

FINAL REPORT

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

GREAT BRITAIN

Forty-Second General Service Conference

20 – 22 April 2007
The Riverside Suite
Park Inn Hotel, North Street, York

Unity Our Future



General Service Office of AA
PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
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Forty-Second
General Service Conference

Unity Our Future



FORTY-SECOND GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2007

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DIGEST OF AGENDA

Friday 20 April 2007

Registration and Reception

Opening Session

Nominations - Conference Chairman 2008

Committee Meetings Commence

Presentation of and questions on
General Service Board Reports
(Session 1)

Saturday 21 April 2007

Committee Meetings Continue

Presentation of and questions on
General Service Board Reports
(Session 2)

Open Forum

Sunday 22 April 2007

Presentation of Committee Reports

Election of Chairman for the Forty-Third General Service
Conference

Ratification of
Board Members Elect

Closing Address

FRIDAY 20 APRIL

The Forty-Second General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain was held at the Park Inn Hotel, North Street, York – a venue situated in the heart of the City of York and only a few minutes walk from the Railway Station. All plenary sessions were held in the Riverside Suite.

After lunch, registration and distribution of folders commenced at 1 pm and was followed by a reception which, as usual, provided an ideal opportunity for delegates to familiarise themselves with the venue, to renew friendships and to share with those delegates and observers attending for the first time. After the opening session which started at the earlier time of 2.45pm, Committee proceedings commenced at 4.00pm including welcome and introduction to Committees.

The Conference comprised 93 delegates from sixteen Regions; one delegate each from ‘Share’ and ‘Roundabout’, 22 members of the General Service Board, Chris F - Conference Chairman, the General Secretary and 7 members of staff. Also in attendance were 12 Observers from the following countries:

Belgium (Flemish Speaking)	(2)
Denmark	(2)
Ireland	(2)
Italy	(1)
Lithuania	(2)
Netherlands	(1)
Sweden	(2)

Total in attendance 137.

Opening of Conference by Chris F (Conference Chairman 2007)

The first full session, which commenced at 2.45 pm, was opened by the Conference Chairman, Chris F (London Region South). He asked for a moment’s silence and asked Ralph A (Chairman – General Service Board) to read the Preamble.

Chris went on to welcome all present and went on to explain how the voting procedure would work over the weekend. He then invited the General Secretary, Ann N, to read the Twelve Traditions, the orientation containing last-minute changes and the National Convention dates, which are as follows:

Scottish Convention	-	4 th – 6 th May 2007
Welsh Convention	-	1 st – 3 rd June 2007
Southern Convention	-	14 th – 16 th September 2007
Northern Convention	-	28 th – 30 th March 2008

Chris continued with the presentation of his **Keynote Address:**

Welcome, Conference

My name is Chris F, I am an alcoholic and I am your elected Chair for Conference 2007. I would like to welcome this year's first-year delegates, I hope that you find your first year at Conference interesting and rewarding, and I am sure that the more experienced delegates around you will endeavour to make it so.

I also welcome back to Conference the second and third-year delegates and I take this opportunity to thank you again for giving me the honour of serving you as Chair of Conference this year. Last but not least, I extend a welcome to members of the Board, as well as our visitors from overseas, and our hard-working staff

Special thanks to Ann N (General Secretary) and Sharon (Conference Co-ordinator) for their help and guidance throughout the year; their contribution to Conference is immeasurable; they are the continuity from one Conference to another, but I will state that they do not have a role in the debates of the Steering Committee, they just keep us focused on the task at hand.

Your Steering Committee has worked tirelessly on your behalf since the close of Conference last year and I believe they deserve special thanks for that. There was a magnificent response to the request for more questions from the Fellowship this year. Some may be deemed in some quarters to be of a controversial nature, but your Committee, through its fortitude, resolved to meet the challenge head on. I believe each Conference committee has something to get its teeth into and I would expect some lively debates to ensue.

Conference welcomes open honest exchanges of views, experience and ideas. This can sometimes become heated but should never become argumentative. We can disagree without being disagreeable. Minority opinion has a right to be expressed, and noted, in this forum, but once a decision is reached we accept it and move on. If you are unhappy with a decision made by Conference and you feel you have not had your rights upheld, please bring the matter to the attention of myself, Ralph (Chairman of the Board) or Ann N (General Secretary) outside of allotted debate time.

There are other members of staff present; they are here to aid us in the smooth running of Conference their contribution is immense, but please remember Conference is ours, and our staff should be cherished not challenged.

Our theme is Unity. For me Unity means respect and tolerance of differing points of view, Love and Understanding of each other; Bill warned us of destruction from within, let us heed that warning. My AA career has led me from Group to Intergroup where I learned that I could disagree with my peers without cutting them out of my life, and with help I was able to deal with any

resentment that could fester in my early sobriety. On to Region where the debates could be heated but I was able to leave the debate in the room, and finally to have the opportunity to serve as a national officer where I learned that although we came from different Regions, with differing opinions, we could work together for the good of AA as a whole. In plain terms I learned to grow up, I learned to put the needs of the whole of the Fellowship first.

This year has taught me a great deal about myself. When I was elected as Chair for Conference 2007 I was overcome with emotion, first disbelief and then pride, quickly followed by fear. I can honestly say this has been a lesson in humility. My experience throughout my service career has been one of growth, from a member of AA in Woolwich to a member of AA full stop. We bring our experience and opinions of local and regional AA to Conference and, as charged, we listen to others, contribute ourselves, and with the help of a higher power, vote for the good of the Fellowship as a whole. This is why I chose the theme of Unity for this year's Conference; please work together for the good of the whole Fellowship. Show each other the love and care you would afford a newcomer walking through the door for the first time and let our red-dotters go away from this Conference with a sense of fulfilment, not one of disillusionment.

So down to business. I will be an active but non-obstructive Chair. Please direct all questions to the presenting Board members through the Chair. When voting, I will try to speed up the process; this should stop many of us going home with repetitive strain injury. I will endeavour to do my best over the next three days. No doubt I will make mistakes, so please make some allowances.

Conference Steering Committee Report

Tim W-M (South West Region), Alternate Chair

Since the end of Conference 2006, the Committee have met for four weekend meetings. The Vice-Chair was selected in the time honoured AA way of drawing a name from a hat containing the names of all nominees. Thus the Higher-Power made the selection.

Firstly, I regret to inform you that proposals from Committees 3 & 6 passed by last year's Conference requiring (a) that Conference Committees should be brought in line with the service disciplines used by the Board and that (b) Board Reports/Proposals should be outlined to Conference Committees prior to presentation to full Conference, could not be implemented.

Close examination of these proposals by both the Board and the Conference Steering Committee revealed that, sadly, they were impracticable. For example, Board disciplines greatly outnumber Conference Committees and we were, in effect, being asked to try and put a quart in a pint pot. Furthermore, it was decided that prior scrutiny of Board proposals by Conference Committees would have duplicated effort and diminished the ability of Conferences to act as the group conscience of the Fellowship as a whole.

The Fellowship responded magnificently to the idea that themes could be submitted as well as questions. Seventy-five questions and themes were submitted by the membership for possible discussion at this Conference. There was some duplication which led to the creation of several composite questions so that the original intent of as many questioners as possible could be satisfied. One question, to review progress, arose out of the deliberations of last year's Conference and a further question as to whether or not Conference itself should be extended was posed by the Conference Steering Committee arising from discussions at the Forum of Conference 2006.

It has been a privilege and an honour to serve the Fellowship on the Steering Committee, especially in the company of other members who brought a wide range of experience to bear in such a harmonious and beneficial manner.

NOMINATIONS FOR CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN 2008

The under-mentioned were proposed and seconded for the Chairman of the Forty-Third General Service Conference 2008:

- | | | |
|------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Penny A | - | London Region North |
| Isabelle S | - | Continental European Region |
| Barry W | - | Eastern Region |
| Tim W-M | - | South West 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 3.45 pm with Chris asking everyone to join him in saying the Serenity Prayer.

FRIDAY EVENING

Chris welcomed everyone and opened the second full session of Conference at 7.45 pm with a moment's silence and handed over to Ralph A, Chairman of the Board, to introduce the General Service Board Report.

General Service Board Report

From Stonebow House to Toft Green

(Ralph A)

At Conference 2006 Ann S GSB Treasurer during her presentation said:

“The vision of the your General Service Board is that the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous is to be housed in suitable premises, which will enable the expansion of services to the Fellowship, which will provide an environment that will allow staff to work as efficiently as they do now but in enhanced surroundings with more effective use of space, working and storage.”

The move from Stonebow House to Toft Green took place during January 2007. Logistically it was a smooth transition, the GSO staff rolled up their sleeves and worked unstintingly to prepare and make ready the offices at Toft Green so that the communication to and from the Fellowship as a whole could, and did, continue with the minimum of disruption.

For those of us who have attended Sub and Regional Liaison meetings at Stonebow House will recall the conditions that staff worked in. In the Memorandum and Articles of Association it states with regards to the General Service Office “to construct, equip, and maintain any building which may be considered directly or indirectly conducive to the Company’s primary purpose.” Twenty years ago Stonebow House met most of the requirements for the Fellowship. With the growth of Alcoholics Anonymous in the UK and the increase of staff, the fourth floor at Stonebow had become restricted, space was at a premium.

I feel sure that you may take the opportunity to visit the office at Toft Green and see for yourselves the vast improvement not only in the office working improvements but also the whole of the general layout. The staff members will be delighted to meet you and to chat to you, whether they be at the Office or present at Conference.

Finance

(Ann S – Treasurer GSB)

Good evening Mr. Chairman, and Conference, it is good to be back, my name is Ann, an alcoholic, your Trusted servant.

All of you will have read the Fellowship's Annual Report, and digested with interest the facts and figures, graphs and balances of our audited accounts.

The Fellowship maintained its commitment and responsibility to fulfil our primary purpose, to carry the message of recovery to all who suffer from alcoholism.

Self support begins with me, because I am part of us – the AA group.

In 1967, Bill W in an article written for AA Grapevine asked Why should we provide AA services with money? His answer is simple.

Every AA service is designed to make more and better 12th Step work possible, whether it be at a group meeting place, an Intergroup/Central Office or the World Service headquarters.

Though not costly, these service agencies are ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL to our continued expansion – TO OUR SURVIVAL AS A FELLOWSHIP. Their costs are a collective obligation that rests squarely upon all of us.

40 years on from that article, I believe we are being true to this commitment. We now have 60 years of Fellowship growth in this country we continue to expand with vigor, enthusiasm and a grateful heart to all those trusted servants who served before us, who never wavered in their duty, and allow us to move forward today.

I called the figures for the last financial year a robust set of accounts, one dictionary definition of robust is – 'straightforward and imbued with common sense'. Another definition is – 'sound, healthy', that is what I believe we have.

In 1996/1997 48% of our funds came from group and Intergroup contributions, 44% from the sale of literature, totalling 92% of all monies received.

In 2005/2006 54% of our funds came from group and Intergroup contributions, 38% from the sale of literature, totalling 92% of all monies received.

These statistics reveal where our stability lies, money placed in the pot and passed through the service structure, and buying our literature from the General Service Office.

These two sources of revenue identify our aspirational goal towards self support, they are critical in our achievement of growth, we must never lose sight of what underpins our annual accounts, long may it continue. There is no room for apathy, and by effective communication all 4,106 groups presently registered at our General Service Office will be able to acknowledge their individual part in our flow of vital funds. We are not competing against each other, the beautiful fact is we are great partners with one another. Our Conference Chairman, Chris, chose as his theme, UNITY – OUR FUTURE. I

believe by placing our money in the meeting Pot, forwarding all surplus funds through the service structure, buying our literature from the Fellowship, we demonstrate individually and collectively our responsibility to carry the message of recovery that was so freely given to us.

I finish this summary of the 2005/2006 audited accounts as I started,

Self Support begins with me, because I am part of us – the AA group.

Turning now to an update of the period October 2006 to March 2007, a time of expansion, providing the Fellowship with a General Service Office that is in the right place, right sized, at the right time. However, before I move on to our Internal Affairs, let me give you a brief glimpse of what we have spent externally from the Development Fund. We sponsored and paid for one delegate from Trinidad and Tobago, and one delegate from the Ukraine to attend the World Service Meeting in Dublin in October 2006. The total cost £4,768.69. We have forwarded 50% of the cost, along side the United States, to fund the 3rd Sub Sahara meeting in Namibia in May 2007. The amount being £8,006.95. We stretch out across continents and offer financial support, as Bill W's legacy to us dictated.

For some considerable time, past and present Trustees of the General Service Board, plus our auditors Clive Owen & Co, had discussed the limitations of Stonebow House, the urgent, indeed essential requirement to house and display our Archives, they are our heritage, our present, our future. Whilst still continuing with our pledge to spend more on carrying the message externally, your General Service Board, in complete unity, recommended new premises were to be found within the City of York, which would serve an ever growing Fellowship for the next 25 years.

Within the budget set out by the Executive, discussed and fully endorsed by the Finance Committee, given full approval by all Trustees, we have completed the project. We have doubled our floor space, whilst lowering our rent per square foot. We have used monies in our Bank Accounts, our Prudent Reserve has not been touched, and in January 2007 10 Toft Green became our registered office. I believe in the Board's vision of expansion, the courage to proceed, I believe it will stand the test of time, and serve our beloved Fellowship and employees well.

Telephones

(Ian D)

0845 769 7555 National Helpline Number
If alcohol is costing you more than money
Call us today in complete confidence.

Somewhere in this country while this is being read the National Telephone Number is being answered by a member of AA. I am honoured to be part of the

process that enables this to happen, and whilst I am aware that those involved are not doing it for the plaudits, I would like to thank all Responders, Intergroup TLO's , Regional TLO's and members of the Telephone Sub-committee, enabling the hand of AA to be available to those in need.

In September I had the privilege of chairing the Regional Telephone Liaison Meeting which was well attended, very productive, informative and conducted in a very business like manner.

Reports were given and the experiences shared provided possible solutions to the challenges the service faces. Among the topics addressed were:-

- Regional Reports
- Running a 24 hour service
- 0845 Helpline Section BT directories
- Reorganisation of Wales Borders Telephone service
- Mobile phone centres
- Inbound Services
- Special 'Telephone Edition' of AA Service News
- Sharing of Recruitment strategies/responder packs/12 step call management
- File Storage/Forum

We agreed to move forward on a number of issues:-

0845 7697555 in "Helpline" section of Directories

The directory entry in the Telephone Helpline Association (THA) will only be changed when a new edition is produced.

BT directories should all contain the following listing of the AA National Helpline number in the "**Helplines**" section:

Alcoholics Anonymous

Telephone 0845 769 7555

If alcohol is costing you more than money,
call us today in complete confidence.

Web - www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Mobile Phones

As more and more calls are being answered from mobiles and because we have so few mobile distribution centres, the RTLO meeting decided to increase our mobile phone distribution centres from the original 8 to 10, thanks to Scottish Regions moving their proportional distribution to 74.

This means that 33 of the 42 GB Telephone Services will now receive mobile phone calls, helping to spread out more evenly the mobile calls received. It was

anticipated that the changes would be made prior to Christmas 2006, so as to be fully effective from 1st January 2007.

Neither Scotland nor London telephone services should notice any changes, but Sunderland, Liverpool, Maidstone and Essex & North Thames (Chelmsford) should notice a slight reduction in 'out of area' 0845 mobile phone calls. Oxford and Devon & Cornwall (Plymouth) should see a significant reduction in the number of 'out of area' calls. Wales & Borders and Midland Regions will have started receiving mobile phone calls from the above date.

Sent out was a covering letter in packs to Regional TLO's which included A3 maps, reference to the approximate amount of calls each mobile distribution point will receive which is approx 8 per week for all telephone services

The GSB Telephone Sub-committee

Reviewed the following Terms of Reference:

- To maintain the existing telephone system, to enable the suffering alcoholic access to a local contact through a single national number, in a manner which is efficient effective and economic.
- To keep the use and cost of the system under constant review.
- To be responsible for all changes to the system and to liaise with the system providers following consultation with Regions.
- To investigate any new technology which may be beneficial to the Fellowship's telephone service.
- To keep a constant review of the facilities offered by other service providers.
- The committee is a sub-committee of the board and will be chaired by the Trustee with the responsibility for telephone service. Membership will normally consist of three members drawn from participating Regions, who will have suitable experience to participate in the committee functions. Where possible this will recognise a geographic spread.
- Membership of the Sub-committee will be for a period of four years, allowing one year for sponsorship, thus the sub-committee will be increased during sponsorship periods.

Inbound Services

We have been talking to outside billing agency looking at what was on offer (nothing to do with calls that some I/Gs have been receiving).

The 0845 contract with BT will be renewed in June on the same terms as last year with additional relaxation of conditions regards changes to our call plan.

There has been a small increase (1%) in the number of calls to the national helpline number in the 2006/7 contract year compared with the previous year.

Calls from landlines have dropped and calls from mobiles have increased by a larger amount. The main effect is substitution as callers switch from landlines to mobiles.

The number of call from mobiles has grown over the past few years. In the first quarter of 2002, we received 4,803 calls from mobiles (15% of all calls). In the first quarter of 2007 the number has grown to 8,635 (26% of all calls).

To provide a more accurate picture of the cost of our Whole Telephone Services we have asked RTLO & Regional Treasurers to gather information to assist us.

The principle of rotation means that Brian who has served the Telephone sub-committee with love, understanding and many hours working on our behalf, will be leaving us after Conference 2007, thank you for your dedicated service.

A letter will be circulated to the Regions and an advert put in AA Service News, seeking nominations to be put to the GSB for a replacement to join us on the committee.

Special 'Telephone' Edition of AA Service News

The special 'Telephone' edition of AA Service News went out to the Fellowship in February and included the following features:

- Vacancy for the sub-committee
- Terms of reference
- Experience of a home Telephone Responder
- A Check for your Mobile Directory
- Scotland, Central, East, North East (S.C.E.N.E)
- Wales and Borders Region
- Guideline No 6 Telephones
- South West Scotland Region
- Early Years on the Edinburgh Helpline
- More responders Experience

File Storage/Folder/Forum

The Telephone Service Forum is up and running enabling members to share experiences electronically. There is a National Telephone File Store with instructions on how to access the File Store and how to contact the Telephone Sub-Committee having been distributed earlier this year to TLO's.

All files can be sent out to members who require them in hard copy and they include:

- Finance
- Flyers

- Regions
- Seminars
- Statistics
- Workshops
- Handling Professional calls
- Mobile phone redistribution

Because of the success of the Telephone Seminar in 2006 the RTLO's meeting has sought funding from GSB for a similar Seminar in spring of 2008.

This year, members of the Telephones Sub Committee have attended a number of Workshops and Intergroup meetings to share experiences on telephone service issues, this included a very successful workshop at Brean Sands.

Thanks to the Fellowship for allowing me to serve, and I look forward to an exciting year's development in our Telephone Service, thanks to all those involved.

DVD Project

(Jim T)

Aims and Objectives

Due to some concerns from the Fellowship regarding the content of our present videos, *One Day at a Time*, and *A Message to Young People* for public information, the GSB has set up a committee to:

- Produce professional and educational DVDs that would help to inform the younger public and others of our approach to alcoholism. Its impact on our lives and the lives of those around us with equal emphasis on our daily solution.
- The DVD scripts would sit comfortably with the membership who deliver PI talks to the younger generation through schools and Sixth Form colleges etc. and presentations to professionals through our various Liaison positions within our Service Structure.
- We would have limited use of our personal experience within the Fellowship and perhaps Louise Foxcroft's (Non-Alcoholic Trustee) talk to the International Council on Alcohol and Addiction (ICAA) reproduced in the winter edition of the AA Service News.

The Committee has met but once to discuss our approach to the above recommendations and shall keep the Fellowship informed of our progress with this project.

Literature

(Dave C)

As you will have seen from the Annual Report 2006, the year since Conference last year has been a very busy one for the Literature Committee. I must start by thanking the members of the Committee in particular for their enormous efforts over the last 12 months. Their unstinting service has resulted in the large body of work which is laid before you this week end.

There are 5 Guidelines within the Committee process for your consideration. There are also 5 pieces of literature, the majority requested by Conference 2006 for textual consideration in plenary session. All 5 pieces were issued in draft form to Delegates in early December.

Last year you agreed the text version of 2 new leaflets (Message for Professionals which was designed and issued in July and Archives which is now available).

This report also allows us the opportunity of sharing with you our work in progress. (Contingent of course on anything that Conference 2007 may wish developed).

Every review starts with the most pragmatic of questions. Does what is already in place meet the criteria 'fit for purpose'. In other words does it meet the needs of the Fellowship, the service discipline (if appropriate) and most importantly the reader? Message for Professionals in many ways was a ground breaking piece of work for the Fellowship. It was born out of a vacuum, from a need recognised by members in service. Our ability to recognise that need and react to it positively is fundamental to our ability to continue to carry the message.

Can I make the point... that as a Committee we make every effort to get it right all the time. We are not infallible...Nor are we precious of our work. Your input is crucial. Your stewardship provides the necessary checks and balances to ensure that the Fellowship gets the literature it deserves

Posters:

We are currently reviewing our posters and will continue to work with the Service Disciplines to deliver a set of posters that best meet the needs of the Fellowship. Our recent request for ideas through AA Service News resulted in a considerable offering of wonderful ideas. My thanks to all who have participated. These suggestions will be on display throughout Conference and delegates feed back would be very much welcomed.

Our intention is to short list a number of ideas, develop them with the relevant Service Disciplines and produce an updated range of posters that meet the definitive needs of the Fellowship.

Newcomers Literature:

The Committee is currently reviewing our Newcomer literature. We are particularly focusing on issues of literacy and readability. This review has come from our initial efforts to adapt 'Who Me' in order to make it more accessible to those with literacy issues.

Prisons:

This year in conjunction with the Prison Service discipline we are initiating a new pamphlet designed for inclusion in the induction packs given to new prisoners.

Health:

The Committee, in liaison with the Health Discipline, is radically reviewing 'AA as a Resource for the Medical Profession'.

Employment

The Committee is undertaking a review of 'The Problem Drinker in Employment'.

Service Handbook of Great Britain:

We are currently reviewing the content of Group Handbook

Guideline Reviews

In keeping with the work we are doing with Literature for prisons, employment and health, it is our intention to review the relevant Guidelines as part of the process (Guidelines 8, 9, and 11). Our objective in reviewing a Guideline is to ensure that

- it continues to reflect best practice in what we do, and
- that its content is consistent with other Guidelines, the 12 Steps, Traditions and Concepts.

When we review a Guideline we liaise with the Service Discipline

Proposals for Conference 2007

That Conference approves the text of 12 Concepts Illustrated

The Literature Committee withdrew the above text of 12 Concepts Illustrated with the intention of bringing back to Conference 2008 with the illustrations.

That Conference approves the text of the Concepts Check List

Conference approved the above proposal with a two-thirds plus majority vote.

That Conference approves the text of the Traditions Check List

Conference approved the above proposal with a two-thirds plus majority vote.

That Conference approves the Fellowship Structure card

With Conference approval the above Fellowship Structure card will be returned to the Literature Committee and brought back to Conference 2008.

That Conference approves the text of ‘The Pot’

Conference approved the above proposal with a two-thirds plus majority vote.

World Service Meeting

(Ralph A)

55 delegates from 34 countries gathered at the 19th World Service Meeting (WSM) of Alcoholics Anonymous held at The Grand Hotel Malahide in the host country Ireland from October 15th-19th and the theme was “**Anonymous, But Not Invisible**”. It was a privilege for me to be one of two delegates representing AA in Great Britain at the WSM. As with all service meetings the primary purpose is to carry the AA message of recovery. The role of the WSM is to ensure that the AA message of recovery is carried to the suffering alcoholic worldwide, in whatever country, and in the language of that country.

The welcoming address was given by John R currently serving as a Trustee of AA in the Fellowship of Ireland. John said in his address to the delegates “The theme for the 19th World Service Meeting, Anonymous, but not Invisible, could not be more opportune in terms of dealing with the kinds of problems which arise in this fast changing world, although the essence of the message of AA – the idea of one alcoholic sharing experience, strength and hope with another, must never change. In order for the message of AA to exist without borders, language, race or religion, it must not be perceived as a threat to an individual’s cultural identity and should focus solely on the alcoholic’s powerlessness over alcohol”.

Following the address, the first of the presentations and discussions began, at this session there were eleven presentations and all were outstanding, as were the presenters who came from Denmark, Brazil, German Speaking Europe, Flemish Speaking Europe, Peru, Mexico, Australia, US/Canada and Iceland. Ann N, 2nd year delegate’s theme for her presentation was “Our spiritual principles emphasize the responsibility of groups for our common welfare”. Ann said during her presentation “Those in service have a responsibility to pass on, not only our message of recovery, but the experience they have gained, so that with rotation the newcomer can carry forward the obligation”.

We then broke up into our respective committee meetings; these consisted of four different categories:

- Agenda
- Literature/publishing

- Policy/Admissions/Finance
- Working with others.

The Agenda Committee recommended that the theme for the Twentieth World Service Meeting be “Service Gratitude in Action”.

Topics for Presentations will be:

- How do I express my gratitude in AA service
- Ways for young people to identify and feel at home in AA
- Growth and change World Wide
- National Membership Surveys-effective tools in AA
- The importance of sharing AA literature
- On line groups-how are they working
- Service sponsorships.

The Committee recommended that the following workshop topics be on the agenda for the Twentieth World Service Meeting:

- New Media and Traditions
- How GSBs and GSOs comply with their countries laws
- Concept X-“Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with scope of such authority well defined”.

The Agenda Committee elected Ralph A of Great Britain as Chairperson, and Leo G of South Africa as alternate Chairperson for the Twentieth World Service Meeting.

AA Service News

(Hugo D)

After Conference 2006 the General Service Board gave me the very privileged responsibility of editing *AA Service News* and I took over with effect from the Summer 2006 edition.

For the Autumn and Winter issues I retained the format and style which had been in operation since the autumn of 2003, following Conference recommendations in that year. However, I was being asked in a number of circles to consider changing this during my period as Editor.

The decision by Royal Mail to make a significant change to the postal charging methods in the United Kingdom encouraged me to go ahead with the format changeover as quickly as possible. Since *AA Service News* has been mailed out in a C4 envelope for many years now, the new postal charging system meant an increase of 42% in the cost of distributing the publication. This was most noticeable in the difference between the postage costs for the Autumn and Winter 2006 editions. The new second class postage charge for the C4

envelope was now 37 pence while the previous cost was 23 pence – quite a difference in a mailing to 4000 groups. I had already begun preparing the Telephone Services Special Edition and decided to change the format for this to an A5 size, the same as *Share* and *Roundabout*. This means that in future the postage cost will be at the lower rate although this may sometime depend on other inserts which GSO is including in the mailing e.g. Conference material, Annual Reports, etc.

To keep the total production costs as low as possible, while trying to make the magazine appealing and easily readable, I retained the one colour - or shades of that colour - and black as had been used in the past. As the Telephone Edition was special, the General Service Office had it produced as a one-off in a glossy finish. I hope the Fellowship enjoyed this special publication as there was a lot of hard work in its preparation by members from the various Telephone Helpline services around the country, the Telephone Sub-committee and especially the *AA Service News* editorial team including General Service Office staff. I thank all of them for their efforts. I would also like to thank the members of the local groups in and around the York area for coming in to GSO and helping with the mailings of *AA Service News*.

I will continue with the A5 format for the foreseeable future and with the help of the team hope to keep improving on what we have begun. Spring 2007 has been issued in this format and the Summer issue is similarly in preparation.

As to the content of *AA Service News*, the Summer and Winter editions have always contained Conference material and it is fairly straightforward to produce these issues as only a few articles on other service subjects are needed to fill the space available. We seem, however, to have a perennial problem in not being able to attract contributions on Service within the Fellowship for the Spring and Autumn issues. If we don't receive articles, I have to 'pad out' the pages with reprints from other AA approved publications, adverts for conventions etc.

I know that there are excellent service initiatives out there; successful initiatives which we could share with others **within our Traditions** while still 'carrying the message' using our magazine to do so. The message of *AA Service News* is meant to assist those in service, those who are contemplating service and those who struggle with ways of fulfilling their service commitments to the suffering alcoholic and the professional community with whom they come in contact.

We have many items in our available literature advising the Fellowship on how it is possible to conduct themselves in various areas of service. Like our Twelve Steps, all written in the past tense, *AA Service News* gives those in service an opportunity to tell others **what they did, what worked or what didn't work for them and how they feel about it.**

Every time *AA Service News* and the magazines which have gone before it have been mentioned at Conference, there has always been an encouraging response from delegates to continue producing and promoting it.

When you go back to your groups, please keep telling them about us and ask them to drop us a note about what they are doing in service and do what we know recovering Alcoholics Anonymous members do well - that is '**share experience, strength and hope**' with others.

Thank you all for listening to me and may God Bless you all in your continuing sobriety.

Health

(John L)

Over the past six years the government's and society's view to the trend in peoples drinking habits have changed dramatically, it is now accepted that people are drinking more, more women are drinking and that children are now starting drinking earlier than at any other time in the past. Cost in lives lost to drink related illness, homes breaking up, the cost to industry in man hours lost through absenteeism, and the horrendous costs to the NHS forced the government to realise that this problem had to be addressed and accept what Alcoholics Anonymous have believed for over seventy years, that alcoholism is an illness and that it can and does affect certain people no matter their age, sex, education, background or their position in society, if they are allergic to alcohol then eventually problems will arise in their lives.

The new government alcohol strategy was introduced in Scotland in 2002/2003 and for the first time Alcoholics Anonymous was included as one of the organisations which doctors and medical professionals should offer to people who they are treating for drink problems. Since then the same strategy has been introduced in England and Wales. AA, like many others, was asked for input into this strategy, and in the spirit of co-operation rather than affiliation in strict adherence to our guidelines AA is not part of the government's official solution to alcoholism.

Across the country at the moment we have something like 133 hospitals where AA meetings are held, where dedicated members run these groups and see that patients are given the chance to attend these meetings if they wish. Quite a lot of the people who run these groups have done so for many years and many, but not all, found their sobriety through hospital groups. The position at Regions and Intergroups across the country at the moment is the same as all the disciplines in AA. One third of the Regions have no Health Liaison Officer and half the Intergroups have no one in the health position, but the problem is being addressed and hopefully through forums and workshops people will feel encouraged to go into service. This is where we should try harder (getting people involved who are in AA but know very little about service work).

We have a new Health Sub-Committee drawn from Regions across the country and over the past year they have met three times and have put forward many constructive ideas that are used in their own Regions which have proved

beneficial when working with health professionals. The four ladies on the sub-committee are all very experienced in health work and one excellent idea in progress at the moment is a starter pack for people who have no experience in Health at Intergroup or Regional level. For that matter, it's a list of useful information to help them understand the work involved and how to conduct themselves when working with health professionals. As was said earlier, at Intergroup and Region we have many posts that require filling but the strange thing is that the work is being done, the AA message is being carried by the people who are in service. When asked, requests at local and national level for talks to health professionals are responded to, the new video and information brochure for health professionals and information packs are made available to health people at all levels. At all the large national health events like Nursing in Practice, which are held every year in four venues (London, Birmingham, Manchester and Glasgow), AA is always requested to provide a stand, and in the past, speakers. Events like these give a great opportunity to pass on literature and to answer any questions on AA.

At these four events alone something like sixteen hundred nurses from all areas of health attend and many are group practice nurses and this provides an excellent opening to provide literature to GPs who are often very busy people. Our experience in the past is that in a group practice, which for many is the first contact when they start to question their drinking, the practice nurse is the first person they speak to and these nurses have told us that in most they can tell when a person has a drink problem, so it's good that we get the chance to explain AA's message to them.

In the past few years where we have had vacant posts in quite a few areas throughout the country, the Public Information Officers have done their best to cover and we thank them. They all have done well when you consider their own work commitment, but hopefully as we, in all areas in the Health discipline, start to grow in numbers and fill the posts that problem will resolve itself, the overall picture is good, it could be better, but we are improving.

This is my last Conference and last presentation to Conference, my four years on the Board are over (and not a day off for bad behaviour). I would just like to thank all the staff at GSO, York for all the help and kindness they have shown me over the past four years, they really are lovely people. It has been a privilege to maybe in some way have served AA and now I look forward to being able to attend my home group every Friday night and returning to kitchen duty (the group have bought me a new apron and rubber gloves). There is no seniority or priority in AA, God Bless.

Chris closed the Friday evening session at 10.15pm in the customary way by asking everyone to join him in the saying of the serenity prayer.

SATURDAY EVENING

Continuation of General Service Board Reports.

Public Information

(Andy C)

Introduction

- Follows on from Conference 2006
- Covers activity from then until now
- Outline for 2007/8

Scottish Parliament

- Event took place on May 10th
- Presentations were given by Ann N. Ralph A and Margaret Currie – Barlinie Prison
- Chaired by myself and Andy Kerr Minister for Health
- 19 MSP's attended along with invited professionals
- Response was positive

Westminster

- Event held on May 24th
- Attended by MP's, Members of the House of Lords, professionals and AA members. 138 accepted invitations about 100 attended
- Presentation followed by Q & A session
- Run by a small committee of local members

Pilots

- Pilot awareness campaigns used to gain a measurement of response
- Conducted in a limited geographical area
- Separate 0845 and Website address used
- Bus, underground, TV and Web

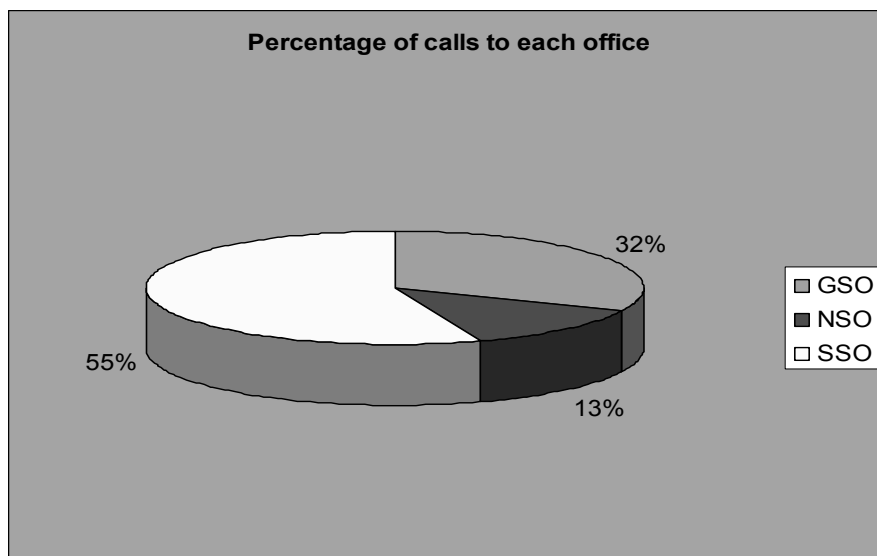
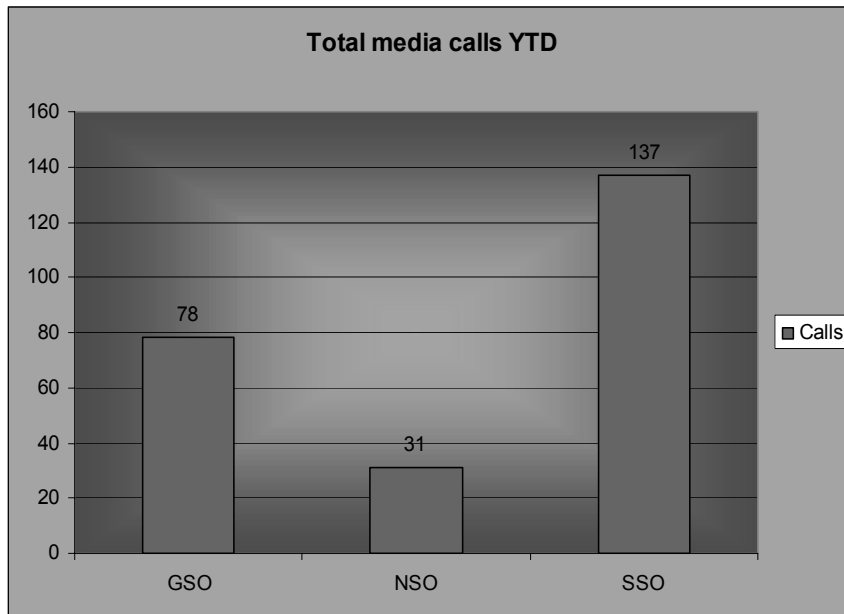
PI Sub-Committee

- Made up of members of the fellowship and staff
- Terms of Reference published in AA News
- Conducted pilot campaigns, supported Scottish Parliament and Westminster, 60th Anniversary Press Release
- Answers membership queries via the web

Office Activity

- GSO, NSO and SSO support PI activity
- Handle all media enquiries

- Have a database of professionals with an AA interest
- Help to co-ordinate activity such as professional conferences



Communications

- PI briefing mailing list available via website – currently over 60 members participate
- Opportunity to ask questions and share experience
- Documents available to assist with PI work
- Message To Professionals available – no charge

Other Activity

- Welsh Convention – workshop
- Northwest Regional Forum
- Liaison Officers meeting October 2006 and 26th and 27th October this year
- New TV advert created

2007-2008

- To support PI activity locally and nationally
- To communicate externally and internally
- To continue to raise awareness of Alcoholics Anonymous

Thanks to those involved in Public Information for all their hard work.

There was also a short presentation on the responses to the posters displayed on transport in London and Scotland

Armed Services

(David M)

Good evening Conference. My name is David, I am an Alcoholic and Board Trustee with responsibility for The Armed Forces and it is my privilege to give the report on our activities during the past year.

The Committee met twice during the year in York, once in July 2006 for our full Committee Meeting and once in January 2007 for our Workshop. For the first time in a couple of years we have a full Committee but we will shortly be losing Roger W. the Secretary on his return to the U.S.A. He will be greatly missed and we thank him for all his hard work on the Committee. We could also be shortly losing one other member due to ill health. Anthony N was elected as Secretary. We have others waiting in the wings willing and ready to take over.

At our July Committee Meeting we reviewed our Terms of Reference and these will be published in AA Service News in due course. We also made plans for the next year.

The Workshop was more of a success than last year as more Regions sent Representatives and it was discovered that various Regions and Intergroups had appointed members to carry the message to the Armed Forces Units in their area. Although this is not a Conference Approved position it has been successful in several areas and contacts made. One Person who turned up was a serving Petty Officer in the Royal Navy who was, as yet, not eligible to serve on the Committee but has already Twelfth Stepped five new members from the Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton and is actively working towards opening a meeting on the camp with the help of the Padre.

We have continued with our commitments that have been carried out previously such as the work with the R.N. Alcohol Treatment Unit and presentations to the R.A.F. Graduate Entrants Course at Gloucester University. We have also given presentations at Reaching Out To Veterans Conferences for the Veterans Agency of the Ministry of Defence. So far these have been held in London, Cardiff, Liverpool, Newcastle, Birmingham and Portsmouth.

One of the Committee attended an Army Health Awareness Day in Maidstone with a display stand and this resulted in an invitation to a similar event in the Ministry Of Defence in Whitehall.

We have also negotiated insertion of announcements in various Forces Magazines and Help Pamphlets such as Tank Magazine and Navy News. This is in the form of `Is Alcohol Costing You More Than Money? If so ring the Helpline Number`.

All in all a successful year after much hard work from the Committee and this year will be even more successful. Thank you to everyone involved and I feel humbled by the commitment and enthusiasm that everyone on the Committee has shown. Once more into the breach Dear Friends!

Non-Alcoholic Trustees

(Graham Verrall)

My name is Graham Verrall and I would like to explain to you why I am on the Board as a Non-Alcoholic Trustee, it's very much a privilege and I think it is very important that you understand how people like me get to be on the Board, and then once we are there what our role is and how it interacts with our daily lives.

Firstly, about myself, I left school when I was 18 and I did 6 years in the Army. I saw a lot of my friends in the Army turn to drink – it was a very stressful time and when I came out six years later I was a bit lost, like probably a lot of people, so I joined the prison service.

I was very fit – I have never smoked and I have never had a drink problem and I went up the ranks very quickly and was made a Governor. In 2003 I was posted to HMP Dartmoor as part of the new dynamic change management team. I was like parachuted into this bleak prison high up on the moors, about 25 miles away from the nearest city, which is Plymouth, and very isolated. Part of my job in the evening was to patrol around and make sure all the officers were doing their jobs, all the prisoners were behaving and I came across two old guys – one with a walking stick, waiting outside one of our gates, trying to get into the wing.

I wandered across and asked what they were doing here – thinking they should be locked up! They explained they were here from AA, one was called Dave, the other was Roy (with the walking stick). Part of my role as the head of

Resettlement was engaging with the voluntary sector and I didn't even know that AA were coming into my prison. I think this is quite typical of a lot of establishments. I took the keys out and let them in, walked them down and asked how they were getting on, they said OK and that they were meeting one or two guys tonight. I said, only one or two. They said it had been a long time since they had been able to get in, problems with staffing, really the same problems we have been talking about over the last two days.

I asked Dave and Roy if they would like to come to the Governor's Office after they had finished and have a cup of coffee. Sure enough, they came and we talked and the more we talked, the more impressed I became. I think that the worst thing about it was I saw qualities in these two old alcoholics that I didn't have in myself. One of them was the commitment to their fellow person and the other was humility. It really got to me so I decided I would champion this cause, I would make sure that Alcoholics Anonymous really was established in Dartmoor and, working with my deputy who was the Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator, we made sure they had access to keys, security clearances through quickly, etc. It was more to make me feel better, I think, because I felt they were doing such a good job and they didn't ask for any praise, any finance and didn't even ask for a room to hold the meeting in. That really impressed me.

I think that the fact that they had a Governor working with them, and because I was the Governor and very enthusiastic, the officers began to see that and also became enthusiastic, was a good thing. So to any Prison Liaison Officers here, aim for the Governor.

A few months later I was talking to one of the alcoholics there, called Malcolm, who said we could really do with somebody with your enthusiasm for AA to work on our Board. They arranged for a meeting with David M and he explained what the role of AA was and would I like to be a part of it. He didn't have to sell it to me at all because I was totally convinced and for the first time I felt this was something I could do to give back to you. I felt you had already given me a great deal, so I came up to York and had an interview with the General Service Board and I was recommended. Last year at Conference you accepted my nomination and I sat on the Board.

It is good I think to have a serving Prison Governor on the Board because I could help influence other Boards. I know how to work with Boards because I do it all the time! I know that we could get together with a few people, drive our decisions through, take over, go for the monopoly, hive off all the money because that's what we do! So I was totally torpedoed after the third meeting when they said we are going to have a conscience meeting. People like me don't have a conscience!

That again was all part of my education, the way the Board are handled, the way you treat everybody with respect, it's all about trust, about respect and about going towards a joint aim. This is some thing I have learnt from the General Service Board over the past year – it's the enthusiasm to get the job done, it's

not about doing it for oneself – it's about doing it for everyone else. I had to understand that the Board does not govern, it serves and again that has been a big part of my education. I have had to learn that I am here to serve, to serve you people here at Conference and to serve the people out in the field.

I have been going to some of the meetings out in the field, sometimes I have seen as many as 100 at a meeting and I was absolutely shocked because half of the people there were women and half of them were under 25. I didn't realise that so many young people had alcohol problems and I didn't realise that so many women were there, and that is probably typical of most of my colleagues as well. We don't know, we don't have a problem so we don't see anyone else's.

It was really good that I went to these meetings, I listened to people sharing their accounts and even in prison you get to understand why so many people are penned up there and how desperate their lives become.

I am a great believer in destiny and I believe God makes things happen. I was amazed when one day we were talking about Service Level Agreements and Dave mentioned there was a problem with a Service Level Agreement being reached at another prison, and felt that this is something that headquarters, the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) who oversee the Prison and Probation Service, could do. I started really giving them a tough time on the telephone, asking where their commitment was towards AA, where their commitment was with engaging with a free service that helped people with alcohol problems, when the Government itself was putting absolutely no money into it yet had written a very elaborate strategy on how we should be dealing with it. To be fair to the NOMS, they said we like your point of view, would you like to come to London and talk to us about it. I went to London, sat down and told them where they were going wrong, and they simply turned round to me and said that they agreed with me but have no one in place to deal with it, and as I felt so strongly about it, would I like the job. I was taken aback by this, it was not what I planned but it was a case of put up or shut up. Am I as committed as I say I am? If so this is a great opportunity for me so I accepted.

I have now been seconded from the Prison Service to the National Offender Management Service as the National Co-ordinator for the Voluntary Sector for both the Prison Service and the Probation Service. That is one radical change. I can actually sit down now and re-write the prison service order telling them how to engage with organisations like AA. Telling them they must have service agreements and these will be ratified by the head of the NOMS and the Prison Service and it will become virtually law to the prisons. I can get the Ministry of Justice, NOMS and the heads of Probation and Prison Service to talk to the General Service Board delegates, people like Charles and Jim, to engage directly with them and that has all happened over this past year. Even now we are planning to go in May to talk to the head of NOMS, the people from the Prison and Probation Service on the new volunteering strategy and they have

particularly asked for Charles and Jim to be there, because they have identified that these are key players in their strategy to reduce re-offending.

It has been a really tremendous change in my life but also I think it will benefit AA as well.

As regards to being a non-alcoholic Trustee, there are four of us on the Board, myself, Louise, Carol and David, and it is a real pleasure to see people from outside the organisation also engaging, but we do have to be educated. We are there because the General Service Board does have corporate responsibility for the charity and the organisation, so although they don't actually govern somebody has to be responsible and that sometimes does need safeguards, and I think having at least four non-alcoholic Trustees on the Board is one of those safeguards. There is always a danger, particularly with AA, because you feel so passionate about your commitment to engage with other alcoholics, particularly ones who have not yet addressed their problem that sometimes a stabilising influence from non-alcoholics is beneficial and a good thing, sometimes just for a reality check, particularly if they have expertise in health and safety, in literature or in criminal justice services like us, then we can also give you professional advice and professional guidance - it also adds a degree of credibility when you are engaging with those organisations.

Electronic Communications

(Mari F)

My name is Mari - I'm an alcoholic and your GSB Trustee with responsibility for Electronic Communications ... impressive, huh? Well, before you get too impressed, let me tell you that I am not a techie... but I'm learning, I'm learning some of the ways in which modern technology is being used to benefit the Fellowship.

I want to take you on a journey, to the past, the present and to the possible future, of Electronic Communications in Alcoholics Anonymous.

I was at Conference, sitting as a Red Dot where you are sitting now, on that Friday night when Dora first announced the advent of the Newcomers area on the AA website. I shared the excitement as she did the countdown, the 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and the Newcomers site went LIVE . When she came back on the Sunday and told us that the first newcomer to ask for help on our website had been contacted, and was at that moment sitting in a meeting, I shed tears - and I was not the only one who cried

So that was then, now lets have a quick tour of the website as it is today

The "front page" has six "doorways" through which we can go and we will now go through the blue door for the potential new member.

There they will find general information together with the literature we put in the starter pack - Who Me? etc., and, of course, the National Telephone Helpline number. There is also the facility to contact our E12 team for information/assistance.

Our E12steppers receive and answer, on average, 16 enquiries a day from the website - of those 8 will be from people who reckon they just might have a problem with alcohol. That's approx 2,920 potential new members contacting us via the website each year - and its growing. When dealing with these, our aim is to guide the newcomer into the "AA system" already in place - the telephone service - and from there to the 12stepper, to a meeting so that wherever the newcomer's entry point into our "system" is - telephone or online - the aim is the same, to get'em to a meeting.

The "doors" are labelled - and the information behind them is appropriate for different types of enquiries - the media is catered for through the purple doorway while if you are a professional you get the scrubby khaki one, but let us take a look at the ones which are probably going to interest most of us ... the green doorways.

If you're looking for a meeting anywhere in GB the place to look is in the Where to Find - and that's behind the last green door.

The one in the middle, labelled "Member's Area" opens onto an array of different things

On the right hand side you will see all the "forthcoming attractions" - the Events listings, the middle is news items while on the left hand side is a ladder of goodies. Click on any of these and you will be whisked to a different area - behind the Conference label you will find a record of the last 9 Conferences and the Questions which were submitted this year but not accepted for Conference - with the reasons why they were not accepted. The Documents Library will enable you to view and download copies of our literature, guidelines, handbooks etc. Then you get to the fun bit - the Service Forums - there you can discuss any aspect of service with others involved in service at all levels and that is where, each year, the Questions for Conference are posted for general comment and discussion.

There is more – services for Intergroups and Regions, storage of documents - for example Minutes of Meetings etc. and, of course, web-hosting of Intergroup and Region webpages.

So times have changed since the website was first introduced - and technology changes with it. These changes are happening all the time and most of you don't know anything about it because it all just runs. But, believe me, if these changes were not made, it would NOT be running. For example, one important change taking place at present is in the method of web-hosting which enables us to publish online content for the Regions and Intergroups.

Webpages are produced by your webmasters in Intergroups or Regions - and then put onto the main AA website where every member can access them.

However:

- a) The software which was originally installed to do this task is now, frankly, breaking down because it's so out of date
- b) You didn't like the effect it had. It altered the webpages you designed and uploaded, by imposing a set frame on them ...don't we just HATE our stuff being messed with?

Well, we are putting a stop to all that - we are changing to a simpler, more efficient and, hopefully, more appealing system called "standard hosting" and it's not costing us a penny.

The only change you are likely to notice - if you are an Intergroup or Region webmaster that is, otherwise you won't notice anything - is that once this system is in place the webpages you put onto the AA website will continue to look just like you designed them to. No more irritating changes imposed by the main AA website software - what you design is what you will get. That change is being implemented. It's being done now - slowly to avoid disruption to the website - but it IS in progress.

The future? What else is in the pipeline?

Pink forms for updating the 'Where to Find' have been downloadable from the website for some time - now we are running a trial project which will enable you to complete and submit these forms online as well. They will go to GSO and get processed in the same way as those received by snail mail.

You want to read the Big Book online? You can! GSO NY have allowed us direct access to the online Big Book, click on the link and you open the book.

A new, expanded Newcomers site - you saw the one we had - it was a bit meagre, so a team has worked hard to expand it. More literature and information, members shares written specially for this purpose and there will be a video! It's looking brilliant!

What else? That is up to you, tell us what you want and we will see if we can do it for you!

Now I am going to ask you to do something, when you get a chance, go log on and have a look for yourself - then go and tell your Region. Suggest an Electronic Communications Officer is appointed, if your Region doesn't have one. It's such a shame that we have Regions not represented in Electronic Communications. RECLOs don't need to be techies, just reasonably confident with a computer. The webteam will assist them to get started.

Above all, tell every member that it's THEIR service: our aim is to serve THEIR needs and together we can carry the message of Recovery into the Electronic Age.

Archives Update

(Polly M-P)

Anticipating the move to Toft Green has been a time of tremendous importance to everyone at GSO and to all those involved in the many Service disciplines. Planning and superb team work have achieved "the move", now we can begin to speak of "the Archives Room" and luxuriate in almost sacred space complete with ambient lighting, display cabinets and library-like work conditions. None of this at all possible without the steady, loyal support of the whole Fellowship showing in the time honoured way what "self supporting" really means in all practical ways.

This is your History that we are preserving and now precious books, documents and memorabilia are here to be seen and enjoyed in all their richness.

The long arm of our Fellowship Archivist is about to reach out and rescue a collection of rather vulnerable Newsletters and Share magazines which are stored in the Southern Service Office but are now showing some deterioration and need to be given optimum conditions in order to be available as reference material .

Work is proceeding on the technological front and, as the work load of the team increases, we have increased the number of Archives Sub Committee meetings . The Sub Committee will now meet each year in both February and May and the National Liaison meeting of the Archives Network has returned to its early Autumn place in the Service calendar. The Network will be kept in the loop and information and Minutes will be circulated both in March and June. The network can only be as up to date as the information held on file; GSO needs to be informed by Groups, Intergroups and Regions about any changes in appointments or changes of address and phone numbers.

Employment Update

(Jerry C)

During the last year the Fellowship has accomplished quite a lot .As you well see below Employment has been very much involved .The RELOs (Regional Employment Liaison Officers) are working on an article for Company House Magazine.

Alcoholics Anonymous presence at last year's Trades Union Congress generated requests from two major Unions to have AA exhibitions at their annual Conferences. The unions were NASUWT, the largest teachers union and UNISON, the major public service union. Both of these events offered a 50% discount on the standard exhibitor rates and space has been reserved. The

appropriate officers in the Regions in which the events are to be held have been approached and agreed to participate.

For the third year AA will be present at all 4 Nursing In Practice exhibitions. This year the Manchester venue has been replaced by Cardiff giving Wales and Borders Region the opportunity to participate in the event. The first event of the year was held in Glasgow in March.

The 2006 TUC and CIPD events both went very well.

The details of exhibitions for 2006 were as follows:

Exhibition	Dates	Venue
Nursing In Practice	14 March	SECC Glasgow
Nursing In Practice	04 April	Cardiff International Arena.
NASUWT	11-14 April	ICC Birmingham
Unison Conference and exhibition	19-23 June	BIC Bournemouth
TUC Conference and exhibition	11-14 Sept	Brighton centre
Nursing in Practice	26-27 Sept	London
CIPD Conference and exhibition	24-26 October	Harrogate International Centre
Nursing in Practice	22 November	ICC Birmingham

The above are events we already participate in at Employment level. The Fellowship, through their Regional Liaison Officers, volunteers to man these stands, GSO co-ordinates and rents the space and supplies the stand and literature which is handed out.

In the last couple of years these events have still taken place but we have not been there actively participating and this is what is new in Employment liaison. I cannot take credit for any of it apart from being part of the Committee. What I would like is when you go back to your Regions is to try to get Employment Liaison Officers to attend our meetings and be part of our group. A lot of work has been accomplished by just a few and in AA most of us know that the more people we have participating the more we can accomplish.

The next Employment Liaison Meeting is due to be held 17/18 August 07.

The work is never done but we are moving forward for next year and we would like to be more involved with Conventions.

Thank you to all the members of the Fellowship and GSO who help make this happen and I look forward to the next year.

Prisons Update

(Jim S)

Prison Liaison's long standing good relations with prison services and prison regimes continues with meetings in 90% of prisons in Scotland and 60% approx. in England and Wales. Using figures supplied this would suggest we

have some 300 prison sponsors and 1000 approx. inmates attending prison meetings.

The Prison Postal Service is a continuing success with the number of inmates using the service increasing from 200 to 300 during the last year. A big part of the increase in the use of this service is due to the dedicated work carried out at GSO, and the staff in our Northern and Southern Service Offices.

Stricter security requirements are being experienced throughout the country with prisons often requiring Clearance Certificates for both visiting speakers and sponsors alike which can be both time consuming and costly. Towards this end it is imperative that we foster an atmosphere of trust in our dealings with the prison service to allow us continue to give our best to this important service.

At the Annual Regional Prison Liaison Officers' meeting in York, non-alcoholic Trustee Graham Verrall gave an informative presentation on how NOMS (National Offender Management Service) will combine Prison and Probation services within the next 3 years. New directives to be introduced by 2009 will mean AA could have a wider role to play regarding prisoners identified as having an ATR (Alcohol Treatment Requirement). The offender will have to demonstrate how their alcohol problem is being addressed before qualifying for remission in sentence or parole. A similar system in Scotland is due to be implemented called ICM (Integrated Case Management). These initiatives will undoubtedly present new challenges to prison meetings, however, I am confident that AA and its members have the ability to cope with and adapt to any change.

In 2007 the annual Regional Liaison Officers' Meeting of both Prison and Probation/Social Services will be held on the same week-end (22/23 June). The two groups will meet separately as normal on Friday and Saturday and in addition there will be the opportunity for a joint Saturday afternoon meeting to encourage closer co-operation between the two services.

Our quarterly meetings with the Scottish Prison Service continue where we have an excellent relationship.

As trustee, attendance at the NACRO (National Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders) conference at Nottingham University also the SASO (Scottish Assoc for the Study of Offending) conference in Peebles and the Prison Reform Trust lecture, provided excellent opportunities to meet and hopefully carry the AA message to professionals in various fields.

Developments include:

- Increase in meetings for vulnerable prisoners.
- Additional Service Level Agreements being signed.
- Further introduction of 12 step study groups in Scottish prisons.
- Updating of Literature and Guidelines.

A vote of gratitude is due to PLO's, sponsors, speakers and postal correspondents who continue to give their unstinting support to this important service in establishments throughout the country.

Probation/Social Services Update

(Charles W)

Trustees maintain contact with National Probation Directorate and National Offender Management Service.

Issue 4 Autumn 2006 of the Probation/Social Services Newsletter carried prison liaison items for the first time.

Work on the Guideline revision and a resource pack for liaison officers is in process.

It has been arranged for the annual meetings of Regional Prison and Probation/Social Services Liaison Officers to take place on the same weekend of 22/23 June 2007. There will be an additional half day session for a joint meeting to discuss closer working between the two service areas.

The response to Conference 2006 proposals is encouraging, with reports from Intergroups showing steady rather than dramatic expansion.

New liaison officers are making contact with Probation Offices and established co-operation is being consolidated. There is increasing professional interest in co-operation.

Conventions Update

Northern National

(Jim T)

After receiving a warm welcome from the Committee to my first NNCC meeting as a Board Trustee on the 25 June 06, the Chair opened the meeting and began the business of the day.

Some members have completed their term of office, which meant that each Sponsoring Body (North West, North East, and Midlands Regions) have the responsibility of electing officers to these vacant posts.

Some changes have been agreed regarding the format of meetings, which are:

- 1.30-2.30 there will be three members each individually sharing on one of our Three Legacies.
- 3.30-4.00 an old timers meeting will take place to help celebrate our sixtieth anniversary.

- Last meeting on Sunday will now be closed due to some requests from the membership for this format to return.

Suggestions were then made at the AGM 11 February 07 as a possible solution to the recurring problem regarding Regional representation. Being the AGM all Regional Chairs were present, and agreed to take these proposals from the committee back to their respective Regions.

- All Regions could elect an alternate delegate in case one of the three delegates already elected cannot fulfil the responsibility.
- The alternate position should be for a period of one year and should be available for attendance at all NNCC meetings and be present at the weekend of the Convention itself.
- The alternates should be elected from the Sponsoring Regions (as are full delegates) and could be elected later to a full term of three years if and when required.

This is to try to ensure continuity and hopefully a full body for the serving committee. If approved by the Regions it could then be included into the Terms of Reference for this Convention.

The annual accounts should be forwarded to the three regional Chairs prior to the AGM date.

Literature order has been sent to the General Service Office.

Everyone is keen to man the Share stall with a few volunteers relieving each other over the weekend.

Seating plans and microphones etc are in place within the hotel and ready to go on the day.

There will be a gathering taking place on the Saturday evening at 8 o'clock. A member will read from the AA Service Manual (A Brief History of AA in Great Britain, Section 2). This is to help celebrate, and coincide with, probably the earliest AA meeting at the Dorchester Hotel on the 31 March 1947.

I hope that in some way this up-date expresses the commitment of the elected representatives of the three Regions involved to make this National Convention a joyous experience for us all to participate in.

Southern National (Mari F)

The first AGM under the new Terms of Reference was held in January, at which the accounts of the SNC, audited by the Treasurers of two of the sponsoring Regions, were presented to the SNCC and the Chairs of Regions. The figures speak for themselves: with a prudent reserve in hand to finance next year's

SNC, the surplus amounted to £8,500. Add to this the Tradition 7 collection of £1,663.87 and you get a total of £10,163.87 contribution to Fellowship funds. The SNC can be justifiably proud of its achievement in 2006.

On to 2007 – plans are underway to enable the Brean Sands convention to implement a ‘deaf friendly policy’. A complete feasibility study has been done which recommends the activation of the loop system (augmentation for hearing-aid wearers), already in place at Pontins, and the introduction of sign language interpreters for a pilot project. It is planned that this year’s Convention will have one main meeting completely signed by professional ASLI interpreters. It is hoped that this will be our learning curve and the start of more extensive coverage in years to come. The project is receiving much enthusiastic support from the whole SNC and the sponsoring Regions.

The SNC is entering 2007 with an excellent Committee, strong Region support and from a good solid financial footing.

Scottish National

(Jim S)

The 2007 Scottish Convention will be held this year in the Dunblane Hydro Hotel, the venue of the first early conventions in Scotland, remembered with much love and affection by old-timers. It is a beautiful hotel situated in Dunblane, Perthshire, ideally suited as the stage for our national convention.

The Committee is hopeful that having negotiated a very attractive deal with the hotel management, attendance will be high and that the hotel will be the venue for years to come. Four Scottish Regions were represented on the Convention Committee this year, but it is hoped that the other Region will participate in the organisation of next year's convention.

The 2007 Convention will be held on the weekend of the 4th, 5th and 6th of May.

Welsh National

(Polly M-P)

The original “nuts and bolts” of this National Convention in its 3rd year of renewal remain much the same. As each Convention takes place, adjustments are made from lessons learned. The Convention Committee have addressed the importance of due rotation at all stages, at present our very able Chairman is being shadowed by his successor who is furnished with all business correspondence and is privy to all decisions. Rotation and accountability are seen to be a good foundation for all the painstaking hard work of the team and its innovative suggestions and plans.

During this early part of a new year the first Committee meeting on January 18th at Pont Abraham Service Station was able to put a sensible framework in place for the June event.

Speakers are a main priority and in this year of our Diamond Anniversary it is intended to go ahead with an “Old Timers” meeting. Everyone on the Team has taken some responsibility for helping in the identification of suitable speakers.

Entertainment, Raffle, Workshops, Come and Go meetings, Literature and the Sunday Spiritual Service are all vital components of a lively Convention and are topics given detailed scrutiny by the whole Committee.

At the Committee meetings in March and May all final arrangements will be in place and an approximate total of weekend visitors should be available. Day visitors will be able to register on the actual day of their visit and that £10 registration fee includes Morning Tea/Coffee and biscuits plus Afternoon Tea/Coffee and Welsh Cakes. The comprehensive Weekend package is an excellent, value for money; £138. You will be in the heart of Wales with scenery beyond price.

Roundabout Update

(Andy C)

Introduction

- ◆ For the last 3 years the Roundabout editorial team and Roundabout liaison officers have conducted SWOT (*Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats*) analyses.
- ◆ The following is a summary of the results.

Strengths

- 1) Commitment
- 2) Carrying the Message
- 3) Gratitude
- 4) Powerful Communication Tool
- 5) Self Supporting
- 6) Local Content

Weaknesses

- 1) Fear
- 2) Shortage of Recruits to Promote Roundabout also shortage on Editorial Team
- 3) Apathy
- 4) Not 12 Stepping Newcomers into Service
- 5) Lack of Group Structure; results in Poor Communication
- 6) Ingratitude

Opportunities

- 1) Conventions and Gatherings
- 2) New Subscribers
- 3) Website
- 4) Placement on Agendas at Group, Intergroup, Region
- 5) Availability of Market Database
- 6) Newcomers

Threats

- 1) Apathy
- 2) Lack of Interest by fellowship
- 3) Declining sales
- 4) Lack of Knowledge of Roundabout
- 5) Shortage of Volunteers, also Articles
- 6) Roundabout Involvement perceived as Non-Job

Objectives

- *1) Keep Roundabout self- supporting.*
- *2) Be on constant lookout for potential Liaison Officers.*
- *3) Maintain regular contact with Groups>Intergroup> Region and. encourage them to have Roundabout on their agendas.*
- *4) Encourage Groups to mention Roundabout from Top Tables. and to introduce the Magazine to newcomers.*

Strategies

- *1) Solicit articles at Group --> Intergroup --> Region.*
- *2) Endeavour to get a commitment to an article per member per year. (a promise made, is a debt unpaid).*
- *3) Organize a Roundabout presence at Conventions Gatherings. Liaise with Roundabout Editorial Team re. availability of display stand. and other requirements for “setting up.”*
- *4) Use supplied Market database to target non-subscribing Groups.*

Summary

- Roundabout is a robust magazine – sales have increased in the last year
- Roundabout relies on articles and sales from the fellowship
- Subscriptions are available through GSO or online
- Subscribe, write or both!

Share Update

(Polly M-P)

The Share Team, having considered its identity as a working team which is nonetheless a Sub Committee of the General Service Board, have adopted Terms of Reference which bring it into line with the workings of all Sub Committees. To that end the team now holds its meetings in York, meetings are held quarterly and a National Liaison Officers meeting has been reintroduced into the General Service Annual calendar. The day to day workings of the team make full use of electronic communications.

To date the newly built team lacks both a Northern and Southern Liaison Officer, these posts will continue to be advertised as they are seen to be the most valuable members of the Share sales team. To assist with any sales and marketing, a new Share Stand has been constructed and will be used at both local and national conventions.

Following the suggestions at last year's (2006) Conference, that AA publications run features on the 12 Concepts, Share carried articles on the Concepts in the issues of July, August, September, October and December 2006, and also in January, February and March 2007. The Editor intends to use further articles in the coming months. Members contributed articles following an appeal in the June 2006 issue and several articles were resourced from Share and Grapevine Archives.

In the summer of 2005 the General Service Board gave the Share Team permission to go ahead with a Diamond Anniversary journal, this would be entitled "Share and Share Alike" and would comprise articles previously published in Share and its predecessor, Newsletter. The dedicated and painstaking work of the Editor and the Deputy Designer are now available for you all to see and enjoy. This marks in a fitting way, our development as a Fellowship during the last 60 years. Dr Jackie Chang has written a moving introduction to this stunning production and, at time of writing, in February 2007, GSO has already received orders for more than 900 copies.

Sadly, the sales of Share, Share Diaries and Calendars have fallen quite noticeably and your meeting between meetings is in need of support from the majority of Regions. The small (but totally enthusiastic) group who attended the first National Liaison meeting for many years, were able to see what an exciting forum for a brain storming session these meetings, hosted by the Share team, can be. When we met in November and undertook a S.W.O.T. analysis we agreed that examining Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats served to highlight all our current concerns. It would be far too easy to point to use of Internet sites and say it robbed us all of interest in the "Hard Copy" of Share, more telling would seem to be the general air of apathy which can permeate many areas of Service .

The future of Share depends on all of us. The team chose the slogan “Your Share, Your Shout” to be used by our new Share News Editor as she sends out the bi-monthly copy to all Regions in order to keep everyone up to date with Share.

Southern Service Office Update

Externally, SSO continued to build good relations with outside organisations in the capital, none more so than Crisis At Christmas. Our East End and West End Intergroups combined to ensure that street drinkers who want to stop had access to a week of AA meetings laid on at Crisis premises.

Media coverage varied from a London Docklands paper to *Finland Radio*. A score of positive pieces ranged from *Women’s Own* wanting our 20 Questions to the *Daily Telegraph* front-page mentioning that SSO’s busiest week is the second one in January. The BBC World Service was among those liaising with us to write about AA on website features.

Perhaps the most positive outcome arose from co-operation with the Open University – GSO and SSO worked to arrange staff and voluntary input to a 7-hour day of filming in the London Office. A 40-minute DVD on “Alcohol” will be part of the OU’s Science Foundation Course and will be distributed to all students from Autumn 2007. We have been given content-approval before it is finalised. Ex-BBC professionals on the camera crew blurred our members’ faces. We had already decided on aliases, so of course Simon, an ex-policeman, was called Nicholas... (Nick the Cop!)

Internally, some fundamental AA principles have been tackled in recent months. A small drift that had seen some Responders and/or Twelfth-Steppers balking at carrying the message to suffering alcoholics without telephones hopefully has been halted by the Telephone Reps restating our primary purpose. The Reps looked, too, at an increase in return calls from suffering alcoholics, complaining that their help had not materialised. “*Believe the recovering alcoholic*” is a tried and trusted practice, for it is true time and again that our 12th-Steppers often make many efforts at contact, only to be answered by ringing tones or computer voicemail.

Meantime, the hundreds of members who flock to SSO each month to respond to the calls for help with the words “*Alcoholics Anonymous, how may I help you?*” have demonstrated over the years another vital (if imprecise) statistic – very few of them ever pick up a drink.

Northern Service Office Update

Since the last Annual General Conference, the Northern Service Office has had another active year. The office still receives a lot of 12 Step calls, which are passed to the helpline or dealt with accordingly. The rise in female callers is exceptional and there are many younger people also requiring help. Many 12

Step calls to this office have come through people receiving our number from their GPs; we have noticed a vast increase in this area. Another noticeable growth area is calls from Housing Associations, homeless and residential care who are looking for help for 12 Steps. This has also strengthened our relationship with Telephone Liaison and other services as we are in constant contact with Regions and Intergroup. They have also provided us with local 12 Step lists which are helpful to members who call us occasionally when they cannot find a contact.

The main professional area that the Northern Service Office has received calls from over the last year is Social Services. This now covers a considerable area of professional work and we get calls daily from different projects looking for meeting lists, AA literature and/or help for a 12 Step. The office also sends many meeting lists to other professional bodies, especially local addiction teams, and students throughout the year request information packs.

We are communicating well with local Intergroups and Regions and have given administrative support to some events that have taken place. The office liaises frequently with local PI Liaison Officers and one particular request was from a group of up and coming addiction workers from Alcohol Focus Scotland who have to decide which addiction service is going to be of most help to their clients. The local Region P.I. met with them in the Northern Service Office and presented to them what AA has to offer. Staff were also able to help them understand the role of the Service Offices and how they co-operate with the professional community.

The Media link between the Service Offices is going well. The Northern Service Office receives many calls throughout the year and communicates with the General Service Office and Southern Service Office with regard to these calls. Our combined Media Log allows us to observe all Media calls and work in accordance with each other. This is also helpful to the National PI Committee and our public relations with the Media.

The Prison Postal Service is consistent and the office collects a list of sponsors to write to inmates on a regular basis. This recent period we have seen this service used mainly by The Young Offenders Institution in Scotland. The young men from Polmont write to AA members on a regular basis which is very encouraging in the fact that they may have some hope on the outside. This is attributable to the Prison Liaison Officer who visits the institution and encourages them to take part in this service coupled up by their attendance at the AA meetings in Polmont. There are also a couple of other inmates regularly using the service from other prisons.

The Service Office has been very grateful to receive minutes and service reports from nearly all Regions and Intergroups throughout Scotland. This is very helpful within our service structure and the office has begun to amalgamate all the same services on the one report as is done at General Service Office. This is helpful to the Board Members who can see the reports at a glance and also

helpful to our office as we have all the details of the next Intergroup or Regional meeting and can inform AA members who call us to enquire. We also receive calls from members interested in service and we can encourage them by directing them to their next local Intergroup meeting.

Within a year the office has updated nearly 500 Scottish groups and helped the Fellowship with other requests such as conventions, meeting information and general questions regarding Fellowship business. We have experienced more calls than usual from new serving officers looking for information regarding their new positions and we are able to provide some support or direct them to the appropriate person.

The Northern Service Office will continue to provide support to Fellowship Services and continue to help make the 12th Step work possible.

Open Forum

The final session of Saturday evening was given over to an 'Open Forum' with contributions from the floor ranging over a wide spectrum of AA's service structure.

The evening ended at 10pm with Chris asking all to join him in saying the Serenity Prayer.

SUNDAY 22 APRIL

Chris welcomed everyone to the final session of Conference, asked for a few moments silence and read the Preamble.

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.

Chris 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 43-44
Committee No. 2	Pages 45-46
Committee No. 3	Pages 47-49
Committee No. 4	Pages 50-51
Committee No. 5	Pages 52-53
Committee No. 6	Pages 54-55

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR CONFERENCE 2008

The nominations received on Friday evening were presented and, after a vote, Tim W-M (South West Region) was duly elected.

RATIFICATION OF BOARD MEMBERS

(Ralph A, Chair GSB)

This is the ratification and goodbye of Trustees. We have one Trustee, John L (Scotia Region), leaving us and I would like you to show your appreciation for all the very, very hard work he has done during his time on the General Service Board and we will all miss him.

Now the ratification of three Trustees,

Martin B	-	Scotia Region
Dave D	-	South East Region
Anne McD	-	South West Scotland Region

Close of Conference

(Chris F)

"I would like to say a few thank you's to the people who have made this Conference possible, the staff at GSO, the Southern Service Office and Northern Service Office who have all contributed to this weekend. To the Board

Members for all their hard work, to the people in the Fellowship who sent in questions this year – there was enough questions to come in to make Conference go this year. When you go back please, please appeal to people to keep sending in Conference questions to give your Conference Steering Committee something to do and also give Conference something to get its teeth into and make it worthwhile. I'd also like to thank Keith and Ryan (from the Park Inn) who have been behind the scene all weekend.

From me, I would like to say thank you. I was elected last year by two-thirds of you here, you have been fantastic and I have loved every minute of this and again, I thank you all and I am going to close Conference with the Serenity Prayer”.

Chris closed Conference by asking everyone to join him in saying the Serenity Prayer.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT CONFERENCE

The Forty-Third General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain will be held at the Park Inn, North Street, York on 18-20 April 2008.

COMMITTEE No. 1

CHAIRMAN TIM W-M SOUTH WEST REGION

SECRETARY GABRIELLA A EASTERN REGION

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

1. Review the objective of the National Telephone Helpline and share experience.

1. This Committee suggests that the National Telephone Sub-committee consults the Regions and Intergroups as to the feasibility of providing a national 24-hour service and report back to Conference 2008.
2. We also recommend that Guideline 6 (AA Telephone Services) be reviewed and that a further seminar would be beneficial.

2. Consider what AA group information ought to be published in the official *Where to Find AA Great Britain and English Speaking Europe*. Make recommendations.

- **Should AA Groups have names?**
- **Should meetings be listed as specialist meetings?**
- **Should there be provision for email addresses and group contact numbers and/or postcodes?**

1. The Committee recommends that groups continue to have names if they wish.
2. The Committee recommends that specialist meetings should continue to be listed provided that they are non-restrictive.

A minority view was expressed that the name of a specialist meeting itself implies restriction.

3. (a) Provision for e-mail addresses is recommended provided that they are generic (group) and not personal.

(b) We also recommend that group contact numbers be retained and that accurate postcodes for the venues be included.

3. Review revised Guideline No. 4 'Intergroups'.

1. Page 2 "Other Responsibilities":
"IIt" to become "It"
2. Page 3, column one:
Delete existing "A Health Liaison Officer" paragraph and replace with:

"The Health Liaison Officer is responsible for establishing links with health professionals and co-ordinating all aspects of carrying the message within the healthcare system."

4. Review revised Guideline No. 5 'Regions'.

There are no textual corrections, but the Committee feels strongly that both maps need to be replaced with clear, legible substitutes, with the correct information being double-checked before publication.

5. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected Gabriella A (Eastern Region) as Chairman of Committee No. 1 for Conference 2008.

6. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected Robert De W (London Region North) as Secretary of Committee No. 1 for Conference 2008.

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

COMMITTEE No. 2

CHAIRMAN ISABELLE S CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

SECRETARY JOHN F SOUTH WEST REGION

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

1. Has the discussion of the Concepts at last year's Conference improved the working practices throughout the service structure since then?

Yes – evidence suggests it has been the case; however this Committee feels that further action is required at all levels of service.

This was a majority decision.

There was a minority view within the Committee that there had been little visible effect.

There was a minority view that this Committee failed to make recommendations on what further action is required to improve working practices.

2. Consider the following to assist the Fellowship with an easier interpretation of our Guidelines in the following areas:

a) Whenever our Guidelines are updated or new Guidelines issued could they be standardised in the description of the recommended period of sobriety required?

The Committee recommends the standardisation of descriptions of recommended periods of sobriety as part of the ongoing guideline review process of the Literature Committee.

The decision was unanimous.

b) Could a one page index of the current Guideline Revision Issues and dates be included in the Guidelines each time they are updated?

The Committee recommends that the Literature Committee produce an index sheet. This should include revision dates and cross-referencing to other relevant guidelines. It should not include sobriety requirements for service positions.

The decision was unanimous.

3. Review the role and structure of the Conference Steering Committee and make recommendations.

Committee 2 feels that the Conference Steering Committee is working effectively in its present structure.

The Committee feels that the current rotation is adequate.

The Committee feels that the role as described in the Terms of Reference is adequate and appropriate.

It is noted that the Conference Steering Committee reviews yearly the Conference Steering Committee terms of reference and publishes them in *AA Service News*. This was a majority decision. (14 for, 3 against, 1 abstention).

There was a minority view that delegate members of the Conference Steering Committee should serve for two years, to enhance experience on that committee.

4. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected Maureen W of East of Scotland Region as Chairman of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2008.

5. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected Lynne W of Wales & Borders Region as Secretary of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2008.

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

COMMITTEE No. 3

CHAIRMAN ROGER W CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

SECRETARY STEVE E NORTH EAST REGION

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

1. Would Conference please discuss "Gift Aid" and whether it is in keeping with our Seventh Tradition?

Following detailed discussion, the majority view of the committee is that Gift Aid is in keeping with our Seventh Tradition.

More information is required throughout the Fellowship to dispel misconceptions about Gift Aid. The committee requests that the Finance Committee of the GSB provides information and disseminates it prior to Conference 2008 via the Autumn Issue of AA Service News and the official AA Website.

The Committee suggests that the use of Gift Aid remain a matter for individual conscience.

The Committee would like to stress that Gift Aid should never be considered as a substitute for 'The Pot'. It is a way for individual members who pay tax to make an additional personal contribution.

The recorded minority view was that Gift Aid was not in keeping with the original spirit of Tradition 7.

Voting figures

For 13 Against 5 Abstentions 0

2. Does Conference need to be extended by either a half-day or one full day in order to discharge its duties to the Fellowship as a whole?

Discuss and make recommendations in the light of the financial implications to AA UK and the extra burden placed upon the individual delegates.

The Committee recommends Conference should not be extended.

Vote 16 agreed 2 disagreed

The recorded minority view was that Conference should start earlier on Friday and not be extended into Sunday afternoon.

In our discussions it was agreed that better use of Conference time was the answer to increased productivity.

The following suggestion was also made:

Background material should include as much information as is available on the topic, not just the background material suggested by the questioner.

3. Review revised Guideline No. 2 'Group Officers'.

The Committee recommends that Guideline 2 be accepted with the following amendments

Page 1 line 25

Change 'an ideal group' to 'a group'

Under the heading 'CHAIR'

Take the last paragraph which starts 'Some Groups....' and place it at the beginning of the section, not at the end.

Reword the section **TREASURER:**

Should read :

Collects the money obtained from passing the pot at group meetings, counts this with a responsible member's help and enters the amount into a cash book or balance sheet in the Group accounts book.

Remove bullet point 2

Reword bullet point 3 to read

Make regular reports to the Group showing how money has been used. After paying the approved expenses, eg rent, refreshments and literature and retaining a prudent reserve of one month's running expenses, any surplus should be sent to the Intergroup Treasurer – preferably by cheque and without delay. Blank signed cheques should never be issued. This is a recommended precautionary measure taken on behalf of both the group and the Treasurer and applies to cheque payments at all levels.

Insert a final paragraph:

The treasurer's responsibilities are fully explained in Guideline 12.

Under the section GROUP SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE (GSR)

Insert the words 'to take' after the word 'opportunity' in Paragraph 3.

Voting was unanimous.

4. Review revised Guideline No. 12 'Finance'.

The Committee recommends that Guideline 12 be accepted with the following amendments:

Edit the first line to correct the grammar: "Most of AA's revenue in Great Britain consists of the voluntary..."

Column 2 para four:

All cheques should be secured by two signatures (two out of three duly authorised) >INSERT> "Blank signed cheques should never be issued." This is a recommended precautionary measure taken on behalf of both the group and the Treasurer and applies to cheque payments at all levels.

Under the section 'Region', bullet point one – change 'required' to 'suggested'.

Passed unanimously.

5. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected Wynford O of Wales & Borders as Chairman of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2008.

6. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected Carole McI of Glasgow Region as Secretary of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2008.

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

COMMITTEE No. 4

CHAIRMAN PENNY A LONDON REGION NORTH
SECRETARY RACHEL M SOUTH EAST REGION

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

1. How many members from one Group should be in service at Intergroup/Region/Conference etc?

This Committee feels that in accordance with Concept 4 every member has the right of participation.

2. Share experience of practical ways of encouraging people into service.

In accordance with Tradition 5 (our primary purpose) the third side of the triangle (service) needs to be emphasised within all groups.

Suggestions which came out of shared experiences include:

- a) Encourage members to share the rewards of service experience as well as the joy of recovery.
- b) Invite members directly to get involved.
- c) Inform members of service opportunities available and what is involved.
- d) Encourage members to become familiar with AA service structure and practices through observation and shared experience.
- e) Write articles to *AA Service News* about the positive experiences and benefits of service.
- f) Hold regular service workshops at all levels.

3. Do we always elect people into service for the good of AA, rather than just because they are willing to fill a vacancy, or, because we think it will do them good? Discuss and share experience.

The majority of the time we do elect people into service for the good of AA.

It is important to guard against electing anyone into a position for which they are not suited just to fill that position, considering that we have a

responsibility of care for both the individual and the Fellowship as a whole.

Service is most effective when members are twelve-stepped into vacancies and supported whilst in that position.

4. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected John H (South West Scotland Region) as Chairman of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2008.

5. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected Tom P (North West Region) as Secretary of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2008.

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

COMMITTEE No. 5

CHAIRMAN WILLIE M HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS REGION

SECRETARY NEIL J SOUTH MIDLANDS REGION

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

1. Discuss and share experience as to whether AA is communicating with the Prison Service at the Governmental (Home Office), national and local levels in the most effective manner possible.

In our discussions we found that:

- a) At local level, best efforts are being made to carry the message in prisons. In some areas prison staff may benefit from a better understanding of the Fellowship. This could be achieved by:
 - Inviting staff to open meetings;
 - Offering to give presentations to staff;
 - Approaching prison chaplains, health centre staff and social work teams who are often supportive of our aims;
 - Liaising with the establishment Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator (England & Wales) or Addiction Co-ordinator (Scotland).

- b) At national level, recent government initiatives regarding prisons have opened communication channels, which have improved the Fellowship's opportunity to carry the message. GSB representatives are fully engaged in communication at Government level.

Additional Observations

The Committee recognises the following challenges regarding carrying the message in prisons:

- The level of awareness of AA among prison staff;
- Difficulties in obtaining security clearances;
- The lack of a National Service Level Agreement (SLA) agreed with the National Offender Management Service (NOMS);
- Local SLAs will still need to be put in place with each prison establishment;
- There continues to be a significant number of vacancies for Prison Liaison Officers at Intergroup and Regional Level.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the website be expanded to include a forum on Prison/Probation.

2. Discuss the distribution of non-AA literature at group level and make recommendations.

The Committee recommends that:

- a) Only GSO-distributed literature is displayed at group meetings;
- b) If groups choose to display or distribute other literature it should be clearly distinguished from GSO-distributed literature;
- c) Groups choosing to display or distribute other literature should be mindful of the effect it may have on other groups or AA as a whole.

3. Review new Guideline No. 20 'Archives'.

Committee 5 recommends that Conference approves the new Guideline 20 'Archives', with the following amendments to the quotation on page 1. (Paragraph 2 of POLICY STATEMENT).

- 1) The word 'declines' to be replaced with 'perishes' as per the original quotation.
- 2) The quotation is attributed by adding the words 'Carl Sandburg' underneath.

4. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected Dave A of Continental European Region as Chairman of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2008.

5. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected Eamon D of London Region North as Secretary of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2008.

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

COMMITTEE No. 6

CHAIRMAN BARRY W EASTERN REGION

SECRETARY PETER F SOUTH EAST REGION

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

- 1. Share experience and consider ways that groups can carry the message to local communities and whether localised notices in newsagents, corner-shops, taxi companies etc. of local meetings, giving place, time and phone contact details for local group officers is acceptable.**

The Committee recommends:

- a) That AA Groups engage in local P.I. activity, e.g. organising public meetings for professionals.
- b) These activities are preferably co-ordinated with their Intergroup Liaison Officer or P.I. Committee.
- c) Groups use national or local helpline telephone numbers alongside the AA website address.
- d) That great care is advised in advertising local meetings, taking into account the individual's anonymity.

One minority view on paragraph (d).

- 2. Discuss, share experience and make recommendations on how the Fellowship can better meet the needs of members with disabilities.**

- a) The Committee recommends that the GSB select a trustee to ensure that members with disabilities are enabled to participate in Fellowship activities and service. The trustee is to be tasked with identifying the most effective way to achieve this. Adequate resources shall be made available to achieve this objective. GSB to report back to Conference 2008.

- b) That groups be mindful of and seek to identify those with various disabilities.

The Committee was unanimous.

Conference passed the above two recommendations with a two-thirds plus majority.

3. Consider which items are suitable for inclusion in the Diary in approved media facilities in Great Britain such as *AA Service News, Share, Roundabout* and the website and make recommendations.

- a) Guideline 14 recognises that AA and Al-Anon have a unique relationship in the spirit of this guideline. Al-Anon events with AA participation may be considered for inclusion in approved AA media facilities.
- b) Only events run by recognised AA and Al-Anon organisations be advertised in the AA media.
- c) The final decision on what to advertise remains with our trusted servants on the editorial teams.

The following minority view was registered:

Guideline 14 actually deals much more with keeping Al-Anon (dedicating 3 paragraphs to conventions) and AA separate. AA should not publicise Al-Anon events.

Conference voted not to accept items a) and b) (above) by a two-thirds majority and c) was accepted by a simple majority.

4. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected William O (North West Region) as Chairman of Committee No. 6 for Conference 2008.

5. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2008.

The Committee elected Jeremy W (Highlands & Islands) as Secretary of Committee No. 6 for Conference 2008.

FORTY-SECOND GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2007

LIST OF DELEGATES

CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN: **CHRIS F** (London Region South)

GENERAL SERVICE BOARD

		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
Ralph	A		
Roger	B	2	
David	C	2	
Jerry	C	4	
Andy	C	6	
Ian	D	1	
Hugo	D	6	
Mari	F	6	
John	L	1	
David	M	4	
Polly	M-P	5	
Vince	O	3	
Ann	S	3	
Jim	S	5	
Jim	T	2	
Charles	W	4	
Martin	B (Elect)	2	
Dave	D (Elect)	3	
Louise Foxcroft		5	
David Munchin		1	
Carol Titley		6	
Graham Verrall		5	

GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Ann N General Secretary
Sharon Smyth
Chris North
Elaine Pickering
Angela Varley
Helen Lambeth
Tricia Mahoney
John H (Southern Service Office)
Caroline D (Northern Service Office)

SHARE

Laurie	A	2	2
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ROUNDAABOUT

James	K	6	2
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**COMMITTEE
NUMBER**

**TERM OF
SERVICE**

EASTERN REGION

Gabriella	A	1	2
Tony	W	2	3
Joe	F	3	2
Margaret	J	4	2
Terry	W	5	2
Barry	W	6	3

LONDON REGION NORTH

Robert	De W	1	1
Tom	B	2	1
Danny	L	3	1
Penny	A	4	3
Eamon	D	5	1
Guy	C	6	2

LONDON REGION SOUTH

Kevin	Mc	1	3
Ron	B	2	3
Kevin	M	3	3
Jim	H	4	1
Neil	K	5	3
Sharon	C	6	1

MIDLANDS REGION

Dave	A	1	1
Sue	B	2	A
Prag	S	3	1
Roy	K	4	2
Robin	M	5	1
Geoff	B	6	1

NORTH EAST REGION

Christine	E-S	1	3
Maxine	W	2	A
Steve	E	3	3
John	C	4	2
Rene	D	5	2
Paula	B	6	1

**COMMITTEE
NUMBER**

**TERM OF
SERVICE**

NORTH WEST REGION

Marilyn	R	1	2
Lesley	B	2	3
Ingrid	K-K	3	3
Tom	P	4	1
Wyn	J	5	3
William	O	6	2

SOUTH EAST REGION

David	O	1	1
Carol	B	2	3
Tom	S	3	1
Rachel	M	4	2
Alex	M	5	2
Peter	F	6	2

SOUTH MIDLANDS REGION

Kevin	B	1	3
		2	
John	G	3	3
John-Dominic	W-H	4	3
Neil	J	5	3
Derek	B	6	3

SOUTH WEST REGION

Tim	W-M	1	2
John	F	2	2
Jennie	K	3	1
Pat	C	4	2
Geoff	C	5	1
Ron	G	6	2

WALES & BORDERS REGION

Judy	F	1	2
Lynne	W	2	1
Wynford	O	3	2
Vida	J	4	3
JoJo	H	5	A
John	F	6	1

**COMMITTEE
NUMBER**

**TERM OF
SERVICE**

EAST OF SCOTLAND REGION

Sandy	O	1	3
Maureen	W	2	2
Gus	H	3	1
Jim	R	4	2
Geoff	T	5	2
Gina	D	6	A

GLASGOW REGION

Roseann	W	1	3
Marilyn	C	2	3
Carole	McI	3	1
Clark	S	4	1
Andrina	C	5	2
Susan	C	6	1

HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS REGION

		1	
		2	
Linda	S	3	1
Alex	P	4	3
Willie	Mac	5	3
Jeremy	W	6	2

SCOTIA REGION

Marc	M	1	1
Matt	M	2	1
Betty	S	3	2
Anthony	N	4	2
Kay	D	5	1
Margaret	M	6	2

SOUTH WEST SCOTLAND REGION

Sue	R	1	1
Joe	B	2	A
Anne	McD	3	3
John	H	4	2
Cate	T	5	2
Kate	H	6	1

		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
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CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

Greg	H	1	2
Isabelle	S	2	3
Roger	W	3	3
David	N	4	2
David	A	5	2
Andrew	G	6	2

OBSERVERS

Jozef	B	(Belgium – Flemish Speaking)	4	1
Marcel	H	(Belgium – Flemish Speaking)	2	1
Vini	J	(Denmark)	3	2
Mads	B	(Denmark)	6	1
Eugene	C	(Ireland)	1	1
Peter	H	(Ireland)	5	1
Filippo	B	(Italy)	4	1
Domas	S	(Lithuania)	2	2
Virgis	G	(Lithuania)	2	1
Wil	S	(Netherlands)	6	1
Bodil	L	(Sweden)	3	1
Reine	J	(Sweden)	4	1

Glossary of Abbreviations used in this report

<i>AA</i>	-	<i>Alcoholics Anonymous</i>
<i>AASN</i>	-	<i>AA Service News</i>
<i>AAWS</i>	-	<i>Alcoholics Anonymous World Services</i>
<i>BME</i>	-	<i>Black and Minority Ethnic</i>
<i>CLINKS</i>	-	<i>Community Links with the Voluntary Sector in Prisons</i>
<i>CSC</i>	-	<i>Conference Steering Committee</i>
<i>ELO</i>	-	<i>Employment Liaison Officer</i>
<i>ESM</i>	-	<i>European Service Meeting</i>
<i>GSB</i>	-	<i>General Service Board</i>
<i>GSO</i>	-	<i>General Service Office</i>
<i>GSPIC</i>	-	<i>General Service Public Information Committee</i>
<i>GSR</i>	-	<i>Group Service Representative</i>
<i>LRS</i>	-	<i>London Region South</i>
<i>NAT</i>	-	<i>Non-Alcoholic Trustee</i>
<i>NHS</i>	-	<i>National Health Service</i>
<i>NSO</i>	-	<i>Northern Service Office</i>
<i>PI</i>	-	<i>Public Information</i>
<i>PICPC</i>	-	<i>Public Information and Co-operation with the Professional Community</i>
<i>PLO</i>	-	<i>Probation Liaison Officer</i>
<i>PR</i>	-	<i>Public Relations</i>
<i>PSA</i>	-	<i>Public Service Announcement</i>
<i>RTLO</i>	-	<i>Regional Telephone Liaison Officer</i>
<i>SIGN</i>	-	<i>Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network</i>
<i>SPSHQ</i>	-	<i>Scottish Prison Headquarters</i>
<i>SSO</i>	-	<i>Southern Service Office</i>
<i>SWOT</i>	-	<i>Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats</i>
<i>TLO</i>	-	<i>Telephone Liaison Officer</i>
<i>TOR</i>	-	<i>Terms of Reference</i>
<i>YPP</i>	-	<i>Young People Project</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 centres may employ special workers.

9 A.A., as such, ought never be organised; 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 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.

