



## PI Service News

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

Shared Service Experience



December 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](mailto:aainformation@gsogb.org.uk)

## Northdown Intergroup Update

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

### COMING UP

Next year is the **Centenary** of *Bill Wilson* visiting **Winchester**. The **Cathedral** is very interested in celebrating this and is talking about setting up a special project team to look at how this might be done. I've suggested that it would be nice if they could mention *Bill* and the connection to **AA** on their website, to have a place in the **Cathedral** where we might put the leaflets explaining this and to have a small notice by the **Grave** itself. They are happy with all these suggestions. They are also going to talk to *Songs of Praise*, as I have done, who are also interested in including the **Anniversary** in a piece next year.

The **Winchester City Guides**, the **Cathedral** and the **Library** are interested all interested in this celebration.

The **Library** have given me the whole of their art space for the month of **August** – and I'm looking to fill this with members photographs and a short paragraphs about meetings around the world – so far I have **Mexico – Thailand – Portugal** – and would welcome ideas and information from within the **Fellowship**.



Please can people ask around for photos of **AA Meeting Places** with a short paragraph about the location. This Exhibition gives us an attractive way to illustrate how accessible **AA** is– and to add written information to tell people about the **Fellowship** and dispel some misunderstandings. The **Library** say if we do this they will probably give us a whole page in their **Events Brochure** – and it will again give us an opportunity to contact **Local newspapers** and **Magazines** etc.

## **EVENTS PAST**

There was a **Celebration of Recovery at Winchester Cathedral**. This was a very useful event – giving us a chance to chat with people from **15 Agencies** involved in various types of **Mental Health** and **Recovery Area**. The **Samaritans** were very interested but we were told they were unable to suggest people try **AA** because of the “religious connection”. I gave them “**The God Word**” leaflet and **12 Traditions Illustrated**, and they said they’d raise it at Board Level.

**School Talk** - A talk for the whole of Year 10 [some 150 pupils] at **The John Hanson School in Andover**– an enjoyable day for those who went to speak and we had this back -

“Thank you so much to you all for running your session yesterday. The feedback from the students and staff was super positive and having you as part of the day made a massive difference to us.” *Assistant Headteacher.*

Alongside the PHSE day was a careers event in the school hall – we took the opportunity over the lunch break to chat with businesses and offer AA talks – one of particular interest which we’ll follow up is the **Community Police**.

**Probus Talk** - A talk to a luncheon club of around 40 people in **Chandlers Ford** – a referral from another Group we talked to last year.

**Public Event October 12<sup>th</sup>** - The second Public Event was held at The **Discovery Centre** in **Winchester**. We had an audience of around 60 including some **AA** and **AI-Anon** Members. Why a Public Event? It gives the opportunity to get mentioned in a variety of **Local Publications** – from the **Free Ads** Papers to the **Regional News**, and to put leaflets around the City.

One therapist came up to speak to us after and I asked her where she had seen it to which she replied “I kept seeing flyers for it in lots of places”. I’ve already had an **invitation to speak at a Health and Wellbeing day from this. It gave us the opportunity to deliver literature to places we might not have visited – like local Community Centres and Solicitors**, to start a conversation and offer them talks and information to suit their needs. It gives people a place to bring friends and family members who are curious about **AA** and **AI-Anon** but don’t want to go to a meeting. It’s these family members and friends who may start to suggest that continued attendance is unnecessary and can prove vital in someone’s decision to go to, or remain going to meetings. It helps in getting an audience since you’re not restricted in who can be invited, this also is in the spirit of the inclusivity of the Fellowship and we know our message is often passed through the most unlikely third parties.

Every member of the Fellowship is encouraged to invite and think about people who might be interested, thus making PI feel more relevant and inclusive. One of the unlooked for side effects has been an increase in people who wish to become involved in PI.

**Local Paramedics** now carry **AA Business Cards** to give out, and have our Audio Pieces to include on their Internet.

**Fluid Motion Theatre Company** is taking our literature as they tour with their play about growing up in an alcoholic home “**Rum in the Gravy Boat**”.

We are exploring the **Who Cares Project** in local churches – particularly in the **Basingstoke** area.

**Andover Library** have hosted our library display with a record number of leaflets taken – this we think due to the fact that it was in a place which was semi private but one which was on the route in and out of the library.

## Westminster Parliamentary Event 2017

This year's annual Event at the **House of Commons** was held on October 16<sup>th</sup>, the delay being due to the **General Election**. The re-arranged event, on October 16<sup>th</sup> was, nonetheless, an outstanding success, including four MPs and three peers.

A wide range of organisations and individuals were sent invitations and among the organisations who did attend were **Drug and Alcohol Agencies, Health Services, Police, Churches, Street Pastors, Social Services, Housing Associations and the Criminal Justice Service.**

The event was sponsored by *Fiona Bruce, MP* who opened by speaking eloquently, not only of the problems caused by excessive drinking, but also of her experience and high regard for the **Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.**

*Tony Mercer*, a **Health and Well-Being Manager from Public Health England**, spoke of his experience of working with AA and 'How It Works' in his perception. He urged those present to develop their knowledge of AA and their relationship with us. He particularly emphasised the value of attending **Open Meetings.**

*Sue D* and *Trevor H* were the AA speakers. Both had lengthy sobriety and gave moving testimony of how AA had transformed their lives from the very desperate situations they had found themselves in.

*Alan T* chaired the event - providing a valuable introduction to A.A. and conducting a Q&A session at the end.

All delegates were provided with a pack of essential A.A. materials. A good supply of other A.A. literature was available for purchase, and our sister Fellowship AI Anon were present with a stall and two members available to talk with delegates.

The audience were very attentive and appreciative, and most stayed for some lively informal discussion afterwards. Everyone is encouraged to fill out a feedback form and, very importantly, all delegates who requested a follow will be contacted soon.

The event is organised by a committee consisting of *London Region Trustees, PI Liaison Officers and others from London, South East and South Midlands Regions.* In the absence of a trustee for North London, the *PI Trustee* is also a member. These attend the event, together with the *Board Chairman, General Secretary and Staff from the General and Southern Service Offices.* Members serve for four years, which helps continuity and the learning process.

This is the thirteenth such event and experience is reviewed and the process improved year on year. This year, for example, there was one professional speaker instead of two as in previous years. This appears to have been a success and will be repeated next year.

## Scottish Parliament Awareness Event 4/10/2017

This successful event, Hosted by *Maree Todd MSP* attracted 25 persons. *Maree* took delegates on a personal **AA journey**, setting the tone for a positive meeting.

*Sandy MacV (Trustee for the Scottish Parliament Event)* gave a P.I. power point presentation explaining what **AA** 'was and was not'.

*Nick Holroyd (Non-Alcoholic Board Trustee of AA GB)* gave his moving and heartfelt personal journey in AA.

*Dr Ask Khan (an ex-NAT)* explained "WHY DOES AA WORK?"

*Anne-Marie S. (Northern Service Office)* shared her "Experience, Strength and Hope".

A question and answer session was followed by very positive and encouraging comments from *Maree Todd MSP*, and "thank yous" from *Sandy MacV*, including guests for their attendance. The event was closed with Serenity Prayer.

## Polish AA in the UK

*Tomasz P writes* - I would like to inform all my British friends in Fellowship, that we are truly grateful for support we are receiving from you since very beginning of Polish - language Fellowship in UK. It is nearly 25 years old now. There is 3 Intergroups in England, one in Scotland and one in Ireland. Thanks of help I mentioned we can enjoy recovery and help others by passing that, what we have been offered.

We created all services essential to carry the message, on level of Groups and Intergroups. It is several years already, when we joined to **Crisis Christmas Action in London**. Nearly two years now we have *Hospital and Prison Liaison Officers, Public Information* as well. There are few Polish AA individuals across UK that cooperate with British AA, but general awareness about us is poor.

21 of October our 5 Intergroups had their first common meeting of the Services. We were thinking about create new service - link between us and York to make flow of information and ideas more efficient.

If you know anything about Polish alcoholics looking for help, or if you have questions please feel free to contact our office we have been generously offered to share with British-language AA in London: 02074038520 (during the week there might be voice mail on). Our email address is [pik.aa.london@gmail.com](mailto:pik.aa.london@gmail.com).

We are ready to send **Polish AA literature** on our cost and share information where and when our meetings takes place. I believe that some of *Eastern Europeans* understand Polish also.

Hope we can be helpful and once again thank you so much for support we received from you already. Wish you all the best and bless you. Yours in Fellowship. Tom 07955811619 .

## PI Across Europe

**CER's PILO Rosalind S-G writes** - In order to achieve success in our work in **Public Information** across **Europe**, we are offered rather different challenges than the other 16 Regions. Due to the distances between Groups and Inter-groups, we depend heavily on our online communication services and email. This works surprisingly well. When we call a **PI Committee Meeting**, **SKYPE** is a very effective form of communication. For a larger Group Meeting, we use '**SKYPE For Business**'. It is very reasonably priced and very efficient.

When we hold a **PI Workshop** On-line, and we aim to attract as many members as possible from Groups and Inter-groups across **Europe**, it is best announced through our online magazine '**ARENA**'. At these Workshops we exchange experience on how to conduct a School Visit, as well as how best to create a Hospital or town Hall presentation. We also discuss how we can work effectively with our host country.

For some Conferences, we feel it is relevant we send a Representative or two. The **12<sup>th</sup> Global Addiction 2016 Conference in Venice** 2-4 October 2016 was a great success. We had a Stand and many Doctors and Academics came to chat. We were treated extremely well. There were approximately 230 delegates. The **13<sup>th</sup> Global Addiction Conference** will be held in 2018. We have already been invited as guests and do not have to pay the usual huge entry fees

One of our **Delegates to Conference** came for the **Costa del Sol Convention** in Nov. 2016 and together we did a PP presentation on '**The Whole Picture**' of **AA**. We focused on **Conference Questions** and the **Annual York Conference**. The Costa del Sol Convention Committee were very keen to invite us back this Nov. 2017. We will concentrate on '**Now That I am Sober, What Next?**' and discuss service and talk about all the areas a member can get involved. This will include ideas for brand new members .Our PI Committee is looking at ways we can spread information about CER at forthcoming Conventions around Europe.

The **CER Website** received 34,200 clicks during the months of June, July and August, 2017 ([www.alcoholics-anonymous.eu](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.eu)). This included 23% from USA, 19% UK, 8.9% Germany. This was an overall increase of 6.2% from last year. The **Costa del Sol** has two very active Websites for interaction, plus we announce social events open to all members. We had a great barbeque at the end of August this year, on the beach. A great success.CER has a very active archivist and we have collected good material throughout the years. We have a very busy 2017/18 year planned. Our **December 2017 Regional Meeting** will be held in **Budapest, Hungary**. The **March 2018 Meeting** will be held in **Vienna, Austria**. We voted to have three Face-to-Face Meetings during the next year. It was agreed that this is an effective way to draw more English-speaking groups and inter-groups into **CER**.

**CER's Health Liaison Portfolio** is dedicated to providing assistance to local Intergroups who wish to reach out to Health Care Professionals. We do this by providing advice to those planning to work with these professionals, advise best practice guidelines for such work and to help and support groups involved in health related activities. Over the first weekend of October, **CER** once again supported a Sub-committee attending the **European Conference on Mental Health**. This conference meets annually and provides a venue for health care workers to come together and discuss developments in the industry. **AA's** presence at the event is a valuable opportunity to demystify the Fellowship in the eyes of the Health Sector, and to explain ways in which we can act as a complementary resource to said Professionals. The Conference attracts hundreds of Delegates and the opportunities for networking are considerable.

These events are a good opportunity for recovered alcoholics to network and communicate with people whose daily lives are spent dealing with people still living in the problem. Exact numbers of connections are not yet available for this year's **ECMH**, but over the years we have targeted hundreds of Health Workers, Last year **AA** was event given a keynote role at the event.

Furthermore, the team of volunteers also attend a banquet throughout the Conference, and spend a night sitting amongst Doctors, Psychologists and other Specialists, providing a living example of recovery the **AA** way.

Over recent months the Health Portfolio has provided advice to several local groups looking to do similar work. So while **ECMH** is a European-wide conference, there may be similar conferences in your local area. Similarly, you may wish to target local Hospitals or Doctor's Surgeries in your region. For help and support on how **CER** can assist you in planning and carrying out this valuable service, please contact [health.cer@aamail.org](mailto:health.cer@aamail.org). We are always open to any new ideas. Please contact me with any thoughts, idea, and questions.  
Rosalind S-G, PI Officer, CER. [pi.cer@aamail.org](mailto:pi.cer@aamail.org).

## AA Poster Campaign London Underground Photos

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B9S6W7TAsIzBS2FOdlZadkRiMTA?usp=sharing>

**AA Heart Radio Campaign** – East Lancs I/G *PILO Daniel C* reports 10 seconds and 30 seconds adverts being broadcast on **Heart Radio** until the end of January. He requests feedback via [eastlancsaa@gmail.com](mailto:eastlancsaa@gmail.com) concerning anyone walking into an AA meeting because of the campaign.

## West Kent Intergroup Activities

**West Kent I/G HLO Andy H** reports:- Monthly **Kenward Trust** meetings ongoing. Education of **Kent University** students as to the role of **A.A.** ongoing. Session with **Family Drug and Alcohol Court for Medway and Kent (NHS)**. Session with a **Gravesend Church Youth Group**.

*PILO Daren F* reports development of **PI Clinics**, with **Groups** arranging relatively small **PI Events** before their normal meetings, inviting local professionals to drop in and offer them the chance to attend an **Open AA Meeting** after the **PI Event**. The West Kent I/G finance additional costs involved, and provide relevant literature.

## Glasgow Region Update from Glasgow Region HLO John S :-

**Glasgow South I/G HLO Angela K** reports progress with **Queen Elizabeth University Hospital Addiction Team** to provide fortnightly meetings for in patients, with ongoing response, in conjunction with **Glasgow NW I/G**, to **12 Step calls** from the Addiction Team.

**Glasgow North West I/G HLO David B** reports the Friday meeting at **Kershaw Detox Unit** averages 10 patients, the alternate Thursday meeting averaging 7 patients. A presentation was also given to **Staff and Young Doctors**. **Eriskay House** had 54 patients attending the meetings.

*PILO Jean S* reports a Stall at the **Glasgow University Fresher's Fair**, with an advertisement in the **Glasgow Guardian** included in each of their "Welcome Pack". Interest also attracted from the **Chaplaincy**, the **Psychology Department** and a **4<sup>th</sup> year student**.

**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 and Continental European Region. If anything you have sent hasn't appeared, please try again.

**INTERGROUP SECRETARIES** – please pass on **Public Information Service News** to **Group Service Representatives**, by e-mail or hard copy.

Please note the contact address: [aainformation@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:aainformation@gsogb.org.uk)