

FINAL REPORT

# ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

GREAT BRITAIN

## Thirty-Seventh General Service Conference

12-14 April 2002  
Goodricke College, University of York

# Our Common Welfare



General Service Office of AA  
PO Box 1, Stonebow House, Stonebow, York YO1 7NJ



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## Thirty-Seventh General Service Conference

### Our Common Welfare



## THIRTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2002

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# **DIGEST OF AGENDA**

## **Friday 12 April 2002**

Registration and Reception

Opening Session

Nominations - Conference Chairman 2003

Discussion Groups

Committee 1 : Youth/Young People in AA

Committee 2 : Why is it that many oldtimers are not involved in service?

Committee 3 : Our responsibility to communicate, who and how?

Committee 4 : After Conference what then?

Committee 5 : What is the basis of our unity?

Committee 6 : Why Service?

Committee Meetings Commence

## **Saturday 13 April 2002**

Committee Meetings Continue

General Service Board Report

## **Sunday 14 April 2002**

Presentation of Committee Reports

Election of Chairman for the Thirty-Eighth General Service Conference

General Service Board Report and Ratification of  
Board Members Elect

Closing Address

## FRIDAY 12 APRIL

The Thirty-Seventh General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain was held at Goodricke College, University of York, with the opening session on Friday afternoon, the Saturday night workshop and the final session on Sunday morning being held in the Lecture Theatre of the Biology Department.

On the Friday afternoon registration and distribution of folders was followed by a reception which, as usual, provided an ideal opportunity for delegates and observers to familiarise themselves with the venue, to renew friendships and to share with those delegates attending for the first time. Just prior to the opening of Conference delegates attended their respective committees for a welcome/introduction to their committee.

The Conference comprised 88 delegates from fifteen Regions; two delegates from Jersey Intergroup, one delegate each from 'Share' and 'Roundabout', 16 members of the General Service Board, Roger B - Conference Chairman, General Secretary and 9 members of staff. Also in attendance were observers from the following countries:

Belgium (Flemish Speaking)	(2)
Ireland	(2)

Total in attendance 123.

### **Opening of Conference by Roger B (Conference Chairman 2002)**

The first full session, which commenced at 4.30pm, was opened by the Conference Chairman, Roger B (Jersey intergroup) asked for a moment's silence and then called upon Brenda T (South Midlands Region) to read the Preamble.

Roger went on to welcome all present and invited the General Secretary, Jim K, to read the Twelve Traditions, the orientation containing the very last minute changes and the National Convention dates, which are as follows:

Scottish Convention	-	3 <sup>rd</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup>	May 2002
Northern Convention	-	28 <sup>th</sup> - 30 <sup>th</sup>	June 2002
Southern Convention	-	13 <sup>th</sup> - 15 <sup>th</sup>	September 2002

### **Conference Steering Committee Report**

(Victoria G (Continental European Region, Alternate Chairperson))

Victoria gave a brief history of Conference Steering Committees over the years, continued with reporting on the workings of this year's Conference Steering Committee including how questions were considered, topics chosen and the agenda set. Following which delegates were given the opportunity to ask question relating to this committee.

Roger continued with the presentation of his Keynote address:

“I have already expressed to you my feelings on having been given the inestimable privilege of serving this Conference as its Chairman. It is by far the greatest honour which has been bestowed upon me, and I accept it with all humility, especially when I consider the great respect I hold for the qualities and abilities of the other candidates who offered themselves. After the euphoria comes the hard work, and choosing the theme for the Conference is just the start. Having the opportunity to stand before you as I am now, and set the tone for the Conference is, whilst being another great honour, very daunting. I hope you will understand that I am neither a great teacher, nor great orator. I am your trusted servant.

**OUR COMMON WELFARE** - Why did I choose this as a theme? One of the things that happens to Conference Chairs, is that you become famous and people can discover your name, address phone number and e-mail address without too much difficulty! It also means that quite a lot of people get to know who you are, and they are likely to “have a word” at Conventions and the like. So my phone rang, my visits to some, conventions were interrupted by discussions on weighty matters, and my e-mail did whatever it is that e-mails do, there may well be an adjective for it. In short, I got lobbied. This was sort of expected, I had, as recommended, spoken to previous conference chairs, and so to a large extent I was expecting to feel more popular than usual. I have been lobbied by members from all over the place, as well as by intergroup and region officers. And I have been hugely grateful for all of it. I hope I have been able to encourage people to extend their service to AA by not only having opinions and expressing them, but also by putting themselves forward for service offices, including Conference, where they can actively contribute to the debate. All of these people have one thing in common, and that is that they all believe that what they are doing is for the betterment of AA, and that without their efforts the Fellowship would be the poorer. And, they are right! These people are, and you may note that I am talking in the present tense, as dedicated and as committed to the service of this Fellowship as are all of us here today. In fact some of them are here today!

We are all trusted servants of this Fellowship, if we were not, we would not be here. We have been selected to represent those who elected us to use our best endeavours to ensure that we continue to achieve our primary purpose, and in doing so, strengthen our own sobriety. One of the people who contacted me said that as our leaders are trusted servants, we follow those we trust. Now AA has many examples of clever wordplay, some of it quite amusing. I consider my friends comment to be dangerous. Let us remember that our leaders are elected by the conscience of whichever group is electing them, and we are all well aware that the decision of the group conscience is the expression of a Higher Power as clearly stated in our second tradition. Accepting that expression, even though I may not agree with it is what I have to do, it is sane sober behaviour. To say that I did not vote for you, therefore I will not follow you, even though the groups conscience has elected you, is divisive and destructive.

Our leaders are trusted servants, and, in this case, we are those leaders. We are not messengers. If the job of the Conference delegate could be done by a messenger then there would be no need for Conference. We could do all of this by post and thereby save a lot of time and money. In our recommended reading you will have come across Section 4 of the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain. It is about leadership and there is no need to go over the whole thing again. An extract succinctly covers the whole thing for me “Our leaders do not drive by mandate, they lead by example” in effect we, the leaders in this case, are being told to act for the Fellowship, but not to boss it. This is the right of decision given to us in Concept III, which also includes the sentence “There will always be plenty of ultimate authority to correct inefficiency, ineffectiveness or abuse”, and “there should always be charity for occasional mistakes” please, and “then trust must be our watchword, otherwise we shall wind up leaderless.” The final paragraph includes the phrase “Therefore we cannot do less than trust our leaders in service”, and we are those leaders. It came as a bit of a surprise to me to find out that the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous did not need me to protect it, that it was in fact in the hands of a power greater than myself, and my disappearance would make not the slightest difference. The Fellowship exists by the grace of God, and there is no need for me to jump up and down and shout to put across my opinion. It will be just the same if I state my truth quietly and clearly, as it says somewhere.

The General Service Conference of Great Britain is the unifying forum of the Fellowship in the geographical area it serves. It is the collective conscience of the Fellowship in Great Britain, and it carries responsibility for the three legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service delegated to it, albeit indirectly, by our co-founders, Bill W and Dr Bob. Again, the details of these facts are clearly described in our literature, particularly in AA Comes of Age which was written by people who were present when these momentous events took place. We are the contact, liaison, facilitator, whatever you want to call it, of unity. We bring together the Fellowship generally, the General Service Board with its alcoholic and non-alcoholic members, the General Service Office, groups, intergroups and regions. We are entirely inclusive and we act on behalf of the Fellowship. We have the will, the power and the authority, and most of all my friends, it is our duty, our duty to act as a united entity. To paraphrase a great man, your Fellowship expects that each person will do their duty, and I know that we will, and that this weekend will be fruitful.

There will be moments of controversy, contention even, perhaps heated debate at times. There will also be compassion, understanding, compromise, and most of all love. There will be something for everyone, even if you have only come to find fault, there will be something for you. If you have come to find love and compassion, caring, and consideration, then there will be an abundance for you. Ultimately, there will be decision rising out of indecision and direction rising out of confusion. Most of all, there will be unity, unity under our message, and our common welfare.

In The Twelve Concepts for World Service Bill compares political evolution with that of the Fellowship. He says:

“Throughout the entire world today we are witnessing the breakdown of “group conscience” It has always been the hope of democratic nations that their citizens would always be enlightened enough, moral enough, and responsible enough to manage their own affairs through chosen representatives. But in many self-governing countries we are now seeing the inroads of ignorance, apathy, and power seeking upon democratic systems. Their spiritual resources of right purpose and collective intelligence are waning. Consequently many a land has become so helpless that the only answer is dictatorship”.

He went on, by comparing the world situations with those of AA

“Happily for us there seems to be little prospect of such a calamity in AA. The life of each individual and each group is built around our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. We very well know that the penalty for extensive disobedience to these principals is death for the individual and dissolution for the group.”

Over this weekend we are going to be given some figures, analysed data, regarding the development of our Fellowship. This information may surprise you, it certainly surprised me. It deals with the growth of the Fellowship over a number of years and predicts how that growth is likely to change over the next few years. What if the Fellowship stops growing, or even starts to shrink? Then what for our common welfare, on which personal recovery depends. And whose job is it to unite the Fellowship and to lead it in passing it's message to the still suffering alcoholic? Whose job is it to unite and lead the Fellowship and to set an example of how we should behave towards each other so that newcomers and not so newcomers will stick around? And whose job is it to unite and lead the Fellowship by holding out the hand that will help, support and nourish those within the Fellowship who need it? It is our job, yours and mine, individually and collectively.

Let me share a relevant experience with you. Over the weekend of the final meeting of the Conference Steering Committee held here in York in early February, some of the committee had to stay over on the Saturday night after business was concluded. I was one of those people and we all decided we would go to an AA meeting, and the nearest one we could find was in a nearby town, it was about half an hour by train. When we arrived at Nearby Town Saturday Night meeting we announced that we were visiting from York, and that we had been in York organizing the General Service Conference. I was asked to share my experience strength and hope at the meeting which I was very happy to do, and just before the meeting started the lady who was going to open the meeting said to me “excuse my ignorance, but what is the General Service Conference?”. Now it is all very well saying that this lady should read AA News or all the other excuses we can think of. If Nearby Town has not heard of us then we have a lot of work to do. It seems that we have trouble carrying our message amongst ourselves, it is therefore less of a surprise to find that our message passing skills could do with some brushing up.

Keynote is a wonderful word, it refers to expounding the central principle or setting the tone for a conference. Unity is another wonderful word. It is one of those words which

cannot be vague, it either is or it is not. It is an axiom. So, how important is unity? Well, if we are not united we are divided, which is, as they say, a sobering thought.

There are many poets, songwriters and raconteurs who will tell you that in order to achieve unity we must follow them. There are many great leaders past and present who have said the same. We of Alcoholics Anonymous have the chance to be different. I do not say to you, unite behind me, or unite behind my committee or the Board. I urge us all to unite behind our message, the message of recovery from the disease of alcoholism which is so precious that money cannot buy it. We know better than anyone how vital that message is.

I am responsible

When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.

And

This we owe to AA's future  
To place our common welfare first  
To keep our fellowship united  
For on AA unity depend our lives  
And the lives of those to come".

## **NOMINATIONS FOR CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN 2003**

The under-mentioned were proposed and seconded for the Chairman of the Thirty-Eighth General Service Conference 2003:

Bob McG	-	Rounabout
Chris A	-	Eastern Region
Victoria G	-	Continental European Region
Winnie C	-	Glasgow Region

The nominees signified their willingness to serve and each gave a brief summary of their AA service background. The formal election, by way of a modified Third Legacy procedure as recommended by Conference 1998, to take place at the final session of Conference.

The first full session of Conference ended at 5.45pm with Roger asking everyone to join him in saying the Serenity Prayer.

## Discussion Groups

At 7.30pm delegates attended the Discussion Groups where the following topics were covered:

- |                 |   |  |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Committee No. 1 | - | Youth/Young People in AA                                   |
| Committee No. 2 | - | Why is it that many oldtimers are not involved in service? |
| Committee No. 3 | - | Our responsibility to communicate, who and how?            |
| Committee No. 4 | - | After Conference - what then?                              |
| Committee No. 5 | - | What is the basis of our unity?                            |
| Committee No. 6 | - | Why service?   |

At 9pm, after a brief break, Committee meetings commenced, closing at 10pm and re-convening at 9am on Saturday.

# SATURDAY 13 APRIL

Roger opened the second full session of Conference with a moment's silence, asked Susan (Jersey Intergroup) to read the Preamble and then called upon Mick W (Chairman, GSB) to present the General Service Board Report.

## **General Service Board Report**

Mick warmly welcomed all delegates, especially those attending for the first time and bade thanks and farewell to those in their final year at Conference.

The order of the Board presentations to be:

Mick W	-	Conduct Guideline
Mike D	-	Finance
Dora M	-	Electronic Communications
Stan F	-	0845 Telephone Report
John A	-	Health and Disabled
Clifford S	-	Literature
Ian	-	Analysis of Survey

## **Conduct Guideline**

(Mick W)

As you will be aware Conference 2000 was presented with a discussion document and that assembly asked that it be widely distributed throughout the Fellowship. The motion was un-opposed. At Conference 2001 a draft Guideline was presented and endorsed by 87% of that assembly. This point was emphasized strongly by the 2001 Conference Chairman, Oliver G, so there could be no misunderstanding or misreporting.

Following the valued contributions from the Fellowship a draft Guideline was drawn together for presentation to Conference 2002. The final draft was circulated throughout the Fellowship in October/November 2001.

The resolution of Conference 2001 was that this document, subject to minor alterations, be presented to, and accepted by, this Conference – Conference 2002. I now present this document in accordance with the wishes of Conference 2001 and this year's Conference Steering Committee, October meeting 2001 for your acceptance.

**After thorough discussion General Service Conference approved by majority vote the Guideline as presented herewith.**



### **Introduction**

**The final report of the General Service Conference 1979 (Committee 1, Attraction by the Individual) contained the following statement:**

**"The importance of the individual member in drawing the suffering alcoholic to the way of recovery was stressed. By guarding his/her own behaviour, morals, dress, ethics, tolerance, sympathy, compassion and understanding of all human beings [a member] carries the message or leaves a slur on the name of AA."**

**In recent decades, society has become progressively more concerned with the rights of the individual. The awareness that that concern has generated has been reflected in recent changes in the law. The Protection Against Harassment Act, 1997 and the Human Rights Act, 1998 are specific examples. Some say that we are moving towards a "litigation culture".**

**The potential damage to AA's unity and reputation arising from the wrongful/criminal acts of individual members and, of course, the associated publicity is of natural concern to the Fellowship.**

### **History and Background**

A continuing function of the General Service Board as custodian of the Traditions is to inform and guide the Fellowship as a whole.

Every AA Group makes an open invitation to any member of the public having a desire to stop drinking to attend its meetings. In terms of AA Tradition, it is the responsibility of all of us to ensure that the carrying of the message, whether to prospective or new or vulnerable or established members, is done honestly and decently. We also understand that our Twelve Traditions including that of Group autonomy does not place Groups or members above the law, and that when individuals act injuriously to others they are legally accountable. This will, of course, be generally understood in that our First Tradition reminds us that all members and Groups have a responsibility in respect to the common welfare and protection of the individual member.

Every AA Group needs to recognise and accept responsibility for dealing with bad behaviour and thereby protect the overall good name of AA as a respected Fellowship.

### **AA and Society**

While Alcoholics Anonymous seeks to maintain its singleness of purpose, and its simple principles, society is growing increasingly diverse and complex. Indeed, AA can sometimes seem like a refuge, set apart from the harsh realities of 21st century living.

The healthy AA Group is largely self-regulating, operating within the Twelve Traditions and the unity of all our AA principles that are founded in love, with our Steps, Traditions, Concepts and Legacies underpinning our recovery.

By regular examination of Group Conscience, the healthy Group enjoys good behaviour at both individual and Group level.

## About Behaviour

Bullying, harassment and offensive behaviour are negative and unacceptable forms of discrimination that are in conflict with the AA Traditions and our way of life in recovery. Any such behaviour needs to be taken seriously, and sober AA members must deal with it as it arises. Whether or not the behaviour is intended to be hurtful is irrelevant, the important point is that it is offensive. AA members, within their Groups, need to recognise the power of their behaviour in their relationships with other members of the Fellowship and with potential newcomers. Members in recovery will understand that the behaviour we choose to adopt influences others. Recognising that we can control our behaviour, we have a responsibility to set a good example.

Members have a right to expect that they will be reasonably safe at a Group meeting. It is the responsibility of the Group holding the meeting, through its members and leaders, to ensure that no member or visitor is subjected to or experiences bullying, harassment or offensive behaviour of any kind.

What can be done about Unacceptable Behaviour?

### 1 Personal Action

- a) It is often sufficient for the recipient to raise the difficulty with the person creating the problem by pointing out that his/her conduct is offensive. Anyone has the right to challenge unacceptable behaviour of any other members of AA at any stage, and request that the behaviour stop.
- b) Support and help - it should be possible for the recipient to prepare for this conversation with the help of his/her sponsor or another member if she/he wishes. Should the recipient find it too difficult or embarrassing to raise the issue with the person creating the problem, it may be

appropriate for the recipient to have the conversation with his/her sponsor or another member present.

### 2 Group Action

- a) When a personal approach fails or the recipient feels that this method is inappropriate, the recipient should approach the Group chairperson, or other trusted servant for help and advice feeling secure in the belief that any complaint of bullying or harassment will be considered as a serious matter.
- b) The alleged offender should be told of the complaint as soon as possible
- c) If the situation is sufficiently serious or complex, it may be necessary to involve members from outside the Group.

### 3 At Group Meetings

- a) Members should be encouraged to choose a Home Group in which true bonds of fellowship will lessen the need to fear behaviour they might find offensive.
- b) Group Conscience meetings should be held regularly (many Groups hold them every 3 months at, say, the first meeting in March, June, September and December) plus additional conscience meetings as they become necessary.
- c) Where unacceptable behaviour (verbal abuse, discriminatory jokes, disparaging remarks etc) occurs in a Group situation, members in recovery have a responsibility to ask for the offending behaviour to stop.
- d) An explanation of the dangers of unacceptable behaviour in AA should be given at the time, or at the end of the meeting.
- e) Offensive behaviour should not be condoned. Failure to challenge and stop inappropriate behaviour gives the offender permission to repeat the offensive behaviour and encourages others to follow suit.

## Suggestions at a personal level

- ☐ Treat other people with respect and dignity
- ☐ Recognise that newcomers to the Fellowship may be severely damaged 'victims'
- ☐ Don't travel alone with newcomers of the opposite sex
- ☐ As a newcomer, don't travel alone with an existing member of the opposite sex.
- ☐ Don't 12th Step or home visit newcomers or potential newcomers alone.
- ☐ When making home visits, leave details of where you are going with a trusted friend or relative. Make sure this person knows when to expect you to return.
- ☐ Be aware of the dangers of opposite gender Sponsorship: man to man and woman to woman Sponsorship is strongly recommended.
- ☐ Never respond to offensive behaviour in a like manner.
- ☐ Should someone speak to you about your unacceptable behaviour, listen to his or her criticism, think about what they have said and react appropriately. You may even at a later stage wish to thank them for pointing it out to you!

## Suggestions at Group level

- ☐ Your Group may wish to discuss and agree, at a Group Conscience meeting, upon a 'clear statement' to display, for example:

### **This Group does not tolerate:**

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Discriminatory behaviour

### **Personal Conduct Matters!**

**Bad Language often offends....  
But its absence never does**

## Finance

(Mike D)

We finished the last financial year on a reasonably healthy note, but reasonable is all, we are in no position to be complacent about finances – it wasn't that good.

The shortened version of the summary accounts which you have in your Annual Reports reflect the last financial year to the end of September. Those reports were presented to our Auditors, the Charities Commission, they were adopted by the General Service Board and they are now lodged with Companies House.

The full Audited Accounts were presented at the meeting of Regional Treasurers in December of last year, they were fully discussed and at length.

Your Region and Intergroup Treasurers received all the Accounts and Reports up to date so are fully informed as to matters financial. If you have used your Treasurers as they should be used, then there is no reason why you shouldn't be as fully up to date as they are.

What is heartening is the fact that I have had considerably less enquiries and telephone calls over the last year from, should we say, general members of the Fellowship and I have had more enquiries and had more discussions from the Fellowship's Treasurers themselves, so perhaps, at last, the penny is dropping, members are using the Treasurers as they should.

One thing that does often come up at the meeting of the Regional Treasurers and that is that Treasurers are not used to their best at all – they are often thought of as people who just sign the cheques and that's the finish of it. It's not, they are the financial life-line of this whole Fellowship. As I have said, I find it heartening that they were better contacted.

Now to get down to it, our contributions to date, I'm afraid, are down a full 4% on the same period last year which isn't brilliant. Cashflow, which if you remember, we had considerable trouble with two years ago, when we got 50% or even 60% of the whole income for the year in the last four months. That might have been fine at the end of the year and the figures might look OK, but we had quite a job getting things done with a cashflow that was that variable. We made all the right noises at the Treasurers' Meetings about it and things improved last year. Cashflow figures were fairly even last year but, I'm afraid to report that in the last three or four months they have started their old antics again. They are up and down, peaks and troughs, and I hope that that is not the trend of where we are going again. It does, as I say, make things very difficult.

Another good thing, the General Service Board Sub-Committees have all stayed within their budgets and no financial constraints have needed to be imposed.

Our financial reserve policy, which as you know, should be twelve months operating

expenditure based on the projected next year's expenditure, stands at the moment at 84% of what it should be. Whilst that is not cause for any particular worry, I would have liked it to have been up to the actual correct amount during my term, but it wasn't to be, you win some you lose some.

Our Auditors were, as usual, delighted with our Management Accountant, with her submissions and procedures. They were accepted with that wonderful phrase which Auditors know 'Accepted without Qualification'. We all thank her very much indeed.

I was just thinking then about the auditing business. I don't really know why we need auditors. The Charities Commission call our membership our beneficiaries. So with something like 34,000 beneficiaries, all with a say in financial matters, through the 15 Regional financial wizards and the 143 Intergroup financial sorcerers. Then there are around 3,400 group financial sorcerer's apprentices, not forgetting our own personal tolerance testers, and we all know of one. The ones that think the whole army is out of step with the exception of themselves. Other than that, a Finance Committee of the General Service Board, then 25 sceptical Board Members and their boss, not forgetting the GSO mafia with Jim K and Jean Webb who make absolutely sure that I only touch paper and not money! That pretty much ensures that the Treasurers don't embark on a life of crime. So as I say, who needs official Auditors, Charity Commission, Inland Revenue and VAT men.

I usually mention my old friend, 'frozen face', you have heard me talk about him before, that is one of our Auditors, we meet him at pre-Audit meetings and post-Audit meetings and I have told you of him and his love affair with the SORP document which is the Statement of Recommended Practice on Accounting and Reporting by Charities. Well, I have moaned and moaned about him over the years, as you know, but actually he has done us a favour because he has more or less prepared us for what the Charities Commission dumped on us last November, which is another set of procedures dealing with risk assessment, risk mitigation and risk management. He has been pestering us that long that we were almost up to speed, anyway - he did us a favour.

I gave SORP presentations to the Executive Committee, to the Finance Committee and to the full Board, but you have no need to worry about me giving another one here, it only applies to the General Service Office and to the General Service Board. The rest of the Fellowship can do what it has always done – pretty much what it likes!

There is no way I could have done this job without the continued efforts of the General Service Office Staff and their consideration towards me at all times. The assistance, guidance and friendship that I have had from Jean Webb, Jim K, GSO staff and the Chairman of the Board it would have been a total impossibility for me to have done this job without them and for that I offer them my unreserved thanks.

At this point I would like to introduce my successor, Paul F, who is taking over from me.

Being on the Board has been interesting to say the least, excellent in parts and I'd like to thank the Fellowship and the Board for giving me the chance to serve in this position.

## **Electronic Communications**

(Dora M)

### **Introduction:**

It is my privilege and honor to serve the Fellowship as the Convener of the Electronic Communications Sub-committee of the General Service Board. I have some experience with electronic communications, which helps in this position, but I do not claim to be an expert. Fortunately the committee does have experts on board to help us with the technicalities about which, we lay people know little.

First, I would like to say that I am very excited about the directions in which we are looking and working. Second, I would like to thank the people who are working with me to make our endeavors the best possible for the Fellowship and most of all, for the still sick and suffering alcoholic. Above all, when we consider electronic communications, we must keep our Primary Purpose in mind. Third, I would like to say that it is our express desire to deliver ideas and products that are soundly steeped in the Traditions of our Fellowship. The committee has met once since being reconvened this year and many suggestions have come forth. We will address them all in future meetings and present to you with what we believe will be the best practices for the Fellowship.

### **What Does the Future Hold for Electronic Communications in AA?**

The answer is quite simply: more than we could ever have dreamed just five years ago, even three years ago. I will try to put forth some suggestions to four simple questions.

1. How will we "carry the message?"
2. How can E-communications enable us to do our service work?
3. What will be "Best Practices?"
4. What will we need?

### **How Can We "Carry the Message"**

The first thing that comes to mind is our own website, which has been very productive since its inception. There are plans underway for revisions and updates to the existing website. We may be able to put a modified version of the "Where to Find" on the website. There is a possibility of a second website dedicated to service work. These are considerations so far—nothing concrete.

Other means of Electronic communications can be better utilized to carry the message. For instance, we can send out bulk faxes of press releases or other information to our

friends in the media and helping professions. We can develop a list server for professionals and students with information about Alcoholics Anonymous.

### **How Can E-communications Enable us to do our Service Work?**

1. We can build a list server for our service workers. A list server is a way of mass mailing of information to subscribers with a common interest or task.
2. We can look into using teleconferencing where face-to-face meetings may not be cost effective or unnecessary.
3. We can create e-mail lists and contacts specific to certain areas of service, for instance different liaison positions in Regions or Intergroups.
4. We can create Electronic Bulletin Boards where questions can be discussed and monitored.
5. We can develop the means to order literature on-line through electronic commerce.
6. We can create CD's of service materials available through our literature orders.

### **What will be “Best Practices”**

The committee will be preparing several documents for the Fellowship. First,

1. Hints and suggestions for E-mail. What are the best ways to use it? How do we protect our service workers and their anonymity?
2. Hints and suggestions for local, intergroup, and region websites. How do we stick to the traditions when building a website. How do we keep within the copyright laws?
3. Hints and suggestions on ‘SPAM’ or unsolicited mail. How do we protect the Fellowship and its integrity and reputation?
4. Publication of “Best Websites”. As websites in our Fellowship are mushrooming, the committee will visit each one as it comes to our attention, and publish a list of those sites that are developed following the Traditions and good practices.

### **What will we need?**

As all of us doing service work in the Fellowship can attest to, anything done well in the Fellowship needs

1. Time. We are all volunteers, most of whom are fully employed as well. Many of us have families at home waiting for us after this conference and all service meetings. So, of necessity, all new endeavors take time: time to research, time to execute, time to assess, and time to adjust to new methods of doing things. We intend to take as much time as necessary to ensure that the job is well thought out and done.

2. Careful planning. There is no necessity for rushing. I have always heard that “haste makes waste” and we don’t want to waste our time or money on endeavors that are not productive. We want to research what is the best technology for the job we want done.
3. Resources. We have many talented people in the Fellowship in the area of Technology and Electronic Communications. Several are volunteering their time already on our committee. We want to solicit more people who might be willing to work on certain projects. Some projects will require very little in the way of money, others will cost the Fellowship for the travel of the people involved, plus the additional technology that may be required. This will all be proposed carefully in budgets for the committee.

## **Summary**

Finally, it is the desire of this committee that we bring you ideas and products that will be useful in carrying the message to our fellow alcoholics. Please be patient while we plan and take the time to make them quality instruments.

## **0845 Telephone Report**

(Stan F)

I have three items to lay before you tonight. The first concerns the 0845 Committee. Those of you who have been here long enough will remember that Conference 2000 passed a recommendation in Committee 2, Question 2 to the effect that the 0845 Committee should, amongst other things, be formed on a geographical basis. Lack of experience, expertise, suitability, etc. it suggested would be overcome by ‘cross training’, whatever that might be.

My predecessor, Sam W, brought this recommendation back to Conference last year and reported that it had been found to be unworkable. A resolution was passed to the effect that this should be brought back to you again this year with more suggestions - this is all a matter of record.

I now have to tell you that we have been pre-empted. The 0845 Committee met in October 2001 and had a full discussion on this matter. The members finally came to the conclusion that the purpose for which the Committee had been formed had been achieved - we have a national service in place. The Committee felt, therefore, that it should now disband and - most importantly - be replaced by a sub-committee of the Board which would look after the future well-being of the Telephone Service in the same way as other sub-committees look after other services. In effect the 0845 Sub-Committee disbanded itself and it is no longer working.

The decision to disband was unanimous, it was taken at a subsequent meeting of our Regional Telephone Liaison Officers and received whole-hearted approval and it was

endorsed by TLOs, again unanimously. The outcome of both meetings has been reported to the General Service Board which has also endorsed it and I now have a resolution to put before you and I ask for your approval.

The resolution is as follows:

***“The 0845 Committee, having completed the task set by Conference 1996, should now be discontinued and the General Service Board should be asked to form a sub-committee to look after the ongoing needs of the National Telephone Service.***

**After discussion this resolution, which was proposed and seconded, was passed with a majority vote.**

I would like to mention, briefly, two points about this. The Committee will be formed by selection, and I am sure some of you are anxious to know how it is going to be done. It will be treated in exactly the same way as any other sub-committee of the Board. In other words, the Board member responsible for the particular service will invite members, but this will not be done just like that, it will be done through consultation with other Board members, with people who have served previously on the old 0845 Committee. It will be done in consultation with the people who are known to have a deep knowledge of the telephone system as it works. What I am looking for, and what we need in the Fellowship, is people with experience, expertise and suitability, people who will give us an efficient, effective and economic telephone service and maintain the high standard we have had in the past. Not where people come from.

At this point I think it is only right that we should record our thanks to the people who have worked on this Committee since 1996 and people who set the path for them before that date. They have done a tremendous job, they have spent hours travelling around the country, spent hours in meeting sessions and they have achieved what we set out for them which is what Conference asked them to do. We have a National Telephone Service to be proud of.

I would now like to pass on to the next item - the Telephone Census. This was arranged in conjunction with the Regional Telephone Liaison Officers at York in October. We chose the date 4<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> February and every Region, or every telephone service because there are occasions when Regions spill over borders as far as the service is concerned, and we also have Intergroups, of course, which run telephone services. Every telephone working point was asked to record all the calls that came in under five categories.

I had hoped that tonight you would have been given details of the final outcome of this but, unfortunately, three replies are still awaited. I feel it is a waste of time doing any in depth analysis on an incomplete survey and what I am giving you are the figures to date:

1.	First Contacts	671	24%
2.	Repeats	491	18%
3.	Family, friends (inc. Al-Anon)	428	15%
4.	Members' enquiries	840	33%
5.	Others	270	10%
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		2700	100%

From this you will see item 1 is in respect of first contacts from suffering alcoholics with the helpline. The second one is follow up contacts or repeats. The third one is from families or friends of alcoholics, very often Al-Anon. The fourth one is from existing members' enquiries and the fifth one, is others, which is a convenient cover for the likes of PI enquiries, enquiries from professionals, other agencies, media, etc.

Other than recording these figures and showing the percentages I don't want to go any further until we are at the stage where we can do an analysis on a full survey. When all the results are in, these will be looked at and sent out to all Telephone Liaison Officers. Also, with the approval of the Editor of AA News there will be an article put out for circulation round the whole Fellowship.

The next item - contacts with British Telecom and this is going to be something that is tackled very early on by the new committee.

Unfortunately, BT have had a re-organisation but the outcome is not the best for us. We have lost our personal accounts managers, we have lost our personal contacts with the technicians so we form the end of the queue, some enquiries may take many months to resolve. I have had very few things coming back to me over the last three or four months and I am in the process of contacting the Director for Sales who wrote to me a couple of months ago with no telephone number, no address or e-mail contact. It is clear that he/she does not wish to be contacted but this will be followed up, and followed up vigorously by your new Committee.

Finally, I want to make a brief comment on a recent example I have had of the way the telephone service has fostered communications between Regions. Historically, our Scottish Regions have always spoken to each other, but recently I had the privilege of attending a meeting in London with no less than four Regional TLOs and a number of Intergroup TLOs, all present to solve a common problem on boundaries. The meeting was a great success, the boundaries agreed and the changes were actually carried out at the end of March. The meeting was such a success that it is going to be repeated on a six-monthly basis so that problems can be anticipated and plans made so that the best possible service is available for the alcoholic who needs help.

## **Health and Disabled**

(John A)

### **Committee Four, Question One Conference 2001**

Recommended that A.A. in Great Britain undertakes to do a needs assessment with respect to services for the disabled within A.A., with the remit that this be done by the Health Liaison Officers at local level. After our National Committee meeting the Board Member responsible for Health would give a progress report to Conference 2002. With this in mind I asked via the July Board Meeting that the reports be forwarded to myself from the Health Liaison Officers.

By the general lack of response and the discussions I have had with Health Liaison Officers I have to conclude that at this time there is no need for a needs assessment. While there are no special A.A. members, there are many with special needs and to this end I feel we have made great progress.

For those carrying the message there are videos with sign language for the deaf and hard of hearing, Braille and large print as well as audio tapes for the blind and visually impaired. Wheelchair access is now advertised in the 'Where to Find' and some groups have loop systems at their meetings. The Conference recommendation, and rightly so, said that all members of A.A. participate in all three legacies to make sure that they can fulfil their primary purpose and participate in all levels of our service structure,

I, myself, have found many with disabilities in my journey in sobriety - those who are wheelchair bound doing telephone duty, those with speech or hearing impediments have done invaluable work with P.I., their work on mail shots, minute copying and working with mailing lists.

At the Health Liaison Officers meeting held at York on the 2/3/02 it was agreed that the draft copy of the Hints and Suggestions prepared by the Literature Committee be adopted, as the first step towards meeting the need's assessment by Conference recommendation 2001, with one addition to the venue section which is 'does your meeting have a smoking policy'.

It is my view with the work done this year that those with disabilities are working at every level of our service structure, including our present Board, and that the Conference Committee in saying that it is of vital importance that those with disabilities let their needs be known were correct, and like every area of service it starts at group level and through good sponsorship they can be directed to the area of service that best suits their needs.

## **Literature**

**(Clifford S)**

The General Service Conference asked the Literature Committee for continuing selective review of the content and appearance of the entire range of literature published by the Fellowship in Great Britain, with assessing its suitability for revision or discontinuance and to consider the needs for new literature. The General Service Board and the General Service Conference require regular progress reports.

I joined this committee as Chairman only in June of last year, and we did wonder how much work we were going to be able to do because three of the members of the committee had resigned for various reasons mostly personal and one as a matter of rotation.

Nevertheless, despite early misgivings, that we would be unable to offer much completed work to Conference this year, there has been I believe a creditable outcome to the year's work. Some of the work that we had been tasked to do more properly involved technical and professional input, especially as new methods of printing, recording and storage relating to the electronic revolution which has emerged in the last few years, we felt, had gone beyond our capabilities.

We found the best way to approach the task this year was to confine our work to revising, updating and redrafting current Guidelines, introducing new Guidelines and Hints and Suggestions which had been requested by Conference and revising, updating and amending the Group Handbook. Where work had already started with new literature, this was brought to its proper conclusion and an example is the pamphlet 'The Pot', which you have had in advance, which replaces the US pamphlet on Money and Spirituality. This is not a revision of the US version - I am sure you understand that we cannot revise copyright publications of AA World Service literature.

The following documents were presented and approved by Conference in the following formats:



## GUIDELINES for A.A. in Great Britain

From the General Service Office, P.O. Box 1, Stonebow House, Stonebow, York YO1 7NJ

### A.A. TELEPHONE SERVICES

Revised April 2002 No. 6

Since June 2000, a national Telephone Service has operated throughout England, Scotland and Wales (with the exception of a few small areas) under the telephone number

**0845 769 7555**

This number links the caller to the nearest Helpline where a local responder will take incoming enquiries and, where appropriate, pass details of the request for help on to a member who has been appointed, under local arrangements, to carry out Twelve Step work.

Wherever a Helpline exists, the organising body has a set of instructions, codes or systems and it is right that these should exist. The purpose of this Guideline is simply to draw the attention of such organisers to recommendations that may enhance their operation and provide safeguards to callers and members alike.

**Members should note that the provision of Helplines is intended for the use of the still suffering alcoholic and for initial contact by professionals.**

### STRUCTURE

Initial responsibility for Helplines begins with Intergroups but in some cases, it has been agreed, on local conscience, to devolve this responsibility to Regions or even to groups of Regions.

### FINANCE

Our Traditions of autonomy and self-support apply to all Helplines.

Operation of the 0845 system means that there are two sets of Telephone accounts rendered for each Helpline number in operation - one for the "local" number and one composite account for the Region in which the "local" numbers are based. It has been agreed generally that "local" numbers (usually Intergroups) will continue to take responsibility for their account while Region will meet payment for the 0845 portion of the account. In order to finance this, it is recommended that Intergroups will, after meeting their own financial commitments, send any surplus funds to Regions which will, in turn, send surpluses to GSO.

### TELEPHONE SERVICE AND TWELFTH STEP WORK

The key purpose of telephone services is to put the suffering alcoholic in touch with an individual contact or local A.A. Group. It is the responsibility of the members of the local Group to carry out the necessary Twelfth Step work, to provide a welcome to the new members and to share their experience, strength and hope with them and to set them on the road to recovery.

A telephone service requires support and participation by the Groups in its area, not only in a financial sense, but also in every aspect of its existence. It is important to ensure that this support is maintained e.g. by keeping the 12 Step contact list up to date.

Common sense with a regard to A.A. principles is of much more help in maintaining a successful telephone service than is the establishment of administrative procedure. However, certain suggestions can be made from our experience of telephone services to date:

- Members participating in telephone service should have a period of continuous sobriety of approximately 12 months.
- The member answering the call should remember the first time caller is nervous, so the response should be positive and sympathetic.
- The Responder needs to keep the call brief and confined to taking the necessary particulars, so that time is kept free for other callers.
- Details of 'phone numbers of A.A. members ready and willing to carry out Twelfth Step work should be to hand and generally listed on an area basis for speed of reference. Experience has shown that it is vital to link "male to male" and "female to female" when placing Twelfth Step calls. This has been emphasised several times by Conference recommendations. When making Twelfth Step visits, it is strongly recommended also that more than one person should make such visits, again observing the gender match.
- A list of Group meetings should be available for immediate reference.
- Intergroup and Regional officers' phone numbers, together with the RSO, and GSO phone numbers, should also be readily available so that calls from the media or other agencies can be referred to the correct source. Other agencies and Al-Anon contact numbers should also be available.
- A large number of calls are received from employers, doctors, social workers, newspapers, radio and TV as well as alcoholics and their families. These PI calls should be passed to the relevant Service Officer when they are of local interest. Calls from national press, radio or television must be referred to the General Service Office in York so that a co-ordinated response can be made.
- **Great care should be taken regarding the CONFIDENTIALITY OF MEMBERS' PHONE NUMBERS. The information as to how an enquirer can be contacted is taken and passed on to the member. It then becomes the responsibility of that member to take whatever action is appropriate.**

**There are many local guidelines and procedures used throughout the Telephone Service. Please check with your local Intergroup for information on how the Telephone Service operates in your area.**



## GUIDELINES for A.A. in Great Britain

From the General Service Office, P.O. Box 1, Stonebow House, Stonebow, York YO1 7NJ

### PUBLIC INFORMATION AND CO-OPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY

Revised 2002 No. 7

**Public Information and Cooperation with the Professional Community is the Third Legacy of Service in action. Along with Recovery and Unity we have inherited this Legacy from the co-founders of Alcoholics Anonymous, and one of the co-founders, Bill W., has this to say:**

*"To reach more alcoholics, understanding of A.A. and public goodwill toward A.A. must go on growing everywhere. We need to be on still better terms with medicine, religions, employers, government, courts, prisons, mental hospitals, and all enterprises in the alcoholism field.*

**Concept XI, Twelve Concepts For World Service**

**AA needs effective communication with professional communities that are involved with the alcoholic.**

It is often said that the best example of Alcoholics Anonymous is its own sober members. This is never more true than when a sober AA member is facing a group of professional people. We are the face of the Fellowship. For this reason it is important that members carrying out PICPC work should have solid continuous sobriety, have regular attendance at Home Group meetings, be acquainted with the service structure, and understand the Twelve Traditions.

Experience has shown that Intergroup is the body that can most usefully discuss PICPC matters and from which one or more PICPC Committees can be formed. Depending on the geography of an Intergroup area and the number of large towns or cities within it, an Intergroup may form a Committee within itself, or with the initiative of local members, form two or more Committees. Local PICPC Committees are usually informal with at least one member attending Intergroup. **PICPC is a cooperative venture and there is no place in it for single isolated acts.** In this way, communication with other parts of Intergroup is maintained and the sharing of service experience is possible. Before going ahead with the

formation of a local PICPC Committee in a large town or urban area, it is as well to check Health Authority and Social Service boundaries so that the work of one Committee does not overlap another. Here again, a discussion at Intergroup will be most valuable. The service structure of AA allows for a Regional PICPC Officer.

Internal communications are complete when each Intergroup in a Region shares its PICPC experience at a Regional meeting.

#### **What is PICPC?**

PICPC work is sometimes referred to as "Carrying the message to the general public." CPC work in particular is "Carrying the message to professionals." Giving talks to doctors, nurses, social workers, probation officers, police, magistrates, community groups, business groups, schools and colleges, trade and professional unions and associations and others, falls under the heading of CPC.

Open and public meetings, exhibitions, displays, posters, newspapers, magazines, local radio, and others come under the heading of PI.

In practice, there is an inevitable overlap and experience has shown that it is better to discuss all aspects of PICPC in one

Committee. The drawing of formal boundaries for service work should be avoided and positive steps should be taken to keep the Hospital, Prison / Probation, and all other Liaison Officers informed of all PICPC developments, with the Liaison Officers becoming members of the Committee wherever possible.

### **Contacting Professionals**

The first contact with a professional body is by letter. The letter should be typewritten on headed Intergroup paper, giving a name and address to which a reply can be sent. The letter should be addressed to the most senior person in the organisation. The objectives of the letter are threefold and should be stated clearly:

- to establish formal contact between the organisation and AA
- to ask for an appointment with a representative of the organisation and
- to provide speakers to give talks about AA

It is important to involve as many members as possible in giving talks. The PICPC Committee acts as a clearing-house for talks and these should be distributed to local AA members, always remembering that those selected are ambassadors of the Fellowship.

Ideally, two members should share a talk - a man and a woman where possible. It is advisable to invite newer members of AA, who are young in sobriety, to sit in the audience and listen. Sponsors may wish to invite sponsees, and in the practice of sponsoring into service, the attendance at a talk provides a valuable learning experience. On some occasions, it may be convenient to play an AA Conference - approved video when giving the talk. This will depend on the time allotted and the type of audience. It is unlikely that a video by itself will carry the message and it is felt that members should never miss an opportunity of sharing their personal experience of recovery.

AA published literature and an AA telephone number should be given out at a talk and a copy of the Big Book displayed as at an AA meeting. Some members prefer to give the talk in the form of an AA meeting using the Preamble and parts of the Big Book. Although it is helpful if a member can give a short history of AA, it should always be remembered that all that is required is to share one's experience.

**We are not able to participate in discussions on alcoholism and treatment methods, other agencies or organisations or medications and drugs. We are simply there to carry the message of AA.**

**Personal Identification** Conference 1998 decided:

In today's society, there is an ever-increasing requirement for security and personal identification. It is important that members of Alcoholics Anonymous remember that they are guests and co-operate fully.

Members of the Fellowship visiting outside agencies should conform to their procedures remembering that each agency, whether prison, hospital, school or other, is autonomous.

Notification of the arrangements made for visits or talks including, where appropriate, the sponsoring PICPC Committee should provide the names of members attending to the host organisation.

The host may require personal identification such as a letter from Intergroup or Region, passport, ID card, driving licence, or letter invitation from the host.

It is important that Alcoholics Anonymous does not become invisible - some loss of anonymity is inherent in PICPC work.

### **PICPC Reading**

- AA Service Handbook of GB
- AA. Comes of Age



## GUIDELINES for A.A. in Great Britain

From the General Service Office, P.O. Box 1, Stonebow House, Stonebow, York YO1 7NJ

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A.A. AND AL-ANON

Revised 2002 No. 14

**The Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and the Al-Anon Family Groups have a unique relationship. They are naturally drawn together by their close family ties. Yet the Twelve Traditions, the General Service Boards, and the General Service Conferences of both Fellowships suggest that each functions more effectively if it remains separate, co-operating but not affiliating with the other.**

**Each Fellowship has always had its own General Service Board, General Service Office, Conference, publishing company and World Directory. Each has established its own policies and maintained its own services. This separate functioning has served both AA and Al-Anon Family Groups well. As a matter of fact, AA's policy of 'co-operation but not affiliation' was established as long ago as the early 1950's, and both Al-Anon and AA recognised at that time the importance of maintaining separate Fellowships.**

**However, from time to time, questions come to both AA and Al-Anon General Service Offices indicating confusion as to how AA and Al-Anon may best co-operate in the area of Groups, Intergroups or central services and Conventions and get-togethers. Trustees of AA and members of Al-Anon have met and discussed these questions. The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain approved the following suggested guidelines.**

#### SEPARATE GROUPS

Since the primary purpose of the AA Group is to help the sick alcoholic to recover, and the primary purpose of the Al-Anon Family Groups is to help the Al-Anon to live with herself or himself as well as with the alcoholic, they should not be combined but remain separate Groups. This should enable both Fellowships to function within their Twelve Traditions and to carry their message more effectively. Thus, the Group name, the officers, and the meetings should be either AA or Al-Anon but not both. Naturally, all are welcome at open meetings of both AA and Al-Anon Groups. The word 'family' is part of the Al-Anon Fellowship's incorporated name, and should not be used in an AA Group's name.

#### COMBINED INTERGROUP SERVICES

Both experience and the Twelve Traditions of AA and Al-Anon suggest that each Fellowship will function more effectively if each retains separate committees, separate staff and facilities for handling telephone and personal calls as well as separate telephone answering services, Intergroup activities, bulletins, meeting lists and all types of Twelfth Step services. Members who are involved in a service committee or office should be AA members, if it is an AA facility, and Al-Anon members if it is an Al-Anon facility.

Where AA telephone services exist, only the National Contact Number for Al-Anon should be made available for partners, family, or involved friends enquiring. AA members on telephone duty should never attempt to deal with calls which are matters connected with the family and which should rightly be dealt with by Al-Anon.

## **CONVENTIONS AND MINI-CONVENTIONS**

In accordance with the Twelve Traditions, a Convention would be either AA or Al-Anon - not both. However, most AA Convention Committees invite Al-Anon to participate by planning their own programme, and the Committee arranges for facilities for the Al-Anon meetings. If AA invites Al-Anon to participate in this manner, all expenses involved in the Al-Anon meetings are paid from the funds of the AA Convention Committee.

Since Conventions and Mini-Conventions are primarily for AA members and do not seek to attract the general public, the meetings will no doubt be either "Closed" or "Open" and reference should be made to Guideline No.1. At an "Open" meeting, the Chair and speaker are, of course, all members of AA but in any subsequent discussion, participation by non-members is welcome. Al-Anon have produced their own Guideline for co-operation with AA at national Conventions or local mini-Conventions.

If an Al-Anon member is invited to attend an AA Convention Committee meeting, it should be remembered that Al-Anon have agreed procedures for dealing with such requests. Requests should therefore be directed to the Al-Anon District involved and not in the first instance to an individual Al-Anon member.

## **CONVENTION FINANCE**

In accordance with the self-support Traditions of both Fellowships and to abide by the concept of 'co-operation but not affiliation', it is suggested that AA should not make gifts or contributions to Al-Anon from the financial profits of a Convention. By the same token, AA should not accept contributions from Al-Anon. Any collections at Al-Anon meetings belong to Al-Anon funds.

## **ALATEEN**

These groups are part of Al-Anon Family Groups, and their formation and servicing is not an AA function or responsibility.

It was the desire of the Fifteenth General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain to place on record and confirm the relationship between Alcoholics Anonymous and the Al-Anon Family Groups and to acknowledge A.A.'s debt of gratitude to the Al-Anon Family Groups, and it unanimously approved the following resolutions:

"It is RESOLVED that Alcoholics Anonymous recognises the special relationship which it enjoys with the Al-Anon Family Groups, a separate but similar Fellowship. It is further RESOLVED that Alcoholics Anonymous recognises the great contribution which Al-Anon Family Groups have made, and continue to make in assisting the families of alcoholics everywhere."



## GUIDELINES for A.A. in Great Britain

From the General Service Office, P.O. Box 1, Stonebow House, Stonebow, York YO1 7NJ

### CONVENTIONS

Revised April 2002 No. 15

A Convention offers the opportunity for a number of members to gather and share their experience, strength and hope.

**“Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers” (Tradition 5)**

Separate social events may add to the enjoyment of a convention.

The following guideline suggests the basis for all conventions and a convention planning checklist can be found at Annex A.

### ORGANISATION

- The decision to hold a convention ought to be made by the group conscience of the appropriate Intergroup or Region (the Sponsoring Body).
- A committee should be elected for the purpose of planning, organising and running the event. The convention committee should have overall responsibility and be accountable to the Sponsoring Body for financial and all other matters. They should bear in mind the need for conventions to be self-supporting.
- Intergroups and Regions are advised to appoint a chairperson or convenor. At National level the convention committee elects its own chairperson and convenor from experienced members. A local General Service Board member serves in an ex officio capacity on the committee of each national convention, i.e. Northern, Scottish, Southern and Welsh (GSB suggests that Trustees attend at least two meetings as agreed with the committee).
- For all convention trusted servants the normal principle of rotation should apply.
- Children and babies. Conference recommends that accompanied children should not be excluded from conventions, organisers must therefore be mindful of relevant health and safety issues.

### FINANCE

- In all financial matters Tradition 7 should be taken into account:

**“EVERY A.A. GROUP OUGHT TO BE FULLY SELF-SUPPORTING, DECLINING OUTSIDE CONTRIBUTIONS”**

- Where it is felt necessary to charge a registration fee, the organising committee should have the final decision. At the planning stage it is sensible to cover all projected costs through the registration fee.
- The “Pot” is traditionally AA money.
- Funding of the convention. The Sponsoring Body should provide the committee with sufficient funds to start the convention organisation. Registration fee income should be used thereafter. If an excess of income is finally generated, the Sponsoring Body may wish to consider retaining a prudent reserve to fund the next convention.

### CHAIRPERSON AND SPEAKERS

- Usually conventions invite the chairperson and speakers to participate well in advance. When planning the programme, Committees may wish to consider the various types of AA meetings outlined in Guideline

No. 1 (Group Meetings). In addition to closed meetings, committees may also consider shared platforms thus inviting speakers from our sister organisations Al-Anon and Alateen.

- The Chairperson should bring Tradition 11 to the attention of the audience at all meetings by reading the AA ANONYMITY ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR MEETINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

- There may be some here who are not familiar with our tradition of personal anonymity at the public level:
- **“OUR PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY IS BASED ON ATTRACTION RATHER THAN PROMOTION; WE NEED ALWAYS MAINTAIN PERSONAL ANONYMITY AT THE LEVEL OF PRESS, RADIO AND FILMS”**
- Thus, we respectfully ask that no AA speaker - or indeed, any AA member - be identified by full name or photograph in published or broadcast reports or our meetings.
- The assurance of anonymity is essential in our effort to help other problem drinkers who may wish to share our recovery program with us. And our Tradition of anonymity reminds us that AA principles come before personalities.

## LITERATURE

- It is advised the practises and procedures relating to sale or return from GSO be adhered to. Ideally orders should be received at GSO at least one calendar month before the event. Final settlement be effected within the same period after the event, after which the return element in the arrangement will be considered null and void. Stock returned damaged or any surplus not returned will be charged for.

- The Sponsoring Body be responsible for the ordering and final payment of any sale

or return literature for conventions.

- Literature stalls should be attractive and well stocked with AA published literature.

- Where the Group Conscience or the Sponsoring Body allows the sale of non AA published literature, separate facilities should be provided. AA money should not be used to purchase this material

## AUDIO TAPES AT CONVENTIONS

- The decision to tape the convention should be made by the Sponsoring Body and the organising committee.

- It can be a difficult, expensive and time-consuming task. A high level of expertise is required.

- Legal and financial issues need to be considered.

- Advance publicity should indicate the convention will be taped.

- Chairpersons, speakers and reserves must be advised individually of the taping well in advance of the convention.

- A thorough briefing of each speaker is vital to ensure that no inadvertent breach of anyone's anonymity occurs.

- The Sponsoring Body and the organising committee will have the right to edit tapes.

- No video taping should take place.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

- It is strongly recommended that all applicable Health and Safety regulations be adhered to.

## CATERING ARRANGEMENTS

- Sometimes convention organisers elect an individual and form a sub committee to deal with catering.

- Some conventions invite participants to 'bring their own lunch'.
- Where food or drinks are supplied, costings should be supplied and prices displayed.
- Where outside caterers are used, it would be prudent to establish provisional costs.

## **ANNEX A - CHECK LIST FOR CONVENTION COMMITTEES**

The following list is not comprehensive but it is intended to be an aid to cover all conventions from mini one day to National:

- Validate all decisions against the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts of AA.
- Gain support of Sponsoring Body and establish a regular system for reporting back.
- Define broad principles, venue, cost and theme.
- Investigate the facilities available at the venue.
- Set target dates for task completion and try to stick to them.
- Set budget business plan and theme.
- Take into account all health and safety implications, fire precautions, the security of monies and books overnight.
- Transport details.
- Publicity.
- Decide upon the role of Al-Anon and Alateen.
- Agree a detailed plan on:
  - AA meetings and workshops
  - Entertainment
  - Al-Anon and Alateen participation
  - Printing and publicity fliers, possible to include a location map
  - Convention details to SHARE and/or Roundabout
  - Raffle tickets in accordance with the gaming laws
  - Convention design - banners, top table arrangements
  - Registration area
  - Accommodation and refreshments
  - POT how and when it is to be passed. Security of POT
  - Literature stands
  - Archives and security
  - Raffle ticket sales and display of prices with security
  - Information stand
  - Technical systems-communication, light and sound systems
  - Access and facilities for the disabled

## ANNEX B- TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONVENTION COMMITTEES

*Convention Committees are formed by intergroups and regions to plan and execute conventions in accordance with the recommendations of the General Service Conference. The following Terms of Reference may be adapted for use by all Convention Committees and should be read in conjunction with this Guideline 15.*

1. Convention Committees comprise delegates elected from the Regions or Intergroups that sponsor the Convention. Their objective is to prepare and provide for a Convention to promote our primary purpose within an agreed budget and according to Tradition Seven.

2. These Committees are accountable to the sponsoring Intergroups and Regions, which exercise their responsibility for the Convention by the provision of elected delegates for the Committee and through the regular reporting back of these, at their assemblies.

3. An appropriate number of members are elected as delegates to serve for three years on the Committee. The Committee elects its officers from these to serve for a suitable term, ensuring the principle of rotation.

4. Committee officers rotating out of service are ineligible for re-election during the next three years. Other delegates rotating out are ineligible for re-election during the next twelve months.

5. Delegates who miss two consecutive meetings without adequate explanation, or who miss three consecutive meetings, are deemed to have resigned.

6. The frequency and location of Committee meetings is at the discretion of the Committee, but costs and cost effectiveness should be borne in mind. All expenses should be approved.

7. Dates proposed by the Committee for the Conventions ought to be checked for possible clashes with other significant AA events.

8. All meetings should be reported, and copies of minutes sent to the secretaries of the sponsoring bodies and to GSO.

9. All Conventions should be run in accordance with this Guideline (No 15) on Conventions



## GUIDELINES for A.A. in Great Britain

From the General Service Office, P.O. Box 1, Stonebow House, Stonebow, York YO1 7NJ

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**VIOLENCE**

**APRIL 2002**

**No. 16**

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**Conference 2000 determined that: "Violence in any form is not acceptable at any level of the structure; our members have the right to feel secure and safe in meetings and whilst going about A.A. service/business".**

"For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority -a loving God as he may express himself in our Group Conscience". (Tradition 2 long form)

"Each Alcoholics Anonymous Group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose -that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers" (Tradition 5 long form)

*The aim of this Guideline* is to provide a framework for AA groups seeking to tackle incidents of violence, including all forms of harassment, within meetings. People may be harassed in various ways, for example because of their ethnic origin, nationality, age, stature, appearance etc.

It is important to note that one need not be the direct object of such behaviour to feel harassed. A person witnessing such an event may deem it necessary to take appropriate action to stop such behaviour.

### ***What can be done?***

Some groups through their Consciences have found it helpful to agree contingency plans to deal with violence, including harassment.

In dealing with any incidents the response must be measured and reasonable, given all the circumstances. Members should not place themselves in danger physically, nor open to legal repercussions.

If an incident cannot be defused quickly and safely, members and groups should consider involving appropriate agencies -e.g. police.

## The AA money tree

Alcoholics Anonymous is like a tree. The groups are the roots, nourishing the whole structure. Money is donated by members at this level.

After paying out basic expenses - rent, refreshments, AA literature - and keeping a prudent reserve for needs in the immediate future, a contribution is sent through the structure, via intergroup and region, to the General Service Office.

With over three thousand local groups to service, GSO is responsible for producing literature, publications like AA News, archives, service meetings, conferences, and meetings of the General Service Board. GSO aims to keep a prudent reserve, based on one year's running costs.

A tree cannot have healthy leaves, blossom, and fruit, without strong branches to support them.

Every level of AA work is important, and we neglect them at our peril.

## Some questions & answers about AA finances

### **Q: What is a prudent reserve?**

**A:** For a group, it is usually a month's running expenses. It is dangerous to keep more than this, as it can lead to arguments about money harming the group.

### **Q: Should we send small sums, or save up until we can send a large amount?**

**A:** Little and often, is better than holding large sums in the group pot

### **Q: How much can an individual donate to AA?**

**A:** No more than £6000 as a direct contribution in any one year. You can leave £6000 as a one off bequest in your will

### **Q: Why should my group send money through the Service Structure?**

**A:** It pays for local services like telephone lines.



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

National Helpline Number 0845 769 7555

# The Pot

## - where AA money and spirituality mix

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

Above copyright © 1947 by The A.A., Grapevine, Inc.

### Tradition 7 (long form)

The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

## Where does the money go?

At the opening of every AA meeting we go to, we read the preamble: *"here are no dues or fees for AA membership."* Then at the end we pass the pot round. Sometimes the treasurer reminds us how much we used to spend on booze, and urges us to put in a bit more cash.

### *Isn't there a contradiction here?*

If this is a spiritual programme, why all this talk about money?

Well, at a very basic level, it goes to pay room hire, and for the coffee and tea we drink, as we socialise before and after each meeting.

It also pays to carry the message to the still-suffering alcoholic, for our telephone service, for the printing of meeting lists, for literature, and other services, like contacts with prisons, hospitals, probation and social services offices.

### *This is where money and spirituality mix.*

## We support ourselves by our own contributions

***"Both these principles we understand: that AA wants no charity, that we support our own services."*** - Bill W., *Language of the Heart*, p.350

It wasn't always that way. When AA started, the pioneers had grandiose plans. They would open up AA hospitals, pay special workers to go round 12th-stepping the still suffering, publishing books, pamphlets, organising massive ad campaigns to carry the message.

All this would take money. So they went around with the begging bowl. The millionaire, John D. Rockefeller, lent them a thousand dollars. Most of it was spent on the first edition of *The Big Book*.

But when the money ran out, they realised that not all donors would give money without strings.

***Ever since then, AA has been totally self-supporting.***

# **HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUPS TO CONSIDER REGARDING THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE DISABLED IN AA SERVICE.**

*In the final report from the 36<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference, it was stated that it is of the utmost importance for all AA members to be able to participate in all three legacies of AA. The legacy of Service must be fully available for everyone, whether or not they have special needs.*

## **VENUE**

Is there wheelchair access in your meeting place?  
Are fire exits easily reached?  
Are there adequate toilets with wheelchair access?  
Is there nearby disabled parking?  
Is the heating adequate?  
Is accessibility clearly marked in the WTF?  
Is there an induction loop? Is it entered in the WTF?  
Are speakers positioned so that deaf persons can see their lips easily?  
Are there members willing to assist with transport to and from group venue, and the carrying of books, papers etc?  
Would you consider changing your venue if it restricts the membership?  
Have you reviewed the group's policy on smoking in the meeting place?

## **LITERATURE**

Do you provide literature in large print?  
Do you provide literature in Braille?  
Do you provide tapes of the main AA literature?  
Have you got a library of AA shares on Tape?  
Do you have members willing to explain literature to slow learners?  
Do you make a special effort to ensure that slow learners and physically handicapped members are offered sponsorship?

## **SERVICE LEGACY**

Do you encourage disabled members to take part in Service?  
Do you ensure that your Intergroup and Region also offer service opportunities to the disabled? Are their venues accessible and without stairs?  
Do you consider service opportunities for people with learning difficulties?  
Do you ensure that disabled members have the opportunity to go on 12-step calls with other members?

## **SHARING SOLUTIONS**

**You may have experience of having solved special problems with members in your group. Do you make a point of passing this on to your local groups and to the Fellowship as a whole?**

**These questions are just a starting point for your Group Conscience to consider.**

## **Amendment to Handbook.**

### **Section 11-5: to be added as the final paragraph**

#### **“The Term of Service of GSB Officers**

In order to maintain a high standard of officer service, particularly with reference to continuity and effectiveness, the tradition of sponsorship needs to be employed with officers-elect.

To ensure that this will be possible, an adjustment was made in May 2001 to the maximum length of Trusteeship for executive officers: Chair to be reduced to a maximum of 6 years, Vice-Chair and Treasurer to be extended to a Maximum of 6 years.

This allows the GSB to consider Trustees for appointment to the executive in their 3rd and 4th years, and this provides the retiring officers an opportunity to give a structured introduction and sponsorship to officers-elect. As before, no Trustee can serve more than 4 years on the Executive Committee”.

#### **Analysis of Survey**

(Ian H)

#### **The Growth of the Fellowship of AA in Great Britain over the past 50 years and foreseen trends for the future**

Surveys of the Fellowship in Great Britain have been carried out at more or less regular five-year intervals since 1972, being in 1972, 1978, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1997. It is planned that the next survey will be conducted during the summer of 2002. Each survey has been prepared in a uniform manner so as to permit meaningful comparisons and interpretations of observed trends in the data chosen to characterise the shape of the Fellowship with aim *‘through learning more about ourselves as we are today - and where we have come from and seem to be going to - the intent is that we will be able to plan to carry the message more effectively to more people in the future.’*

The surveys provide information on the following aspects:

- the gender ratio of members
- the age distribution of AA members
- the number of continuous years spent in AA
- the years of sobriety in each age group
- the frequency of attendance at meetings
- the ratio of members addicted to drugs other than alcohol.

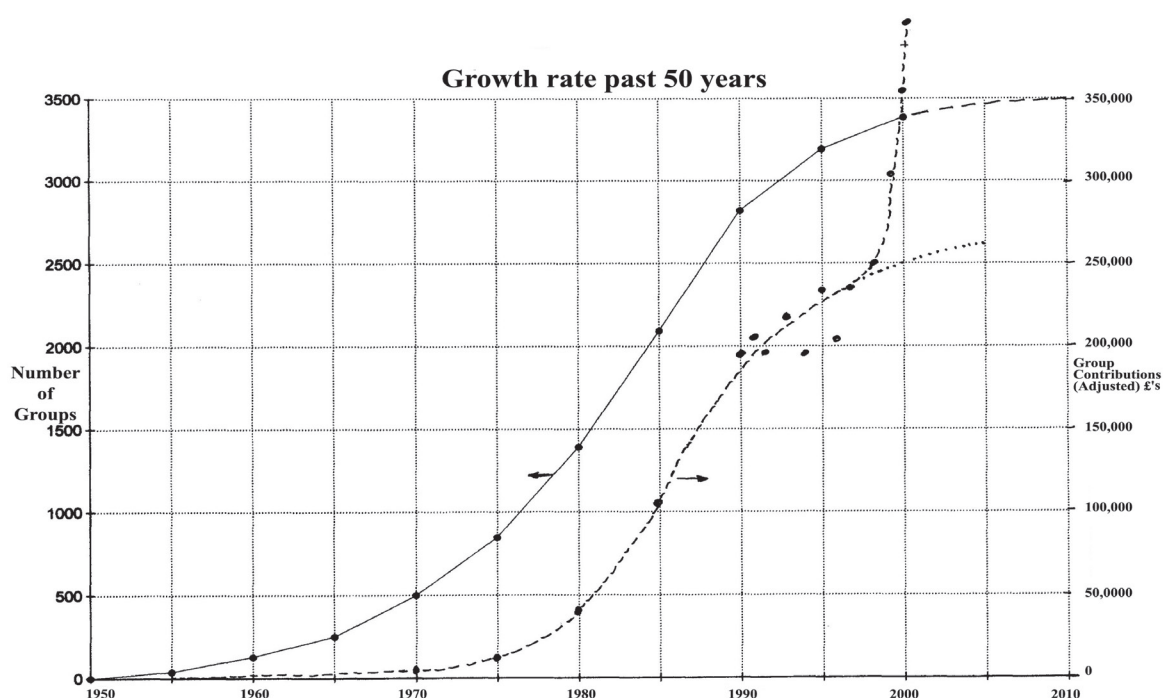
The results obtained within these categories were presented at Conference 2002 in the form of charts. Snap shots taken for 1997 on the length of sobriety by age group for all members and the point of entry into AA for the ‘one-year sobers’ will be compared, in due course, with those to be gathered in a similar way for the survey this summer.

In addition to these statistics, and using the data made available from GSO for the years

since 1970 and data given in Archives and in the Service Handbook for the earlier years, the survey has been extended to look at the growth rates for the Fellowship in Great Britain, deducing these from the number of recorded groups in England, Scotland & Wales since the formation of AA in the early 1950's. These data are plotted in the Figure (below).

Also plotted on this figure, as another basis for assessing the growth, are the recorded group contributions received at GSO since 1970. These follow the trend in the groups curve well after 1970 and up to 1998, but after then the contributions rise rapidly. This departure is considered to be due to the various appeals made since then for a more regular supply of funds to the Fellowship and the release of unduly high prudent reserves.

The composite figure leads to the observation that the earlier rapid growth of AA in Great Britain during the first half of the 25 years has slowed progressively over the second half to a level today of very little or no growth at all. Indeed, the situation could be said to be characteristic of that of a fully developed and stagnant organisation in need of a re-vitalisation process or product to stimulate further growth.



Without this stimulation, it appears that the size of AA in Great Britain will probably level out at around 3500 groups in the next couple of years: the present figure is around 3400. Steps have already been initiated by the General Service Board to broaden the visibility of and access to AA by way of the:

- introduction of the National Telephone system
- ongoing development of the Website and other forms of electronic aids
- new approach to PICPC taken through the PICPC Committee
- new look being taken at Employment Liaison

To further correct these disappointing trends in *our apparent inability to carry the message*, Conference was asked to reflect on the extent to which delegates and members should perhaps focus their efforts more on matters of substance rather than of form i.e. to focus less on *how* we should be doing things and more on *what* things should we be doing.

After further discussion of the Analysis of Survey, Roger thanked everyone for their contributions to this session and closed with the Serenity Prayer at 9.45pm.

*In response to the presentation of the Analysis of Survey a proposal was made on the Sunday morning which would involve every AA member of the Fellowship carrying out our primary purpose in line with Tradition Five, and in accord with the second objective of Conference "...as a matter of vital importance affecting our primary purpose to stay sober ourselves and carry the message of sobriety to the still-suffering alcoholic".*

*It was proposed by a member of the Conference Steering Committee that action could be taken now to reverse the trends demonstrated in the statistics shown in the presentation if every AA member is asked to perform one act of service, in that they would be involved in hanging one poster in a doctor's surgery, police station, hospital or wherever.*

*It was further suggested that our Fellowship could initiate this project during Gratitude Week since this is also a week of particular significance to us in the UK and Continental European Region. (The posters had been prepared in accordance with Conference 1995, Committee 4, Question 3).*

# ANNUAL REPORT 2001 UPDATES

## Archives

The digital re-mastering of reel-to-reel tapes is near completion creating a bank of nearly 40 CD's. The tapes can now be lodged in a repository that GSO has in their network, as is already done with Conference Reports. This will start to create more storage space.

The Archives Committee met on February 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> 2002. The bulk of the time was spent on planning the projected Roadshow event on September 7<sup>th</sup> 2002, which, though open to everyone, will be serviced mainly by the South West, Wales and Borders, and South Midlands Regions and will take place in Hereford. The aim of the venture is to encourage more people into this line of service and dispel some of the myths that exist around archives service in AA. Members from these Regions will be invited to take part in this 'hands on' archives event. This event will take place on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September from 10 am until 4 pm in the Shire Hall Hereford.

A detailed plan of the venue was available to us and the space available was allocated to various activities. The Regional Archivists will be playing specific roles and there will be an Old-timers AA meeting with invited speakers to bring the day to a close, the pot being sent directly to GSO. There will be three presentations each taking place three times in the day. One will be on "The Evidence Trail", another on "Collecting" and yet another on "Group Histories".

There will be a room showing AA videos, C/Ds and Film Strips side by side with Sales, a Display Table of Archival Treasures, and a 'Swop Shop'. There will also be display screens on the Stage with various paper and photographic records. Old-Timers will be invited on a personal basis and will be able to share informally with those present.

Coffee, tea, and light refreshments will be provided, but 'bring your own picnic lunch' will otherwise be the order of the day. The Archives Committee is indebted to members of the Fellowship from Hereford who are undertaking much of the work for the event. Regional Archivists will also be staying overnight on September 6<sup>th</sup>, as this meeting embodies the National Meeting of Regional Officers normally taking place at this time of year.

## Share

The SHARE team continue to work hard to produce the magazine on a monthly basis, and to encourage members to contribute.

Circulation is not as good as it could be and the unfortunate situation is that if one subscriber failed to renew their subscription or stopped taking the magazine we would no longer be in a "break even" situation.

Following the success reported last year of the “one off” Millennium diary, Board permission has been sought and given to produce a diary on a yearly basis. The diary for 2002 went on sale in August and we are anticipating larger sales than experienced before.

Due to increase in costs it has proved necessary to raise the price of the magazine to £1 - effective from October 2001. This is the first price increase for over 3 years and we will strive to keep this price until 2003.

Our aim is to continue to produce a quality magazine, for members by members to share experience strength and hope, and to carry the message to both newcomers and longer term members alike.

Figures as at 7<sup>th</sup> February on the sale of diaries and calendars are:-

	Printed	Break Even	Sold
Diaries	3000	2000	2667
Calender	1200	670	729

Thus a surplus of £876 was made for the Fellowship on diaries but a deficit of £326 on calendars.

It is hoped that SHARE diaries will again be on sale at Camber Sands in September 2002 - and the SHARE team will do their best to achieve this.

## **Employment**

On being appointed to the General Service Board nine months ago as the Employment Liaison Trustee, I conducted a countrywide survey of the current position within this area of service. The results of that survey were published in an article in the December 2001 edition of the A.A. News. What follows is information which has come to me subsequent to that article.

I received news from South West Region that following contacts made last summer by Jersey Intergroup with local employers at an ‘Awareness Day’, the South West’s Regional Employment Liaison Officer would be putting on a workshop at the Jersey Convention, to which local employers were being invited. This is to take place the first weekend in March.

Additional information from the South West includes the building of a regional ‘team’ by the present ELO to help the intergroups set up employment liaison service in their areas.

The South East Region continue to put in sterling work in this area of service. They

recently held a regional workshop, again with the aim of helping intergroups set up EL work in their areas. Their report includes details of Occupational Health contacts, and also a health and fitness week held at Sussex University. They note that the overlap between Health, Employment and P.I. means we are more effective carrying the message when we work as teams.

This is echoed by the employment liaison team from London Region, who have developed some good leads with the job centres, amongst other work. They too are finding that their work is best carried out with involvement with the regional P.I. team. They now have almost all intergroup posts filled and a lot of enthusiasm for the work.

The North East region does not have a single ELO at any level! However, they do have a committed and hard working PI team, who inform me that in the course of the last year they have given talks to Health Care workers, Bail Hostel workers and gatherings of the clergy. Since all of these are not only employers themselves, but also people whom suffering alcoholics are likely to approach for help, the importance of our carrying the message to them is obvious.

Both South Midlands and Midlands Region have a Regional ELO in post, both of them have sent me reports of the work they are doing to build a team. South Midlands have worked out a presentation for companies and personnel officers using both a script and an overhead projector and are finding this works well. I shall ask for details of this at the forthcoming joint workshop in York.

Finally, this report comes immediately prior to the joint Health/ Employment/ Public Information workshop to be held in York on 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> March.

## **Public Information**

The PI committee, working as an extension of GSO and GSB, has continued to make progress over the last twelve months on the task it was set in 1999: to carry the message more effectively on a national basis and provide support for local and regional PI services.

To briefly recap on activity during 1999 and 2000, the PI committee initially focused on a series of regional and national PI workshops to discuss improving the way in which we carry the message and to receive valuable feedback from the Fellowship.

It subsequently began issuing information on AA to national media on a regular basis. Produced a series of Public Service Announcements (PSA's) for local use and ran a national radio campaign on Virgin Radio over Christmas 2000.

The committee's focus over the last year has been on four primary areas:

1. National media
2. Bristol 'pilot' scheme

- 3. Materials for local PI
- 4. Internal PI communications

#### National media

We have continued to issue “stories” on AA to national media, building increasingly positive relationships with national newspapers and magazines. We have worked closely with the Southern Regional Office in London, which has been a traditional contact point for national press. The research carried out by the Southern Office (London) on newcomer telephone calls was the most effective story in terms of coverage generated. The committee continues to handle media ‘referrals’ from GSO.

#### Bristol ‘pilot’ scheme

The aim of the ‘pilot’ scheme was to demonstrate the effectiveness of a heavy concentration of PI activity in a single area, so that the PI committee could pass on experience to other areas where local intergroups and/or region could take a more informed decision on PI expenditure with a clearer idea of the impact on carrying the message. Bristol was selected a reasonably ‘well contained conurbation’, covered by two intergroups that were already working together (Avon North and Avon South).

Full results of the campaign, which was carried out in February, will not be known until April when a second survey of the Fellowship in Bristol is carried out and compared with the first survey in December and January. However, in terms of media coverage, local awareness and increase in calls to the telephone service, the ‘pilot’ has been a considerable success, demonstrating how much can be done for a moderate budget.

The success was down to the tremendous work on the ground by the local team put together by Avon North and South intergroups. Key elements were excellent local radio, TV and newspaper coverage, three public meetings attended by professionals and press, a radio PSA campaign on GWR and a poster campaign across the city.

A full summary will be prepared and circulated by the PI committee as soon as all results are collated.

#### Materials for local PI

Following the production of Radio PSA’s, last year, the committee has now created television PSA’s, adapted from material originally created by AA in America. These will be used for national TV and circulated in March for use by local and regional PI’s for regional TV. Four different PSA’s have been produced with a variety of different regional accents.

#### Internal PI communications

Members of the PI committee have continued to attend regional PI workshops when

requested, but the main focus over the last year has been the launch of the PI newsletter, which is now on to its third issue. This will hopefully become an increasingly valuable forum for exchange of views and experiences in all aspects of PI work.

It has been very encouraging to receive so many communications from our people in the field of Public Information, expressing their delight in what the Committee is doing in order to help them to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. I have to express my gratitude to the intergroup and regional telephone services for the way in which they are able to handle their duties. The referrals that we receive through telephone services are tremendous.

## **Armed Forces**

The Committee for the Armed Forces continues to function although there have been some changes in its objectives and structure.

Sailor Bill has left the Committee after several years service and I would like to record our gratitude for his work.

Terms of Reference and Guidelines have been published, and several more members of the Fellowship have become involved

The Committee now consists of :

Board member

Ex-RN (3)

Ex-Army (3)

Ex-RAF (2)

Wife of serving Army

Member of Al-Anon observes and assists

A Steering Group meets every two months to monitor progress and review actions. Actions worthy of mention include:

Attending the RN Alcohol Treatment Centre at Fort Blockhouse for one afternoon of each one week course, that is held each month.

Participation in Service medical conferences, briefings and workshops.

Contact with the RN's welfare organisation and participation in a conference that included alcohol problems alongside other issues.

Contact with the Army's Adjutant General's Department desk officer dealing with alcohol abuse that may lead to future participation in a group advising on policy in this field.

Dialogue with Service nurses specialising in alcohol treatment.

Future actions include:

Production of the final version of the Communication Plan, that will guide activity over the short and medium term;

Establishment and development of a UK and Germany wide Network of AAs in recovery who have significant service in the Armed Forces. This is not making Service people out to be 'special and different'; rather it recognises the unique conditions of UK Service life, and the need to be able to approach the Armed Forces in ways they will accept and understand;

Preparation of a presentation to the Principle Personnel Officers of all three Services (top HR managers) to explain what AA can offer them – to be led by a non-alcoholic trustee;

Preparation of literature, presentations, letters and other material to support suffering alcoholics to find AA and to help commanders to understand what AA offers them;

Approaches to the medical (particularly psychiatric) and pastoral (particularly religious) staff to gain their understanding and support.

Anticipated challenges that we come across all the time include:

Persuading some members of AA that:

- AA must use an approach to the Armed Forces that commanders will understand or be ignored;
  - Responsibility for an individual in the Armed Forces is totally vested in his/her superior;
  - This inhibits a suffering individual's involvement with AA;
  - Service experience of many years is not relevant;
  - Commanders should only be approached by AA individuals with whom they can identify;
  - Overcoming regional 'ownership' of local Armed Forces establishments;
- This is an area in which close relationship/joint approach with Al-Anon is required.

Persuading some members of the Armed Forces that:

- AA will not seek to interfere with Service culture, responsibilities and operating methods;
- AA is a free asset, ready to help;
- AA seeks to work with commanders, medical and pastoral authorities;
- Agreement that alcoholism is a disease is irrelevant- AA is about recovery;
- The scale of their alcohol problem is large and growing;
- Some serving Service people and their families are already in AA and/or Al-Anon;
- Membership of a 12-Step Fellowship is compatible with Service discipline;
- AA is not a religious programme, it is about living sober;
- Total anonymity is assured- it is a cornerstone of the programme.

On a personal note, whilst in South Africa over Christmas I was talking with a Colonel in the Armed Forces, who is a relation – when the issue of alcoholism among the Armed Forces was raised, the subject was changed!!

## **Prisons**

The National Prison Workshop took place in York in September 2001. Thirteen Regions were represented by RPLOs, all present agreed that AA in Prisons is coming on quite well but more prison sponsors are required all over the Country. AA at the present moment of time is in 80% of prisons throughout Britain.

Also in September 2001 I had a three hour meeting with the New Head of the Scottish Prison Service addiction team. This was a very fruitful meeting where we were able to discuss what AA had to offer in Prisons and also what the Prison Establishments expects from AA. One of the much appreciated documents that the SPS liked from AA was that of the Prison Guideline. Communications is on going through the Northern Service Office and the future for AA Meetings within Prisons can only progressively get better through meetings like this.

I had the pleasure of chairing the Prison Workshop at the Southern Convention held at Camber Sands, this was one off the best attended and constructive Prison Workshops I have ever taken part in. The follow up with enquiries about Prisons was due to the three wonderful speakers that took part.

This last year has seen more Regions holding Prison Workshops, but there are still some Regions (three) to be accurate who at this moment in time have not got a Regional Prison Liaison Officer I hope this will be rectified as soon as possible.

One of the main questions asked by some of the AA Prison Service workers throughout the country is: what do AA members do, when approached by members from other agencies that go into Prisons for their help? There is only one answer, we do not affiliate; also we do not abuse our privilege that AA has given those of us, who carry the AA message into prisons, after all we would not be in Prison work if we were not in AA.

After Conference 2002 I will be showing Board Member Peter L, who already has much Prison experience in AA - the requirements for the Prison Board Member, he will take up the position after Conference 2003 when I rotate from the Board.

## **Southern Service Office**

Extensive renovations will see the physical separation of the telephone service from office administration staff tasks. This will allow a increase in strength of daytime telephone teams, from four volunteers to five.

It will also free staff to concentrate on liaising internally with more than 1,000 members

who oil the wheels of service - and externally with those whose work brings them into contact with potential members of AA.

The administrative assistant, Stephen O, is moving on to pastures new after more than two years. He takes our thanks and good wishes with him.

### **Northern Service Office**

The previous year has seen a very substantial growth in the facilitation of the Professional Community around Scotland, approximately 100 telephone interchanges per month and growing. Much of this has resulted from the “Seminar for the Professional Community”, hosted by Glasgow Region in September 2001, mentioned in previous Reports. As doors have opened we have recognized a growing demand on the ability of the Northern Service Office to facilitate these requests. This has been much alleviated by the recent posting of an Assistant Administrator and upgrades in office administration hardware.

NSO has functioned successfully with regard to bridging contacts and communications between the General Service Board, Regions and Intergroups with appropriate Professional interface and relevant NSO Service input. This aspect of NSO function has helped establish co-operation without affiliation with Professionals working in close proximity to the ‘problem’ and Senior Statutory staffs responsible for other matters.

Requests for support from appropriate Fellowship Services have also substantially increased. This has resulted in some very fruitful co-operation with various service entities. Understanding of the role, functions and operations of NSO is becoming increasingly widespread; the implementation of policies, systems and procedures has helped us maximize our productivity.

We continue to have good and productive interchange with Roundabout Service. Positive developments with Roundabout Service have generated a substantial increase in demand of office time, space and resources.

This **Golden Jubilee of Service**, year, in Scotland, has presented many new opportunities and challenges for our Fellowship Services and for NSO. Our interface with the Public and the Professionals create even more demands and we have been encouraged by our support in co-operation with most of our Trusted Servants. The days ahead appear to be offering openings for our members to practice the Twelfth Step through Fellowship Service in ways that were not, until recently, available to us. Warm regards from all at NSO.

### **Scottish National Convention**

The Scottish National Convention was again held at the Quality Station Hotel in the beautiful city of Perth in central Scotland at the beginning of May 2001.

The consensus was that the convention had been a success and this was reflected in a

slight increase in the numbers attending. (Approx 350)

It was also noted that the account had an increase of £1004 from the previous year. This had restored the account to the previous reserve which the Convention committee had originally inherited. All monies from the meeting collections (£623.11p) have since been forwarded to GSO.

Some members had complained about the collection of pots, since there was a registration fee. This has been addressed for this years convention by following the example of the Southern National Convention's experience i.e. there will be no collections at the meetings, but buckets will be strategically placed at the end of each meeting to allow members who wish to, to contribute to Tradition Seven.

The Committee have made strenuous efforts to practice prudence within the spirit of Tradition Seven by holding meetings at a local church hall, reducing the numbers of meetings and also in the printing of a more realistic amount of flyers for distribution and the flyers being informative but less colourful.

There had been a complaint of overcrowding at the Saturday night dance. This was because of the hotel's misinformation about the capacity of the ballroom. To rectify this, the committee have arranged for a disco to be held in the other ballroom at the same time as the dance. So you now have a choice!

As you are aware, each of the five regions in Scotland take it in turn to host the convention, and each meeting is rotated through each region. Scotia Region will be responsible for the Saturday afternoon service meeting and they have decided that the top table will be solely devoted to speakers involved in Roundabout.

The host this year is East of Scotland Region and 2003 will be hosted by Glasgow Region.

Everything is now in readiness for another good convention and the hard-working committee are ready to welcome you on the **3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> May in Perth.**

## SUNDAY 14 APRIL

Roger opened the final session of Conference with a few moments silence followed by the Preamble read by Peter M ( North East Region).

As agreed at Conference 1995 each recommendation will be voted on and whether or not it is a two-thirds majority will be recorded. Also, that the Committee Secretaries would act as tellers if required.

Roger then invited the Chairmen of the six Committees to present their respective reports which were fully discussed and adopted.

These Committee Reports are included in this report on the pages indicated below:

Committee No. 1	Pages	49-50
Committee No. 2	Pages	51-52
Committee No. 3	Pages	53-54
Committee No. 4	Pages	55-56
Committee No. 5	Pages	57-58
Committee No. 6	Pages	59-60

### ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR CONFERENCE 2003

The nominations received on Friday evening were presented and, after a vote, Chris A (Eastern Region) was duly elected.

### RATIFICATION OF BOARD MEMBERS

Firstly, Mick W, Chairman of the Board, asked Conference to ratify the nominated Board Members, listed below, for which there was unanimous approval:

Tim S	-	South Midlands Region
Pravin K	-	London Region

He went on to thank Mike D, Treasurer - General Service Board rotating out adding *“we have worked together on the Board for four years, three of which were on the Executive, a closer - more trustworthy friend would be impossible to find. His work on finance matters have been second to none, the Fellowship owe him a deep sense of gratitude. On a personal note, and during trying times he has been a tower of strength and support to me. The Board will miss him and so will I”*.

Mick gave special thanks to Jim K and the staff of the General Service Office in York. Special thanks too, went to Roger B, Conference Chairman, who had been splendid over the weekend.

### Discussions

During the Friday evening and Sunday morning sessions delegates raised questions concerning the way in which questions for Conference were selected by the Conference

Steering Committee, placing particular emphasis on the way in which correspondence between Regions and Conference Steering Committee were dealt with. Following discussion the Conference Chairman apologised for any problems which may have arisen.

Following the above, a question was asked as to why the term 'National' PI Committee was being used to describe an un-elected body of AA members that is not in any way representative of our Fellowship and requesting that the term 'National' be removed.

The Chairman of the Board confirmed that this had been discussed at a previous Board Meeting and the term 'National' would no longer be in use.

## **CLOSE OF CONFERENCE**

(Roger B)

In closing Roger gave thanks to Jim K, Maurice B and Mike D, from the Conference Steering Committee, for their guidance and assistance that was invaluable, and their contribution to the Committee's deliberations which was inestimable. Also thanks to the Committee Chairs, Sharon (Conference Co-ordinator) and her team and, finally, to the University staff for all their hard work. He went on to say:

*"I believe that we have achieved all the things that we set out to do on Friday, I do believe we have done all of that. Particularly with the theme I had chosen, that of 'Unity' and I believe that that has expressed itself and for that, all of you have my eternal gratitude. This has been the greatest privilege bestowed upon me and I don't know where I am going from here! Well, we will see about that, but I tell you what, I will remain, in all humility, a trusted servant to this Fellowship. Thank you all very much".*

## **DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT CONFERENCE**

The Thirty-Eighth General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain will be held at the University of York on 21-23 March 2003.

## COMMITTEE No. 1

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CHAIRMAN JERRY C      CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

SECRETARY NIGEL L      LONDON REGION

The Chairman opened the meeting with a moment's silence and the preamble.

1. **When questions for Conference are considered by the Conference Steering Committee (CSC), should the questions be categorised to indicate the source of the question, i.e. from a member, group, intergroup or region?**

To ensure the anonymity of the questioner is observed, a letter code could be used, e.g.

<b>I = Individual</b>	<b>G = Group</b>
<b>IG = Intergroup</b>	<b>R = Region</b>

**This information could provide an indication of the volume of opinion supporting the issues involved in the question.**

This Committee recommends that questions for Conference should not be categorised as to source.

Any question submitted for consideration by the Conference Steering Committee (CSC) should be considered solely on its merits.

Members should be encouraged to share their intended questions at their home group, intergroup and region meetings.

This was a unanimous decision.

2. **Would Conference consider recommending that all new groups register with GSO through their intergroup and that all groups confirm their details annually through their intergroup in order to be included in the Where to Find directory.**

This committee recommends that new groups should register with GSO through intergroups and that all groups should confirm their details annually through their intergroups in order that up to date information may be maintained in the Where to Find directories. Groups can of course, send this information directly to GSO, but this may mean that local intergroup information is not kept up to date.

There is a minority opinion that in order to be included in the Where to Find directories new groups should register through their intergroups and that all groups should confirm their details annually through their intergroup.

**3. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected Ralph A of Wales & Borders as Chairman of Committee No. 1 for Conference 2003.

**4. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected Anne S-P of South East Region as Secretary of Committee No.1 for Conference 2003.

*All recommendations on Committee No. 1 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.*

# THIRTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2002

## COMMITTEE No.2

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CHAIRMAN          DENIS C          MIDLANDS REGION

SECRETARY        SALLY R          SOUTH WEST REGION

The Chairman opened the meeting with a moment's silence and the preamble

1. **There are members who feel the need for more guidance than is currently available as to what suggestions can safely be made to newcomers in the Fellowship concerning 'putting down the drink'. Are we sufficiently aware of the possible risks when we simply suggest that newcomers should 'just stop drinking'? Would Conference please share its experience and give guidance.**

The AA message is NOT to "just stop drinking". This Committee feels strongly that the AA message is that "There is a solution".

It is not our experience that AAs generally advise newcomers to "just stop drinking"; however, some Committee members had come across instances of such advice being given.

We offer a spiritual programme of recovery. We share our experience, strength and hope in that regard. The Committee recommended we remind ourselves that AA does not give medical advice, although we should be aware that detoxification may require medical supervision.

The Committee points out that all necessary information is already contained in the existing literature. It is to be found principally in the *Big Book*, and also in other Conference-approved literature such as the *12 Steps & 12 Traditions*, *Living Sober* and *Hints & Suggestions for 12<sup>th</sup> Steppers*.

The Group is responsible for sponsoring members into 12<sup>th</sup> step service. The Committee recommends that all members should be encouraged to become familiar with the AA-approved sources of information, which are already available.

The Committee's recommendations were unanimous.

2. **National Where to Find**

**There are many entries in the national "Where to Find" which refer readers to a Telephone Helpline number.**

**The Telephone Helpline is provided for enquiries from the still-suffering alcoholic**

**and not for members seeking directions for meetings.**

**Please discuss and make recommendations.**

This Committee wishes to emphasise that Telephone Helplines (national and local) are provided primarily for enquiries from the still-suffering alcoholic, and should not be engaged unnecessarily. When existing members use the Helplines they may be stopping such enquiries. They may well be unaware of the cost involved.

This Committee recognised that Helplines are not always being used for their intended purpose. In particular, the Committee noted that they are being used by existing members seeking information such as meeting times, locations and so forth.

In the absence of other information sources, some use of the Helplines by existing members is unavoidable. To minimise this and to enable such callers to obtain information about meetings, groups should be encouraged to make available the personal telephone numbers of two group members for publication in national and local *Where To Finds*. The Committee has been mindful of the AA Pledge in making this recommendation. Any local *Where To Finds* distributed to outside agencies should be separate versions not containing personal telephone numbers.

The Committee further recommends that Telephone Helpline numbers should not be shown in the national *Where to Find* following group entries.

The Committee's recommendations were unanimous.

**3. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected John T T of London Region as Chairman of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2003.

**4. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected Shona P of South West Scotland Region as Secretary of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2003.

*All recommendations on Committee No. 2 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.*

## COMMITTEE No. 3

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CHAIRMAN VICTORIA G      CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

SECRETARY GUENTER G      GLASGOW REGION

The Chairman opened the meeting with a moment's silence and the preamble.

1. **The Conference Steering Committee has established that, from 1994 to the present date, the number of acceptable questions for Conference that have been submitted has steadily decreased.**

**Would Conference discuss this situation and make recommendations which would assist the Conference Steering Committee in evaluating how we may best fulfil our primary purpose at the Service Conference?**

**This situation can no longer be explained by claims of apathy in the Fellowship. Have we, perhaps, reached the point in our development where most of the questions that need to be asked have been answered?**

This Committee feels that there are still questions to be asked that haven't been answered. To avoid feelings of disillusion and frustration, reported by some Regions, we recommend:

AA Service Handbook for Great Britain section 10, subsection 5, part b (Conference Questions) should be reviewed. After the first sentence insert:

- a) All questions to be addressed to Conference Co-ordinator at GSO with sender's name and address on the question itself.
- b) If acknowledgement hasn't been received within 14 days, phone or write to Conference Co-ordinator at GSO.
- c) Questions should be researched by referring to our literature, (especially General Service Conference Digest & Index), guidelines etc. before submission.

This Committee suggests that the Conference Steering Committee could be assisted in fulfilling our primary purpose by:

- All proposed reviews, changes and additions to the Service Handbook and Guidelines going before Committee at Conference.
- Only published Terms of Reference being used as reasons for rejection.
- Questions not selected for Conference and reasons for rejection being made available on request.

- The Terms of Reference used for rejection of a question being fully and clearly explained to the satisfaction of the questioner.
- Workshop time being used for careful consideration of the reports from GSB.

The recommendations of this Committee were carried by a substantial majority.

**2. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected Dave O of Midlands Region as Chairman of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2003.

**3. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected Alan L of Eastern Region as Secretary of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2003.

*All recommendations on Committee No. 3 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.*

## THIRTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2002

# COMMITTEE No. 4

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CHAIRMAN    STEVE R                      CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

SECRETARY   PETER M                    EAST OF SCOTLAND REGION

The Chairman opened the meeting with a moment's silence and the preamble

**1. Does our behaviour reflect that we are a loving Fellowship? Discuss and report.**

Many views were brought from the regions into the committee. These ranged from disbelief that it was necessary to ask this question to a perception that it was a matter that needed much thought and consideration. It became clear to the committee that this was really something that needed to be asked on an individual basis, as a personal challenge, as much as of the Fellowship as a whole.

Experience showed that, in the main, group meetings are where love is shown most effectively. It is the committee's experience that at business meetings sometimes our concentration on business matters can deflect our attention from exercising a caring attitude regarding our own behaviour as part of a loving Fellowship. Passions can run high as we work on matters affecting our groups and how we carry the message. Frictions sometimes arise due to differing interpretations of our Traditions and Concepts and occasionally failures to accept the group conscience.

For the purpose of our deliberations we agreed on a working definition of a loving Fellowship, as being "a group of individuals, bound by our primary purpose, who not only cherish, value and respect each other, but are seen to do so by both members and outsiders alike".

This is only one of many possible definitions and every A. A. member will probably be able to provide their own.

However, love and tolerance of others is our code and gratitude is an action not a word. The phrase "let it begin with me" was one that was often voiced by members of the committee. Our consensus was that we intend to be a loving Fellowship but are not always successful in translating words into action. We need to be vigilant and seek improvement.

Loving and caring, to a degree interchangeable terms, are best seen as examples. Committee members shared many personal experiences of love in action, mentioning cases of illness, bereavement and relationships, where they received overwhelming support from AA members, which we considered sharing with you today. We came to the conclusion however, that every member has a similar story to tell. We would ask you to take 15 seconds now to think of one such experience in your life, one that made you want to keep coming back.

Thank you. However we also shared many experiences where our behaviour could not be defined as loving. Examples shared included difficulties in finding 12<sup>th</sup> Step support and telephone responders. A few horror stories about inappropriate behaviour in all types of meetings were also brought forward.

So what is the point of our deliberations? Our experience shows that we are a loving Fellowship. Adherence to the Traditions, Concepts and Guidelines will keep it so.

The effect of unloving behaviour in our Group meeting is self-evident – the newcomer may not stay. The consequences of not showing each other respect, tolerance and consideration in our business meetings may have far reaching effects. It may divert us from our primary purpose and could be prejudicial to the best interest of the still-suffering alcoholic.

Meetings that fail to demonstrate these principles of respect, tolerance and consideration are in danger of becoming unattractive to members, especially those coming to service for the first time.

In closing, we would ask you to consider this question - Does your behaviour reflect that we are a loving Fellowship?

All members of the Committee contributed to these discussions.

**2. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected Dave C of London Region as Chairman of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2003.

**3. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected Ron McE of Scotia Region as Secretary of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2003.

*All recommendations on Committee No. 4 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.*

## THIRTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2002

# COMMITTEE No. 5

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CHAIRMAN            CHRIS A            EASTERN REGION

SECRETARY        MAGGIE S            SOUTH MIDLANDS REGION

The Chairman opened the meeting with a moment's silence and the preamble.

### 1.    **How can we take the politics out of AA? Make recommendations.**

This committee agrees that politics is an activity through which contending interests are considered for the collective welfare, advancement and survival of the Fellowship.

It is impossible therefore to remove politics from AA.

This committee also accepts that there is a harmful side to politics. This may arise when an individual or group has an agenda contrary to our Primary Purpose.

Often this is owing to the absence of an informed group conscience or the misunderstanding/ ignoring of AA Traditions, Concepts, Structure, Guidelines and Service Literature.

This Committee recommends that at all levels of AA

- 1) Members are sponsored into Service.
- 2) Members practise AA principles in all their affairs.

This can be encouraged through:-

- Sponsorship
- Education about AA structure
- The Home Group principle
- Group Handbook on display at meetings
- Conscience meetings
- Rotation of service positions
- Recovery, Service, Unity.

These recommendations were agreed unanimously by the committee.

**“The Unity, the effectiveness and even the survival of AA will always depend on the continued willingness to give up some of our personal ambitions and desires for the common safety and welfare. So, sacrifice means Unity and survival for the group and for AA’s entire Fellowship”.** – Bill W, from *As Bill Sees It*.

**2. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected Rowland B of North East Region as Chairman of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2003.

**3. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected Phil W of Wales and Borders Region as Secretary of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2003.

*All recommendations on Committee No. 5 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.*

# THIRTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2002

## COMMITTEE No. 6

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CHAIRMAN  
SECRETARY

BOB McG  
IAN D

ROUNDAABOUT  
NORTH EAST REGION

The Chairman opened the meeting with a moment's silence and the preamble.

After the informed conscience of all delegates on this Committee was presented, we realised that an impasse had been reached regarding the relevance of part of the questions in both 1 and 2, because they had been discussed in another form at the General Service Conference 2001.

A proposal was adopted and seconded asking for the questions to be rejected. The proposal was defeated by the casting vote of the Chairman.

After full and frank discussions the following expectations were agreed:

**1. a. What are the personal expectations of a delegate when attending General Service Conference?**

Delegates expect to be welcomed on arrival with AA's hand of friendship being offered, ideally by Committee Chairs and Secretaries.

Some members were of the opinion that their personal needs were secondary to their responsibilities as trusted servants.

Delegates can reasonably expect that their informed conscience will be respected and noted.

Delegates expect to improve their knowledge of the workings of the Fellowship.

Delegates also expect to return to their regions with fully-informed reports on their deliberations and those of the General Service Conference.

At a personal level, Delegates to Conference can reasonably expect to deepen their own sobriety as a result of free and frank sharing on matters of service.

Through their participation, delegates may experience a connection with their spiritual journey as described in Concept IV of the World Service Handbook.

**b. How best can we achieve these expectations?**

Delegates can best achieve their expectations by reading all relevant materials, including the Conference reports of the previous two years.

**2. a. What is expected from Conference delegates by: Conference and the Fellowship as a whole?**

After considerable deliberation, this committee recognises that the recommendations of General Service Conference 2001 are adequate.

**b. How may we best fulfil these expectations? Make recommendations.**

The Committee suggests that we can assist delegates to fulfil the expectations of Conference and the Fellowship by constant implementation of recommendations made by Committee 6 at General Service Conference 2001.

We would further recommend:

- That previous delegates share their experience and assist by the sponsoring of alternates and first-year delegates.
- Conference Committees should concentrate on Service matters  
e.g. EXTERNAL/INTERNAL/FINANCE/LITERATURE/GENERAL ISSUES.
- Board members attending the Committees to have knowledge relevant to the question.
- An open forum be included on future Conference agenda.
- Delegates bring to Conference the Informed Conscience of their membership and take back the Informed Conscience of Conference to the membership.

**3. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected Ian D of North East Region as Chairman of Committee No.6 for Conference 2003.

**4. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2003.**

The Committee elected Marian O'B of London Region as Secretary of Committee No. 6 for Conference 2003.

*All recommendations on Committee No. 6 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority.*

## THIRTY-SEVENTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2002

### LIST OF DELEGATES

**CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN:**      **Roger B**      (Jersey Intergroup)

#### GENERAL SERVICE BOARD

		<b>COMMITTEE NUMBER</b>	<b>TERM OF SERVICE</b>
Mick	W		
Mike	D		
John	A	5	
Michael	C	3	
Dianne	C-T	1	
Stan	F	2	
Paul	F	5	
Ian	H	3	
Gareth	L	3	
Peter	L	4	
Betty	MacN	5	
Ronda	M	4	
Dora	M	1	
Clifford	S	2	
Willem	V H	6	
Jackie Chang		6	

#### GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Jim K      General Secretary  
Sharon Smyth  
Chris North  
Ann N  
Elaine Pickering  
Angela Varley  
Jean Webb  
Jeremy S  
John H  
Charlie S

#### SHARE

Del	H	3	3
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#### ROUNABOUT

Bob	McG	6	3
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		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
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### **EASTERN REGION**

Alan	H	1	3
Ruth	I	2	1
Alan	L	3	2
Bill	B	4	3
Chris	A	5	3
Pam	S	6	1

### **LONDON REGION**

Nigel	L	1	2
John	T T	2	2
Brian	L	3	1
David	C	4	2
John	A	5	2
Marion	O	6	2

### **MIDLANDS REGION**

Hester	A	1	3
Denis	C	2	3
Dave	O	3	2
Ken	P	4	A
Charles	W	5	3
Helen	C	6	1

### **NORTH EAST REGION**

Mary	G	1	1
Peter	M	2	A
Russ	C	3	1
Steve	E	4	A
Rowland	B	5	1
Ian	D	6	2

### **NORTH WEST REGION**

Peter	K	1	1
John	K	2	1
Ruth	E-S	3	1
Jim	T	4	1
Nancy	K	5	1
Bryan	H	6	2

		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
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### **SOUTH EAST REGION**

Anne	S-P	1	1
Jimmy	B	2	1
Val	B	3	1
Felicity	P	4	1
John	D	5	A
Dick	M	6	3

### **SOUTH MIDLANDS REGION**

Bob	B	1	3
Isabel	B	2	3
Vince	O	3	1
Neil	J	4	A
Maggie	S	5	2
Brenda	T	6	1

### **SOUTH WEST REGION**

John	K	1	2
Sally	R	2	3
Wayne	P	3	2
Malcolm	B	4	3
Mike	D	5	3
Sherry	D	6	2

### **WALES & BORDERS REGION**

Ralph	A	1	2
Viv	S	2	1
Janice	W	3	3
Eileen	S	4	3
Phil	W	5	1
		6	

### **EAST OF SCOTLAND REGION**

Mari	M	1	2
Merle	C	2	3
Roy	M	3	A
Peter	M	4	2
John	S	5	3
Suzi	E	6	1

		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
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## GLASGOW REGION

James	G	1	1
Anne	B	2	1
Guenter	G	3	3
Fraser	McD	4	3
Winnie	C	5	3
Mary	B	6	2

## HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS REGION

Derek	B	1	3
David	R	2	1
John	D	3	3
Myra	S	4	2
Allan	McI	5	1
Rae	J	6	1

## SCOTIA REGION

Ivor	L	1	1
Michael	C	2	2
Chick	McA	3	3
Ron	McE	4	2
Denis	C	5	3
Michael	B	6	2

## SOUTH WEST SCOTLAND REGION

Billy	B	1	2
Shona	P	2	2
John	Q	3	1
Mary	M	4	A
John	T	5	2
Philip	B	6	3

## CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

Jerry	C	1	3
Cyrus	K	2	1
Victoria	G	3	3
Steve	R	4	3
Barbara	G	5	A
		6	

		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
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## JERSEY INTERGROUP

Pat	H	3	1
Susan	M	6	A

## OBSERVERS

Simon	M	(Ireland)	1	1
Jimmy	L	(Ireland)	4	1
Christiaan	D	(Belgium Flemish speaking)	2	1
Chris	D.M	(Belgium Flemish speaking)	3	1

## Glossary of Abbreviations used in this report

<i>AA</i>	-	<i>Alcoholics Anonymous</i>
<i>Al-Anon</i>	-	<i>Organisation for families and friends of alcoholics</i>
<i>BT</i>	-	<i>British Telecom</i>
<i>CD</i>	-	<i>Compact Disk</i>
<i>CSC</i>	-	<i>Conference Steering Committee</i>
<i>ELO</i>	-	<i>Employment Liaison Officer</i>
<i>GSB</i>	-	<i>General Service Board</i>
<i>GSO</i>	-	<i>General Service Office</i>
<i>GSR</i>	-	<i>Group Service Representative</i>
<i>NSO</i>	-	<i>Northern Service Office</i>
<i>PICPC</i>	-	<i>Public Information and Co-operation with the Professional Community</i>
<i>PSA</i>	-	<i>Public Service Announcement</i>
<i>RPLO</i>	-	<i>Regional Prison Liaison Officer</i>
<i>RSO</i>	-	<i>Regional Service Offices</i>
<i>SORP</i>	-	<i>Statement of Recommended Practice</i>
<i>SPS</i>	-	<i>Scottish Prison Service</i>
<i>SSO</i>	-	<i>Southern Service Office</i>
<i>TLO</i>	-	<i>Telephone Liaison Officer</i>
<i>WTF</i>	-	<i>Where to Find</i>
<i>www</i>	-	<i>World Wide Web</i>

# The Twelve Traditions

**1** Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

**2** For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

**3** The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

**4** Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.

**5** Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

**6** An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

**7** Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

**8** Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

**9** A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

**10** Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

**11** Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

**12** Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

