



AA Service News

Winter 2013

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From the General Service Office of Great Britain

AGENDA FOR CONFERENCE 2014

CONTENTS

Conference Steering
Committee Report

Conference Agenda 2014

Guidance on 12th Stepping
and Sponsoring

Young Peoples Project

Probation

Alcohol Awareness Month

PI – NATs Letter

PI – AA on TV

Employment

Highlands & Islands Region
Presentations and Workshops
Event

Forthcoming Events

Vacancies

Annual Archivists Meeting

Contributions

In Memory Of

Contributions regarding service in the Fellowship are welcomed from all areas - individuals, groups, intergroups, regions, subcommittees, GSB.

AA Service News is published in early March, June, September and December each year with deadline dates of the last Friday of January, the last Friday of April, the last Friday of July and the last Friday of October each year. The General Service Conference report is published each year in the summer issue and Questions and Topics for the following year's Conference in the winter edition.

Please note that the opinions expressed in *AA Service News* may not necessarily represent the view of the General Service Board.

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Conference Steering Committee Report

Avi M, London Region North, chairs the Conference Steering Committee (CSC) for the 2014 Conference.

The remainder of our Committee consists of the elected chairs of the six Conference Committees together with two members of the General Service Board (GSB), the General Secretary and one member of staff from the General Service Office (GSO) who acts as Conference co-ordinator.

Voting rights are given to the six elected members with the remainder providing guidance whenever required.

To date we have met on three occasions, 10/11 May, 13/14 September and 11/12 October and have one final meeting set for 7/8 February 2014.

Nothing in our wonderful Fellowship happens by magic, everything from someone answering a call for help to that all-important Twelfth Step call; Group meetings, Intergroups, Regions, the General Service Conference and myriad of activities all take place because we have members who selflessly carry the AA message through our legacy of service.

I am both humbled and grateful to have the opportunity to give to

others what was freely and, I must add, patiently given to me.

Having served for the past two years as a Conference delegate for my Region and being involved in the process of discussing the questions at Group, Intergroup and Region, together with anyone else that I could encourage to express a view or share their experience, after Conference reporting back to the same and now as a member of the CSC, I have been able to see what my sponsor meant about it being OUR Fellowship and how WE function.

Questions for Conference are submitted from throughout the Fellowship and again the advice I was given (If you don't know.... Ask) seems all the more pertinent.

So if there is something you feel we as a Fellowship need to look at please consider sending in a question for Conference 2015, you've got until 31st August 2014.

Our General Service Conference is the group conscience of our Fellowship.

For me I think Conference 2014 started around 30 seconds after being elected as Chair for my Committee when I was handed a large brown envelope containing minutes from the 2013 Committee and the meeting schedule for the new CSC.

So three weeks after Conference 2013 I found myself at GSO for our

first meeting in May.

At the May meeting our Chair suggested the theme **“By Faith and Works”** for our 2014 Conference, which was unanimously accepted.

After electing Nicki W as our Secretary/minute taker and myself as Alternate Chair, we were given a briefing by Roger B the General Secretary on the history of the CSC, and taken through the various guidance’s and briefing notes that were provided to us.

We reviewed our Terms of Reference, the Conference Charter and recommendations from Conference 2013.

Shortly after our May meeting questions for Conference 2014 began arriving at GSO from the Fellowship right up to the closing date of August 31st.

At our September meeting we began the process of carefully considering each question in the light of our Terms of Reference.

We had received a total of 54 questions plus we had one item that had been referred to the CSC by Conference 2013.

By the end of the meeting we had worked our way through over half of the questions and had decided to write to some of the questioners for either further background information or possible re-writing.

Three weeks later we returned to GSO for our October meeting where we completed the task of considering the remaining questions along with any response from our correspondence with some questioners as mentioned above.

After much careful deliberation we concluded to accept 12 of the 54 questions to be submitted to the Fellowship for consideration at Conference 2014.

Those who have sent in questions that were unfortunately not accepted are to be contacted by the CSC, thanked for their submissions and advised of the reasons their questions were not taken forward as per our CSC Terms of Reference.

Conference 2013 referred Committee 4, Question 2 back to the 2014 CSC for consideration due to its lack of background, which left Conference unable to consider it. The 2014 CSC has concluded not to put this forward as questions that have been accepted for consideration at Conference 2014 contain the same subject in a more defined way.

I hope that the Fellowship feel that the questions selected for our 2014 Conference are both pertinent and relevant to our current needs and, that through our discussions at Groups, Intergroups, Regions and beyond, we can ask our collective group conscience how we can best

achieve our primary purpose.

In closing I would like to thank all those who contribute to our Fellowship to ensure that the hand of AA will always be there.

With Love and Gratitude
John B
North East Region

Conference Agenda 2014

Committee No. 1

1. Share experience and make recommendations on supplying certificates of attendance for professionals attending various AA presentations.

Background

1. We are asked by professionals particularly doctors and nurses for a certificate to show that they have attended an AA presentation, for example PI, Health, Employment.

2. AA already operates the chit system for proof of attendance at AA meetings.

3. The AA Service Handbook for Great Britain, Chapter 9, Paragraph 5.

2. Can the Fellowship share experience and make recommendations on how we can respond positively to the

recovery agenda and external initiatives in the professional community?

Background

The recent emphasis on recovery (as an alternative to harm reduction) by Government and its Agencies and engagement with 12-Step Mutual-aid Groups is likely to impact on the Fellowship and increase the number of newcomers.

Twelve Step Facilitation by healthcare and other professionals has been acknowledged as an effective recovery pathway for suffering alcoholics in the US and could gain traction here.

Issues to consider include:

- Cooperating with other organisations
- Safeguarding the Fellowship
- Carrying the message (PI opportunities)
- Capacity and willingness to absorb higher numbers of newcomers
- Learning from the US experience of Twelve Step Facilitation
- Liaison with substance misuse services e.g. Recovery Champions

The Government is keen to work with facilities that reduce the burdens to society

(Policing, NHS, Housing etc) resulting from substance abuse including Alcohol. The cost to society is significant in all manner of support areas which could be reduced with the right programmes of recovery. It is an opportune time to work with the government in its endeavours to encourage people into Recovery programs.

The key to the Government's success in this area could be greatly aided by AA working in co-operation with the various bodies involved in this initiative whilst also reaching out to more alcoholics who may then wish to seek help with their drinking problem through coming to AA.

The following was written about Mark Gilman, the Recovery Champion for Public Health England, in the Guardian newspaper on 11th June 2013 ...

Mark Gilman is a man with a mission. In his role as England's addiction/recovery champion, it's his aim for the country's addiction treatment services to tap into what he sees as an underused resource: mutual aid groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous....

These groups, known as fellowships, are based on the premise that there are 12 steps to recovering from addiction,

from the first, of admitting powerlessness in the face of addiction, to taking stock of personal failings and past wrongs and handing over life's decisions to an unspecified "power greater than ourselves". The 12th and final step comes – after a spiritual awakening – with carrying the fellowship's message to others struggling with addiction. And now Gilman is touring the country trying to cajole local health commissioners and providers into referring more service users to these groups...

His views dovetail with the government's desire to make addiction treatment more focused on recovery. "Suddenly, now, the focus on the importance of friends casts [12-step fellowships] in a brand new light, whereby we are encouraged – and we are encouraging others – to re-evaluate things like AA," he says.

He told a global addiction conference in May 2013 about his new enthusiasm for 12-step mutual aid groups, saying afterwards: "I bet those doctors wondered what the hell I was talking about: 'What, Public Health England thinks the answer is to go to meetings which have been going since 1935? That are free? Duh!' But actually, yeah."

And, he says, during a time of

strained local authority budgets, it helps that support from mutual aid groups "is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and is completely free of charge".

BENEFITS OF TWELVE STEP PROGRAMMES & FELLOWSHIPS

- Potentially fills the "recovery" gap/shortfall in current service provision
- Enhances chances of individuals achieving sustained sobriety (research data)
- Increased opportunity to carry the message (subject to willingness and capacity)
- Increased membership – more lives saved

3. Review revised Chapter Three (Electronic Communications), AA Service Handbook for Great Britain and page 114 (AA (GB) Website), AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain.

Background

Revised Chapter Three, AA Service Handbook for Great Britain and page 114 (AA (GB) Website), AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain.

Committee No. 2

1. Inventory Question

Does the existing service structure ensure Conference answers are implemented effectively? Specifically:

- **Are delegates and Regions doing enough to raise awareness in Regions and encourage action at intergroup level?**
- **Is GSB implementing the recommendations from Conference?**
- **Whilst great attention and effort is given in the Conference structure and organization to bring forward questions each year, could equal or greater exertion be made to ensure that the experience of the Fellowship, as expressed in Conference Answers, is communicated to and can be implemented by its members at all levels?**

Background

2013 Comm4 Q1 – asked about collecting experiences and views (next step?)

2012 Comm5 Q1 – using and responding to reports from GSB and Conference

Concepts 1, 2, 6, 9

The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain, page 80

The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain, page 101

2. Would the Fellowship share experience and make recommendations on how to

make AA more accessible to parents of small children? Specifically with regard to groups paying for childcare and/or crèche facilities at meetings, conventions and conferences either directly from Tradition 7 funds or otherwise.

Background

I am writing to submit this question for Conference 2014 regarding the provision of childcare on behalf of local AA members who at times feel excluded from AA group meetings, intergroup and conventions due to difficulties in finding local childcare facilities e.g. single parents. We are aware that some groups do make provision for childcare at meetings e.g. "Mums meetings with crèche" etc advertised in the Where to Find and meetings lists for other areas, but we do not have experience of groups doing the same within our own intergroup or adjoining areas.

Looking through questions discussed in previous conferences (1999 - 2013 taken from the AA website) has only turned up the following recommendation: "...Children and babies. Conference recommends that accompanied children should not be excluded from conventions, organisers must therefore be mindful of relevant health and safety

issues." (AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain, page 121 CONVENTIONS). And searching through Questions not accepted for Conference (2009 - 2013 again taken from the AA website) yielded no related questions. So it doesn't look like this question has been asked already.

Looking through other AA literature, we could not find any specific advice apart from stating that "(the Pot)... at a very basic level ... goes to pay room hire, and for the coffee and tea we drink, as we socialise before and after each meeting". It is unclear whether this is a prescriptive list or just a list of examples. Local opinion is divided - some members saying that the pot should only be used to pay for tea and coffee but not biscuits and others arguing that paying for professional crèche facilities can be considered part of the overall rent.

Committee No. 3

- 1. Would the Fellowship discuss if the needs of agnostic and atheist members are adequately provided for throughout AA's literature?**

Background

1. The pamphlet 'AA and the Gay / Lesbian Alcoholic' states 'We are not religious', page 16
2. The pamphlet 'Do you think you're Different', pages 15 and 31
3. Preamble
4. Alcoholics Anonymous, Chapter 4
5. Came to Believe
6. 12 Steps and 12 Traditions

- 2. Would Conference consider and suggest how groups may become more involved in the Conference process as an on-going activity, and how delegates may become more involved with groups and Intergroups on a regular basis?**

Background

Concept 1
The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain, pages 80 and 99

Committee No. 4

- 1. Would Conference consider ways in which the Fellowship could reduce costs and waste in mailing publications and information to Regions, Intergroups, Groups and Officers?**

Background

The decision to provide each registered group and serving officers with copies of AA publications was made many

years ago when there were far fewer groups and officers, and when postal costs were much lower.

- 2. Would the Fellowship discuss, share experience and make recommendations on the best way to carry the message to the homeless (rough sleeper) alcoholic?**

Background

- According to studies approximately 40% of people who have slept rough have an alcohol problem (CHAIN -'Combined Homelessness and Information Network' report, June 2013, figures also used by Government)
- Most alcoholic drinks are labelled with drinkaware.co.uk which has details on AA but most rough sleepers don't have internet access.
- Not all rough sleepers will make it to a hostel where information on AA may be provided.
- Most rough sleepers don't have a GP.

Committee No. 5

- 1. Would Conference share experience and consider the importance of employment liaison work in Alcoholics Anonymous, and whether a new approach is required?**

Background

- Despite all the work done little evidence of increased awareness with employers (recent Conference reports).
- Big book has an entire chapter 'To Employers'. Page 150, Hank P writes 'they have been saved from a living death'. Is that not our responsibility still today?
- Only 25 out of 120 Intergroup ELO positions filled (GSO information 09-08-13).
- Recent programmes on TV highlighting binge drinking and resultant injuries, sickness and hangovers.
- Employers may be unaware that frequent episodes like this may indicate a serious problem for the employee and ineffective workforce for the employer.

2. Would the Fellowship discuss, share experience and make recommendations on how we attract new members to “Alcoholics Anonymous” with regard to Tradition 11, since a lack of promotion might suggest that we prefer the alternative title of “Alcoholics Invisible”?

Background

We are informed by the media that there is a growing problem with alcohol in all levels of

society.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

Committee No. 6

1. Share experience and make recommendations on how AA's message can be carried effectively to the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer) community. Could more be done to attract LGBTQ members?

Background

One of the outcomes of Conference in 2013 was that questions pertaining to 'special interest groups' would receive consideration given that Conference had not been able to draw any conclusions from the 2013 special interest question due to the way it was phrased. We were advised to reword any questions to make them more specific to the special interest group.

- Evidence points to the fact that members of the LGBTQ community are far more likely to abuse alcohol than the general population (some studies estimate 25% vs. 3-10% general population) (Centre for Substance Abuse Treatment, 2003)

- Stonewall (the LGB charity) states on its website: ‘LGB people may not feel targeted by messages in this area, or feel able to disclose drinking habits and circumstances to a health practitioner. Preventative health messages, and campaigns, are generally **only targeted at heterosexual people**’
- The NHS acknowledges that transgender people in particular are likely to turn to alcohol to deal with their problems (<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Transhealth/Pages/Transmentalhealth.aspx>)

2. Would the Fellowship discuss, share experience and make recommendations on the question of how AA can best carry the message to alcoholics with psychological disorders both inside and outside of the Fellowship?

Background

“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.” The Responsibility Pledge of Alcoholics Anonymous.

“There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of

them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.” Big Book, Chapter 5, Page 58.

Examples of psychological disorders:

Mood Disorders (clinical depression, bi polar affective disorder); Neurodevelopment Disorders (autistic spectrum disorder); Anxiety Disorders (post traumatic stress disorder, generalised anxiety disorder); Schizophrenia, Personality Disorders.

Guidance on 12th Stepping and Sponsoring

This guidance is offered following changes in the law affecting minors and vulnerable adults and supersedes that issued by the General Service Board in February 2010. It refers to all who come into AA including children (under 18 years old) and vulnerable adults (any person over 18 years old who is the recipient of a regulated activity).

- AA members do not require DBS or Disclosure Scotland checks for 12th Stepping or Sponsoring, as they are members of self-regulating groups. The Disclosure and Barring Service and the Scottish Government have confirmed this, following discussions with the General Service Board’s solicitors.

- The spirit of the law however should be borne in mind and AA members should acknowledge the duty of respect that is due to one another
- Sponsors should have substantial sobriety and be aware of the duty of care towards others
- Contact with new members (including minors and vulnerable adults) to be conducted by □two members – preferably a man and a woman
- Any meeting with a new member would be best held in a public place and where appropriate the date, time and place reported in advance to the Group Secretary
- Smaller Groups and those in rural areas may find it useful to contact other Groups in the area to pool resources for 12th Stepping
- If members are able and willing to do so they may inform the Group Secretary of any CRB or Police checks held

For members attending schools:

If members are attending schools frequently (which is now defined as more than 3 days in a 30-day period, or overnight), to do unsupervised activities (e.g.

teaching, advice, guidance) they *will* be required to obtain an enhanced DBS check for the activity. However, the onus to obtain these checks will fall on the school, and not AA. This requirement does not apply to supervised volunteers (supervision being defined dependent on the type of activity and the age of the children, but generally as reasonable day-to-day supervision by someone also engaging in a regulated activity, e.g. a teacher).

For members attending prisons:

Please note that if the members were to come into contact with any under-18s in a prison, the situation relating to regulated activities provided to children would apply as above.

Young People's Project

Young People's Project up and running

We put out an invitation, *Calling all younger members...*, in the Summer edition of AA Service News and on our website via a link from the home page, for volunteers to join the YP Project Team. A good response was received predominantly from members in the south of England so a circular was also sent out to the Regions in a bid to attract young members from the midlands, north, Scotland and Wales.

Everyone who had expressed an

interest in the YP Project was invited to the Southern Service Office on 28th September for an introductory session, which aimed to share experience and identify some actions to move the project forward.

The meeting room was full with an enthusiastic crew from London, Bristol, Portsmouth, Southampton and one from Stockholm in Continental European Region.

The broad aim of the project is to take inventory of the Fellowship's service structure and resources, including literature, posters and website and make recommendations which would make AA more attractive and relevant to potential young members in Britain (and English speaking Europe) today. Proposals focus on:

- Attracting young people with alcohol problems into **recovery** in AA.
- Engaging them in the **unity** of the Fellowship.
- Encouraging them into **service** via the service structure.

Committee 2 at Conference 2013 had made the following recommendations in response to questions about young people in AA.

- Young people should be warmly welcomed into AA.
- Young People are encouraged through sponsorship to be

active members of the Fellowship.

- The Service Structure may seek to encourage and co-operate with Young People's Conventions.
- The Electronic Communications Sub Committee (ECSC) looks at appropriate apps and social media as a possible means of attracting young people to AA.
- Young people are encouraged, wherever possible, to carry the message at PI events in education, young offenders institutions etc.
- A young person (YP) status is highlighted on the 12th Step list
- The "Too Young" poster be updated with input from younger members.
- Intergroups and Regions may, where appropriate, appoint a Young Persons Liaison Officer.

The meeting agenda picked up from here and identified a number of aims with individual members or groups concentrating on particular items to develop.

The next 'meeting' via Webex is scheduled for the end of November. Any young members interested in finding out more and joining the YP network can contact Sophie at GSO SophiePerring@gsogb.org.uk

Phil W
Vice Chair General Service Board

Probation

Probation Service: The Times are Changing

Those of us within this service discipline will be aware of the huge changes that have been announced by the Ministry of Justice. In brief, most prisoners on release will be supervised for the first year. The information below relates to England and Wales. There are no known plans to change their current system in Scotland.

In place of the 35 Probation Service Trusts there will be 20 for England + 1 for Wales Areas. Currently being called Contract Areas

A National Probation Service will supervise those deemed as "dangerous" – their word! and a "privatised" service dealing with other released prisoners. There will still be need to be for the Fellowship to be in contact with whatever organisation is in place (Tradition 3 and Step 12) so please continue to try and cultivate new contacts and maintain current ones.

The Fellowship maintains a good relationship with both Prison and Probation services within the National Offender Management Service and information when confirmed will be forwarded via the service network.

Clive D GSB Trustee: Probation and Criminal Justice Services

Alcohol Awareness Month

Alcoholics Anonymous Awareness Month & Beyond

I was able to attend the PI seminar on behalf of my Intergroup NLIG. The day was both well organised and well attended and it was good to see lots of familiar faces as well as having the opportunity to make new friends from around the country.

After a welcome from Joe H (PI Trustee) each table had a general sharing session of how they approached PI and carried the message in their area. It was good to note that most areas are like ours in that volunteers for service are getting fewer.

The first presentation, by Seb (PISC Member), was on "Organising an AA Open Meeting for Professionals". His local area had successfully held large open meetings in AAA month to help carry the message. Although too late for our Intergroup to organise this year, it certainly gave some food for thought for the future. It also gave ideas as to how groups at local level could focus on giving personal invitations to professionals to attend their Open meetings.

After the break, Jeff B (PISC Member) gave a very informative talk on "Structuring an AA Article for a Newspaper". Again a talk full of practical suggestions about media awareness and making sure the message is clear, concise and in accordance with the Traditions.

Suggestions for the article included:

1. What is the article about? Are you "telling your story" or giving factual information about AA
2. Who are you trying to reach? Keep the message clear & concise with no AA jargon
3. Make personal contact with the journalist and make it clear what you can/cannot say.

Likewise for radio interviews:

1. Get to know the local reporter
2. Make clear the Traditions
3. If possible know the questions beforehand so you can avoid being asked for your opinion on outside issues

Lunch time brought a good opportunity to chat and go over the wealth of information that was being circulated around the seminar.

The afternoon programme started with a presentation on "Twelve

Step Facilitation" by Geoff H (Health Trustee). This was particularly interesting for me as we are getting many requests at local level to bring AA meetings to Recovery Facilities. The information given was helpful to see how AA can play a part co-operating in "Mutual Aid" which is currently at the forefront of the Public Health agenda. By working alongside the Facilitation providers we can help direct people to AA meetings or provide meetings in the facilities

The latter part of the day included a presentation from Paul, a Non-Alcoholic Trustee. This highlighted the role that the "NATS" can play as they are not constrained by anonymity. Finally a presentation was given on the production and mailing of the monthly PISN newsletter

After further general discussion on the many areas covered, the day closed with the Serenity Prayer.

All-in-all a very full day, with lots to think about and many practical and helpful ideas and suggestions to bring back to Intergroup.

PI - NATs Letter

AN initiative to raise the profile of Alcoholics Anonymous GB has been made in preparation for AA Awareness Month November 2013.

An open letter signed by the four Non-Alcoholic Trustees of the General Service Board has been sent to the editors of every national and Sunday newspaper in England, Scotland and Wales, and to the editors of specialist magazines and national weekly papers.

The initiative adheres to AA Traditions - the four non-alcoholic trustees are not bound by the principle of anonymity.

The letter has been written and signed by Prof Jonathan Chick and Dr Ashraf Kahn, both consultant psychiatrists, Paul Myles, qualified in psychology and substance misuse, and Martin Weegmann, a clinical psychologist.

It seeks to dispel misconceptions about AA – that it is neither a religious organisation nor a secret cult.

It encourages anyone with a drinking problem to try AA; to ring the national number 0845 769 7555 and to attend an AA meeting.

The letter says the image of AA in North America appeared to be more positive than it was in the UK. But that appeared to be changing – the economic climate was perhaps encouraging more creative solutions to our national drinking problems.

The letter added there were many and regular AA meetings throughout Great Britain, the help

was free to the sufferer, as well as to the State.

PI – AA on TV

TV asks AA for Help

A TV programme dealing with alcohol and drinking problems in the Sikh community has been broadcast.

The producers had contacted GSO via the AA website. Dr Ash Kahn, a Non-Alcoholic Trustee of the General Service Board, was among the panel on the studio discussion programme, which was recorded in Birmingham on 16 October.

An AA member in recovery made a short contribution on the phone, using an assumed name.

The programme was conducted in English and Punjabi, and it was concerned with what to do about the drinking problems that exist in the Sikh community - and the shame and guilt that made people reluctant to seek help.

It went out on Akaal Channel Sky 858 on Tuesday 29th October at 9pm - repeated on Saturday 2nd November at 1pm. Viewers without Sky TV could watch live online - akaalchannel.tv

The programme producers afterwards thanked AA for taking part.

Employment

Recently the first ever GSB Employment Sub-Committee met and adopted the following Terms Of Reference.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EMPLOYMENT SUB COMMITTEE

Accepted September 2013

Co-operation with employers means informing them about AA, what we are, what we can do, and what we cannot do. Many employers encounter daily the suffering alcoholic and in spite of rising public awareness, some employers simply do not know what to do with an alcoholic.

A look at our history shows clearly that co-operation with employers has been an integral part of the Fellowship since the earliest days. So important is this area of co-operation that in our basic text, Alcoholics Anonymous or "Big Book," there is a whole chapter dedicated "To Employers."

Primary Functions of the GSB Employment Sub Committee

Create a consistent and clear external message that differentiates AA from other bodies, thereby ensuring that the AA name is never confused with, or considered to be affiliated with, other organizations.

Establish and maintain good relations with employers and professional bodies at national level.

Increase employers' knowledge of the AA programme, by means of "awareness campaigns" run at national and regional level.

Offer support and advice to Employment Liaison Officers (ELO) as and when requested or required.

Create and maintain an accurate system of record keeping in order that information is available to others following "service rotation."

Publish Employment Newsletter.

Communicate effectively with the Fellowship.

In addition the committee will comply with the principles and procedure guidelines for Sub Committees published from time to time by the GSB.

Highlands & Islands Region

Presentations & Workshops Event

Saturday 28th September 2013

Theme: Sponsoring into Recovery and an Introduction to the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

This event was a continuation of

Highlands & Islands Region group conscience decision six years ago to hold biennial workshops, to encourage service at groups and intergroups across the Highlands & Islands Region.

The event was well publicised across the Highlands & Islands Region and beyond. The event also featured in the AA Service News and the Roundabout magazine.

The organising committee felt that, for this event, time had to be devoted to allow for full discussion and exchange of views, particularly in the workshops, following the presentations and therefore a whole day 10.00am to 4.00pm was dedicated.

Presenters from other Scottish Regions, including former GSB Trustees, were invited to take responsibility for the Presentations and also to lead the Workshops. To facilitate full involvement and participation in the workshops, the AA Traditions Checklist from the AA Grapevine was available for all workshop attendees and proved to be very useful.

The Presentations, Sponsoring into Recovery and an Introduction to the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous were recorded (with Presenters permission) and is now part of Highlands & Islands Region Archive. CDs are also available for attendees.

A range of AA Literature relevant to the Presentations and Workshops was available for attendees.

Two comments expressed at the conclusion of the event seemed so adequately to sum up the day. One, from a member who had made a round trip of 370 miles to be there, said "it was worth every mile of the journey to be here" and, secondly "it isn't about numbers it is about quality".

A full report of the event will be presented to Highlands & Islands Regional Assembly early in December, and it is the intention of Region to hold workshops on The Twelve Concepts for World Service at the next biennial event.

Jim C
Highlands & Islands Region

Vacancies for Board Sub-committees

Telephones Sub-Committee

Due to rotation a vacancy exists for a new team member. Experience as a telephone responder and of data handling would be an advantage.

The telephones sub-committee's role is to

- Maintain the existing telephone system, to enable the suffering alcoholic access to a local contact through a single national telephone number, in a manner which is efficient, effective and economic.
- Keep the use and cost of the system under constant review.

- Be responsible for all changes to the system and to liaise with the system provider following consultation with Regions.
- Investigate any new technology which may be beneficial to the Fellowship's telephone service
- Maintain a constant review of the facilities offered by other service providers

The team meets three times a year in York and also stays in touch with conference calls and email.

The appointment is for four years and requires a minimum of five years sobriety at the date of application. Applicants should have a sound knowledge of AA Traditions and Concepts.

Sub-Committee Application Forms can be obtained from GSO (contact Sophie on 01904 644026) or downloaded from the Forms folder in the Document Library on the website.

Application Forms accompanied by a covering letter of recommendation from a serving officer in the applicant's Intergroup or Region should be sent to GSO, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York, YO1 7NJ.

The closing date is 31 December 2013

**ASSISTANT EDITOR/ EDITOR:
SHARE MAGAZINE**

The GSB seeks to appoint a successor to the current Editor of Share, AA's monthly magazine in England and Wales, Initially the appointment would be at Assistant Editor level, proof reading the articles, learning the Editor's responsibilities and Share's production schedule to ensure competence to cover for the role, then leading to full Editor status when the present incumbent rotates in November 2014.

The Editor selects material for each month's issue, liaising with Share's Editorial Readers and proofreader, General Service Office colleagues and production staff at the printers.

She or he plans the magazine's layout and content, alongside the printers, and is responsible for clearing the final proofs from the printer, ensuring that deadlines are met to ensure share is delivered to AA groups by the first week of the month.

The Editor chooses and collates articles, graphics, edits copy (text) and writes headlines, keeps a record of contributions and initiates, answers, and files correspondence. She or he writes a 300-word editorial each month.

This is a four-year commitment and applicants should have a minimum of five years sobriety, be an active member of Alcoholics

Anonymous at Intergroup or Region level and have a sound knowledge of AA's Legacies and the principal Fellowship literature.

Computer and email competence is a prerequisite. A background in journalism or other media may be desirable but is not essential.

The Editor is required to attend quarterly team meetings at York or via conference call facility.

This post is unpaid but expenses are claimed.

The position is by appointment following selection process that includes endorsement from your Region or Intergroup.

**Closing date for Applications is
3rd January 2014.**

Application forms can be found in the Documents Library of the AA WebSite at <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk> Folder 23 and 24, or by telephone request to Chris North at GSO: 01904 644 026

Applicants should write, enclosing Fellowship CV and other relevant information to:

General Service Office, PO Box 1,
10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ.

Armed Services Sub Committee Vacancies

There are four vacancies on the Armed Services Sub-committee of the General Service Board.

Applicants who are serving members of the Armed Forces, or ex-Service men and women would be an advantage but not essential.

The aim of the sub-committee is to raise awareness of Alcoholics Anonymous within the Armed Services community, serving and ex serving personnel, including their families.

Main aims are:

- Offer support and advice to Regional Armed Services Liaison Officers. Help promote and encourage the appointment of Liaison Officers.
- Support the development and sharing of good practice and review and update literature, media resources and guidelines as necessary.
- Establish and maintain good relations with professionals and professional bodies connected with the Tri-Services.

It is suggested that applicants

would fulfil the following criteria:

- A minimum of five years continuous sobriety at time of application.
- sound grasp of AA Service Structure, Guidelines and Traditions.
- A personal service history at either intergroup and/or region in this discipline.
- Good organisational and communication skills are desirable. The ability to produce written and verbal reports would be an advantage, as well as relevant IT skills.

Armed Services Sub-Committee members will normally serve for a period of four years.

There is an expectation that Armed Services Sub-Committee members normally attend two meetings a year in York and participate in possible 'conference call' meeting(s) as and when required, giving notice to the GSB Trustee if unable to attend/participate.

Sub-committee applicants should be endorsed by the AA structure i.e. a serving officer of their Intergroup or Region. The serving officer's endorsement should be in the form of a letter attached to the completed nomination form.

Application forms are available

from Region Secretary, from GSO (contact Sophie on 01904 644026) and can also be found in the document library at www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Please forward applications to GSO of AA, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ by 31st December 2013.

Health Subcommittee

A vacancy exists on the Health Subcommittee for applicants with a minimum of five years of sobriety at time of application and previous experience at intergroup and/or region, and with enthusiasm for health liaison work. The term of the appointment is four years.

Role requirements:

- To have a working knowledge of the AA structure and to adhere to the Traditions, Concepts and Guidelines
- To work within the terms of reference for the Health Subcommittee
- To have an understanding of the working relationship with the General Service Board
- To accept guidance from the GSB Trustee if and when required

- To attend Health Subcommittee meetings in York and participate in 'conference call' meetings, giving prior notice to the GSB Trustee if you cannot attend/participate
- If attending any conferences or events, to be mindful of the Traditions, particularly Traditions Ten and Eleven when interacting with professionals
- To check with conferences and events organisers as to their requirements for equipment and health and safety issues, and to allow time to make these arrangements. GSO will always assist as required.
- To liaise with GSO when ordering literature and apparatus for professional conferences and events

Application forms are available from Sophie Perring at General Service Office, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ. Tel: 01904 644026, email: sophieperring@gsoqb.org.uk.

Closing date is 1 March 2014

Geoff H
GSB Trustee for Health

Public Information Sub Committee Vacancies

The PI Sub Committee (PISC) is looking for **two** new members to join a committed team who are passionate about finding innovative ways of passing the message of recovery to the public, professionals and the still suffering alcoholic at a national, Regional & Group level.

Our primary functions are to:

- Create a consistent message externally that differentiates AA from other bodies.
- Increase awareness of the AA programme with professionals and professional bodies; members of the media and journalists at national level.
- Offer support and advice to Regional PI committees & liaison officers.
- Provide leadership to the PI network through national projects.
- Communicate effectively with the Fellowship.
- Comply with the principles & guidelines of AA.

- Update the PI web site and other PI resources.

Role requirements are:

- The position is rotational after four years and requires a minimum of 5 years sobriety at the time of applying.
- A sound knowledge of the service structure & Traditions of the Fellowship.
- To provide guidance on digital media projects.
- To work within PISC terms of reference
- To attend two PISC meetings and 'teleconference' meetings

Application forms are available from GSO (contact Sophie on 01904 644026) and can also be found in the document library at www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Please forward applications to GSO of AA, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ by 31st December 2013.

Annual Archivists Meeting

On the weekend of Friday 18th of October and Saturday 19th 2013 saw the Annual Meeting of Archivists at GSO York, a total of 22 people attended.

Highlights this year were the introduction of two new members to the Archives Sub Committee, Harry and Charlie, so a big welcome to them and then, to start us off, Roy the Midlands Region Archivist spoke of his experience and started an informative discussion on photographs of members at displays at Conventions.

Our main Speaker for the weekend was Jenny Mitcham, from the Borthwick Institute, who is their first digital Archivist and gave us a PowerPoint presentation on the digital preservation of Archives in general and also tips that we could put into practice ourselves.

As we are turning more and more towards the digitalisation of our files at GSO Archives this was very important to hear and more talks with Jenny and the Borthwick are planned and indeed necessary.

On the Saturday Brian our Sub Committee member from Dumbarton and Carpet Jimmy gave a brilliant presentation of their Roadshow which they take to various Conventions. Events, societies and people from before

1935 were included in the timeline to show how AA first developed.

After the break Alan, Potteries & District Intergroup Archivist, spoke about the definitions of archivist and historian.

He also described how evidence from pink forms and the recollections of members could be conflicting and in researching early meetings asked "how unorthodox can a meeting be?"

The last hour was spent with a general sharing session as we have done many times in the past and have found this to be very informative and important for our members, so thanks to all who came and took part at this event.

In AA Love and Service,

Stephen S
Fellowship Archivist

Regional Contributions

Extract from Guideline 12:

GUIDELINES for AA in Great Britain from the General Service Office, **Finance** No. 12

“Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE

All groups, intergroups and regions should accept responsibility for the funding of the General Service Office. The financial operations at GSO, the methods of accountability to Conference through the Board, and the broad financial strategies adopted on behalf of the Fellowship, are all subject to continuous revision.

| July-Sept Regional | Contribution |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Eastern | 21000.00 |
| London North | 21250.00 |
| London South | 10000.00 |
| Midlands | 5000.00 |
| North East | 5000.00 |
| North West | 17000.00 |
| South East | 34410.00 |
| South Midlands | 24500.00 |
| South West | 8150.00 |
| Wales and Borders | 5400.00 |
| East of Scotland | 0 |
| Glasgow | 19500.00 |
| Highlands and Islands | 4000.00 |
| Scotia | 6000.00 |
| South West Scotland | 6000.00 |
| Continental European | 2410.67 |
| | |

GSO Gratefully Acknowledges the following Donations:

In Memory July – September 2013

| | £ | |
|---|--------|--------------------------------|
| Immingham Sunday Group | 69.00 | in memory of Jack |
| Basingstoke Thurs | 38.49 | in memory of Bill B. |
| Basingstoke Fri | 83.42 | in memory of Bill B. |
| Leominster Mon Group | 50.00 | in memory of Dr. John |
| Black Country IG (chq-AAWM Intergroup) | 50.00 | in memory of Chris S. |
| Basingstoke Fri Step & Tradition | 71.51 | in memory of John B. |
| Basingstoke Fri Step & Tradition | 30.74 | in memory of Darren S. |
| Newcastle-Under-Lyne Groups | 23.00 | in memory of Irene K. |
| Congleton Mon Group | 14.00 | in memory of Irene K. |
| Newcastle-Under-Lyne Groups | 33.70 | in memory of Karl B. |
| West Wales IG | 183.00 | in memory of Richard D. |
| Golders Green Monday(£17) Thurs(34,88) in memory | 51.88 | in memory of Guardsman John |
| Christ the King Emotional Sobriety Meeting | 200.00 | in memory of Patrick |