

To: All Regional Electronic Communications Liaison Officers  
From: Trustee, Electronic Communications Sub Committee

Date: September, 2016

This is a newsletter to inform you of progress in several areas since our last meeting on August 12/13. Please pass on this information to ECLOs in your Regions.

### **Email update**

We are well underway in transferring users of the old addresses [xxx@aa-email.org.uk](mailto:xxx@aa-email.org.uk) to the new ones, [xxx@aamail.org](mailto:xxx@aamail.org). When this transfer is complete, we will start the six month countdown to switching off the old system.

All officers who have been using forwarders from an old address to a personal one will be notified. If they wish to continue to receive forwarded mail, it will be sent from the new address to the personal one. During the countdown period, any mail going to the old system will be forwarded through the new one. Failure to respond to this notification means that the forwarders will not be transferred to the new system, and will be lost when the old system is switched off.

In the next stage, any Intergroup or Region Officer may request a new address, or the ECLO may request addresses for several officers. The correct route is through the ECSC Helpdesk at:

[alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Service/Helpdesk](http://alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Service/Helpdesk)

We will first check that the request comes from someone currently listed in the Confidential Directory - if not, we will ask for Chair/Secretary to confirm. Then the request will be passed to the Helpdesk for the new system.

Please do not ask for a blanket set of all available email addresses. Firstly, if anyone is using an old address, they will have been offered a path migrating them to the new address. Secondly, it takes time to set up each address individually, and if there is no officer in place who wants to use that address, then we could use that time to better effect.

Lastly, in each case, the officers concerned should consider whether a full mailbox is wanted/needed, or a forwarder. If the latter, then the forwarding address should be provided.

### **Online Response Service**

This service is operating smoothly. The number of responders is higher than it has been for some considerable time, and the ORS is covering about 20 hours every day. There is a page on the website where statistics will be posted occasionally. Please see this page for more information:

[alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Service/Disciplines/Electronic-Communications/Online-Responder-Service](http://alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Service/Disciplines/Electronic-Communications/Online-Responder-Service)

### **Chat Now**

Since Conference 2016, this new service has been in preparation. We hope to go live for 2-4 hours per day starting in early October. Watch the Newcomers pages of the website, because this is where we expect to put the "Chat Now" button. But we hope that members of the Fellowship will not use this button for contacting AA - it is designed as a tool for assisting newcomers.

As experience grows, we expect to expand the number of hours covered each day. For this, we will need more responders. Please see this page for more details:

[alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Service/Disciplines/Electronic-Communications/Chat-Now-Service](http://alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Service/Disciplines/Electronic-Communications/Chat-Now-Service)

## Online Groups

Following a decision of the Board, we will soon be inviting groups which meet online to register with us. This means that these groups will appear on our website Meeting Finder, and in the book, *Where to Find AA in Great Britain and English Speaking Europe*. The registration form will be the usual Pink Form, particularly the website version. Notes have been prepared on how to complete the form on behalf of an online meeting.

**Note:** An Online Meeting is one which meets through electronic media, not in a physical place. The proposal supported by Conference 2016 was as follows:

Our initial findings are that it is feasible to include an online group on the AAGB Meetings database and thereby recognise that group from a search on the website. This may require some minor changes to the meeting finder function of the website. It is envisaged that the group would register with GSO in the normal way using a Pink Form or online. Ideally it would attach itself to an existing intergroup as is custom for all new groups although this is not mandated by the Fellowship. It is then up to the group/intergroup to facilitate the meetings, appoint officers and arrange pot collections etc., as is done by any group in becoming self-supporting.

## Website

On the website, please look out for these new features in the Members Section.

- **What's New?**

This is a page listing recent changes/additions to the website. In addition, if items have been posted/emailed to the officers of particular disciplines, then there may be a note of this having been done. There is usually also an electronic version of the item. Notifications will usually be deleted after approximately one month.

- **FAQ**

This page directs members to the answers to some Frequently Asked Questions. If you can suggest any improvements to this page, please contact a member of the ECSC on the website Helpline.

- **Website Stats**

On this page, we will show occasional graphs indicating usage of the website. These are static graphs, only updated when a member of ECSC has looked at the recent figures and copied some details. We are working with our suppliers in an effort to make the display dynamic i.e. updated automatically.

Two other changes on the website are worthy of note.

- **Pink Form**

The website version of the Pink Form now invites users to read some notes before completion.

- **Short URLs**

For some time, RECLOs and others have been requesting shorter URLs. For example, this can be the route to an Intergroup microsite:

[alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Regional-&-Local-Websites/Scotia-Region/Cumbernauld-&-District-Intergroup](http://alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Regional-&-Local-Websites/Scotia-Region/Cumbernauld-&-District-Intergroup)

It has always been possible to use [aa-gb.org.uk](http://aa-gb.org.uk) as a shortened form of our website's Home Page. Our suppliers have succeeded in producing a further shortcut to microsites: [aa-gb.org.uk/cumbernauld](http://aa-gb.org.uk/cumbernauld)

If you want to take advantage of this shortcut, please contact us on the Helpline, and it will be set up. The 'designator' for each Intergroup or Region will normally be the same as that for the email addresses on the new system.

## Limitations

This shortcut applies only to microsites. It cannot be used for other pages of the website. It cannot even be used to direct to a particular page within the microsite. If Cumbernauld wishes to direct readers specifically to their Newsletter, then the longer

URL is still necessary:

[aa-gb.org.uk/Members/Regional-&-Local-Websites/Scotia-Region/Cumbernauld-&-District-Intergroup/Newsletter](http://aa-gb.org.uk/Members/Regional-&-Local-Websites/Scotia-Region/Cumbernauld-&-District-Intergroup/Newsletter)

Smartphones may also have a problem with this shortcut. If they are set up to use location, then they pick up the mobile site (which does not feature the microsities) before reading the shortcut - and that does not work. With further developments, we expect this drawback to disappear. Meanwhile, the long URL will still work with smartphones - the mobile site is bypassed, and the required page is displayed.

### **ECLO seminar**

This was requested by RECLOs. The Board has agreed that there shall be such a meeting next year in the Park Inn at York. The date will be Saturday 5 August, 2017. The hours are still to be determined, but are likely to be from around 9 am to 4 pm. All RECLOs and ECLOs will be invited to attend. Please inform all ECLOs in your Region, and ask them to 'save the date'.

### **RECLO meeting**

The annual RECLO meeting usually takes place on a Friday/Saturday in August. In view of the decision above, it will be a shorter meeting, on Friday 4 August from 5 pm to 7.45 pm. It will take place in GSO.

### **Telephone Helpline Number**

The new number 0800 9177 650 has now been in operation for over a year. A member of the Fellowship pointed out that some of our microsities still display the old number, 0845 769 7555. Editing of these sites is the responsibility of the Regions or Intergroups which own them. Please review any microsities you use, and let the organising body know if an amendment is in order.

### **Point of Contact**

You can always get through to a member of ECSC by using the website's Helpdesk:

<http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Service/Helpdesk>

In Service  
James K  
Trustee ECSC