

# 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, organization 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.

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# **Annual Report of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain) Limited - 1 OCTOBER 2017 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2018**

## **Introduction**

### **Chairperson's Introduction to Annual Report**

It is both a pleasure and privilege to present the Annual Report on behalf of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Great Britain.

The main purpose of the General Service Board is to support the Fellowship in carrying out its primary purpose of carrying the message of recovery from alcoholism to all who seek its help, to those who are associated in some way with people with alcohol problems, and to the public at large. The charity is also concerned with the proper governance of its affairs and the most effective use of its finances. In this, we adhere to the requirements of the Charity Commission, the Twelve Traditions, and Concepts for World Service. This annual report sets out to show how the charity has worked towards realising its aims during the last year.

Trustees, in addition to their commitment to their specific Regions, are also responsible for the various Board disciplines. This year has seen an increase in the number of alcoholic trustees joining us from the Regions. We currently have just one Non-Alcoholic Trustee, who has provided immeasurable help in ensuring some balance to the Board and has worked hard to help us communicate in public situations without having to adhere to the constraints of personal anonymity.

Our Trustees have responded to invitations as observers to the General Service Conferences of several European countries and have also participated as delegates at the World Service Meeting in Durban.

We have attended 23 professional conferences. The Board with the help of the Fellowship has also arranged events at House of Commons and both the Scottish and Welsh parliaments, all of which were well attended.

This year our General Service Conference approved the release of five new videos, four of which are aimed specifically at professionals working with alcoholics in the armed services, the health sector, prisons and probation, and employment, together with a slightly longer video produced for public information.

This year too, we have arranged for our archives to be moved to the Borthwick Institute for Archives at York University to enable cataloguing to commence.

Nigel Patience  
Chair

## **GSB PERSONNEL**

The following trustees retired from the Board this year:

Joe Henry  
Geoff Hopkinson  
James Kay  
Sandy MacVarish  
Charles Rennie  
Helen Sharman  
Jeff Berliner

The following trustees were appointed to the Board:

Sandi Aarvold  
Erik Abbott  
Norman Brown  
Clive Kilmartin  
Patrick McGuire  
Jonathan Pope  
Michael Power  
Terri Semple  
Stephen Smith  
Maxine Wilson

## **Report of the Trustees**

The primary purpose of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is to pass the message of recovery from alcoholism to those who seek help, making that information available to professionals, the media and the public. The General Service Board (GSB) of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain works to support the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and to raise awareness of AA's message of recovery.

Our Tradition of Self Support, underpinned by the Alcoholics Anonymous (Dispositions) Act of 1986, ensures that AA is supported solely through the voluntary contributions of members. The charity continues to achieve a stable financial position and has been able to undertake initiatives that the Fellowship of AA has requested.

Each trustee takes responsibility for a particular area of work within the Board activities, all of which are geared towards raising awareness of all that AA can offer those who seek help. The trustees stay abreast of developments and co-operate with the authorities in these professional areas by communicating on a regular basis, attending conferences and exhibitions and by developing projects for each professional body.

The Archives Sub-Committee now has a new Fellowship Archivist who took up his post in September.

There have been a couple of displays in public spaces throughout AA GB following on from the successful Kelvingrove Museum Event in Glasgow. We have entered a busy and exciting time for Archives with the ongoing Borthwick Institute cataloguing and digitisation project now gaining momentum. The Kelvingrove event showed Archives working with Public Information which can only enhance AA's ability to carry our message of recovery more effectively. It is hoped that these initiatives will continue throughout AA GB and the Archives subcommittee will be there to provide support and help in any way that it can.

AA Service News continues to be published quarterly, carrying details of Conference Questions, Parliamentary events in England, Scotland and Wales and news of other notable service events. Thanks to all contributors.

Armed Services Sub-Committee (ASSC): There were visits to Strensall Garrison Health Fair, contacts were maintained National Armed Services Day in Llandudno welcomed the North West Intergroup to the service as well as maintaining contacts within the area. North West Region attended a one-day Health Fair at Imphal Barracks. In Scotland there were visits to a Convention in Stirling, a display, and handouts to various groups. In West Lanarkshire there were some members of the Scottish Parliament who spoke to us and they were impressed by our work. West Lothian set up a stall and some of our literature was displayed and we were invited to set up a stall next year. Edinburgh and Glasgow have been well represented at conventions and barracks. Contact has been maintained in our Eastern Region at Molesworth, RAF Alconbury, RAF Mildenhall and RAF Lakenheath. An event held by Northdown marking the centenary of Bill W's visit to Winchester was held in the Cathedral and was attended by between 850-900 people, many of whom were in the Armed Services. Other events that were attended were at RAF Cranwell and RAF Wryton.

The Criminal Justice Partnership Sub-Committees are now up to full strength. We have had our 4 areas meetings and problems were identified which the Sub-Committees have taken on board to try and resolve with the help of the Fellowship. Attended events with Inside Government, Probation & Prisons talks about Structure & Strategy, Criminal Justice Management and also Digital Technology where we made some useful contacts and they seem to be listening now to the various problems that Mutual Aid Organisations like ourselves encounter in doing service. It has been a very busy year I attended an international conference in Poland and was very impressed by the level of co-operation by the Polish Prison Service. The Sub-Committee have also released their Newsletter Beyond the Bars. At our last area meeting we had a presentation from the Ministry of Justice which was very informative, all in all the Prison & Probation Sub-Committees are now starting to get to grip with problems now that we are at full strength.

Electronic Communications: Our website [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk) is even busier than in the past, attracting some 1.25 million visitors in the year. Many are newcomers who can find help by email via our Online Response Service, or one-to-one via our ChatNow Service. Each of these is in contact with some 10,000 people each year, to encourage them to use our Telephone Helpline and start the journey into recovery. Many existing members access the website in order to find meeting information and since a high percentage of these are mobile users, a change has been made to the website design to make the pages easier to read on these devices. A major overhaul of the website is taking place, particularly the 'back end' in order to ensure that we comply with current data protection legislation, and in this connection our Privacy Policy has been updated and published. The website content will not change significantly but its style and layout will be brought up-to-date. To preserve anonymity and to comply with GDPR, we continue to offer generic email addresses for all posts at Intergroup and Region levels.

The Employment Discipline held their four quarterly Sub-Committee meetings for 2018 with the annual regional Employment Liaison officers meeting taking place in June 2018. Each meeting proved to be successful and productive with future plans being put in place for 2019. The committee still needs new members as the workload continues to grow. Our Employment Liaison officers continue to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous within the Regions and Intergroups. Overall it was another successful year and the members of the Employment Sub-Committee are looking forward to 2019.

The Health Sub-Committee have been working closely with HLO's throughout the regions to carry the message at every opportunity to all Professionals working with the still suffering alcoholic. These include frontline Healthcare, Judicial, Universities, Emergency Services, Clergy, and many others. The Health Sub-Committee was asked to contribute to the NHS England 5-year Mental Health Plan and the trustee with responsibility for Health AAGB, was invited to attend and deliver a presentation at the annual AA event at the Scottish Parliament, which resulted in an excellent follow up from many and diverse professionals. The Open Meeting Workshops have proven to be very popular and have been adapted and delivered in many locations and to more than 1500 people including GP surgeries, hospitals, treatment centres, dentists, universities, training colleges, nursing degree students, post graduate psychologists, etc.

The Literature Sub-Committee has produced seven new pieces of work in response to Conference 2018 recommendations which are now available: AA in Treatment Settings – *How We Can Help*, pamphlet; General Service Conference – the Conscience of AA GB pamphlet; 4 National Posters; 1 Armed Service Poster. We have also been working on the following new and revised pieces of literature in time for submission for Conference 2019: Now that I'm a GSR – What do I do? 12<sup>th</sup> Step AA Starter Pack.

Our Magazines - SHARE and Roundabout: SHARE has been fortunate to recruit two new team members recently and now only have the position of assistant editor to fill. The magazine retains its unique flavour whilst implementing subtle changes to move with the times. The editor has managed to get good monthly copies out on time which have been well received by the Fellowship. We hope to maintain the current high standards and sustain enthusiasm for Share whilst encouraging sales and submissions! The Roundabout Editor was coming to the end of his tenure and at the last minute the gentleman who was due to take over decided that he was not able to follow up. Fortunately, the team rallied round until we were able to get a new Editor who is now in place and up to speed. A good committee to be part of and we are all looking ahead to our annual workshop that will take place in March. Please help SHARE and Roundabout to carry our message of Recovery.

Our National Conventions: Northern, Scottish, Southern and Welsh continue to be well attended enjoyable events. An Anniversary Convention to mark 75 years of AA in Great Britain is being organized by the GSB and will take place in 2022 - the Sub-Committee are about to finalise the decision regarding which venue will hold the event. To encourage as wide as possible participation of the Fellowship a Logo competition has been organised, a great number of entries have been received and the winning Logo will be used on all the Convention material. The Anniversary Publication Working group is a new working group which was set up by the Board in August. Its aim is to produce a publication in time for the 2022 Convention celebrating 75 years of AA in Great Britain and 50 years of Share Magazine. The working group is a collaboration of members of the Archives, Share, Roundabout and 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sub-Committees. It has met twice so far, and work is gaining momentum. The working group is developing relationships with the Fellowship through the Regions so that the final edition of the publication will be Fellowship led with material being submitted by Archivists and other members of the Regions, Groups and Intergroups. The working group are planning that the final edition of the publication be ready by 2021, a year before the event.

The Public Information Sub-Committee meet four times during the year and held a successful Seminar in York for the Regional Liaison Officers. A Regional Public Information Officer's Event was held in Guildford in June and was well supported, our next one is in Warrington in December for the Northern Regions and the final one in Glasgow is scheduled for early 2019. One of the highlights of the year was the series of events organised by the Northdown Intergroup in Winchester to celebrate the Centenary of Bill W's visit to the Cathedral Churchyard where as a young American soldier he saw Thomas Thatcher's Tombstone in August 1918. August 2018 events included an AA Meeting in the Cathedral, displays in the Cathedral Bookshop, Winchester Library and the Royal Hampshire Regimental Museum. We also had an AA documentary on this event on BBC T.V.'s 'Songs of Praise' in late August, during which our Non-Alcoholic Trustee Dr Mani Mehdikhani was interviewed by the BBC presenter. We supported Parliamentary Public Information events this year at Westminster, Holyrood and Cardiff.

Survey: AA organises a Survey every 5 years and has recently formed an ongoing Sub-Committee which will enable continuity for the surveys going forward. Its aim is to coordinate and produce the surveys. An outside professional organisation is involved in collating the data from the survey. There are 3 members of the Sub-Committee so far along with two trustees and the Fellowship Project administrator from GSO. The Sub-Committee has met twice so far and work to produce the 2020 survey has begun.

Telephone Sub-Committee (NTSC): During the first 3 quarters of the year there were 65,469 calls to the national AA helplines, much the same as last year's figures. However, it must be remembered that people also phone local land line numbers directly and these calls will inflate the total number of calls received by Telephone Responders. The NTSC has 6 members including the Trustee and has been busy especially with problems around old BT analogue telephone lines and the implementation of new digital services. The regional TLO meeting was well attended and the sharing of successes and obstacles to the successful working of the helpline, was a valued part of the meeting. The NTSC continues to strive to support the very important role of the helpline in carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic.

Young People: We held our first ever YPLO seminar in York, which was well attended and showed what diverse ways those in the role were using to pass the message to the still suffering young alcoholic. These included working with gyms, universities and schools. Our aim in the first few years of the new discipline was to get as many Intergroup and Regional YPLOs in post and working with the different disciplines within the Fellowship. This is now happening, and we currently have six Regional YPLOs and 35 Intergroup YPLOs, we aim to build on this in the coming year.

Our Non-Alcoholic Trustee has had a busy year. In addition to attending Board meetings (4 per year) and a workshop in July they have attended Sub-Committee meetings and a number of events around the Country, made contacts with the media, been involved with appointing members to Sub-Committees, spoken at our Conference and conventions.

The ongoing purpose behind all of AA's activities, to carry the AA message of recovery from alcoholism, continues. Our principle of personal anonymity is of vital importance to us and especially to a newcomer to the Fellowship as it offers the assurance that personal confidences remain just that. Trustees have worked tirelessly over the last year to ensure that the message of recovery is available and to thereby keep Alcoholics Anonymous 'anonymous but not invisible'.

## **Financial Statement**

### **General Service Office Funds**

In February 2018, following reasonable suspicion that fraud carried out over an extended period against the Charity had taken place, the General Service Board immediately carried out a thorough investigation, with the assistance of expert third party advisors. As a result of the work by the board and the Charities chief executive in addressing this matter, losses suffered by the Charity as a result of this fraud, after reimbursement by insurers of £25,000, will have been limited to £9,328.48. The General Service Board has introduced new measures to seek to prevent similar frauds occurring in future. As the matter is still with the relevant police authorities, the General Service Board is unable to provide any further information currently. Please note that these losses will be reflected in the Charity's accounts for the relevant accounting period. The Charity Commission have been informed. On 7 November 2018 The Charity Commission confirmed that, based on the information provided, it does not consider that any further regulatory action is required.

The General Service Office and the two satellite offices in Glasgow and London continue to operate efficiently and provide services to members, professionals and those seeking help.

Contributions have fluctuated monthly but overall have increased on last year. Literature sales are virtually the same amount as last year, but sales do show an upward financial trend over the past 10 years. This enabled another tranche of stocked literature to be reduced in price through bulk purchase and acquisition of further licenses to print Alcoholics Anonymous World Service material in GB. The new Structure and Service Handbooks are free of charge and available on application.

### **Investments**

Our investment portfolio is operated by CCLA. The Charity invests within their Ethical Fund.

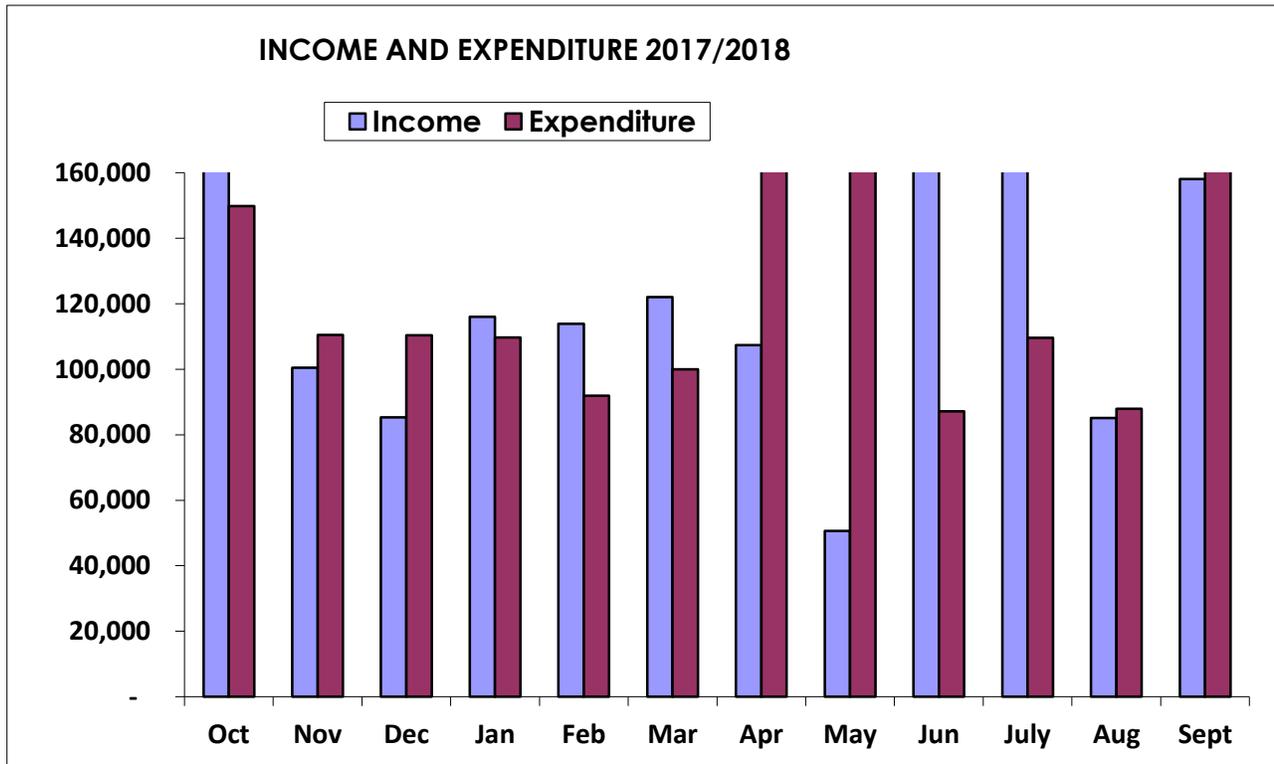
The Charity hold 537653 units in the Fund. Which at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018 had a market value of £2.3938 / unit. This gives the Charity investment a market value £1,287,033.

Due to normal fluctuations within the Stock Market and a certain amount of volatility due to Brexit. We have seen the total value of our investment fluctuate over the past 12 months from a value at: 27<sup>th</sup> Sept 2017: -£1,184,862 to 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2018: - £1,287,033 which is an increase of £102,171.

Expenditure for the year includes new and ongoing initiatives. The GSB continues to fund the AA National Telephone Helpline; professional conferences and awareness raising events have been held at national and local levels with increased attendances. New initiatives to carry the AA message into places of work have been undertaken in several areas of AA service, where appropriate cooperating with private, Governmental and Local Authority structures. A Young People's Liaison Officer position is now available throughout the service structure with a trustee chairing a GSB Young People's Sub-Committee.

In line with the AA Tradition that the charity should be self-supporting, and following sound financial practices, the GSB holds a Prudent Reserve of over 1.25 year's expenditure (£2,044,800) which is in line with the principle of AA's Concept 12 – Warranty 2: "Sufficient operating funds plus an ample reserve should be its prudent financial principle".

When planning future projects, the Board of Trustees of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain is always mindful the value of its investments and the potential fluctuations of funds coming from Fellowship members.



The World Service Office in New York requested further funds to finance fledgling AA Service Structures in developing countries to allow delegates to attend the World Service Meeting. AAGB increased its contribution to the International Literature Fund to £15,000 from £10,000. AA GB supports the World Service Meeting, and the Sub-Sahara Africa Service Meeting as well as supporting Fellowships in other countries through initiatives to assist their development. In October 2017 the European Service Meeting (ESM) was held in York. This was funded via the ESM Restricted fund, which has a balance of £77,142

The overall picture is positive and stable. The Board keeps members informed about the financial position of the Charity through various media and the implications for our primary purpose. Throughout the year the Board has maintained all Conference requested internal services to the Fellowship. Developing new pamphlets and continuing the work of passing our message of recovery from alcoholism to professionals, the public and those who need help.

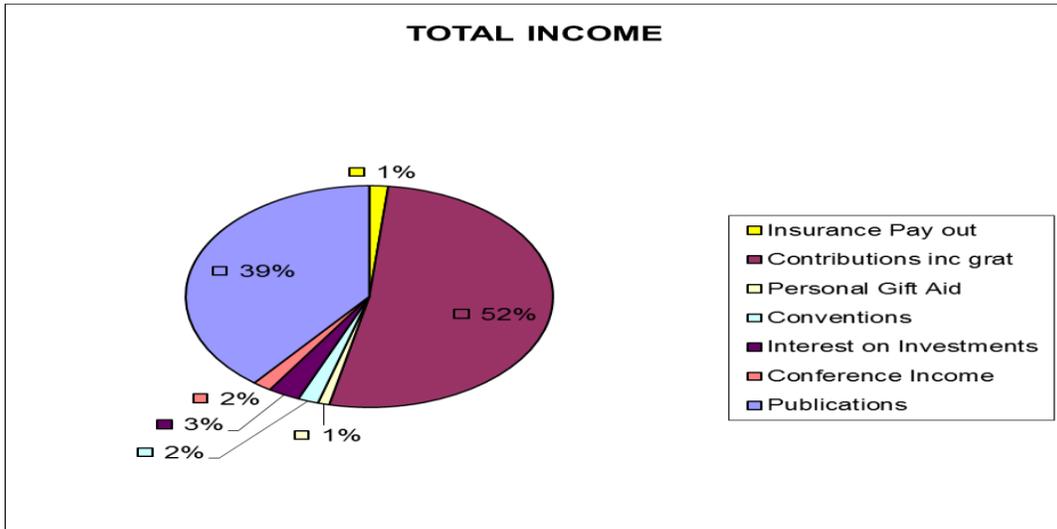
The month of November will once again be AA awareness month and Groups, Intergroups, Regions and Board Trustees will be initiating a range of activities. Work at professional events, seminars and conferences will be further developed, and the charity hopes to see increased attendance at these events as they continue into next year.

The Non-Alcoholic Trustees continue to work together to help transmit AA's message of recovery in a way that AA members cannot - as AA Traditions state that members need always maintain anonymity at the level of press, radio and films. Emphasis on the training and development of all trustees continues through internal systems and external programmes. The website continues to be developed and now gives access to the use of a 'Chat Now' line to carry the AA message of recovery. A website improvement programme is in progress with a budget of £23,172 in place, this update should be completed within the next couple of months.

The coming year will see the development of new initiatives and the expansion of current projects. The Board will continue to exercise both optimism and caution when considering the future deployment of resources.

The final accounts show a deficit (before any unrealised revaluation gains on our investments) of £115,745 and a deficit (after unrealised gains on our investments) of £13,574, with our total funds standing at £2,512,291.

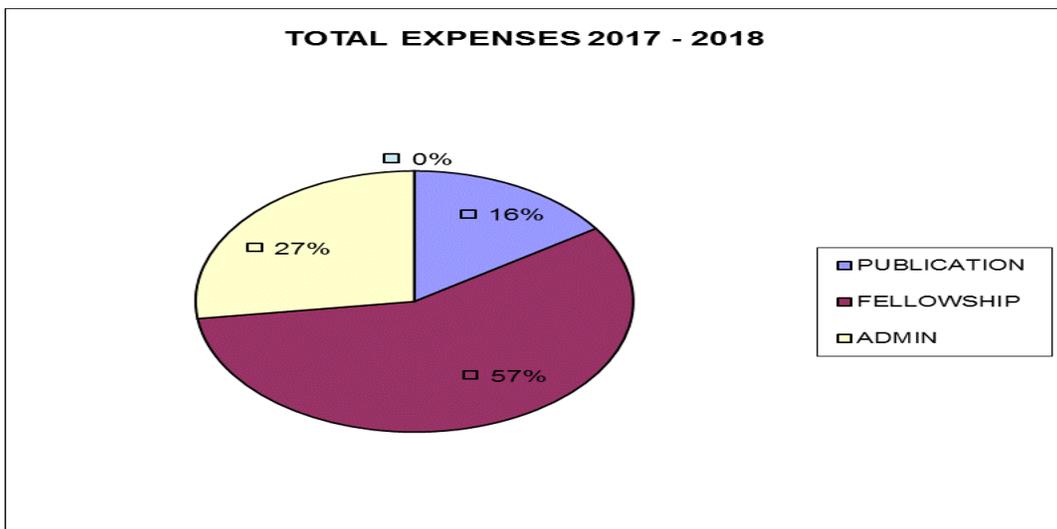
**WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM (ALL FUNDS) 2017/18**



Contributions	Publications	Investments	Conventions	Conference	Restricted Funds	Insurance Pay out
£793,506	£581,367	£42,642	£27,373	£25,080	£25,167	£25,000

Total Income all Funds: £1,520,135

**WHERE THE MONEY GOES (ALL FUNDS) 2017/18**



Publications  
£254,645

Fellowship Services  
£938,073

Administration  
£443,162.

Total Expenditure all Funds - £1,635,880

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2018**  
**BALANCE SHEET**

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2018 Total funds £	2017 Total funds £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
Tangible assets	1,728	-	1,728	1,386
Investments	1,287,033	-	1,287,033	1,184,862
	1,288,761	-	1,288,761	1,186,248
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Stocks	124,658	-	124,658	146,334
Debtors	79,333	-	79,333	80,311
Cash at bank	1,108,855	-	1,108,855	1,174,626
	1,312,846	-	1,312,846	1,401,271
<b>CREDITORS</b>				
Amounts falling due with one year	(89,316)	-	(89,316)	(61,654)
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	1,142,368	81,162	1,223,530	1,339,617
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	2,431,129	81,162	2,512,291	2,525,865
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	2,431,129	81,162	2,512,291	2,525,865
<b>FUNDS</b>				
Unrestricted funds			2,431,129	2,431,279
Restricted funds			81,162	94,586
			2,512,291	2,525,865

This information has the approval of the auditors and comprises extracts from the full accounts which have been audited by HPH Chartered Accountants and delivered to the Registrar of Companies. The auditors' opinion was unqualified. A copy of the complete audited accounts may be obtained on request from The General Service Office, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York, YO1 7NJ

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
(INCORPORATING INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2018**

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2018 Total funds £	2017 Total funds £
<b>INCOME RESOURCES</b>				
<b>Income and Endowments from</b>				
Donations and legacies	845,959	10,212	856,171	825,539
Other trading activities	581,367	14,927	596,294	563,464
Investment income	42,642	28	42,670	26,930
Other	25,000	-	25,000	-
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	1,494,968	25,167	1,520,135	1,415,933
<b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>				
Other trading activities	254,645	-	254,645	225,417
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Charitable other	1,342,644	38,591	1,381,235	1,202,687
<b>Total</b>	1,597,289	38,591	1,635,880	1,428,104
Net gains/(losses) on investments	102,171	-	102,171	92,289
<b>Net income</b>	150	(13,424)	(13,574)	80,118
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>				
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>	2,431,279	94,586	2,525,865	2,445,747
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	2,431,129	81,162	2,512,291	2,525,865

**CONTINUING OPERATIONS**

All incoming resources and resources expended arise from continuing activities.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2018

<b>DONATIONS AND LEGACIES</b>	<b>2018 £</b>	<b>2017 £</b>
Fellowship contributions	788,429	771,423
Gift Aid	15,289	9,790
Convention contributions	27,373	23,206
Conference contributions	25,080	21,120
	856,171	825,539

<b>OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>2018 £</b>	<b>2017 £</b>
Sales of literature	596,294	563,464

Literature is sold at a surplus to assist in support of the primary purpose

<b>INVESTMENT INCOME</b>	<b>2018 £</b>	<b>2017 £</b>
Fixed asset investment income	41,937	21,667
Deposit account interest	733	5,263
	42,670	26,930

<b>EXPENDITURE – OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>2018 £</b>	<b>2017 £</b>
Purchases of literature	254,645	225,417

<b>CHARITABLE RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>	<b>2018 £</b>	<b>2017 £</b>
Staff costs	220,672	225,711
Premises costs	92,456	91,437
Office expenses	118,440	121,720
Public information and publication costs	127,742	96,531
Conference costs	48,409	38,569
Website	19,681	5,235
PI Video Project	1,615	32,427
Irrecoverable VAT	56,358	50,391
Financial expenses	6,931	2,379
General expenses	134,959	37,300
	827,263	701,700

Included in charitable resources expended is £38,569 (2017: £396,451) relating to charitable activities and £22 (2017: £305,249) relating to support costs.

<b>FELLOWSHIP SERVICES</b>	<b>2018 £</b>	<b>2017 £</b>
Staff costs	232,424	244,520
Premises costs	73,332	71,757
Office expenses	29,285	28,286
General expenses	121,939	59,590
	456,980	404,153

<b>GOVERNANCE COSTS</b>	<b>2018 £</b>	<b>2017 £</b>
Trustees expenses	75,208	86,492
Professional fees	21,784	10,342
	96,992	96,834



# 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.