
3. Applying Tradition 4, the committee concluded that this affects AA as a whole and therefore suggest that National Convention Committees develop guidance on this issue given that they are accountable to regions.
4. We should be able to find expressions of unity/spirituality without the use of 'religious' songs. Members should be mindful when selecting material to be used. Love and Tolerance is our code.

Vote

For: 15  
Against: 2  
Abstain: 0

Minority Views: All pathways to spirituality, whether religious or secular, ought to be respected.

Is the question not expressing a degree of intolerance? The Big Book begs us '...to lay aside prejudice, even against organised religion...'. (Chapter 4 We Agnostics).

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

2. **Would Groups discuss, and through Conference recommend, a way to engage the Fellowship's involvement in Conference Questions, considering particularly that modern technology is available to gauge reactions to proposed Questions, or topics for Questions.**

There are three parts to this question which the committee feels needs further exploration: how questions are submitted, how questions are selected and how feedback is obtained. It was felt that this was too large an issue to discuss within the remit of the current question. Therefore, it is recommended that a working group be formed to address these points.

There is a perception of over-involvement of Board Members in the selection of questions for Conference process, perhaps in part due to GSB Trustees and the General Secretary providing continuity on the Conference Steering Committee (CSC).

The committee recommends the following means of engaging the Fellowship's involvement in Conference Questions:

- a. Regions/Intergroups to get the message out as early as possible to groups to respond to Q4C, including publishing questions on Intergroup Microsites.
- b. Sponsors encourage sponsees to get involved in Group Consciences discussing Q4C.
- c. Workshops/meetings held especially for working through the Conference process at different levels; Group, Intergroup, Region.
- d. The process of submitting questions is overly complicated. This should be reviewed with a view to simplifying it (e.g. finding previous questions could be supported with the use of modern technology by creating a database of previously asked questions).
- e. Share examples of how previous Conference decisions affect the Fellowship today.
- f. Member(s) submitting the questions give a premise for it in a medium of their choice (print, audio, video).

- g. Supply links with Q4C (questions for conference) to access background material, terms of reference etc.
- h. Use video platforms such as Zoom to encourage wider participation.

The committee further recommends that the working group considers using technology in the following ways:

1. Create multimedia formats to show the process of Conference (e.g. podcast, walk-through guide, video).
2. Use online feedback forms/polls to ease submission of questions and gauge reactions to proposed questions/topics before CSC select questions.
3. Use the AAGB website more interactively in question selection and gathering responses.
4. Care should be taken not to exclude members who do not have access to modern technology and ensure quality of access for all members.

Vote:

For: 16

Against: 1

Abstain: 0

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

3. **Would the Fellowship discuss, share experience and make recommendations on the following matters concerning service with limited or no internet access? -**

- a. **How to accommodate a willing member with no access to a computer or smart device hold a service post in this technological age.**

The committee agreed that very few people have no access to a computer or smart device. How new members come to AA is changing as technology develops, so there is a need for AA to ensure that they are making use of all available avenues into the Fellowship, while being inclusive.

Intergroup/Region/National Level service generally require access to technology.

The following recommendations were made to accommodate willing members with no access to devices:

1. Technology buddy.
2. Borrow/lend equipment.
3. Encourage such members to do service that does not require technology.
4. Members should encourage and support others who need it (as we did during lockdown)
5. Use public libraries/internet cafes – being mindful of anonymity.
6. Use support offered by the AA Helpline.

7. Paper documents should be available on request (e.g. 12<sup>th</sup> stepper list, meeting list, minutes)
  8. Carry out a survey to find out how many members use a computer or smart device to carry out service.
- b. How to accommodate a willing member with no technical abilities carry out service in this technological age.**

The committee recommends use of:

1. Sponsorship/Buddy system
  2. Workshops to provide training.
  3. Make use of free training available (Libraries; 'My world of work' – provides free courses).
  4. ECLOs to support members.
  5. Use a Service Secretary – who would buddy members up together to share technical abilities.
- c. Also, how can a willing member living in an area with patchy or limited internet connectivity carry out effective AA service.**

The committee recommends the following:

1. Telephone buddy with someone who does have consistent connectivity to internet.
  2. Provide 'dongles'
  3. Encourage members to carry out service that does not require internet access.
- d. At times of crisis what can the Fellowship put in place to ensure members without technology gain access to help and information.**

The committee discussed different interpretations of 'crisis' and for the purpose of this question focussed on a potential national or global crisis.

The committee recommends the following:

1. One alcoholic talking to another. There is a certain amount of individual responsibility for personal recovery.
2. Use the local helpline.
3. Groups to have an up-to-date contact list – 'Telephone tree'.
4. A collection of experiences from across the Fellowship with a view to creating a leaflet – 'In times of Crisis....' incorporating what we learnt from Covid, what happens in the event of technology not being available etc.

Vote: For: 13

Against: 2

Abstain: 2

Minority View: Expressed that the measures proposed are excessive and not commensurate with the size of the problem.

4. **Review revised section ‘Regional Assembly’, *AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain*, page 96.**

The Regional Assembly

It is suggested that a regional assembly should comprise up to three regional representatives from each participating intergroup, who should be prepared to serve for a term of three years. Provision should be made for rotation to preserve continuity. It is recommended that regional representatives should have at least three years’ continuous sobriety and sufficient intergroup experience. An important factor is the availability of elected members to devote time to the work without adversely affecting their family or careers.

Regional representatives should elect their officers from members of the Assembly. These should consist of:

- The Chair, who takes the meeting
- The Vice Chair deputizes for the chair and often takes responsibility for workshops and forums.
- The Treasurer, who attends to finance matters, more information on which is given in section (renumbered) 5, Region Money.
- The Regional Secretary is a channel of communication for their region. Suggested duties may be found in (new) section 3, Administrative Responsibilities

These officers, and others, if decided by a region, may form an Executive or Steering Committee that meets as required between assemblies to deal with urgent matters and to prepare for the assembly. Any one or more of these members may be a co-signatory for region funds.

The agenda for the regional assembly, the minutes, and other pertinent documents are reviewed collectively by this group. Executive committee members are jointly responsible for securing the venue, setting dates for, and ensuring the smooth running of regional assemblies, including the AGM, although this may be undertaken primarily by the regional secretary. They should participate in encouraging attendance at assemblies and act as service sponsors, by demonstrating the value of service.

In addition, members should be elected, taking into consideration their experience or interest, to the following positions:

- Archivist
- Armed Services Liaison Officer
- Electronic Communications Liaison Officer
- Employment Liaison Officer
- Health Liaison Officer
- Prison Liaison Officer
- Probation/Criminal Justice Liaison Officer (Scotland)
- Public Information Liaison Officer
- SHARE/Roundabout Liaison Officer
- Telephone Liaison Officer



#### ▪ Young People's Liaison Officer

It is recommended that these officers should serve a maximum of three years and be confirmed annually.

The regional assembly may also co-opt a member of the region, not necessarily a regional representative, to carry out a specific task as a non-voting member of the assembly for the duration of the work involved (e.g., convention convenor, archivist).

Having served three years a regional representative should retire by rotation, thus providing a place for another to gain regional experience and so enrich experience of service in the Fellowship. He or she could then be eligible for re-election after a minimum period of one year. When the regional representatives of an intergroup are depleted because one of their number has been elected to serve as an officer, then another suitable member may be elected by the intergroup concerned to take their place.

It is suggested that a regional assembly should comprise two or three regional representatives from each of its constituent intergroups, together with its elected officers and General Service Board (GSB) member. These are the sole holders of voting rights. Observers and visitors are welcome but may not participate unless invited by the chair.

It is suggested that the assembly should meet 4 times annually. The meeting should be called in a proper manner with a settled agenda, and minutes should be circulated after the meeting with copies to interested persons such as General Service Office (GSO), the GSB and neighbouring regions for information as an additional means of sharing experience.

New section 3 below will precede current 3 (Conference Delegates/ Alternates), 4 (Region Money) and 5 (Regional Forums) to be renumbered 4, 5 and 6:

### **3. Administrative Responsibilities**

A regional secretary is **the/a** channel of communication for the region, with its intergroups, with GSO, members of the regional assembly, or other regions. They also support the passage of relevant information between members and outside bodies with whom AA deals. The regional secretary should be approachable, use clear language, and keep within our Traditions.

They work with all regional liaison officers (LOs), passing on enquiries and communications such as AA Service News and notifications of regional LO meetings, and encourage timely reports for the regional assembly.

They maintain accurate records, observing GDPR (**General Data Protection Regulations** (QR Code/link to current GDPR)).

These may include:

- Regional assembly agenda and minutes (and forwarding copies to GSO)
- Summary from the regional assembly for intergroups and groups
- Register of regional officers and contact details
- Digest of decisions
- Register of members who have served at region, and of members who have served a full term at Conference.

The regional secretary is also responsible for:

- Regional officer registration with GSO (required for aamail.org email addresses and access to the Confidential Directory)
- Conference delegate and alternate delegate registration with GSO
- AAGB Sub Committee applications, GSB nominations, and letters of support

Any correspondence with outside organisations is usually in collaboration with the regional chair and other appropriate members – specific liaison officers or members of the executive committee.

The regional secretary establishes eligibility to vote and the quorum at the assembly and conducts ballots appropriately.

It is suggested that when time permits and business is completed a sharing session on some specific subject is held in which observers may participate, the object being to forward our primary purpose and improve services in the region.

It is suggested that:

1. Each region holds a regular **inventory**. ([link to current inventory questions](#))
2. The regional inventory generates a list of ideas and actions to be used as a yardstick.
3. The region considers using the inventory list as a regular item on their agendas.
4. The inventory questions and answers of that region be shared with other regions and the GSO / GSB for wider distribution to the Fellowship, e.g., through AA Service News and the Regional Chairs Meetings.

### **Service structure**

Committees may be formed to support region officers in their roles, allowing for shadowing and sponsorship into service positions.

The formation of committees may be along the lines adopted by the GSB as listed in The General Service Board, section 1, or to address the region's requirements. Here are some examples:

- Finance
- External Communications
- Executive

There should be named liaison or contact officers for specific areas of service at all levels to enable contact with neighboring/neighbouring regions, as well as intergroups and GSO to include AAmail addresses and examples.

Please could it be made clear whether a new section is being introduced or a current section being amended with regards to future literature items?

Vote

For: 17

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

**5. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2024.**

The Committee elected Alan F of South Midlands Region as Chair of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2024.

**6. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2024.**

The Committee elected Cherisse D of East of Scotland Region as Secretary of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2024.

## COMMITTEE No. 3

CHAIR

JIM K

GLASGOW REGION

SECRETARY

ANN A

LONDON REGION NORTH

1. In recent times, with the exponential growth of social media platforms there are more opportunities and media than ever before for well-meaning AA members to break their Anonymity at the public level. While there is ample AA literature available on how to respect/protect anonymity at the public level and on social media platforms (e.g., 'Hints and Suggestions on Internet Safety' card and ongoing work by the board) it seems to be occurring more and more regularly.

Could Conference discuss and make recommendation on what can be done by the fellowship (i.e., AA GB, Regions, intergroups, groups and individual members) to encourage well-meaning AA members to stop this harmful trend.

For example, the USA and Canada GSO send a regular letter to newspapers reminding them about the importance of tradition 11 (see link <https://www.aa.org/anonymity-letter-to-media> and AAGB anonymity letter from 2015 <see [Anonymity Letter | Alcoholics Anonymous - Great Britain \(alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk\)](https://alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)).

The Committee heard from the fellowship that the problem of anonymity being broken at the public level, particularly on social media, is a major concern.

"When using digital media, AA members are responsible for their own anonymity and that of others. When we post, text or blog, we should assume that we are publishing at the public level. When we break our anonymity in these forums, we may inadvertently break the anonymity of others" (Understanding Anonymity leaflet).

The Committee makes the following recommendations under three areas:

### 1. Personal Responsibility:

STOP. THINK OF OTHERS BEFORE YOU PRESS THAT BUTTON.

Suggest sponsors reinforce the message of the Traditions highlighting personal responsibility on anonymity, particularly related to social media.

Suggest members of the fellowship send in articles on their experience of anonymity for inclusion in AA Service News, SHARE and Roundabout magazines.

## **2. Groups, Intergroups and Regions:**

Suggest Regions and Intergroups hold Tradition workshops with emphasis on media anonymity.

Suggest groups include reference to the “Understanding Anonymity” pamphlet (Item Code 3330) when reading out the Yellow Card.

Suggest groups include traditions and active discussion on them in their conscience meetings.

Encourage use of laminated cards “No Photos” at conventions.

## **3. General Service Board (GSB):**

Request GSB to send all groups the Leaflets “Understanding Anonymity” and “AA Guidelines: Internet”, the “Hints and Suggestions on Internet Safety” card and the Anonymity one finger board (item code 3829).

Include the current Hints and Suggestions on Internet Safety card in Starter Pack.

Request GSB to review Hints and Suggestions on Internet Safety card and present to conference 2024 to include specific reference for social media.

Request GSB to write letter to World Services proposing Tradition 11 be updated to include specific reference to social media.

Request GSB to send a letter to prominent media organisations on an annual basis explaining our principle of anonymity.

Include the anonymity quote above from “Understanding Anonymity” in the front of refreshed Handbooks, diary and other appropriate publications.

Ask the body responsible for reviewing the revisions to the AA GB website to include the anonymity statement prominently on the members’ landing page.

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

## **2. Would conference consider changing the imagery used in the illustrated Traditions pamphlet Product code: 3290. Should the Fellowship decide to update this to a more inclusive format?**

The fellowship perceives the imagery to be outdated. The committee agreed the imagery should be updated to a more inclusive format.

The committee further recommends the leaflet be removed from sale and asks that GSO stocks the “Experience Has Taught Us” leaflet which is currently published by AA USA/CANADA.

VOTE: FOR: 16 AGAINST: 1

MINORITY OPINION: One delegate did not agree the leaflet be removed from sale.

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

3. **Would Conference discuss and make suggestions as to how links between AA groups and the General Service Board (GSB) can be strengthened, to encourage members to take an interest and participate in the projects undertaken by the GSB.**

**In particular:**

- a. **Should there be reports from the GSB in AA Service News, and, if so, how frequent should they be?**
- b. **Should the first names of GSB members be publicised more prominently within the Fellowship, together with their regions?**
- c. **Should the identity and role of the Non-Alcoholic Trustees (NATs) be more widely publicised within the Fellowship?**
- d. **Should the Structure Handbook of AAGB contain details of the purpose and work of the Sub-Committees of the GSB, and a clear statement of the role and responsibility of Sub-Committee members?**

The fellowship felt that improving links was of key importance and that any action which helps the wider membership understand how the GSB works would be valuable.

The committee recommends:

- 1. Encouraging members into service - service helps members understand the workings of the fellowship.
- 2. Inviting board members via the GSB Executive Committee to Intergroup (face to face or online).
- 3. Encouraging GSRs and Region Reps to fully engage in communication between Region, Intergroups and Groups, for example comprehensive sponsorship, sharing service experience, promoting reading of AA Service News.
- 4. Encouraging those participating in projects and sub-committees to share the benefits of their service experience.

In relation to the above specific questions:

- a. Yes the inclusion of bullet points from the GSB in AA Service News when possible.
- b. Yes with permission.
- c. Yes with permission.
- d. Yes.

UNANIMOUS

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

4. **Review Health Sub Committee revision of Chapter 6, *AA Service Handbook for Great Britain*, p51-54.**

The Fellowship applauded the revision of this chapter, and the committee made the following minor amendments and additions:

## **Chapter 6: AA and Healthcare in the Community**

### **1 Introduction**

### **2 Communication**

### **3 Ideas for Activity**

### **4 Meeting Healthcare Professionals**

### **5 Hospital/Treatment Centre Meetings (Groups and Sponsored)**

### **6 Starting a Meeting at a Hospital/Treatment Centre**

### **7 Visiting Patients in Hospital**

### **8 GP Surgeries/Healthcare Centres**

### **9 Pharmacies**

### **10 Other NHS or Healthcare Groups**

### **11 Useful Approved Literature**

### **12 Restricted Access Caused by a Covid-19 Pandemic**

#### **6:1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to assist Health Liaison Officers (HLOs), at intergroup or region, and all members helping the still suffering alcoholic, through cooperation with the healthcare profession.

AA has a history of working with the healthcare community, whether visiting patients in hospital (Bill and Bob visiting 'The Man on the Bed'), talking to doctors and nurses either in hospitals, treatment centres or GP surgeries, making presentations to communities or talking to a patient referred to AA. Frequently the alcoholic is referred to as a 'problem drinker', 'alcoholic dependent' or 'suffering from alcohol use disorder'.

The AA Great Britain website has an extensive section on Health that can be viewed as follows:

- Health within the Members Service Disciplines Area. This includes an Introduction, Health Resources, Roles and Terms of Reference of the Health Subcommittee
- Healthcare within the Professionals Social Sectors Area
- See also the sections on Safeguarding on the website and in the AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain

#### **6:2 Communication**

Intergroups and regions are responsible for appointing Health Liaison Officers (HLOs), who ideally, should work as a member of the local AA combined services committee, working with Liaison Officers from other service disciplines. HLOs should aim to establish contact and maintain communication with healthcare professionals and report back to their intergroup/region. It is important that HLOs communicate with other AA members working in health liaison in their area. The primary role of the regional HLO is to support and co-ordinate the work of intergroup HLOs. This way, the AA message of

recovery can be passed more effectively. Do not be afraid to seek advice from other intergroup HLOs, your regional HLO or a member of the Health Subcommittee. **The sharing of reports is an easy and effective way of communicating ideas.** Regular reporting is an effective way of communicating activity and ideas between intergroup, region and the sub-committee.

### 6:3 Ideas for Activity

There have been many changes in the NHS, and in the provision of mental health and substance misuse services, over the last few years. Our message remains the same, whether we are delivering it directly to a patient or to a professional in the hope that it will be passed on to problem drinkers.

Perhaps start by investigating and listing potential healthcare contacts in your area such as hospitals, medical / treatment centres, mental health charities, surgeries, medical training establishments, public health and wellbeing teams at local authorities, and any other healthcare establishments where a health professional may come into contact with a problem drinker.

The lists below offer some ideas on how HLOs together with their intergroup and / or region can move towards achieving our primary purpose:

- Provide stands at local events
- Invite/accompany professionals to open AA meetings
- Give talks to groups of health professionals
- Develop contact with medical training facilities with the objective of including Open Meeting Workshops (OMWs) in their curriculums
- Work with hospitals/treatment centres for problem drinkers
- **Establish contact with local government health and wellbeing teams**

#### Hospitals/Treatment Centres:

- Look for opportunities to display AA literature, always asking for permission first
- Find out if there is an Alcohol Liaison Nurse or Liver **Specialist** Nurse **Practitioner**, contacting them directly to see if there is help, we can offer
- Investigate the opportunity to help with staff or student development
- If there is no AA meeting in the hospital, look into the possibility of helping to start one up
- Ask a local group to develop a good working relationship with the hospital

#### GP Surgeries and Health Centres:

- Look for opportunities to display AA posters and literature, talking to the Practice Manager first to obtain their support
- Make use of any central distribution point such as Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) for sending information out to GPs, Health Centres and pharmacies



- Liaise closely with Social Prescribers, who are healthcare professionals employed in GP practices, to support patients with multiple needs including alcohol issues, by signposting to community groups and services
- Try to ensure staff have a supply of contact cards with the helpline number. Local meeting lists may also be useful
- Talk to your own GP and/or Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) about how AA has helped you and how you would like to help others
- Offer to arrange a speaker for their training days to explain how AA works
- Contact local CCGs to see if there are opportunities to offer talks or OMWs, or to carry the message in other ways

Other possible contacts may include: Alcohol Forums, Alcohol Support Services, Alcohol Problems Advisory Services, Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (DAATs), Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADPs) in Scotland, Social Work departments, Treatment Centres, Rehabilitation and Substance Misuse Teams, mental health charities and various other alcohol awareness projects. It also may be worth researching Psychiatric Day Hospitals/Centres, Home Detoxification Services, Clinics, Dentists, Community Health Centres/projects and Pharmacies.

Many educational establishments that deal with health education would appreciate talks from AA members or OMWs - see AAGB website. These include Universities, Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Paramedic Practices, Health Scientists, Colleges with Health and Social Care departments or those that run Counselling Courses, local Health Initiatives run by CCGs or DAATs and GP Vocational Training Scheme programmes.

There is real benefit from working with other AA liaison officers.

#### **6:4 Meeting Healthcare Professionals**

Our role is to provide information about AA, what it can and cannot do, always remembering that as a Fellowship we are committed to remaining non-professional. Our approach is based on our ability, as alcoholics who have recovered from the illness of alcoholism, to work effectively with the still suffering alcoholic.

When meeting a healthcare professional, it is suggested that we: -

- Turn up on time, suitably dressed
- Politely make yourself known
- Provide information on local meetings, the National Telephone Service and 'Chat Now' service
- Be fully aware of the Steps, Traditions and Concepts
- Never discuss individual AA members
- Do not give medical advice to anyone
- Do not engage in debates on outside issues such as budgets, medical staff shortages or the NHS

- Never commit Alcoholics Anonymous or other AAs beyond your remit or our Traditions and Concepts
- Record and share items relevant to region / intergroup

Don't be afraid to ask questions. It is also important to listen as it is the way we learn.

Enjoy your role, safeguard the position and pass on your experience at rotation. If the experience is new to you, make use of the experience of other members in your area.

#### **6:5 Hospital/Treatment Centre Meetings (Groups and Sponsored)**

There are two forms of meeting suitable for these premises:

- The regular AA 'open or closed' group meeting, run according to guidance in the Structure Handbook, using the hospital/treatment centre as a venue. These meetings welcome patients being treated for alcoholism and should honour Tradition Seven
- An AA sponsored meeting held solely for inpatients. These meetings are not open to AA members in general, nor are they listed in AA's 'Where to Find'. AA members from outside do service at these meetings. This type of meeting may not be self-supporting. It may be necessary for the AA organisers to provide speakers, refreshments and AA literature. Inpatients generally undergo treatment for relatively short periods, and so the continuation of the meeting depends heavily on the facilitating AA members. It is usual for these meetings to be open, to allow health professionals to attend

#### **6:6 Starting a Meeting at a Hospital/Treatment Centre**

Discuss the idea at intergroup, region and combined AA service meetings to establish support from local members. Experience has shown that a minimum of four AA members are required, who are prepared to commit to support the meeting for at least one year. The HLO, with support from the service committee, should then make contact with the hospital/treatment centre to discuss the form of meeting to take place on their premises.

#### **6:7 Visiting Patients in Hospital**

The HLO may establish contact with a hospital or treatment centre, creating an opportunity to visit patients on the wards and share our experience, strength and hope. A small team of volunteers should be prepared to visit the wards on a basis agreed with the hospital, reporting back to intergroup.

- Volunteers may have to be registered with the hospital administration and may include a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS). A DBS check is not transferable and is held by the individual, but requested by the medical unit
- Volunteers must abide by the hospital /treatment centre rules; we are only guests. At all times the hospital staff have control and determine our access to

patients. We are invited onto the wards by the staff. We are allowed to talk to patients only with their consent. These conversations are strictly confidential

- Limit yourself to carrying your own story of recovery
- Be willing to listen, more than talk
- Have a thorough knowledge of the Steps, Traditions and Concepts, and live by their spiritual foundation
- Although we visit the wards as individuals, we will be known as members of AA by people in the hospital, and our appearance, language, manner and conduct may influence their opinion of AA as a whole
- Always maintain a courteous, cheerful humility about the amateur status of AA. We are not professionals, but we are experienced in recovering from alcoholism
- Do not talk about medication, psychiatry or scientific theories on alcoholism
- Never interfere or comment on the treatment or drug regime of the patient. This is the sole responsibility of the doctors and nurses
- Do not boast about AA. Let results **speak** for themselves

When taking responsibility for meetings in a professional centre, it is necessary to maintain contact with members of staff there.

#### 6:8 GP Surgeries/Healthcare Centres

General Practitioners (GPs) provide an obvious opportunity for health liaison (see also section 6:3 above “GP Surgeries and Healthcare Centres”). Simply mentioning AA during a doctor’s appointment is a start.

A short meeting or email contact with the Practice Manager **or nurse** may generate enough interest for a formal presentation to surgery staff, perhaps during a weekly/monthly staff meeting. **Attendance at the presentation may allow for a form of credit to a doctor’s/nurse’s individual Continued Professional Development or Education (CPD/CPE). Advice should be sought about the supply of certificates of attendance.**

The format of the presentation may vary and could include:

- How AA works
- Stories from individual members
- What AA has to offer
- The presentation of an OMW
- Ways in which AA and health professionals can work together

Presenters should leave the attendees with solutions/suggestions that they can use. Always stress AA’s benefits and that we are a free resource.

#### 6:9 Pharmacies

Pharmacists have become a first point of call for many. Making yourself known to local pharmacists and supplying literature, posters and AA contact cards may prove beneficial.

Some pharmacy chains are reluctant to display posters that are clearly visible to the public, but are willing to display them in private consultation rooms. Take time to discuss opportunities that might be of mutual interest.

#### 6:10 Other NHS or Healthcare Groups

Many different groups are involved with health, whether funded by the NHS, local government **wellbeing hubs**, charities or groups with specific interests. Those involved with mental health or addiction may benefit from a knowledge of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Be prepared to invite any healthcare practitioner or contact to a local open AA meeting.

#### 6:11 Useful Approved Literature

AA produces a considerable number of leaflets and videos that are continually being reviewed and these are available from the General Service Office. A full catalogue is available online.

#### 6:12 Restricted Access Caused by Covid-19 Pandemic

Our experience during the Covid-19 pandemic was that restricted treatment access made it extremely difficult and sometimes impossible to practise our primary purpose. Although many of our activities had to be cancelled, postponed or amended, we could still maintain contact with individuals and organisations.

Should a similar **pandemic strike** **restrictions** **occur** again, it may be beneficial to follow a path similar to that taken during Covid-19:

- Face-to-face contact can be replaced by virtual AA meetings with individuals or small groups, provided permission from an organisation is obtained when required, and that the risk of spreading infection (or just getting in the way) is agreed and safely addressed
- Medical staff could be given AA contact cards and appropriate supporting literature. Patients might be encouraged to make contact and speak virtually, or to meet in a safe location on discharge. Drug and alcohol liaison **and liver specialist** nurses can be especially supportive

We need to be regarded as an additional **immediate, local and free** resource that can always be called upon.

UNANIMOUS

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

### 5. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2024.

The Committee elected Jim M, Eastern Region as Chair of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2024.

**6. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2024.**

The Committee elected Jonathan T, North East Region as Secretary of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2024.

## FIFTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2023

### COMMITTEE No. 4

CHAIR	ELAINE C	LONDON REGION NORTH
SECRETARY	ERIC L	EAST OF SCOTLAND REGION

1. a) **Would the fellowship share its experience of appointing Safeguarding Liaison Officers at group level outlining the responsibilities of the role and explore the potential benefit of creating Safeguarding Liaison Officers at all levels of the service structure of AAGB.**
- b) **Discuss the need for the creation of a Safeguarding Sub-Committee of the General Service Board and make recommendations.**
- a) There has been little experience of appointing Safeguarding Officers at group level. The overall feedback from the fellowship is that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Many groups argued that it is difficult enough getting people taking on existing roles.

Many groups responded that safeguarding issues can be effectively addressed through the Group Conscience.

Some groups have found that implementing the tabletop card was beneficial.

There has similarly been little experience of Safeguarding Officers at both Intergroup and Region levels.

It is recognised that several of the concerns raised in the responses to this question are actually addressed within the Safeguarding Guidelines that were approved by Conference 2022. (AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain; The Group, Section 5)

Experience was also shared of unintended anonymity breaches that could have been avoided with better understanding of the guidelines.

The committee explored the potential benefit of creating safeguarding liaison officers at all levels, and considers that a deeper understanding and application of these guidelines would enable groups to make effective but autonomous decisions on the appointment of officers.

- b) The committee also discussed the need for the creation of a Safeguarding Sub-Committee of the General Service Board and recommends that a Sub-Committee should be formed.

The terms of reference should be designed to assist the fellowship develop its understanding of safeguarding issues through workshops and interfaces with statutory bodies e.g., MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs).

This Sub-committee would not have any responsibility to address specific safeguarding issues.

VOTE: Unanimous

*Conference approved this recommendation by a simple majority.*

2. **Would Conference consider whether having an AA stall at events whose aims are unrelated to those of AA is incompatible with AA Traditions and carries with it the risk of drawing AA into controversies associated with issues outside the Fellowship?**

**Does attendance at such events undermine or facilitate the unequivocal inclusivity of Tradition Three, either diverting us from or promoting our primary purpose?**

**Is attendance at events such as those described below consistent with our Traditions Six, Ten and Eleven, and the stated aims of PI work?**

Following a full and thorough discussion on all aspects of the question the committee concludes that when considering attendance at any event, each should be assessed on its own merit ensuring adherence to all traditions. The committee respects each group's autonomy when making these decisions.

VOTE: Unanimous

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

3. **Would the fellowship consider doing an audio version like a podcast of the Daily Reflection reading so that they can hear it on a morning please?**

The committee asks the GSB to produce an audio version of Daily Reflections.

VOTE: Unanimous

The committee also considered the suggestion in the background that these daily podcasts are prepared using different accents. Whilst some accepted the merit of this, the timescale and cost will need to be investigated.

VOTE: Unanimous

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

4. **Review revised Chapter ‘Conventions’, AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain, page 126.**

The committee reviewed the revised Chapter ‘Conventions’, and it was accepted without further change.

VOTE: Unanimous

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

5. **Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2024.**

The Committee elected Jane C from North East Region as Chair of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2024.

6. **Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2024.**

The Committee elected Rachel D from London Region South as Secretary of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2024.



## FIFTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2023

### COMMITTEE No. 5

CHAIR                      SEAN M                      GLASGOW REGION

SECRETARY              JEREMY M                      EAST OF SCOTLAND REGION

1. **Following on from Conference 2018 and noting the recent increase in groups continuing to meet online due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, would the Fellowship please discuss, share its experience and make recommendations about Tradition 7 contributions being collected electronically and digitally by means of card readers and other digital payment technology?**

Having shared experience, committee noted that groups are autonomous and need to consider their own choice at their group conscience.

Digital collection has worked well, and in some cases has increased income for groups, but where possible, provision for cash contributions should be maintained.

The committee (our shared experience) found that these things have worked for groups.

In the case of online and hybrid meetings, electronic payment should be encouraged, to maintain group income.

Care needs to be taken to ensure visibility of monies that have been collected by digital contribution.

Groups may need to have a warning card or statement indicating that there may be concern with personal anonymity, and that the name of the account may contain the name "Alcoholics Anonymous".

Where possible the group treasurer should check the account settings to ensure the name 'Alcoholics Anonymous' does not appear on any payee statements.

Further research is still needed.

The committee would recommend that the General Service Board GB review the relevant section of the Structure Handbook (Group Money, Group Treasurer) following the Treasurers Service Forum, and that the Literature Sub Committee might include the above points in group guidelines.

In accordance with Tradition 7, contributions come from within AA.

VOTE: Unanimous

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

2. **Would conference share experience regarding members wishing to take up service positions at Intergroups and Regions which require attendance a minimum number of meetings before being voted into office?**

The shared experience of the committee where there is a minimum attendance requirement for service at Intergroups and Regions was sparse. Following discussion of the background material no ideal specific solution could be identified, for all situations.

Any suggestion should be descriptive rather than prescriptive. The autonomy of each Intergroup or Region should be respected.

Regions shared occasional experience of officers not meeting the responsibilities of their role but have not had the need to introduce any firm guidelines.

The majority experience was that of difficulty in filling positions, and a desire to avoid placing additional obstructions in the appointment process.

Detailed handovers and sponsoring into service were recognised as being established methods of providing adequate support for those new to post, and also encouraged continuity in service.

The process of ratification was universally used, following Concept 9, and provides a degree of protection.

Commitment to service is demonstrated by the responsibility of the nominated member and their presented "AA CV".

VOTE: Unanimous

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

3. **Would the Fellowship discuss, share experience and make recommendations on holding 'hybrid' Intergroup Meetings or Regional Assemblies. In particular, would the Fellowship consider the potential benefits and disadvantages, as well as the practical considerations of holding such meetings both online and in-person at the same time.**

The committee recognised both the autonomy of each intergroup and region in their informed group conscience, and the value of hybrid meetings where there is an identified need.

The committee shared experience and highlighted the following benefits, disadvantages and practical considerations.

### **Experience**

The committee's majority experience was of a move back to entirely physical meetings when this was safe and possible following the pandemic. On occasion there had been a need to move to a fully virtual meeting. The committee experience was that the hybrid meeting may result in "the worst of both worlds". However, an experienced and enthusiastic minority have continued successfully with this format.

### **Potential benefits**

Hybrid meetings can offer improved inclusivity, where accessibility, geography or weather may be an issue. Cost savings may balance the cost of equipment purchase or hire against travel expenses claimed.

### **Disadvantages**

Costs should be weighed against the potential negative impact on unity, service and recovery.

The risk of dilution of unity, feelings of separation, loss of focus or interest.

Reduced opportunity for fellowship and incidental conversation.

### **Practical considerations**

Future improvements in technology may make this a more engaging and effective means of communication.

### **Recommendations**

Hybrid participation should only be considered if it is a necessity rather than for ease of convenience.

Consider alternative of alternating physical with virtual meetings, rather than using hybrid.

Where possible it is recommended that all serving officers should be present at the physical limb of a hybrid meeting.

The Chair outlines the way in which the meeting is going to be run.

VOTE: Unanimous

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

#### **4. Review replacement text to AA *Structure Handbook for Great Britain* 'GSB operates through Committees' p.113**

Prison and probation services separated.

First Response Online and National Telephones separated.

Discussion of subcommittee terms of reference.

Insert work 'Committees'.

Correct spelling of 'online'.

### **Background**

**This addresses an outdated description of GSB committees and no mention of sub-committees in handbook.**

### **CURRENT TEXT**

The General Service Board operates through committees:

- 1) Finance
- 2) Internal communication
- 3) External communications
- 4) Executive

The Trustees with specifically designated service areas serve on the appropriate committees.

Committee reports are presented to the full Board meeting for consideration.

#### SUGGESTED REPLACEMENT TEXT:

The General Service Board (GSB) operates through three types of committee or working group:

**a) Committees composed of GSB members and the General Secretary**

Finance

Nominations

Executive (See 2 below)

Supporting the GSB to carry out work as recommended by Conference are AAGB Sub Committees and Working Groups

**b) AAGB Sub Committees, with a trustee chair and Fellowship members interviewed and appointed by the Nominations Committee**

At present, these are:

Archives

Armed Forces

Employment

First Response Online

Health

Literature

National Telephone

Prison

Probation / Criminal Justice

Public Information and Electronic Communications

Roundabout

SHARE

Survey

Young Persons

Vacancies on these sub-committees are posted in AA Service News and on the AAGB website, along with eligibility criteria.

A sub-committee may be formed to work on a specific project for a limited time, e.g. 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention.

The term served on a sub-committee is usually 4 years. Members are expected to attend at least two meetings in York and two meetings online.

**c) Working groups** may be formed to address specific issues, with members co-opted for their experience and insight, e.g., Diversity, Race Today.

In all cases, these committees and sub-committees are to advise, and not to instruct the GSB. Members of these committees serve on behalf of the Fellowship as a whole, and do not represent the regions from which they come. Trustees with specifically designated service areas serve on the appropriate committees.

Committee reports are presented to the full GSB meeting for consideration.

VOTE: Unanimous

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

**5. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2024.**

The Committee elected Jeremy M from East of Scotland Region as Chair of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2024.

**6. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2024.**

The Committee elected Gordon M from Scotia Region as Secretary of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2024.

## FIFTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2023

# COMMITTEE No. 6

CHAIR

JOHN S

SOUTH EAST REGION

SECRETARY MEL A

SOUTH MIDLANDS REGION

1. **Would Conference share experience of the awareness and observance of Concept V and Warranty Four at all levels of the Fellowship, and consider whether any recommendations for improvement can be made?**

The shared experience of the Fellowship shows that awareness and observance of Concept V and Warranty Four increases going down the inverted triangle of 'The Service Structure of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain)'. There is a need for greater understanding and application of the Concepts throughout the service structure as a whole.

It is recommended by this committee that Regions, Intergroups and Groups familiarise themselves with 'Twelve Concepts checklist', 'The Twelve Concepts for Service in Great Britain illustrated' leaflet and the Twelve Concepts Video, as well as 'The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain' which covers Concept V and Warranty Four in detail.

The Committee recognises the importance of sponsors in the process of imparting knowledge of the Concepts, as well as the Steps and Traditions, as they introduce sponsees to service. This would encourage members to express and respect the minority view. Useful in this context is the recently approved pamphlet, 'Sponsorship into Service'.

Service workshops that include discussion of the Concepts can lead to greater understanding. The Committee feels that it could be helpful to read out Concept V and Warranty Four before the explanation of any applicable voting, at all levels of the AA Structure.

The committee approved the recommendation unanimously.

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

2. **Would the General Service Conference please consider the possibility of AA GB sourcing and selling "Sobriety Medallions/ chips" through the AA website shop?**

The committee has considered the possibility of AA GB sourcing and selling "sobriety medallions / chips" through the AA website shop.

“Sobriety medallions / chips” are seen by the majority of the Fellowship to celebrate recovery and help fulfil our primary purpose. We note that a number of groups make use of the “sobriety medallions / chips” and regard them as particularly important for the newcomer.

However, some members of the fellowship felt that this was outside of our primary purpose and AA GB does not need to use AA staff resources as “sobriety medallions / chips” are readily available elsewhere.

The committee’s recommendation is that the idea should be explored by the General Service Board, with particular consideration of practicalities and cost-effectiveness

The committee approved the recommendation unanimously.

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

3. **Would the Fellowship share experience about the challenges faced in managing finances at group, intergroup, region and other service levels in recent years, and make recommendations to Conference for improvement?**

**In particular, what is the experience about the problems facing new treasurers in obtaining access to a bank account when taking over from a treasurer who has left or rotated out? How can they deal with the process of changing signatories and obtaining identification requirements?**

**What role might internet and telephone banking play in managing the finances of the group, intergroup or region?**

**How should dormant or inactive accounts be dealt with where a group has closed, signatories have passed away, or the account has been inactive for a period of years?**

Having shared experience, the committee recognises that the background document is a true reflection of the challenges faced by the Fellowship.

Any new treasurer would benefit from a proper handover at least three months prior to the old treasurer rotating out. Ideally, they might have a period as a shadow/alternate treasurer. Access to the accounts and processes should be shared prior to the handover. Bank accounts should have multiple signatories to make the handover smoother.

We recognise that the use of internet banking is increasing.

If an account is dormant or inactive, the only way to reclaim the funds is through the processes of the bank in question. All accounts should be opened with multiple signatories so that they can always be accessed by the Fellowship.

The Committee recommends that the General Service Board should:

1. Define best practice for treasurers, making use of input from the Finance Seminar in June 2023.
2. That best practice referenced above should cover, among other points, the ease of:
  - a) opening a new bank account
  - b) establishing signatories
  - c) changing signatories
  - d) transferring funds
3. Provide timely interim guidance arising from the above process.
4. Revise and update section 4 of 'The Group', section 4 of 'The Intergroup' and section 4 of 'The Region' in 'The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain' to reflect its findings.

The committee approved the recommendation unanimously.

*Conference approved this recommendation with a two-thirds plus majority.*

**4. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2024.**

The Committee elected Vikki C, Wales & Border Region as Chair of Committee No. 6 for Conference 2024.

**5. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2024.**

The Committee elected Frank C, London Region South as Secretary of Committee No. 6 for Conference 2024.



## FIFTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2023

### LIST OF DELEGATES

**CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN: SHIRLEY S** (South East Region)

### GENERAL SERVICE BOARD

		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
Amanda	S		
Tim	B	5	
Charon	B	2	
Andrina	C	4	
John	C	5	
Jo	F	3	
Zelma	K	4	
Clive	K	1	
Hamish	McS	5	
Barbara	O	6	
Levey	P	6	
Charles	R	2	
Stevie	S	4	
Gretchen	S	1	
Justin	T	3	
Holly	A	(Elect)	6
Thomas Baldwin			2
Tom Fox			1
Mani Mehdikhani			2
Kieran Moriarty			3
Ranjana Bell	(Elect)		4
Emma Gipson	(Elect)		5
Henry Lowe	(Elect)		6

### GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Ranjan B                      General Secretary  
Sharon Smyth  
Sophie Wright  
Jenny Pryke  
Chris North  
Mandy Tervet  
Gillian Thompson  
Lucile D

		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
<b>EASTERN REGION</b>			
Mike	C	1	2
Gerald	M	2	3
Jim	M	3	2
Greg	H	4	1
Robert	R	5	2
Maggie	P	6	3
<b>LONDON REGION NORTH</b>			
Patrick	R	1	1
Marco	L	2	3
Ann	A	3	2
Elaine	C	4	3
Cameron	D	5	2
Anne	M	6	1
<b>LONDON REGION SOUTH</b>			
Des	C	1	3
Gary	E	2	1
Bill	G	3	A
Rachel	D	4	1
Richard	F	5	2
Frank	C	6	2
<b>MIDLANDS REGION</b>			
Alex	Mc	1	A
Michelle	C	2	3
Phil	G	3	2
Janice	N	4	2
Gregory	V	5	2
Chris	H	6	3
<b>NORTH EAST REGION</b>			
Lynne	H	1	3
Adam	p	2	3
Jonathan	T	3	1
Jane	C	4	2
Jerry	B	5	A
Aline	B	6	1

**COMMITTEE  
NUMBER**

**TERM OF  
SERVICE**

**NORTH WEST REGION**

Pete	N	1	1
Dave	G	2	2
Julian	B	3	1
Neil	W	4	3
Julie	W	5	2
Chris	D	6	1

**SOUTH EAST REGION**

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

**SOUTH MIDLANDS REGION**

Antony	J	1	2
Alan	F	2	2
Pragnya	G	3	1
John	B	4	1
Janet	V	5	1
Melanie	A	6	2

**SOUTH WEST REGION**

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

**WALES & BORDERS REGION**

Helen	S	1	2
Tony	O	2	2
Amanda	T-H	3	1
Mik	N	4	1
Andy	D	5	1
Vikki	C	6	2

		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
<b>EAST OF SCOTLAND REGION</b>			
Alison	F	1	2
Cherisse	D	2	1
Gerry	C	3	2
Eric	L	4	2
Jeremy	M	5	2
John	M	6	2

### **GLASGOW REGION**

Robert	M	1	1
David	M	2	2
Jim	K	3	3
Sandy	C	4	3
Sean	M	5	2
Sharon	W	6	1

### **HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS REGION**

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

### **SCOTIA REGION**

Joe	C	1	1
Phil	E	2	1
Jeannie	F	3	3
David	S	4	1
Gordon	M	5	2
Matt	A	6	2

### **SOUTH WEST SCOTLAND REGION**

Scott	R	1	1
		2	
		3	
		4	
		5	
		6	

			<b>COMMITTEE NUMBER</b>	<b>TERM OF SERVICE</b>
<b>CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION</b>				
Andre	M		1	3
A.J.	P		2	1
Tom	H		3	2
Marisa	C		4	A
Jonathan	P		5	1
Jan	J		6	1

### **OBSERVERS**

Jo	R	(Belgium – Flemish)	3	1
Nevena	B	(Bulgaria)	1	1
Vanja	Z	(Croatia)	6	1
Asger	J	(Denmark)	2	1
Emmet	O’H	(Ireland)	1	1
Deirdre	O’S	(Ireland)	2	1
Ilze	V	(Latvia)	4	1
Dorota	R	(Poland)	6	1
Przemko	C	(Poland)	5	1
Mario	M	(Portugal)	3	1
Racy	J	(USA)	4	1
Bob	W	(USA)	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 &amp; 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.

