



AA Service News

Spring 2018

No.174

From the General Service Office of Great Britain

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Tradition Seven

Twelve Concepts. Personal Checklist. Following the General Service Conference recommendation in 2006, the original Twelve Concepts Checklist was adapted to reflect the structure of the Fellowship in Great Britain and approved by Conference in 2007:

Concept VII

The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs.

The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.

- Do we act responsibly regarding the "power of the purse?"
- Are we familiar with the Conference Charter and the freedom of action that the trustees must have?
- Do we realise that the practical and spiritual power of the Conference will nearly always be superior to the legal power of the GSB?

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

Share Your Experience!

Are you sending in your Region and Intergroup Minutes and Agendas to aainformation@gsogb.org.uk ?

Scottish Parliament – ‘Why Does AA Work?’

THE Scottish Parliament awareness event was held in Edinburgh on Wednesday 4 October. It was attended by 25 people - the numbers may have been low, but the event was a great success.

The event was opened by the Parliamentary host Maree Todd MSP, who took us on a very personal AA journey. This set the tone for a very positive meeting.

Sandy Mac V, the event Trustee, gave a P I PowerPoint presentation explaining what AA was and was not.

This was followed by Nick Holroyd, a Non Alcoholic Board Trustee, who gave a very moving and heartfelt presentation.

He was followed by Dr Ash Kahn, a former Non Alcoholic Board Trustee. His presentation ‘*Why Does AA work?*’ was well received.

Anne-Marie S from the Northern Service Office shared her experience, strength and hope, and this too was very well received. A question and answer session then followed.

Maree Todd summed up with some very positive and encouraging comments, and Sandy Mac V thanked all those who made the event possible.

The list included: Maree Todd MSP, Nick Holroyd, Ash Kahn and Anne-Marie, Helen at NSO, the Parliament and the events team, Michael T, Jaqui Mc K and Alex H. Sandy also thanked his fellow trustees for their attendance and support, and all guests for their attendance.

Sandy Mac V, Trustee for Scottish Parliament Event

Westminster – ‘more than 70’

An excellent event attended by more than 70 people was held at Portcullis House, Westminster on 16 October. The ‘sponsoring MP’ was Fiona Bruce, a member of the Parliamentary Select Committee for Alcohol and Substance Misuse.

The event was chaired by Alan T on behalf of the House of Commons PI Group, who gave an introduction about AA in Great Britain.

The professional speaker was Tony Mercer, Public Health England Substance Misuse Manager for the Midlands. There were also two AA Speakers - Sue D and Trevor. Questions and answers followed.

There were 50 invited guests including four MPs, three members of the House of Lords and the Bishop of Edmonton.

There were also committee members, GSO staff, two Trustees plus our GSB Chair and General Secretary, Geoff and Roger, and AI-Anon members.

Three important issues were agreed at the debrief meeting later.

- 1 - Moving the event to early October rather than Spring for easier booking.
- 2 - Retain a core of three or four professional speakers for an AA message.
- 3 - Planning meetings reduced from eight to four.

It is planned to invite Labour MP Liam Byrne to be our sponsoring MP next year, and Dr Ash Kahn, former Non-Alcoholic Trustee to be the professional speaker.

Outgoing members Alan T, Daniele V and Stephen M were thanked for their excellent contribution during the past four years.

Welsh Assembly Event – ‘well delivered’

THE presentation at the Welsh Assembly, Pierhead, took place on the 14 November 2017, with most of the people who had pre-registered attending.

I would like to thank all members of the presentation team and the GSO Staff for their efforts on the day.

Attendance of Assembly Members at the event was disrupted, due to the sad events which had occurred at the Senedd in the previous weeks*. This required the members of the Welsh Assembly to attend a meeting in the Assembly Hall.

The Assembly Member Rhun ap Iorwerth who hosted the event welcomed all the attendees gave his opening address then leaving to attend the Assembly meeting.

There were 23 professional attendees together with the GSO staff and seven members of the Fellowship.

All presentations were well delivered and well received by the professionals in the audience

The question and answer session after the presentations was quiet but the one to one sessions after the event was more encouraging with many queries being responded to by the presenter and the members of the Fellowship.

Brian J, Trustee Welsh Parliament Event

(*Note: The death of Assembly member Carl Sargeant)

Service with a difference....

HAVE you thought of trying a different type of service? Service you can do at your own pace, in your own home? We are looking for men and women prison postal sponsors.

Offer your support through letters to the still suffering alcoholic who can attend few or *no* meetings. All correspondence is through GSO.

It is an extremely rewarding and fascinating service – remember, you get back only what you give away.

Help and support is available. Please contact:

PPS Request, GSO, PO Box 1

10 Toft Green

York

YO1 7NJ

Or email: aainformation@gsogb.org

Phone: 01904 644 026

Charles R, Trustee Prisons

Service Workshop in the Midlands

A move to encourage more people into service prompted a Workshop by Northamptonshire Intergroup, in Rushden last November.

The theme was “Being Sponsored into Service”. Each service discipline was covered by the acting intergroup officers giving a brief description of their area of responsibility, with additional contributions on group service and 12th-stepping.

The meeting was chaired by Tom Mc D, Intergroup PI Liaison. It was opened with a session by Midlands Region Board Trustee, Jeff B. In addition to sharing on his own service experience, he cited the Conference 2012 question and response to the very topic of “Being Sponsored into Service.”

As most of the intergroup officers were in attendance, it is likely that the Conference recommendations will be reviewed at the next intergroup meeting.

‘Improved each year’

Some members present were not currently involved in service at intergroup level. Northamptonshire Intergroup members were grateful for members from the neighbouring Coventry & Warwickshire Intergroup for coming along.

They shared their experience, strength, and hope on how their annual service workshops have improved each year. This is something that we hope can be replicated in Northamptonshire.

I would like to express my gratitude to all who helped to contribute to the success of this initial workshop.

Yours in fellowship

Tom Mc D, Public Information Liaison, Northamptonshire Intergroup

Welsh Borders – a family affair

A WORKSHOP with the theme '*The Newcomer and the Family*' is due to be held in Hereford on Saturday 12 May.

It will be the latest in a series of annual workshops by Welsh Borders Intergroup held at Holmer Church Hall, Hereford.

Presentations will include 12th Stepping the newcomer, the experience of being a newcomer and helping the newcomer.

Prison and Probation regional meeting

THE latest in a series of joint meetings for those working within the disciplines of Prison and Probation will be held in Warrington on 4 March.

It is aimed at Intergroups and Regions in the Midlands, North East and North West of England, and North Wales. Previous meetings of this kind were held last year in Stirling and Cambridge in September and Swindon in October. The 'pilot' was held in Warrington a year ago.

It reflects the closer working of the two disciplines to carry the message to offenders within the criminal justice system behind bars, or in the community.

If an Intergroup or Region doesn't have a specific Prison or Probation Liaison Officer, someone interested in working in those areas may attend. The event will be held at The Hallmark Hotel, Warrington between 10:30am and 2:30pm.

Who Me? A New Trustee's Story

I grew up on a tough council estate in a drinking family. Both Mum and Dad and all my male siblings were alcoholic. I didn't have much chance of not developing the illness.

When I was 38, I got sober in AA after an eventful drinking career which included many scrapes of which I am not proud.

I got a sponsor who was very much involved with service in AA. He encouraged me to become involved. I did all the group jobs and, after about

four years, I went to Intergroup. A member, who was 'a bit posh', told me that there was plenty of service for a chap like me - making tea, washing up etc.

This conversation led me to believe that I was not the right kind of fellow for Intergroup/Region service. Those members that went on to serve on committees were suit-wearing, briefcase-carrying professional types. My self-esteem took a beating.

'Promoted to tea boy'

However, with my sponsor's encouragement, I took myself onto both Intergroup and Region. To my delight, I found members there were ordinary men and women, simply doing their best to carry the AA message. Funnily enough, I felt at home there.

In all my AA service, other people have always seen more in me than I saw in myself. Region packed me off to Conference. Conference Committee Six voted me as Chair for 2005, and I served on the Conference Steering Committee.

After Conference, my local home group promoted me to tea boy. After several years, an old AA pal rang me and asked what I was doing for AA? With his encouragement, I stood for the General Service Board appointment for my Region. I never expected to be invited to join the GSB - after all, I spent my working life in plasterer's overalls, not in a suit.

I am now in my first year as a Trustee for the fellowship, and guess what? The other Trustees are just ordinary members; just like you meet at any local AA meeting.

I found all the reading of documents quite daunting at first - but I am getting used to it as time goes on. If I feel a bit overwhelmed at any time, I think of the old AA saying: "If God takes you *to* it, God will see you *through* it".

I have been asked to take responsibility for the National Telephone Service, which is a real privilege. I have met the AA members who form the Telephones Sub-Committee, and they are a great bunch who know far more about telephone service than I do.

'Can't outgrow this fellowship'

They have much to teach me and I have much to learn. This, in my opinion, is the great thing about AA - I never stop learning and growing. We can't outgrow this fellowship.

The other GSB members are really good people, and I am making new and hopefully lasting friendships. We laugh a lot over coffee and exchange good stories, just like any other AA meetings. But, of course, there is serious business to be considered on behalf of Alcoholics Anonymous. The way I look at it is that it's simply my turn to put all my years of experience to good use, on your behalf.

Every problem drinker that comes into our rooms shivering and shaking, full of remorse and hopelessness is a potential GSR, Intergroup Chair or Conference Delegate. Every GSB member 'shook' their way into AA.

Peter S, Trustee for Telephones

GSB Sub-Committee Vacancies

When applying for any of the vacancies below please note that forms are available from Jenny Pryke at GSO, PO Box 1,10 Toft Green, York, YO1 7NJ; 01904 644 026; jennypryke@gsogb.org.uk or in the Document Library of the AA (GB) website www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk.

The Chair, Vice Chair or Secretary of the sponsoring Region or Intergroup must endorse the application by way of a covering letter.

The deadline for ALL applications is 21 April 2018

Vacancy for Fellowship Archivist

Requirements

- At least 5 years' continuous sobriety, plus experience of local archives
- In keeping with Conference recommendations, this post does not rotate.

- The Fellowship's Archivist will need to become familiar with the National Archives housed in GSO, York, although it is not expected that more than 4 or 5 visits per year will be necessary.
 - The candidate should be familiar with Conference approved literature, *Alcoholics Anonymous, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, AA Comes of Age, the Twelve Concepts, AA Service and Structure Handbooks for Great Britain and the AA Archives 'policy and procedures'*.
 - An interest in AA history, good communication and IT skills along with an ability to work as part of a team would be highly advantageous. Some knowledge of archival work would also be useful in order to develop the AA National Archives.
 - This is a voluntary position but, all expenses for the duties of the National Archivist will be paid.
 - The successful candidate will become a member of the Archives Sub-committee.
-

Vacancies for Employment Sub-Committee

We have vacancies for **two** Sub Committee members.

Our Primary Functions are:

- Create a consistent message externally that differentiates AA from other bodies.
- Establish and maintain good relations with professionals and professional bodies at national level.
- Establish and maintain good relations with employers and companies at national level.
- Increase public and professional knowledge of the AA programme.

- Offer support to Regional and Intergroup Liaison Officers.
- Create and maintain an accurate system of record keeping for future officers and events.
- Communicate effectively with the Fellowship.
- Comply with the principles and guidelines of AA.
- The committee meets up to four times a year in York, although some of the meetings may take the form of telephone conferencing - Skype. Much of the work is done in the interim, generally in partnership with the other members of the committee.
- The post is subject to rotation after four years.
- It is suggested that we follow the following criteria:
 - A minimum of five years' continuous sobriety.
 - A sound knowledge of the AA Structure, Steps, Traditions and Concepts

Sandy Mac V, Board Trustee for Employment

Vacancy on the Probation and Criminal Justice Social Work Services sub-committee

The main aims of the committee are to produce information to the liaison officers in this service discipline throughout GB by use of the website and other communication, and to be a focus for enquiries both from the Fellowship and outside professionals.

It would be advantageous if one of the candidates has experience of the Criminal Justice Social Work Services in Scotland, because of the

different legal system in Scotland compared to that of England and Wales.

It is suggested that applicants would fulfil the following criteria:

- Minimum of five years' continuous sobriety at the time of application.
- Sound grasp of the service structure, Service Handbook and Traditions
- Personal service history of this discipline at Intergroup or Region
- Good organisational and communications skills
- Availability to attend at least 2 committee meetings a year at GSO

Appointment will be for a period of 4 years

Jeff B, Trustee Probation/Criminal Justice Social Work Services

Vacancies on the Share team

Editor, Share Magazine

SHARE Magazine is a Sub-Committee of the AA General Service Board. The GSB seeks to appoint a successor to the current Editor of Share, AA's monthly magazine in England and Wales.

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

The Editor 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 guarantee 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.

The monthly production of SHARE magazine is a team effort; it is essential for the Editor to be an experienced team player. Computer and email competence is indispensable. It would be desirable to have previous editing experience; training will be given.

This is a four-year unpaid commitment, although expenses may be claimed. Applicants must have a minimum of five years continuous sobriety at the time of application. They should be familiar with Conference-approved literature, Alcoholics Anonymous, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, AA Comes of Age, Twelve Concepts and the AA Structure and Service Handbooks for Great Britain.

The Team can hold up to four annual meetings, either in York or by conference-call, including an annual, national SHARE Liaisons Officers' meeting. The day-to-day business of the Team is carried out electronically.

Share, Editorial Reader

There is a vacancy for one Editorial Reader.

The job involves reading all articles and letters received, and indicating to the Editor on a scale of one to six (one being exceptional and six being unsuitable) their opinion of suitability for publication.

Such response should be made to the editor *within a week* of receipt of articles and letters from GSO (usually via email).

The team can hold up to four annual meetings, either in York or by conference-call, and an annual, national Share Liaisons Officers' meeting. The day-to-day business of the team is carried out electronically.

Applicants must have a minimum of five years' continuous sobriety at the time of application and will normally serve for a period of four years.

They should be familiar with Conference-approved literature, Alcoholics Anonymous, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, AA Comes of Age, Twelve Concepts and the AA Structure and Service Handbooks for Great Britain.

Helen S, Trustee Share

Young People's Sub-Committee

There are **two** vacancies on the newly-formed Young People's Sub-committee of the General Service Board.

Experience of working as YPLO at either Intergroup or Regional level would be an advantage, but not essential.

The aim of the Young Peoples Sub-committee is to raise awareness of Alcoholics Anonymous within the youth community.

Main aims are:

To assist in the recruitment and support of YPLOs at Regional and Intergroup level.

Support the development and sharing of good practice and review and update literature, media resources and guidelines as necessary.

Establish and maintain good relationships with professionals and professional bodies.

It is suggested that applicants would fulfil the following criteria:

- *A minimum of five years continuous sobriety at time of application.
- *A strong 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.

Young People's Sub-committee members usually serve for a period of four years. There is a requirement to attend two meetings a year in York plus an annual Young People's Liaison Officers meeting and participate in work in-between meetings if needed.

In Memoriam

Largs Luton Beds	£300	In memory of 7 Les
Bourtree Sun Night Irvine, Ayrshire	£150	In memory of Moira B

Those in Receipt of AA Service News

Three copies are posted to the mailing contact for all Groups in the GB Service Structure. It is also posted to all Intergroup and Regional officers and the General Service Board.

If your Group is not in receipt of AA Service News please contact GSO and check who is the "mail contact" on your Group's **PINK SHEET** and if necessary update it. Thank you

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

The Editor, AA Service News, GSO, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ

Email: aanews@alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Tradition Seven

“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 review.

Services can require committees, delegates, trustees and Conferences. They include small voluntary money contributions so that the group, the area, and AA as a whole can function. They range all the way from the cup of coffee to AA’s General Service Headquarters for national and international action. The sum of *all* these services is AA’s Third Legacy” - *AA Comes of Age page 140*

The Role of GSO

With four thousand groups to service, GSO is the vital administrative centre of our Fellowship, supported by Northern and Southern Service Offices. It produces and distributes AA literature and publications and is

From Regions Oct –Dec 2017	Contributions £’s
East of Scotland	3,000
Eastern	22,000
Glasgow	0
Highlands & Islands	0
London North	26,485.90
London South	0
Midlands	10,000
North East	13,000
North West	0
Scotia	10,000
South East	45,144.41
South Midlands	5,000
South West	0
SW Scotland	18,000
Wales & Borders	4,093.57
Continental Europe	4871.10

responsible for service meetings of Liaison Officers, for Conference and for meetings of the General Service Board (GSB). GSO liaises with and supports European and World Services. It is also responsible for Fellowship archives. Staff also deal with all telephone calls from members, the media, and outside organisations.

Taken from GB Conference approved pamphlet ‘The Pot’