



PI Service News

*"Easy does it.....
but do it!"*

Shared Service Experience



BUMPER ISSUE July 2017

Please pass on this newsletter to your friends in the Fellowship, either by forwarding via email or by printing copies to take to your local meetings. Anyone who wants their personal copy of the newsletter should send us their email address to the address below. You can also drop a line to GSO with any items for inclusion.

Please note the contact address: aainformation@gsogb.org.uk

Month of Wellbeing at University of Chester

Chester City I/G PILO Keith B reports: "A member recently gave a talk to 25 people from both **Street Pastors** and **Night Church**. These are volunteers from local churches who go out on the streets at night offering support to anyone who needs it, be they homeless or suffering from the effects of drink or drugs.

Our speaker detailed some of his experience, explained about the "three pertinent ideas" in the Big Book which they found most interesting and about the curious mental twist that by the time we had "the first drink" all bets were off as we had passed the point of no return.

We had two excellent Q&A sessions, one before the talk and one after. There were a number of first class questions, one asking about the need for a "Higher power/God". In addition there was a GP there who was asked a number of very detailed questions. The GP has asked us to contact her later to give her further information and this will be followed up.

Both **Night Church** and **Street Pastors** have asked for supplies of our wallet sized contact cards and these have been provided.

I would say that the evening went very well, given that in addition to the request for the cards, one of the ladies asked our speaker to buy her a Big Book.

The best comment was from a lady, who came up to our speaker at the end and said that "this was the fourth or fifth talk on drugs and alcohol that she had attended and that she had learnt more tonight than in all the other talks put together".

Young People's Liaison - there is an encouraging number of **YPLO's** in service.

Cheshire East I/G, YPLO Rosie O'C, are working with **Cheshire East Council youth support service**, with the idea that young people who are already showing signs of "problem use", and/or may have identified "Alcohol or other Substance Misuse" issues, might identify with the experience, strength and hope they hear. There is also contact with **Cheshire East schools**.

Wirral I/G YPLO has been requested by a local **Catholic Bishop** to arrange regular Fellowship visits to a school.

Manchester I/G's YPLO Jonathan writes:

From attending Intergroup with the encouragement from a friend.... found myself with the position of *Young People's Liaison Officer*. With the initiative of a more senior member of the Fellowship/Fellowship Service.... He has been in communication with the well-being officer at **Manchester University's Students Union**. Acquired a room in the building, 2nd floor, room 7 from 6-7pm every Thursday as on the meetings list. Meetings are open and non-restrictive and have commenced since the start of November 2016. With a basic set up, the meeting has been going for 6months. Has attracted a number of young people and is carrying the message. Rent donation has been paid - £50.00. Big books, starter packs bought - £48.00. It's been a great experience having the meeting at the **Students Union** building, with so many young associates in and out of the meeting... it highlights the insight we can be oblivious to...in a time of our life.... that the solution we are searching for can be right under our noses the whole time, upstairs, in the room next door, in the same building. Doing school shares, connecting with pupils and attending the Young People's meeting in the students union connecting with students, has giving me a clear presentation of the stepping stones through youth, teenage and young adult life where (for me, and possibly the majority) that the hiccups, turmoil and weeds of addiction are formed and reinforced, but sadly most folk are unaware of the forces of nature that are at work... so to have the meeting is a little murmur of light for those in need to connect, (if they are aware) the opportunity is being presented in that delicate part of life for anyone who has the requirement for membership.

HLO John G reports talks to 6th formers at **Audenshaw Grammar School**, talks to 6 classes at **Copley Academy, Stalybridge** and year 10 at **Bridgewater School**. In his experience:-

"We have made a start but considering the number of schools and colleges we have only scratched the surface. We get grateful thanks each time and the teachers say the students appreciate it. Going into schools is not for everyone, and but a year or more sobriety is appropriate. Ask individuals you see with good sobriety who might be interested, especially young people.

What are we trying to do? It's clear we're not telling them alcohol is evil, don't drink, preaching, teaching etc. We are not a temperance movement. But in every prepared to talk about that. We can bring it into the open. So this is not about information and knowledge but experience and trying to give them some empathy. We do this in small groups rather than talking to a whole class. It is more personal and we focus more on family stuff than we would if talking to an alcoholic.

Are there other ways we can do this? Our storytelling is very powerful but this could also be done with audios – pre-recorded shares which are real but focus on something in particular. This would be a way to take more of us into schools but not needing so many of us to be there physically."

Liverpool City I/G have given talks to 6th formers at 3 schools about drinking and **University** – the 5th year this talk has been requested.

North East Wales I/G reports "well received" school talks in the **Wrexham Area**.

Northdown I/G talked to 175 Year 10 students as well as staff at **Andover** school, and interacted with other agencies giving talks on the same day.

North Yorkshire I/G have given school talks – 2 people visiting to speak to different year groups.

Take the Meeting to the Professionals!

East Lancs I/G's *PLIO Daniel C* reports continued attendance at **REFLECT Awareness Courses** for **Lancashire Police** at **Burnley** and **Blackburn**. A short PowerPoint presentation including history and current locations of **A.A.** has been requested.

He notes that at the *Regional Health L.O.'s* workshop at **G.S.O.** the developing practice of taking a Meeting to **Health Professionals**.

The value of taking our Non-alcoholic Board Trustee Health Professionals to presentations was also recognised.

An AA Display

Liverpool City I/G attended the **Unison Conference** and the **RCN Event** at the **Echo Arena**, with this Stand:-



Manchester I/G met with a member of **Voicebox** involved in a research study in **Manchester University** around **“End of Life Issues”** for **Drug and Alcohol** users, to provide experience of recovery as well as active using.

Legacy of the Tombstone

Northdown I/G's PILO Chrissie B reports:-

“The **Business Community Groups**” are attracted by the local historic connection – which we use as an opening to give a short, and hopefully entertaining, history of AA, what it does and how it's constituted, before relating more personal stories and taking questions.

We would like to attract more such talks, since they supply a good number of people and cost the Fellowship nothing to put on. I'm planning to get round to meetings to ask people to look out for opportunities. We are happy to tailor the talks to appeal to the groups in question.

We have had a display in both the **Winchester Library** and the **Southampton City Library**(with Solent I/G's approval) and interest from other libraries. Designed to make approach and picking up information easy, it centres on the success of the Big Book and its featuring **Winchester Cathedral**. The display has copies of the Big Book, the leaflet about **Thomas Tetcher's grave**, as well as “Where To Find”, leaflets for Professionals and “Is Alcohol Costing you More Than Money”. Smaller libraries have been interested in leaflets where there isn't room for the display.

Winchester Hotels display the **Thomas Tetcher Leaflet** in their “Out and About and Events” Section and one has taken both the leaflet and “Where To Find” to place in hotel bedrooms.

In March we ran an evening at The **Discovery Centre in Winchester** – giving the history – running and personal testimonies. It drew a good audience from within the Fellowship, and people from **Inclusion Mental Health Team**, some **Alcohol Nurses** from the hospital and the **Winchester CityGuides** - who never fail to re-tell the story of *Bill Wilson* to tourists as they tour the Cathedral. A half page listing for the evening in the Spring Events Brochure gave us good exposure as did the placing of a thousand flyers round community notice boards. It's been decided to hold a second event on 12th October now that we understand more about promoting it.



We were approached again by the **University in Winchester** to help make an end of term film for a small group of students. They attended a meeting and subsequently filmed with one of our members. Though these opportunities only offer direct contact with a small group of students it gets them talking about AA, and gives us an opportunity to explain the concept of Anonymity and AA's interaction with the media. Their questions have always been intelligent and their attitude respectful and open minded.

I am meeting with the new **Dean at Winchester Cathedral** in June as we explore ways we might celebrate the centenary of *Bill Wilson's* visit as recounted on page one of the Big Book. I have written to Grapevine and Share as well as other overseas groups and magazines to alert people to the date of the centenary - Nigeria were delighted to be included! If anyone has ideas or stories about what Bill started when he made his visit let me know – the Library have offered display space if we wish to mount a display. And we had wondered about stories from around the world with photos of meeting rooms to illustrate the broad reach the Fellowship has.... obviously all anonymous and within the Traditions. We welcome response to this as it seems like a good opportunity to attract public attention and pass our message.”

ALSO

- A luncheon talk to a **Probus Group** in **Chandlers Ford** attracted 50 people.
- A meeting with the **Chaplains** at **Winchester** and **Basingstoke Hospitals** and their team of about 20 volunteers was positive and well received.
- A positive response to contact with a **Chandlers Ford Mission** offering non-denominational outreach to local workplaces.

Intergroup Activities

Severn I/G report:

Gloucester NHS are preferentially referring clients to **AA**, usually 1-3 a week – one 23 yo female now working a programme with a sponsor. 6 Big Books and 6 Living Sober Books supplied to the **Mental Health Liaison Team** – with recommended sections to read with a sponsor in **AA**.

Gladstone Clinic Cam – 10/15 clients seen fortnightly.

West Kent I/G report:

Kenward Trust addiction rehab. Monthly meetings for residents in place for the year.

Kent University course for medical students in progress.

Medway & Kent (NHS) Family Drug & Alcohol Court P.I. session being arranged.

P.I. presentation initiatives being planned – watch this space!

Somerset I/G HLO Alastair reports presenting to doctors at **Redgate Medical Centre**. G.P.s e-mailed a PID. Feedback on effectiveness of AA literature uptake at **St. James Medical Centre** their “Dry January” promotion obtained at a visit. AA presence at **Bridgewater Food Bank** supported by I/G.

North Yorkshire I/G report working with the **Police** sharing experience, strength and hope with the **Prison Officers** and carrying out training with them at different **Police Stations**. Literature supplied for police use. Repeat sessions requested.

DIARY DATES

15th/16th September, 2017

P.I. Seminar for all I/G and Regional PILO's in York

9th September 2017

The 9th UK Recovery Walk at Blackpool

November 2017

Alcoholics Anonymous Awareness Month

- suggested to start planning projects NOW!

The 9th UK Recovery Walk

9th September 2017
12 Noon
Blackpool

ATTEND THE WALK
Join thousands of people in recovery, their families and friends for the biggest gathering of recovering people in Europe as we walk through Blackpool celebrating and advocating for recovery.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY MONTH
Each September in the UK, thousands of people in recovery as well as projects and services celebrate their successes, and recovery itself, by organising and taking part in events throughout the country. See the website for our official UK Recovery Month Events Calendar for more.

GET INVOLVED, CELEBRATE & WEAR SOME PURPLE
Anyone can get involved. You can join the Walk, attend the many events around the country, speak to us, your local recovery organisation or just wear something purple to show your affinity!

To find out more about the UK Recovery Walk, to register for it, to see what's on during Recovery Month, or simply find out more about how to get involved, please visit:
www.facesandvoicesofrecoveryuk.org

UK Recovery Walk
UKRW

“What’s On” in the West End?

West End Intergroup meets on the second Thursday of every second month. Next *WEIG PI* meeting is on Thursday 13 July at St Anne's Soho, Dean StW1 following the usual full *WEIG* which begins at 6.30pm. All welcome.

WEIG has been unsuccessful in filling its PI post for many years. So the current chair decided to set up a committee instead. This act of delegation to a committee has had immediate and spectacular results which are very satisfying for recovering alcoholics who have learned to meet their need for gratification through service.

London Underground Poster Campaign

Our main initiative has been attempting to develop a *PI* poster 'attraction not promotion' campaign on the **London Underground**, following the examples read in previous *PI* newsletters of other **Intergroups** across the country. Having small posters on the trains itself is prohibitively expensive. So working with the agency, **Exterior** - that other **Intergroups** have successfully worked with on metros in other cities, we have worked out an affordable way of running a campaign on the posters that run up alongside the escalators. Most people will be familiar with the type of thing - escalators at **Leicester Square, Piccadilly Circus** etc. Because the **Transport For London** underground network goes across London, and because we cannot act alone as an **Intergroup** in matters affecting other groups, we needed to put this through both **London Regions, North and South**. The campaign has now been agreed by both **Regions** and will run in September on 500 poster sites across the entire network for two weeks. We hope that suffering alcoholics who have literally reached 'the end of the line' might be encouraged if they see a poster indicating that there is a solution! *Gabriel, PI for London Region North, and Michael, PI for London Region South, and Ruth, chair of WEIG*, have been delegated onto a temporary committee chaired by *Gabriel* to take this forward. *Ruth* and *Michael* are also on the *GSO PI sub committee* so can keep the *PI subcommittee* informed as well. We are currently in the process of preparing the poster artwork, working with a member from another **Region** who has expertise in this area, which will be based closely around existing **AA posters** and will be checked carefully with *GSO* to ensure we remain within the **Concepts and Traditions**.

Local Poster Distribution

At our last Intergroup, we distributed 50 posters kindly supplied by *AA GSO* for *GSRs* to put up at any sites they can find near their homes or meetings – **GP offices, church notice boards** – we hope to do this on a regular basis at Intergroup meetings in future.

Geographic remit of our PI committee

We have drawn up a list of organisations in our **W1, WC2 and WC1 postcode areas** to reach out to. We could put literature, posters etc in these places. e.g. put a literature rack in a library and restock on a regular basis.

Ideas we are pursuing include:

UCH has a hospital radio. Can they do public service announcements? Posters in **homeless shelters**? Letter of introduction to homeless shelter?

Police - posters for people who have been arrested in the custody suites? Can also approach human resources, and the police unions. Posters on notice boards of some of the numerous **churches**. Try and get on **Rotary lunch** list? Get a list of **newspapers/blogs/magazines** in the postcode areas. **Schools** in our area.

Some of this work is already progressing in the following ways:

Charing Cross Library

We have had a face to face discussion with **Charing Cross library manager**. He is happy for AA to place a AA literature stand in the library and for AA to keep it stocked. We have also reached out to **Marylebone library** to explore the possibility of a stocked literature stand.

University College London

We have been in contact with the student welfare officer at **University College London** who is interested in progressing further with AA.

Police Stations

We have spoken to **Charing Cross police** about placing literature in the station and will be investigating this further. **West End Police Station** has a drugs but no alcohol helpline and he is exploring further liaison on this.

West London Mission, Hinde Street

The **West London Mission** at Hinde St, where dozens of meetings of all fellowships take place but mainly AA, is very interesting in knowing more about the fellowship. The new chief executive, *Jon Kuhrt*, former head of social work, has been attending open meetings there to find out more - to our knowledge the first time this has ever happened in the long history of AA being there. He wants to attend the *Parliamentary reception* when it is reconvened. This is a significant contact because **West London Mission** also coordinates the **winter night shelter** run in churches and synagogues in central London from October to March which is a significant outreach potential for the fellowship concerned to help suffering alcoholics. *Harry*, ELO from *NL Intergroup* has been developing these contacts with the **WLM** and has arranged a date for an AA information talk to the West London Mission staff. *WEIG PI committee* will work with *Harry* on this talk.

Music Room which is a national charity set up to deal with addiction in the music industry. They will have a presence at all the major music festivals this summer. We have been approached by them requesting 50 newcomer packs to distribute at these events which we will be providing.

Rotary

We have contacted **Rotary** in our area to speak at one of their dinners and are awaiting a response.

London Region North Workshop

LRN PILO Gabriel S reports:-

About 50 members attended a *GSR* and *PI* workshop held by **LRN** at **Mary Ward House, London WC1** on 14th May. The morning was devoted to *GSR Service*, the afternoon to *PI*. There were presentations on **Telephone Service**, the Role of *SSO*, What is *PI?*, and *PI* at **Group** level, followed by a discussion on the topic "Is there anything we can do to motivate more people to do *PI Service?*"

Group Level

One *PI* committee member is working also with his home group the **JUST FOR TODAY CANDLELIGHT MEETING, 7PM HINDE STREET OPEN MEETING** which holds an open meeting on the last Friday of each month. He has begun to publicise this in the following ways:

1. Announcing at the *closed Just for today Candlelight Meeting* for members to think of inviting professionals, friends and family who might benefit attending our open meeting.
2. Circulating invitations to professionals to attend the open meeting – he has had one confirmation of attendance so far from a professional.

AA Banner

West End Intergroup recently purchased an AA banner for use at events and is looking forward to making use of this soon.

Communication

Taking full advantage of current technology and in a bid to improve communication between *PI committee meetings* we have set up a *West End PI committee intergroup WhatsApp group*. This has vastly improved communication, allowing members to share ideas, experience and documents in addition to getting committee approval for PI ventures without having to wait for the next PI committee meeting. This has made us a much more effective committee and we would highly recommend this practice for other committees.

(To offer feedback or ideas, feel free to email WEIG chair: chair.lnwe@aamail.org)

PLEASE pass on your experiences to the address below.

PI Service News is fortunate to receive a great deal of information from throughout Great Britain.

If anything you have sent hasn't appeared, please try again.

Please note the contact address: aainformation@gsogb.org.uk