



AA Service News

Summer 2019

No.179

From the General Service Office of Great Britain

CONTENTS

Concept XII / Checklist

CONFERENCE 2019: RECOMMENDATIONS

Letter from Your Local Archivist

Service Workshop in Coventry

***Where to Find* Listings: Suggestions**

Service Workshop in Vilnius, Lithuania

GSB Sub-Committee Vacancies

Calendar of Events

Tradition Seven

In Memoriam

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 XII

The Conference shall observe the spirit of AA tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

- How do we guard against becoming a “seat of perilous wealth or power”?
- How do we practice prudent use of our Tradition 7 contributions and literature revenue?

Twelve Concepts. Personal Checklist. Continued:

- Do we ensure the spiritual liberties of all AA members by not placing any member in the position of absolute authority over others?
- Do we try to reach important decisions by thorough discussion, vote and, where possible, substantial unanimity?
- As guardians of AA's Traditions, are we ever justified in being personally punitive?
- Are we careful to avoid public controversy?
- Do we always try to treat each other with mutual respect and love?

Share Your Service Experience!

AA Service News

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.

Please send your service related articles to: editor.aasn@btconnect.com

What's Happening in Your Intergroup and Region?

Are you sending in your region and intergroup Minutes and Agendas to aainformation@qsoqb.org.uk ?

Is Your Group, Intergroup or Region Doing 12th Step Work in Prisons?

The Autumn 2019 edition of *AA Service News* will highlight 12th Step work in prisons (as well as jails and other correctional facilities). If you or your group or your intergroup or your region is doing this sort of 12th Step work, *AA Service News* would love to hear about. Please consider writing a short report or article about this important service and sending it to:

editor.aasn@btconnect.com

Conference 2019 Recommendations

Committee No. 1

1. Inventory Question

Would the Fellowship share its experience and make recommendations with regards to the Young People's Liaison Officer (YPLO) service position, in particular:

- a. Recent integration into our service structure**
- b. Getting more younger members into AA and involved in service generally**
- c. Relations with Young People in AA (YPAA) Conventions**

- a) The experience of the Fellowship ranged from no experience with YPLOs to a positive response from Intergroups and Regions where there are people in position. Where there are YPLOs in position, those areas

have benefitted from the collaboration with other disciplines including PI, Prisons, Employment and Health.

It is clear that there is still a need to raise awareness of the Young People's discipline across areas of AA GB. Particular reference is made to page 73 of the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain 2018 which outlines the role. In addition, in accordance with Tradition 3, it should be emphasised that young people's meetings are open to all members of the Fellowship.

- b) The committee recognises the work already done by the Sub Committee and YPLOs at Regions and Intergroups. Work done to attract young people into the Fellowship includes the introduction of new posters and videos, the recruitment and placement of YPLOs, the introduction of meetings at educational institutions and young people-focussed workshops.

Young people are actively involved in service disciplines across Groups, Intergroups, Regions and Sub-Committees and the committee encourages all liaison officers to make use of younger members when holding PI talks.

The committee recommends that the Young People's Sub Committee rolls out a roadshow across AA GB and contributes articles to AA Service News.

- c) Where Young People's conventions have been held, these have been well received by those participating. The inclusion of younger speakers at established conventions has highlighted the experience of getting sober earlier in life to the wider Fellowship.

The committee recommends that there is formal inclusion of the Young People's discipline on the agenda of the 75th Anniversary Event in 2022.

The committee recommends that all convention committees consider the inclusion of younger members when selecting speakers for their meetings.

Vote for - unanimous

- 2. **Would the Fellowship consider reverting back to the name General Service Representative as intended by Bill W and as described in the Concepts?**

Following feedback from the Fellowship, the committee compared the US and AA GB service structure as part of the discussion and found that the term “Group Service Representative” (GSR) is more descriptive of the AA GB “inverted triangle” structure where final authority lies with the Groups.

As such, the committee recommends that the term “Group Service Representative” be retained.

The committee would like to emphasise that the GSR is the vital link between the Group and the wider Fellowship as advised in the newly approved pamphlet “Now that I’m a GSR”.

Vote for: unanimous

Conference 2019 Recommendations

Committee No. 2

- 1. Would the Fellowship review our current “public image” as portrayed by our literature, with respect to our primary purpose, and identify any areas for improvement and make recommendations**

The Fellowship has identified the following issues concerning our current ‘public image’ with respect to our primary purpose as portrayed by our literature:

- a. our image lacks consistency / cohesion
- b. perceived negative image of an alcoholic
- c. insufficient focus on the diversity and geographical location of our target audience
- d. much of our written message is too ‘wordy’
- e. website navigation difficulties

The Committee also found that it is difficult to have a clear view of how the public and the professional community perceive the image of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The recommendation of Committee Two is therefore as follows:

- a. that the General Service Board should undertake a project to establish a better understanding of how our Fellowship is perceived by both the general public and the professional community
- b. that professional advice is sought to bring our literature and other communications materials in line with the following objectives:
 - i) clear, cohesive and attractive visual identity
 - ii) to enhance the positive image and benefits of Alcoholics Anonymous as a free resource (mutual help and recovery)
 - iii) to support the efforts of AA's public information service disciplines to connect with the professional community and the public at large
 - iv) to consider the appropriate presence of AA in all forms of digital media
 - v) to ensure that our literature and other communications materials are suitable for use in Continental European Region e.g. telephone helpline number and website information

The Committee's response was unanimous

2. Would the Fellowship review the AA GB pamphlet "Now that you've stopped: 15 Points" against our Twelve Step recovery programme and if any inconsistencies are found consider revising or withdrawing it from publication?

The Fellowship reviewed the AA GB pamphlet "Now that you've stopped - 15 points" against our 12 Step recovery programme and in line with the background information.

The Committee agreed that some points in the existing pamphlet have been found to be very useful to newcomers and therefore it should not be withdrawn. However, there are inconsistencies and we suggest the Literature Sub Committee revise the pamphlet whilst considering the following points:

- a. The focus of the pamphlet is for the newcomer. Its purpose is to share some coping methods for staying away from the first drink in early recovery
- b. Any revision should ensure that the message is consistent with the principles of our recovery programme as set out in the Big Book “Alcoholics Anonymous”

Based on the responses from the Fellowship, the Committee recommends that the pamphlet be revised to emphasise our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service.

The Committee’s response was approved unanimously.

Conference 2019 Recommendations

Committee No. 3

1. Will the Fellowship discuss the use of digital voting equipment during Conference?

The committee discussed the merits and issues of introducing digital voting equipment and shared feedback from the respective areas. Feedback from regions was varied and was based on the background information provided.

The committee further discussed the question and noted the following points:

- a. Concern whether the background information has been sufficiently researched, specifically in relation to
 - i. the indicative figure of £2,000
 - ii. whether manual voting is time consuming in relation to digital voting
- b. Expense – funds being spent on activities other than primary purpose work
- c. Whether equipment would be rented or purchased
- d. Which voting mechanisms (voting buttons / phone apps) we would use

- e. **Digital solution better protects the anonymity of voters**
- f. **Moving to a digital solution would mean ‘loss of Fellowship’ through teller service positions being removed.**

The committee agreed this response by:

15 for
0 against
1 abstention

2. Would the Fellowship share its experience and make recommendations as to updating existing literature in order to raise further awareness for internet safety and security when using social media, apps and other forms of electronic communications.

The experience of the Fellowship is that members’ anonymity and security has been breached through use of social media. Social media is not secure and information is trackable.

For example - an individual’s location can be identified through the ‘location services’ function available through mobile devices; administrative rights on group chat functions means information can be exported; anonymity can be breached through photos being published on social media platforms; algorithms can track personal information which, once posted on social media, and even if subsequently deleted, may be accessible.

Experience is that, due to rapid development of the internet and technology supporting social media, perhaps existing literature doesn’t reflect the current risks.

The existing ‘Hints & Suggestions on Internet Safety’ card remains relevant, but feedback is that it’s not a well known piece of literature. We recommend that it be:

- a. regularly reviewed and updated in line with developments on internet and new social media channels
- b. sent out to all groups with AA Service News.

The committee recommends that:

- a. When reviewing all existing literature and online content, the emerging risks in the use of social media are highlighted.
- b. Conference request that the General Service Board (GSB) distribute the USA AA 'Anonymity in the Digital Age' table card to all groups in the first instance to raise awareness and subsequently make it available to groups through the online shop.
- c. On the new website we introduce information on using the internet and social media safely.
- d. All groups to use existing literature on the use of social media to provide guidance and highlight dangers of social media in meetings.

Carried unanimously

3. Would the Fellowship consider having a Young People's National Convention?

The committee considered the feedback from the Fellowship. While there was minority support for a Young People's National Convention, the majority of feedback was opposed to it.

The feedback highlighted concerns about the legacy of unity; that AA should be inclusive.

Our structure already allows for Young People's conventions at intergroup and regional level. As a Fellowship, we should encourage and support all members to grow within the existing service structure. This could lead to a natural evolution over time where the Fellowship may introduce a Young People's National Convention.

The committee agreed this response by:

13 for
0 against
3 abstentions

Conference 2019 Recommendations

Committee No. 4

1. **Would the Fellowship consider and make recommendations on the common practice at Intergroup, Region and other service committee meetings to collect Tradition 7 contributions and how it affects the ‘power of the purse’?**

This question provoked lively discussion within the Fellowship.

The Committee reports that the practice of Tradition Seven within regions, intergroups, and other service committee meetings is common in some parts of the country but not universal.

The Committee finds that the practice is unnecessary for such meetings. However, they may practice Tradition Seven in accordance with their conscience. If Tradition Seven is practised, it is recommended that the funds collected be passed through the service structure.

The Committee recognises that the power of the purse (Concept VII) is a valuable mechanism of last resort in the event of dispute, but that the Tradition Seven funds collected at these meetings are typically insufficient to undermine this power.

The vote was unanimous.

2. **Would the Fellowship:**
 - a. **Share experience on how our Twelve Concepts for Service are currently being practiced at the group, intergroup, and region levels**
 - b. **Provide useful examples of the Concepts as applied in practice at the group**
 - c. **Recommend ways to further apply the Concepts throughout our Fellowship**

- a. The Committee reported the following experience of the practice of the Twelve Concepts for Service at group, intergroup, and region levels, amongst other examples:
 - i. Knowledge of the Concepts within the Fellowship was generally limited, with some exceptions.
 - ii. The principles contained within the Concepts are widely observed in practice at group level and throughout the structure, without the Concepts in question being referred to explicitly.
- b. The Committee reported the following examples, amongst others, of the Concepts as applied in practice at group level:

Concept I: the democratic principle reflected at groups and throughout the Fellowship.

Concept II: delegation of authority to the GSR with accountability back to the group.

Concept III: trusting our group members to fulfil their service responsibilities.

Concept IV: right of participation—actively enabling equal contribution by all members.

Concept X: authority and responsibility going hand in hand—the right to participate in decision-making is conferred by doing service.

Concept XI: rotation of officers is commonly observed.

Concept XII: discussion, vote, and wherever possible, substantial unanimity—no major decisions to be reached by simple majority.

- c. The Committee found that, given limited awareness of the Concepts, further application requires improved knowledge, through the following recommended means, amongst others:
 - i. Encouraging use of existing literature, particularly the *Twelve Concepts Checklist*, *The Twelve Concepts for Service in Great Britain*

Illustrated, and Section 6 of *The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain*.

- ii. Coverage in *Share*, *Roundabout*, *AA Service News*, and at conventions.
- iii. Active sponsorship into awareness and use of the Concepts as service tools.
- iv. The option of the three scrolls (Steps, Traditions, and Concepts) as a single purchase.
- v. General Service Board reviewing the possibility of producing an animated video on the Twelve Concepts for the AAGB Website.

The Committee also recommends the following ways of further applying the Concepts throughout our Fellowship:

- i. When decisions are being made, consider how the Twelve Concepts apply to the decision in question using the available literature.
- ii. Reference the Concepts in discussions and cite them in minutes.
- iii. Cite the Concepts in new and revised literature.

The vote was unanimous.

Conference 2019 Recommendations

Committee No. 5

1. **Would the Fellowship discuss the feasibility of publishing a special edition of the Big Book with the original text but with British members' stories at the back?**

After a lengthy discussion the Committee concluded that it was feasible but not desirable.

A strong feeling amongst the Committee was that the question was limited in its scope by the word feasibility, when the majority of group responses were concerned with the desirability of a special edition.

Some of the reasons given were:

- a. Cost implications.
- b. The definition of British was unclear as we live in a multicultural and multinational society.
- c. Who chooses which stories are included?
- d. Dilution of AA's primary message.

Minority View: A special edition of the Big Book with British stories was desirable.

Voting: The Committee result was carried unanimously.

2. Would the Fellowship consider making the AA Meeting Finder available in app form?

The Committee considered making the meeting finder available in app form and whilst there was initial overwhelming support fed back from the Fellowship for the proposal, after further discussion the following views emerged:

40% in favour. Some of the reasons given but not limited to the following are:

- a. Answering a request from the Fellowship.
- b. Available offline.
- c. Attracting young people into recovery.
- d. It would be Conference approved.
- e. It would adhere to Tradition 5.

40% were against. Some of the reasons given but not limited to the following are:

- a. Duplication of the current meeting finder therefore it is not needed.
- b. Minimal requirement for offline use.
- c. Unknown build and running costs.

- d. Affiliation to outside organisations e.g. Google Play and Apple Store may contravene Tradition 6.
- e. Requires additional regular updates to meetings list.
- f. Possible demise of the hard copy of the Where to Find in some Regions.

20% were undecided.

Recommendation: After lengthy discussion the Committee recommends that the Electronic Communications Sub Committee review making the AA Meeting Finder available offline in app form and explore the financial implications, reporting back to Conference 2020.

Voting: The Committee result was carried unanimously.

3. In order to help AA carry the message to the greatest number of Fellowship members, would Conference consider extending the remit of ECSC to allow the use of external links enabling those in service to download items such as the new Conference-approved videos?

The Committee voiced its concern that the use of the acronym ECSC (Electronic Communications Sub Committee) without further explanation caused confusion to the Fellowship.

The Committee recommends extending the remit to the Electronic Communications Sub Committee to allow the download of recently approved media files.

The Committee recommends that the Electronic Communications Sub Committee is permitted to seek Board approval for other appropriate external links provided clear disclaimers and warnings that the user is leaving the AA website are displayed.

The Committee noted that this changes the previous Conference decision of 2013. (reference background material).

Minority View: The Electronic Communications Sub Committee should assess reputational risk and trust that they would use this delegation of power appropriately.

Voting: Substantial unanimity.

Conference 2019 Recommendations

Committee No. 6

1. **Would the Fellowship share experience and make recommendations on how individual groups could include within its Group Conscience a strategy to deal with safeguarding issues should they arise?**

Inappropriate behaviour in its various forms is a problem and the consequences of not dealing with it can have a significant impact for the victims, the group and the Fellowship. Group safeguarding issues are primarily the responsibility of its group conscience.

The committee acknowledges the importance to groups of a safeguarding strategy. Many groups have already given this due consideration. Some are also now developing their own strategy as a result of this question being asked at Conference.

The committee heard experience of effective safeguarding strategies:

- a. Newcomers have been made aware of the group's safeguarding practice and whom to speak to regarding any safeguarding concerns.
- b. The personal conduct card is being read at the start of the meeting.
- c. Safeguarding issues have been brought to a group conscience.
- d. When immediate action was required 2 members within the group have made an approach to the perpetrator.
- e. Where the group has not had experienced members to deal with the issue an approach has been made to intergroup/region for support.
- f. Some groups have approached this effectively by using the guidance of the Structure Handbook (Section 5 Violence and Personal Conduct), other relevant literature and by following the Traditions.
- g. The relevant authorities were contacted when necessary.

The committee recommends consideration of the following:

- a. Workshops to enable groups to share experience and to develop and implement their own safeguarding strategies.
- b. Ask that the General Service Board collate relevant materials, together with feedback from the Fellowship, to produce a safeguarding guidelines document for the whole Fellowship, which will be presented at Conference, preferably in 2020, which groups may adopt.
- c. Ask that the board review the 'Sponsors' section within the 'Safeguarding Standards in AA Fellowship: June 2018' document prepared for the Charity Commission.

The committee unanimously agreed with the recommendation.

2. Would the Fellowship consider that all posters and videos put to Conference be looked at on an individual basis i.e. voting on each poster and or video separately. And that all posters and or videos are circulated and made more accessible to the Fellowship through the service structure.

The committee agrees that all posters and videos submitted to Conference be voted on an individual basis.

The committee suggests that proposed posters be watermarked "DRAFT", as per previous practice, and distributed with the Conference background material.

The committee recommends that proposed videos be presented in a separate room throughout Conference. This would enable Delegates to review and discuss with their Region's Conference Delegates prior to voting.

The committee lacks the expertise to determine whether videos can be practically and securely distributed prior to Conference approval and therefore asks that the Electronic Communications Sub Committee and General Service Board explore this further.

The committee unanimously agreed with the recommendation.

3. Review changes to The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain on the following pages:

Page 79	Treasurer
Page 82	Group Money
Page 90	Intergroup Money
Page 95	Region Money

The committee unanimously agrees with the proposed changes.

A Letter from Your Local Archivist

TO ALL GROUP MEMBERS – FROM YOUR LOCAL ARCHIVIST:

Lately a few of our members have sadly passed away. What happens to all their AA archive material (any old minutes, *Where to Finds*, books or anything pertaining to the Fellowship)? I know from experience. Recently one of our members, who I know had lots of stuff as he did a lot of service, passed away and all the archive material he had has been lost forever. I know that nearly every member has lots of stuff in drawers, old carrier bags, lying in garages or sheds, especially some of the older members. What happens to it when they sadly pass on? Is it just thrown out, especially by those who are left to settle their affairs and who have no knowledge of the Fellowship?

Can I therefore please ask you to let those left behind pass it back to the Fellowship? Or why not just pass it on to your local Archivist now as once it is put away in drawers, it is very rarely looked at? By doing so this would not only be helping the Archives but also helping yourself by tidying your affairs at the same time. If you do want to keep your material, please let your local Archivist see it so that they can photocopy anything which they may need and return the originals to you the members.

Many thanks for your help.

Yours in Fellowship,

Your Local Archivist

Report: March Service Workshop Coventry and Warwickshire Intergroup

2 March 2019 in Coventry

There were over 20 members present, with a significant number at their first service workshop. There were six areas of service covered, with time allocated for questions and responses.

We started with a presentation on the role of the Group Service Representative (GSR), with the presenter putting an emphasis on the importance of the role of the GSR as the first vital link in the chain of communication between the group and local and national services. The GSR is responsible for two-way communication between the group and Intergroup. The presenter stressed the importance of the GSR discussing service matters with their group and sharing the group's views/experience on service matters irrespective of what their personal views may be.

This was followed by a presentation on sponsorship, with the presenter stressing the responsibilities involved in sponsoring. He mentioned the important role of his sponsor in his recovery. He shared about the importance of having a sponsor and the need to talk to other members before deciding on a potential sponsor. He mentioned that an AA sponsor does not offer professional services such as counselling, medical, legal advice etc.

We then had a presentation on region covering the range of activities, including a focus on the importance of the sharing of information/service between intergroups and region. The pivotal link that region has between intergroups and Conference was also covered. The responsibility that our region has for AA Stands at National Exhibitions (i.e. Health & wellbeing at work at NEC, etc.) was mentioned.

A presentation on the role of the Intergroup Secretary was given by the present incumbent, starting with the structure of intergroup. She mentioned that Intergroup serves the groups and not vice versa. Among the responsibilities of the Intergroup Secretary mentioned were: Circulation of information from/to groups and GSO (i.e. *PI Service News*, etc.); Link between groups/intergroup/region/GSO; Provision of welcome pack for GSRs; Preparing meeting agendas (with Chair) and minute taking at meetings; Sending out minutes, including where required, AA CVs for new officers with names of nominator and seconder in time for them to be considered by groups.

There were two presentations on the weekly AA hospital talks that take place at two hospitals, one of which has a “formal” arrangement with our Intergroup (including DBS checks paid by the hospital) for AA visitors and the other more relaxed regime. Both presenters mentioned that the hospital teams are mindful of guidance given in the service handbook regarding the need to follow the required procedures at all time. The rotas are arranged so that one male and one female visit the hospitals weekly. All those involved in the talks are advised not to engage in discussions of a medical nature or to make any comment on outside agencies. Both speakers were aware of the responsibility entailed in this service, with all members involved being seen as representing the Fellowship as a whole. All are in the hospitals as visitors and should always be respectful towards staff members and thank them for allowing us to carry the AA message to those who wish to talk to us. The nursing staffs at both hospitals have been enthusiastic about our visits and very grateful for our consistent presence.

A breakdown of responsibilities involved in our yearly Mini-Convention was given by a member of the convention committee, which amongst other things covered the election/confirmation of committee members, schedule of two planning meetings and one post-convention meeting. Content on flyers and distribution of them. Our policy of looking for speakers from outside our area was mentioned. The yearly display of archives was touched on. Event held on nearest Saturday to Founders Day – 10 June.

Kevin M

Suggestions on *Where to Find* Listings

When the National Telephone Sub-Committee (NTSC) put out a request for contributions to the Telephone Service Newsletter it got me thinking of one particular experience I had with the *Where to Find* a few years ago. I remember when I was taking a turn on the Helpline, and I would call a contact in the *Where to Find* looking for somebody to take a 12th Step Call and I would be met with the response that they only put their number in as a Group contact. I would say “Read the Guidelines”, and they would come back and say “What Guidelines”? This obviously caused a lot of frustration for Responders as a lot of AA members were still unaware of their responsibilities regarding having their name and number in the *Where to Find*.

Although Note 2 in the *Where to Find* at that time thanked members for accepting 12th Step Calls, there was no explanation of what the responsibility of entering contact details in the *Where to Find* entailed.

At first I sent a letter to the Literature Sub Committee (LSC) and asked them if they would consider inserting the following paragraph from Page 76 of the *Structure Handbook* into the *Where to Find*. It states:

Members whose names appear in the *Where to Find*, should be prepared to take full responsibility as contacts and delegate where necessary. This implies that such a telephone number will be freely available within the Fellowship and that the contact is prepared at anytime to:

- **accept a call for help**
- **give information to a professional e.g. a GSO number**
- **guide a family member to the right source for help e.g. to Al-Anon**
- **speak to members of the Fellowship enquiring about meetings.**

After some time passed I had received no reply. But I did not give up. I then raised it as a question for Conference. GSO replied and told me that the Conference Steering Committee had referred the question directly to the LSC for consideration. Again sometime passed. But then out of the blue I received an email from the Trustee of the LSC, explaining that at the last Board meeting it was agreed that I had a valid point and Note 2 in the *Where to Find* would be replaced with the paragraph from page 76 of the *Structure Handbook*.

Plus it would also be included in the Group Registration/Amendment Form (“Pink Form”), both on the Website and on paper, so that the information was available from the beginning. Even today, we sometimes get this problem, but at least now we have a point of reference to direct members to.

Brian H

Scotia Region Telephone Liaison Officer (TLO)

Report: Service and Sponsorship Workshop in Vilnius, Lithuania With Participation from CER and the Lithuanian Fellowship

The quarterly assembly of the Continental European Region (CER) was held in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 2nd and 3rd March, 2019. After the assembly, on Sunday afternoon, members of CER joined the local Lithuanian AA Fellowship for a workshop on service and sponsorship, conducted in Lithuanian and English, with translation provided for both. Balys K, a local member and organiser of the workshop, provided the following report and kindly translated comments from Lithuanian members Julija, about the workshop, and Irma P, about the assembly.

I first found out about the CER when my fellow member told me that her home group had invited CER to have their quarterly assembly in Vilnius, Lithuania. It was interesting to know that all English speaking groups across Europe are somehow connected. Then last summer during the EURYPAA convention in Vilnius two CER members did a workshop about CER and AA general service structure in Great Britain. It was a great opportunity to find out more about how the region works and what kind of service it does. We are also very thankful in Lithuania that the CER donated some English AA literature to us. Up until now we could only buy English AA books online or when travelling, but now we also have the possibility to buy them for our English speaking group.

After meeting the two AA members who were speaking in the CER workshop at the July 2018 European Convention of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous (EURYPAA), I had the idea that as there would be a bigger group of English speaking AAs coming to the CER quarterly meeting in Vilnius in March 2019, we could try and arrange a workshop for our local AA members. I approached Matt, the CER Secretary at that time, and he kindly agreed to forward the idea to CER. When Stephen rotated in as Secretary, he was also very helpful organising the workshop. We formed a small committee for organising the workshop in Vilnius and our local Lithuanian region helped a lot.

One of the main topics of discussion for the past few years in Lithuanian AA has been sponsorship and different approaches to sponsorship. Another topic we wanted to discuss was general service, the Group Service Representative (GSR) and the AA General Service Conference. At first we asked CER if we could have one or two speakers for these topics We were very happy to hear that there would be ten to twenty CER members attending. CER had only one request: that our Lithuanian members would exchange their experience, strength and hope as well.

We arranged the workshop so that after announcing each topic we would draw a name from the hat and then one member would share his experience. After a few shares we would open the floor for questions and discussion. Our Lithuanian members were more quiet and timid, but several local AAs did share in the last hour of the workshop.

It is always very inspiring to be at these bigger international AA events. Whether it's an official general service meeting or a workshop, or just an AA get-together. Going to my home group every week is essential to my sobriety, but getting out of my daily routine brings more colour to life and to sobriety. It is very interesting to hear some never heard of AA jokes and slogans and to repeat the good old ones. It is very important to check up on my Step work and clear the dust from some rarely used AA tools. It is very refreshing to hear new information on how the message is being carried in different countries. And it always makes me very emotional when I get to feel that sense of AA Unity.

I think it was a very special Sunday afternoon for me and for all of our Lithuanian members who attended the workshop. Ninety-five AA members attended, eighteen CER representatives from across Europe and the rest from different parts of Lithuania.

I made a small survey after the event and the most mentioned words were communion and fellowship. I think we all felt it. I want to pass on a huge thank you from the Lithuanian AA to the CER members for being so generous and willing to share their experience, strength and hope with us.

Balys K, Vilnius, Lithuania

It was my first meeting of this type and it gave me a unique possibility to have a glimpse of the bigger picture of our Fellowship, to see what we have in common and how we differ. I am very grateful for the opportunity to hear the experience of the AA Great Britain CER representatives. Each of our guests could share their experience because we drew the names out of the hat and we were also able ask them questions. After participating in this event I feel I am a small part of this big and supporting community. It also feels very good to be of service in some small things as at the end of the day each of them helps me maintain my sobriety and adds up to our common welfare.

Julija, Vilnius, Lithuania

Apart from new practical things that I learnt about CER and the AA Great Britain structure, I also got a lot of inspiration from the enthusiasm of my fellow AA

members and their never expiring willingness to pay it back to the Fellowship by doing service, by sacrificing their time, and by travelling and participating. What impressed me most is that, during the CER assembly, the Chair stopped the meeting and did a Tenth Step after receiving some criticism. He made amends right away by giving more time for the questions the assembly felt needed to be discussed more thoroughly. I understood that the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts are not only theory—they are something I need to follow all the time and everywhere.

Irma P, Vilnius, Lithuania

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 (Forms) 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 Friday, 16th August 2019.

Young People's Sub Committee Vacancies

There are three vacancies on the Young People's Sub-committee of the General Service Board.

Experience of working as YPLO at either intergroup or region level would be an advantage, but is not essential.

The aim of the Young People's 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 Intergroup and Region levels.
- Support the development and sharing of good practice and review and update literature, media resources and guidelines (subject to approval).
- 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 sobriety at time of application;
- A strong grasp of AA service structure, Guidelines and Traditions;
- A personal service history at Intergroup and/or Region in this discipline;
- Good organisational and communication skills.

If you have any questions contact Amanda S or Sandi A (Trustees of the Young People's Sub Committee) via GSO.

Application forms are available from Region Secretaries, GSO or the AA GB website in the Document Library.

Amanda S and Sandi A, GSB Trustees for Young People

Survey Sub Committee Vacancies

There are two vacancies on the Survey Sub Committee of the General Service Board.

The General Service Conference 2017 determined that there should be a new Survey Sub Committee to be given the task of preparing and producing the 2020 Survey and all subsequent surveys.

The General Service Board (GSB) of Alcoholics Anonymous (GB) has been conducting a survey of the Fellowship every five years since 1972. The intention of these surveys is to learn more about the Fellowship in Great Britain so that the AA message can reach the still suffering alcoholic more effectively, thus helping us to fulfil our Primary Purpose in the most effective manner.

Additional reasons for conducting this survey include: estimating the number of people in the Fellowship; informing the GSB regarding the effective allocation of resources; and gaining information that could be useful in communication with Professionals.

There are currently two vacancies for members of the Fellowship to join the Survey Sub Committee.

It would be preferable for applicants to have experience in conducting surveys and in using computer software.

Applicants should also be able to work as part of a team and to liaise with professional advisers. They should have the expertise to consider previous surveys and draft additional questions to assist in improving and building on the data available. In addition they should be prepared to undertake ad hoc tasks as required from time to time.

As with all Sub Committees, a minimum of five years continuous sobriety is required. All applicants should have experience of service at Intergroup and Regional levels.

Experience as a Conference Delegate is also desirable. They should have gained a working knowledge of the *Service* and *Structure Handbooks* for AA GB in addition to the 12 Steps, the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts for World Service.

The successful candidate will be required to attend up to four meetings per year in York and will normally serve for a period of not more than four years.

The application must be endorsed by way of a covering letter from the Chair, Vice Chair or Secretary of the sponsoring intergroup or region.

Application forms are available from Region Secretaries, GSO or the AA GB website in the Document Library.

Mani Mehdikhani and Clive K, GSB Trustees for the Fellowship Survey

SHARE Assistant Editor Vacancy

The SHARE Magazine Sub Committee seeks to appoint an Assistant Editor of SHARE, AA's monthly magazine in England and Wales.

The Assistant Editor receives articles weekly by email. These are edited to correct spelling, punctuation and ensure the SHARE "House Style" is complied with, while, most importantly, maintaining the authors "voice". Each article is scored on suitability for publication and then sent on to the Editor together with any comments helping the Editor decide on publication. It is vital that good communication is maintained between the Assistant Editor and the Editor. A record of articles received needs to be kept.

Each month the printer sends a proof copy of the next magazine and the Assistant Editor needs to proof read the whole magazine within 48 hours, emailing the Editor with any amendments. An understanding of deadlines is vital for this position to guarantee SHARE is delivered to AA groups by the first week of the month.

The monthly production of SHARE magazine is a team effort; it is essential for the Assistant Editor to be an experienced team player with good experience of service within AA including service at Intergroup and, preferably, service at Region. 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.

Application forms are available from Region Secretaries, GSO or the AA GB website in the Document Library.

Maxine W, GSB Trustee for SHARE

SHARE Editorial Reader Vacancy

There is one vacancy for a SHARE Editorial Reader.

SHARE has a vacancy for an **editorial reader**. The job involves: reading and scoring all articles and letters submitted, providing a guide for suitability to publish, checking quotations, suggesting titles and supporting the team to develop SHARE magazine.

Most of the work is done electronically and requires working to deadlines. The position is for 4 years.

Requirements:

- Readers are required to attend meetings at GSO York 2-4 times per year.
- 5 years continuous sobriety.
- Experience at Intergroup and preferably Region.
- Good standard of English language and computer literacy.
- Familiarity with Conference approved literature
- A working knowledge of the Traditions, Concepts and the service structure of AA Great Britain.

The ability to work as part of a team is paramount.

Application forms are available from Region Secretaries, GSO or the AA GB website in the Document Library.

Maxine W, GSB Trustee for SHARE

Public Information (PI) Sub Committee Vacancies

There are two vacancies on the Public Information (PI) Sub Committee of the General Service Board.

The PI Sub Committee (PISC) is looking for two new members to join a committed team who are passionate about finding innovative ways of passing the message of recovery to the public, professionals and the still suffering alcoholic at a national, regional and group level.

Our primary functions are to:

- Create a consistent message externally that differentiates AA from other bodies
- Increase awareness of the AA programme with professionals and professional bodies; members of the media and journalists at national level
- Offer support and advice to Regional PI committees and liaison officers
- Provide leadership to the PI network through national projects
- Communicate effectively with the Fellowship
- Comply with the principles and guidelines of AA.
- Update the PI web site and other PI resources
- Publish the *PI Newsletter* and *Newsletter for Professionals*.

Role requirements are:

- The position is rotational after four years and requires a minimum of five years sobriety at the time of applying
- A sound knowledge of the service structure and Traditions of the Fellowship
- To provide guidance on media projects
- To work within PI Sub Committee Terms of Reference
- To attend up to four PI Sub Committee meetings and “teleconference” meetings.

Application forms are available from Region Secretaries, GSO or the AA GB website in the Document Library.

Peter F, GSB Trustee for Public Information

Probation Sub Committee Vacancy

There is one vacancy on the Probation Sub Committee of the General Service Board.

We have a vacancy on the Probation Sub Committee.

The post requires five years continuous sobriety and experience at intergroup and region as a minimum. The post is four years in duration and the applicant should be enthusiastic about probation/criminal justice service.

Basic Role Requirements:

- A working knowledge of the Traditions, Concepts and the AA GB service structure are essential.
- Willing to work within our Terms of Reference as presented on the AA GB website.
- Prepared to attend up to four meetings per year held at GSO York.
- Good organisational and communication skills along with the ability to produce written and verbal reports.
- The willingness to work as part of a team who are directly responsible to the General Service Board of AA.

Application forms are available from Region Secretaries, GSO or the AA GB website in the Document Library.

Maxine W, GSB Trustee for Probation and Criminal Justice

Literature Sub Committee Vacancies

There are up to three vacancies on the Literature Sub Committee of the General Service Board.

To enable the Literature Sub Committee of the General Service Board of AA GB to fulfil its role of:

- Considering needs for new literature
- Undertaking selective review of the content and appearance of the entire range of the literature published by the Fellowship in Great Britain
- Assessing literature for its suitability for revision or discontinuance.

Its members meet the following criteria:

- Have a minimum of five years continuous sobriety
- Have a sound understanding of the Twelve Steps
- Have a working knowledge of the AA structure, the Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts, obtained through service at various levels
- Show a commitment to service through personal experience at their home group, intergroup and/or region
- Have a sound understanding of the Conference process (which does not solely need to come from having attended Conference)

- Are endorsed by the AA structure, i.e., a serving officer of their intergroup or region. (The serving officer's endorsement letter is to be attached to the completed nomination form.)

Essential requirements:

- Be able to travel to York, UK, four times a year (Fridays and Saturdays)
- Have time between committee meetings to work on assigned projects, liaise with other committee members, provide feedback on projects other members are working on, and prepare for committee meetings by reading all relevant materials
- Be able to serve a four-year term
- Be familiar with the wide range of AA literature
- Have a sound command of English written grammar and style
- Be familiar with word processing and email programmes, as well as file sharing
- The ability to work collaboratively as a contributing member of the sub-committee. Most projects require members to work together in close collaboration, including in pairs or small groups, in the production of multiple drafts, with detailed editing, towards a final version.
- The ability to work towards set deadlines.

Desirable requirements:

- Have some experience in copy editing, design, document drafting or similar work
- Be familiar with social media and other communications platforms.

Application forms are available from Region Secretaries, GSO or the AA GB website in the Document Library.

Denise H, GSB Trustee for Literature

Employment Sub Committee Vacancies

There are two vacancies on the Employment Sub Committee of the General Service Board.

Our Primary Functions are:

1. Create a consistent message externally that differentiates AA from other bodies
2. Establish and maintain good relations with professionals and professional bodies at national level
3. Establish and maintain good relations with employers and companies at national level
4. Increase public and professional knowledge of the AA programme
5. Offer support to Regional and Intergroup Liaison Officers

6. Create and maintain an accurate system of record keeping for future officers and events
7. Communicate effectively with the Fellowship
8. Comply with the principles and guidelines of AA.

The Sub 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 Sub 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
- Sub-Committee applicants should be endorsed by the AA structure i.e. a serving officer in their intergroup or region. The serving officer's endorsement should be in the form of a letter attached to the completed nomination form.

Application forms are available from Region Secretaries, GSO or the AA GB website in the Document Library.

Mike P, GSB Trustee for Employment

Armed Services Sub Committee Vacancies

There are four vacancies on the Armed Services Sub Committee of the General Service Board.

Applicants who are serving members of the Armed Forces, or ex-Service men and women would be an advantage but not essential.

The aim of the Sub Committee is to raise awareness of Alcoholics Anonymous within the Armed Services community, both serving and ex-serving personnel, including their families.

Main aims are:

- Offer support and advice to regional Armed Services Liaison Officers.
- Help promote and encourage the appointment of Liaison Officers.
- Support the development and sharing of good practice and review and update literature, media resources and guidelines as necessary.
- Establish and maintain good relations with professionals and professional bodies connected with the Tri-Services.

It is suggested that applicants would fulfil the following criteria:

- A minimum of five years continuous sobriety at time of application
- A sound 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 are desirable. The ability to produce written and verbal reports would be an advantage, as well as relevant IT skills.

Armed Services Sub Committee members will normally serve for a period of four years. There is an expectation that Armed Services Sub Committee members normally attend two meetings a year in York and participate in possible “conference call” meeting(s) as and when required, giving notice to the GSB Trustee if unable to attend/participate.

Sub Committee applicants should be endorsed by the AA structure, i.e. a serving officer of their intergroup or region. The serving officer’s endorsement should be in the form of a letter attached to the completed nomination form.

Application forms are available from Region Secretaries, GSO or the AA GB website in the Document Library.

Mike P, GSB Trustee for Armed Services

Archives Sub Committee Vacancies

There are two vacancies on the Archives Sub Committee of the General Service Board.

The Archives Sub Committee works to preserve the history of the Fellowship as well as aiming to develop its network of Regional and Intergroup Archivists. The Sub-committee reports to the Board through the Trustee responsible for Archives.

Applicants should have a minimum of five years sobriety, will normally serve for a period of four years and should be familiar with Conference approved literature, *Alcoholics Anonymous, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, AA Service and Structure Handbooks* for Great Britain. 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 and/or experience of archival work would also be useful. The successful candidates would be required to attend up to four meetings a year in York.

Application forms are available from Region Secretaries, GSO or the AA GB website in the Document Library.

Clive K, GSB Trustee for Archives

Seventh Tradition

“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.”

- Taken from AA GB Conference approved pamphlet “The Pot”

“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

From Regions January – March 2019	Contributions £s
East of Scotland Region	£ 4.323,00
Eastern Region	£ 21.037,00
Glasgow Region	£ 20.030,00
Highlands & Islands Region	£ 300,00
London Region North	£ 1.516,00
London Region South	£ 14.314,00
Midlands Region	£ 5.751,00
North East Region	£ 9.650,00
North West Region	£ 1.767,00
Scotia Region	£ 15.769,00
South East Region	£ 340,00
South Midlands Region	£ 543,00
South West Region	£ 15.270,00
South West Scotland Region	£ 12.150,00
Wales & Borders Region	£ 1.134,00
Continental Europe Region	£ 1.161,00
Sundry & Unidentifiable receipts	£ 1.183,00

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 responsible 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.

In Memoriam

JANUARY – MARCH 2019

Ilkeston Group	£ 61,00	In memory of Lisa H G
Milnthope-Preston	£ 31,00	In memory of Florida Helen
New Forest Milford on Sea	£ 40,00	In memory of Michael McG
Lancaster Cathedral Thursday	£ 125,00	In memory of Jimmy
Warrington Winwick Group	£ 70,00	In memory of Brenda
Pontefract Step	£ 250,00	In memory of A M V
Haywards Heath Friday	£ 140,00	In memory of Ed K

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: editor.aasn@btconnect.com

GSO Website: [*www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk*](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

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 FORM** and if necessary update it. Thank you.