

Board Reports

to

Conference 2022

75th Anniversary Convention

As many of you will be aware AAGB will be holding our 75th Anniversary celebration at Leeds in June this year.

Preparations have been going well with the Committee overcoming the many hurdles that we have all been experiencing this past two years.

We can advise that over 2000 members have now registered to attend, and we would encourage all who intend to be there to pre-register asap.

Pre-registration is required to assist the Leeds Arena understand what Security arrangements they will need to put in place over the weekend.

For those that are fairly new to the Fellowship AAGB hold this celebration every 25 years. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet members from different areas of AAGB and AA members from other countries.

For all those who have offered to volunteer, over the weekend ...many thanks.

For all those from across the Fellowship who have been working with the 75th Committee to prepare for our weekend we are grateful for your Service.

We all know that Service plays a big part in our Recovery and Primary Purpose work, and we hope that our weekend in Leeds will encourage and inspire many more members to be a wee bit more active. Self-supporting is a lot more than just financial contributions.

On that note - Our 75th Committee took on the task of running a financially self-supporting anniversary and to achieve this we need an attendance of around 4700 members so please keep encouraging others to come along.

Stevie S
GSB Trustee, 75th Anniversary Convention

75th Anniversary Publications Working Group

The team met mainly online during the year with a couple of hybrid meetings in September and November. The publication is now in its final stages of editing before being sent to the printer for production in time for our celebrations in Leeds.

Our sincere thanks must go to everyone involved in producing histories for each of the 16 Regions across the AAGB Service Structure. Our thanks also go to everyone who contributed to the Service Discipline histories and those who sent in other articles.

I must add my personal thanks to the members of this working group and to our staff at GSO who have given us their constant support throughout the past 4 years since this project started. I was more than a little apprehensive when I was asked to chair this group in the beginning. However, these apprehensions soon vanished when the team got stuck in and the publication began to take shape. We hope that you will find it both informative and enjoyable.

We also very much look forward to seeing you all at our 75th Anniversary celebrations in Leeds from 10 to 12 June 2022.

Clive K
Chair, 75th Anniversary Publication Working Group

AA Service News

AA Service News (AASN) is the General Service Board's principal medium for communication of service events and developments throughout all regions of AA Great Britain. It is published quarterly, with articles that emphasise in particular matters affecting our Primary Purpose: to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

The annual Winter edition contains the Conference Questions and the Summer edition the recommendations from the General Service Conference in response to those questions.

Additionally, news and details about Parliamentary events in England, Scotland and Wales, and other notable service events are published throughout the year in articles written for and by the Fellowship. These include General Service Board Sub-Committees vacancy notices (and information on how eligible AA members may apply), regional Seventh Tradition and In Memoriam contributions, as well as a Concept or Tradition and a calendar of AA events in Great Britain and overseas.

Historically, copies have been sent to the postal contacts for all Groups registered in the Great Britain Service Structure, to intergroup and regional officers, and to the General Service Board. Since the beginning of the pandemic, widespread closed venues, and the suspension of many face-to-face meetings, digital-only editions have been prepared and circulated via email. This will continue. Recent digital editions have included guidance on how hard copies can be printed locally by groups.

A downloadable PDF of each edition is also posted in the Document Library section of the Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain (AA GB) website.

This year will see a new Editor rotating into post.

If your group is not receiving AASN, please check that your Group Registration details – including an email address – are up-to-date with the General Service Office. (Alternatively, fill out a new registration form – also called the 'Pink Form' – and be sure to include an email address.) If in doubt, please contact the office.

Many thanks to the staff at GSO for their work to collate and pass along information for each issue, and especially to Sharon who maintains the database and who is enormously patient in reminding me of the deadlines.

And finally, a big thanks to all contributors without whose articles and notices AASN could not be published. Your willingness to share your service related experience, strength and hope informs the Fellowship and encourages all of us – and our groups, intergroups and regions – to keep AA's Legacy of Service alive and thriving.

Jo F and Erik A
GSB Trustees, AA Service News

Archives

Response from the Archives Sub-Committee to the Conference question (2021 committee 5, question 3) concerning the transfer of materials from regional and intergroup archives to the AA Archive at the Borthwick Institute.

The committee 5 recommendation is as follows:

1. *The Committee agreed that the best way to keep archive material intact is for it to be moved to GSO/Borthwick for the best protection of the fellowship's history.*
2. *The Committee recommends that there is a request made to Region and Intergroup archivists that material older than 10 years is passed to GSO for storage, bearing in mind the autonomy provided to all by Tradition Four. A minority view was expressed that this request should not be made.*
3. *The Committee agreed that is considering the moral ownership of the material, AA archives belong to the fellowship and not the individual; legal imperative notwithstanding.*

The recommendation continues as follows:

The Committee recommends that the GSB instruct the Archive Sub-Committee to provide clear guidance to the fellowship about items that should be included with the archive material. This guidance should be added to the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain, chapter 11 'Archives'.

The Committee hopes that the above recommendations inform the ongoing review being undertaken by the Archives Sub-Committee of the views of the fellowship on these points.

The Committee recorded a majority in favour of the decision. A minority view that the question should have been postponed until further background information was made available was expressed, fully considered and respected.

These recommendations were considered carefully at the meeting of the Archives Network in York in September 2021, and the discussion there has informed the response by the Archives Sub-Committee to the conference recommendations.

The following important points were made at the Archives Network:

- (i) It came to light that the question had been proposed for conference by a regional archivist (who was present at the Network meeting). Although the recommendations were of course supported by a majority of conference members, it was noted that there was a significant minority view opposed to them.
- (ii) While it was accepted that there is a problem about ensuring the survival of local archives which are threatened with disposal, several members of the Archives Network argued that there are strong objections to the method of ensuring their survival by transferring older materials to GSO for storage in the Borthwick Institute which is proposed in recommendation 2. In particular –
- (iii) Many speakers at the Network Meeting emphasized the importance of keeping local archives local, so as to ensure that they remain accessible to local groups who wish to preserve a record of their own distinctive development, history and achievements. There is here, as many speakers emphasized, an important matter of trust: those who donated materials to their local archive did so in the belief that these materials would remain readily accessible to local groups.
- (iv) This point was reinforced by James Neill in his presentation to the Network, who remarked that the Borthwick Institute does not wish to receive van loads filled with the materials in local archives that are over 10 years old. It would be difficult, and potentially expensive, to find space for all this material in the Institute. Furthermore, it is likely that some of this material duplicates material already in the archive; and even when it does not, much of it is better kept in a local archive where it records local developments that are primarily of value to local groups rather than to the Fellowship as a whole.

Subsequent discussion at the Archives Network started from a proposal made by James Neill, that instead of transferring all materials that are 10 years old or older to the AA Archive at the Borthwick Institute, regional and intergroup archivists should prepare inventories of their archive and submit these to the Borthwick Institute. These inventories would enable archivists at the Borthwick, with help from the Archives SC and the Fellowship Archivist (once one is appointed), to identify materials which would genuinely enhance the AA Archive at the Borthwick Institute, and equally materials not suitable for transfer to the Borthwick. In the case of the former, with the agreement of the local intergroup or region, it should generally be possible to create good quality copies of original papers which can be kept in the Borthwick while the original is preserved in the local archive (or vice-versa, depending on the wishes of the local archivist). An important advantage of this approach is that it would make it possible to develop an extended catalogue of AA Archives, to include materials in intergroup and regional archives as well as that stored in the Borthwick AA Archive.

Some of the archivists present commented that they have extensive archives which are not fully catalogued, and cataloguing such collections might be difficult and take some time. In subsequent discussion it was observed that this practice has in fact been recommended for some time in the Policy and Procedures Manual for Archivists, and its importance is not dependent on this question concerning the possible transfer of materials to the Borthwick Institute. James Neill recently produced an example of a Box Folder Catalogue, and this has been presented to the Archive Network as an appropriate way to catalogue an AA archive which not only lists its content but also its confidentiality status. Furthermore, the AA Archivist at the Borthwick Institute will not be able to process a large number of inventories each year, so there is no expectation that this task can be done quickly - especially where it will require the physical inspection of large amounts of paper etc.. In the end, therefore, there was unanimous support at the meeting for the basic point here, that having created an inventory of the materials in their archive, regional and intergroup archivists should submit a copy of this inventory to the AA archivist at the Borthwick Institute in order to initiate a discussion concerning the selective transfer of important material of national significance to the AA Archive at the Borthwick Institute, while maintaining the strength and vibrancy of local archives.

In developing its response to the conference recommendations, the Archives Sub-Committee endorses this approach. While recognizing that more needs to be said concerning the conference recommendations, the sub-committee observed that this proposal does provide a way of beginning to implement the recommendation that 'the GSB instruct the Archive Sub-Committee to provide clear guidance to the fellowship about items that should be included with the archive material'. For this proposal provides a clear procedure for identifying material which merits transfer to the Borthwick Archive. The committee recognizes that it will not be possible to apply this procedure very quickly: in many cases it will take time for inventories to be prepared and it will also take time for the Borthwick Institute to deal with large numbers of them. But the committee hope that this will be a constructive learning process: once this procedure has been applied to a few archives for which there is already a complete inventory, it will become easier to provide further guidance to archivists preparing an inventory concerning the types of archive material which are likely to merit transfer and those not suitable for transfer.

Going back to the beginning of this discussion, the Archives Sub-Committee recognize that this procedure does not of itself guarantee the safety of an archive threatened with disposal, for example following the death of an archivist. The sub-committee strongly recommend that archivists should guard against disputes about ownership of any AA archive they have been looking after which might arise after their death by including in their will a codicil to the effect that the papers and other materials in the AA archive are the property of their region or intergroup, to which they should be returned after their death. However, even where an archive has been returned there is still no guarantee that it will not be disposed of if the relevant intergroup or region cannot find an archivist to take over the archive

or arrange safe storage of it. In a case of this kind there are two possible situations: either there is at least a partial inventory of the archive which covers the older material, or there is no significant inventory at all. Where there is a partial inventory of the archive under threat, this inventory can be sent to the Borthwick Institute, and a judgment made as to which materials described in the inventory merit transfer to the Borthwick. The remainder are then the responsibility of the relevant intergroup or region, and while the Archives Sub-Committee would strongly recommend that some way be found of preserving at least those materials which make an important contribution to local history, the committee has no resources to make this happen. In a situation of this kind the sub-committee therefore recommend that the relevant intergroup or region should approach the Fellowship Archivist and other archivists in the Archives Network for advice.

Where there is no significant inventory at all, and the relevant intergroup or region cannot find an archivist to take over the archive or arrange safe storage of it, the Archives Sub-Committee recommend that it would be appropriate to refer the matter to GSO so that the situation can be assessed with the advice of the Fellowship Archivist, the Archives Sub-Committee, and the Borthwick Institute. As a last option it should remain possible to 'shelter' an archive in this situation at the Borthwick Institute where the AA archivist can investigate to see if it contains valuable material which merits transfer to the AA Archive at the Borthwick Institute, and, if there is, transfer it. The situation with respect to the remainder is then similar to that described above: the Archives Sub-Committee would strongly recommend to the relevant intergroup or region that some way be found of preserving those materials which make an important contribution to local history, and that they should approach the Fellowship Archivist and other archivists in the Archives Network for advice as to how this can be best achieved.

Several members of the Archives Network reminded the meeting of the value of the injunction: 'keep it simple'. The main procedure recommended here, of relying on inventories prepared by local archivists to facilitate the selection and transfer of materials to the Borthwick Institute (subject to the agreement of the relevant intergroup or region), is relatively straightforward. The courses of action recommended for situations in which there is a threat to an existing archive are not so straightforward, for these situations are inevitably complicated and practicable ways of dealing with them are bound to be similarly complicated. But we hope that situations of this kind will become increasingly rare once the main procedure recommended here has been widely implemented.

Thomas Baldwin
GSB Trustee - Chair, Archives Sub-Committee.

Electronic Communications

In Spring 2021 we were pleased to welcome AA-GB's new Web Manager who joined GSO staff, and ECSC were happy to help her find her way through our large and complex website. Much of the early-stage work was of a housekeeping nature and a great deal of tidying up has already been carried out with some much-needed streamlining of background processes.

Our email service has undergone a major change in the past six months, with migration to a new Gmail-based system, hosted by a known and trusted provider. The changeover ran smoothly on the whole, with a couple of issues which were rapidly dealt with by our new host. Many thanks for the hours of work by GSO and NSO staff who were tasked with the issuing of new passwords and handholding of members when required. We are confident that the new system will be more stable than the previous, and that efficient support will be provided when necessary.

To preserve anonymity and to comply with GDPR, we continue to offer generic email addresses for posts at Intergroup and Region. To avoid delays with their issue, please ensure that the Confidential

Directory is kept up to date using the Intergroup and Region Officer Registration Form available from the website Document Library, which includes an optional request for an aamail.org email address.

The continuing pandemic has seen ongoing activity in Online Response Service and ChatNow. These essential services are moving out of ECSC to join National Telephones SC in forming the new 'First Response' sub-committee. This is a logical transition given that, albeit using different media, the services provided to newcomers are similar, so a consistent message can be passed by all three.

Norman B
GSB Trustee, Electronic Communications Sub Committee

Employment

The Employment Sub-committee has re-grouped and re-organised, with the support of the General Service board Chair and Vice-chair, following the resignation, for various reasons, of several members.

An informative and positive face-to-face Sub-committee meeting was enjoyed on 28/29th January, and face-to-face meetings are planned for 11/12 March and the AGM with RELO's 17/18 June. In the absence of an Employment Liaison Officer, Regions are encouraged to send another representative.

The enthusiastic nucleus of members are continuing interaction with Regions. The "Now You are an Employment Liaison Officer" pamphlet is now available and being distributed. An informative flyer to interest potential Employment Sub-committee members is under preparation.

The "Blue Light" initiative is being continued. Active results with local Employment Liaison Officer involvement are being achieved with Humberside and Dorset Police Welfare teams. Other Police opportunities are being pursued.

A more nationally attractive approach for all "Blue Light" services is under planning.

The value of working with Health and Public Information subcommittees is recognised and encouraged.

Employment presentations for the 75th Anniversary Convention are underway. The Employment room will be continuously attended by Employment Sub-committee members and Regional and Intergroup Employment Liaison Officers are invited to help with this information centre.

The Employment Sub-committee meets monthly on Zoom to informally catch up with our primary purpose, and to care for our wellbeing by sharing.

Charles R
GSB Trustee, Employment

Health

Throughout 2021 the Health Subcommittees' planned events continued to be delayed, disrupted and rescheduled by the pandemic. There is little doubt that it may be extremely difficult for the Health Subcommittee members, the Regional and Intergroup Liaison Officers and the Health discipline at every level to recover from the major impact the pandemic has had on relationships and co-operation built over many years. Working directly with the healthcare professionals continues to be disrupted by the closure of most healthcare facilities to outside visitors.

Undaunted the Health Subcommittee continued to support Health Liaison Officers at Regional and Intergroup level, who in turn continue to meet online to carry out regular Open Meeting Workshops within universities, colleges, hospitals, health practices and other health care facilities throughout AAGB.

Although unable to attend live health conferences, members did manage to attend many virtual events and the Health Subcommittee passed new information and continued to support the Regional and Intergroup Health Liaison officers including updating the website and the file store. The regular virtual meetings allowed a constant flow of communication and became a new tool in our Spiritual toolkit.

When restrictions eased the Health Subcommittee met face to face in July 2021, and plans were revised for the postponed Health seminar to take place in October 2021. A full programme of events was proposed, and although uncertain of their availability, the Health Subcommittee approached a variety of relevant prominent speakers who without hesitation consented to give freely of their time and commitment.

HEALTH SEMINAR

The highly successful seminar was held as a hybrid event to ensure all Government guidelines were adhered to. It also allowed members who preferred not to travel and accommodated members from other AA service disciplines to attend. Chaired by Amanda S, chair of the General Service Board of AAGB, Amanda chose two of the members joining virtually to open the meeting by reading the Preamble and the Statement of Unity.

The opening keynote speaker, ex Non Alcoholic Trustee, Dr Eric Carlin, is now leading the European team to develop the World Health Organization's European Alcohol strategy. Dr Carlin presented an excellent overview of the effects of alcohol worldwide and the ensuing annual alcohol related deaths now exceeding three million, with one in four of those deaths aged 20 -24. He stressed the importance of Health Liaison Officers presenting Alcoholics Anonymous to healthcare professionals to always stress the efficacy of the twelve-step programme, as evidenced in the recently published and highly acclaimed Cochrane Report. Dan Carden, MP for Liverpool, shared his personal experience of AA and recovery and how he broke his anonymity to promote addiction as an illness in the Westminster Parliament. He discussed the high financial cost to the UK economy caused by alcohol harm and stated that the UK Government policy strategy has not been reviewed since 2012. Dan also stressed that he believes in visible recovery, the value of recovery to society and stressed his belief that a recovering alcoholic is an asset to every community.

Ms Debbie, Head of Policy NHS England, described the post pandemic comprehensive model for personalized care, introducing co-operative working with community recovery and linking specialised alcohol nursing teams with local Alcoholics Anonymous liaison officers. One new opening gateway to allow the health discipline to engage with healthcare professionals post pandemic.

Sohan Sohata, shared his long recovery experience in Alcoholics Anonymous and compared this with his personal experience of racism and discrimination in trying to access other support services. He then went on to describe his own Nottingham based project carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic who is often stigmatized, including within their own black Asian and minority ethnic {BAME} communities.

Ex Non Alcoholic Trustee, Dr Sarah Flowers, an addiction specialist working within an NHS twelve step rehabilitation centre, presented a doctor's view of AA. Sarah stated she had been a doctor for twenty-five years before she encountered people in recovery. With the minimum of training on alcohol related harm, it was not until she attended an AA meeting that she understood AA's effectiveness. Dr Flowers

went on to serve on the General Service Board and continues to prescribe recovery, linking patients with AA. She is a strong advocate of Open Meeting Workshops and regularly participates in assisting I/RHLOs in delivering these to student and other healthcare professionals.

The General Secretary, Ranjan B, presented a brief though very informed outline of the structure and the framework of Alcoholics Anonymous GB for the benefit of the non-alcoholic delegates.

Dr Mani Mehdikhani, Non Alcoholic Trustee, General Service Board, summarised the recent 2020 Alcoholics Anonymous quinquennial survey. As always Mani fielded many questions and emphasized the efficacy of the statistics obtained from the survey and their value in underpinning the message when HLOs are delivering presentations and Open Meeting Workshops to health professionals.

The Seminar concluded with a thoroughly informative session, headed 'yes we can' from serving Health Subcommittee and liaison Officers from a wide range of Intergroups/Regions, including Daniele V LRN, Mike A GR, Robin H SER and Navraj D, Birmingham Intergroup who gave a summary of his experience in the new role of Community Liaison Officer. The feedback from the Seminar was very supportive and the following is an example from one AA member.

I found the seminar to be an uplifting experience and it was so valuable and confidence building to be able to hear all the experience of the speakers. I was quite blown away by what the people I heard have accomplished in service, yet with humility and a simple desire to carry the message. I am very grateful to everyone who organised and ran the seminar and who were so welcoming and happy to offer advice. It was a gift and a privilege to be there and to be able to report back to my intergroup, where, working together, I hope we can achieve some good things. We sometimes talk about staying in the middle of the bed. On my drive home, it felt that the bed was a lot bigger than I realised. Edward H

MEDICAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM – ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

In 2019 Alcoholics Anonymous GB was invited by the Medical Council on Alcohol to participate in its annual Symposium which is held in London every November. The event finally took place virtually in November 2021. Alcoholics Anonymous member, Daniele V chaired a live Open Meeting Workshop, supported by six members from London Region North, who shared their experience, strength and hope, a first for this prestigious event. The feedback from the professional audience was considered and highly commended.

Following his presentation, the recipient of the 2021 Max Glatt medal and presenter of the Max Glatt lecture, Dr Peter Rice, Director of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, invited Non Alcoholic Trustees, Mr. Tom Fox and Dr Mani Mehdikhani of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous GB to speak on AA's behalf.

Tom delivered a very moving and thought-provoking complimentary overview of his experience of Alcoholics Anonymous over many years in his role as Corporate Director of the Scottish Prison Service. This was widely appreciated and commented on. One delegate stated that Tom's personal experience and dignified passion for Alcoholics Anonymous was enlightening.

Tom was followed by our longest serving Non Alcoholic Trustee and Clinical Psychologist Dr Mani Mehdikhani's presentation of the analysis of the quinquennial Alcoholics Anonymous survey conducted in 2020. The Medical Council delegates had a particular interest in these statistics as presented and this too was very well received. Dr Mani later participated in the question-and-answer panel shared with Professor John Kelly, professor of addiction medicine at Harvard Medical School and Dr David McCartney, Recovery and Residential Rehabilitation, Edinburgh. The final word went to Dr Mani when he answered the last question which closed this highly lauded Symposium.

Delegate question to Dr Mani. What is it in your opinion that makes Alcoholics Anonymous so successful?

Dr Mani answer: They keep coming back!

Terri S
GSB Trustee for Health

Literature

All literature items were sent out in December and are available on the AAGB website - <https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Document-Library> under Conference Reports and Background / Conference 2022. Hard copies of any of these are available on request.

Prisons

Prisons over the year have been without meetings but are now slowly opening, all being limited to certain days and times due to staff shortages. Vetting & Clearance is causing issues and clarification is needed from the Ministry of Justice.

There has been a lack of refresher training taking place which will be investigated as a matter of safeguarding for volunteers.

The Dorset team received a reward for their service to prisons in their area.

It's the Prisons Sub Committee's aim to have a Seminar in 2023.

The Prison Liaison Officers have been doing a marvellous job in delivering Roundabouts and Shares to the still suffering alcoholics in Prisons, as well as using Postal Sponsorship, these have been well received. I would like to thank all the Prison Liaison Officers and volunteers for their hard work and dedication in these trying times.

Pat McG
GSB Trustee, Prisons

Probation

Probation officers have been working hard and have been represented at the two Zonal meetings that we were able to have during the year at Stirling and Bristol.

There are now eleven area directors for probation in place and we hope there will be a good relationship and co-operation with AA.

The Sub Committee has been busy working through the structure manual taking out CRC details, finishing probation starter pack, arranging templates with the Website Manager, arranging Chit Symbol for meetings, vetting and clearance issues etc.

We will be proposing a Seminar for 2023 for CJS Officers where we can bring everyone up to date and receive questions etc but all in all the probation service is on the up and the service is getting increasingly better as strategic plans start to be introduced.

I would like to thank all Probation Officers for their Service.

Pat McG
GSB Trustee, Probation

Public Information & Communications

The last year has seen a few changes in the Public Information and Communications Sub Committees. Most significantly in July of 2021, the committees were amalgamated into a single entity.

The Communications Sub Committee had been made up entirely of trustees so following the amalgamation of the two committees it was agreed to reduce the numbers of trustees on the new committee.

Over the year the committee was involved in a number of activities including notably the production of a video celebrating 75 years of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain. Members of the committee assisted in the recruitment of volunteers to participate in the filming. It is anticipated that the following conference approval the video will be premiered at the 75th convention later in 2022.

During the year we have helped to deal with a wide range of media enquiries from across the UK and indeed the wider world.

A very good meeting was held in September with liaison officers from across the country, it was great to see everyone face to face after such a long time.

Tom Fox
GSB Trustee, PI & Communications

Survey

The Survey Sub Committee, having produced and delivered the 2020 Survey, has spent the year looking at new and effective ways to disseminate the wealth of information that resulted from the 2020 Survey.

Due to the pandemic the Survey had to be conducted completely online and a lot of valuable lessons were learned, not least of which being the importance of keeping group contact details up to date.

This subcommittee's aim is to coordinate and produce the surveys and they will be producing a comprehensive handover report which will enable continuity for the surveys going forward.

There are currently 3 members of the Sub-Committee along with two trustees and the Fellowship Project Administrator from GSO. The Sub-Committee is looking to recruit into the two remaining posts and would like to encourage those with some electronic communications skills as well as an interest in surveys and general communication. An outside professional organisation is involved in collating the data from the survey.

Gretchen S
GSB Trustee, Survey Sub Committee

Telephones

Very recently, given the similarities of the Chat Now and the Online Response services with the National Helpline service, it seemed sensible to combine these first response services. Everyone involved with these services welcomed the move. The Board agreed that there should be a one-year trial of this new arrangement. As a result, the National Telephone Sub Committee (NTSC) has now been renamed the First Response Sub Committee (FRSC).

A full report on the three services will be produced before conference 2022. As will a summary of work carried out by the subcommittee reviewing the national telephone service as a whole (A Conference 2021 request). In addition to this, it's the aim of the subcommittee to provide guidance on training and safeguarding for the telephone service.

Jonathan P.
GSB Trustee, First Response Sub Committee

Young People

As with all disciplines carrying the message of hope has been our primary purpose. 2021 has been another difficult year. Earlier in the year we had a zoom meeting for Region and Intergroup YPLO's as well as holding 3 Sub Committee meetings on zoom.

In August we held a Region Young Persons Liaison Officers meeting face to face in York where we got YP's views on safeguarding. During our meetings this year we have looked at literature and pamphlets available for young people and submitted revisions to the 'Younger people in AA' pamphlet to the Literature Sub Committee who have chosen 4 new stories from the ones collected. The rest of the stories submitted by young people will be forwarded to Share and Roundabout.

In November we held our second Road Show in Leeds. We invited young people to encourage them into service and young at heart members to see how they could sponsor young people into service. The day went well despite the awful weather causing a number of people to cancel.

The Young Peoples section of the AA GB web site is being revamped to make it more user friendly and bring it up to date.

Over the past year we have looked at how we can be involved in the 75th Anniversary Convention to raise the profile of Young People in the Fellowship. Lots of ideas are being put forward to the 75th Committee and many young people have volunteered.

The YP Sub Committee are putting forward names of young people to be considered as speakers at the 75th convention.

Roundabout

With the immediacy of the meeting closures due to the pandemic, few groups thought to cancel or renew their Roundabout magazine subscriptions.

The General Service Board moved quickly to facilitate Roundabout being uploaded to the AAGB Website as a free download for the first twelve months, followed by a subscription fee of fifty pence thereafter. The wider Fellowship appreciated this gesture and the more computer competent members were able to share copies with housebound members.

The unopened dusty envelopes, containing the group subscription magazines lying behind closed meetings doors did not go to waste. They were made available when the meetings went live again to newcomers and donated to Prisons, Hospital waiting rooms, GP Surgeries, Pharmacies and any other venue where potential members are in attendance. These were warmly welcomed within the institutions also in lockdown.

New editor, Cath W, lead the editorial team and along with proof readers Moira C and Dilys H and the Link Liaison Officer Ian McN, they continue to review and refresh each edition. Throughout lockdown the Roundabout Subcommittee continued to regularly meet virtually with the Intergroup and Regional LOs and were delighted to meet again face to face at their Workshop at Pitlochry in February 2022. This Workshop produced new and innovative ideas which they hope will ensure Roundabout magazines sustainability in this media age.

The Roundabout magazine celebrated its 70th Anniversary in February 2021 and a celebratory Yearbook was printed to mark the occasion. This has been praised by those members who have already purchased a copy from the literature department of GSO and copies will be on sale at the 75th Anniversary Celebration at the Leeds Arena in June 2022 also. Please visit the Roundabout service and hospitality room at this celebration and share your experience, strength and hope for inclusion in a future issue of Roundabout. A warm welcome awaits you.

The role that the Roundabout magazine has played within the Fellowship, particularly in Scotland but never forgetting our worldwide subscribers, cannot be exaggerated and the Roundabout Subcommittee with the support of the General Service Board and the Fellowship of AAGB will continue to produce a monthly edition of 'our meeting in print'

Terri S
GSB Trustee, Roundabout

Share

In spite of the seemingly endless situation, with all its ongoing restrictions, Share, your "Meeting between meetings" continues to thrive. This is down to the dedicated team who have continued to work tirelessly throughout the year to ensure seamless production of the magazine.

The team met online during the year. This included an online seminar in July which our sister magazine in Scotland, Roundabout, was invited to participate in. Lively and topical discussions ensued and it proved to be an immensely enjoyable experience for all who attended.

My sincere thanks go to all Share Team members, along with our dedicated Staff at GSO and all contributors throughout our wonderful Fellowship who have ensured that Share continues to be our "Meeting between meetings".

The Share team look forward to seeing you all at the 75th Anniversary celebrations in Leeds from 10 to 12 June 2022.

Clive K
GSB Trustee, Share

National Conventions

Northern

The Northern National Convention was sadly cancelled in March 2020 and March 2021 as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

The Committee met online on a regular basis with their first face to face meeting (AGM) being held at the Norbreck Castle Hotel in September 2021

At that meeting, it was agreed that the 46th Convention would be held 18th-20th March 2022.

Since then, the committee has worked together in the true spirit of Fellowship to organize and finalise the arrangements for an event that will hopefully put the difficulties of the last two years behind us all.

Barbara O
GSB Trustee, NNC

Scottish

The SNCC (Scottish National Convention Committee) have advised that this year's Scottish National Convention will go ahead face to face at the Stirling Court Hotel this year from May 20th till 22nd.

The venue lies in the grounds of Stirling University with the meetings taking place in the Theatre next to the hotel.

It's an ideal venue and anyone attending will no doubt have a great weekend.

Due to Hotel Covid restrictions the attendance will be limited to 300 so pre-registration will be required. Please see the flyers or visit the AAGB website for details or the Convention email site convention.snc@aamail.org for more information.

We would like to thank all members of the Committee for their continued dedication, especially over the past two years.

Stevie S
GSB Trustee, SNC

Welsh

In 2021, Wales and Borders Region offered a very warm welcome to a virtual convention which was held on the 5th of June. This one-day Convention was thought to be a success by all who took part. A bonus in having a virtual convention was the chance for people from around the world to take part – quite an emotional experience for the Welsh diaspora amongst others.

The planning is well advanced for the Convention to be held on the 27th to the 29th May 2022. The theme will be “*Sobriety – together stronger*” or in Welsh “*Sobrwydd Cryfder gyda’n gilydd*”. There is every hope that this can be a real convention but there are plans to hold it as a hybrid. In part to build on one of the pluses of last year’s virtual convention -- the attendance of people from around the world. We will follow the usual format of having meetings in English as well as a Welsh Language meeting, (there will be simultaneous translation for English listeners). There will be Come and Go meetings and a Share magazine workshop.

As always, all are welcome to this jewel of a convention in the heart of Wales. held at the Metropole Hotel, Llandridod Wells.

Jonathan P
GSB Trustee, WNCC

Parliamentary Events

Westminster

In 2021 the presentation was necessarily offered by “Zoom”, facilitating participation by delegates from throughout the U.K. An excellent attendance reflected this opportunity.

The meeting was introduced by our A.A. committee member, being sponsored and chaired by Caroline Ansell M.P.

Alison Keating, Head of Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco at Public Health England spoke on the impact of alcohol misuse on public health.

Female and male A.A. members explained their experiences of alcoholism and recovery.

Andrew Wetherall, a Non-alcoholic Board Trustee, spoke on alcoholism and mental health.

There were opportunities for questions and answers and ‘signposting’.

A face-to-face meeting is scheduled for 12th May, 2022 at Portcullis House, Westminster Parliament.

It will be sponsored and chaired by Dan Carden M.P., the chair of the “All Party Parliamentary Group on Alcohol Harm”.

Preparations are supported by monthly meetings of the organising committee, including: - the invitation of professional and A.A. speakers; agreeing the best time schedule for M.P.s to attend; confirming details of requirements for the event.

THE significant challenge is always attracting delegates and committing their proposed attendance by them obtaining a registered invitation for admittance to Portcullis House, where security is strict. The presentation is prepared for all who are involved in environments affected by the influence of alcohol, to clarify the help our Fellowship can offer anybody suffering alcohol addiction/abuse. Our General Service Office supervises the invitations. Regional and Intergroup Liaison Officer and Group members are requested to suggest attendance at this presentation to all parties to whom they have been “Carrying our Message”.

Charles R
GSB Trustee

Scottish

It is with regret that I report that the Scottish Parliamentary event has yet again been postponed due to the Pandemic. The event continues to be supported and sponsored by an MSP, the participating speakers on behalf of the Scottish Government and NAT Tom Fox and ex NAT Dr Eric Carlin are primed and available, along with AA members.

Terri Semple
Trustee Scottish Parliament

Welsh

The last event took place at the “The Pierhead”, Welsh Assembly Campus Cardiff on the 25th of November 2021.

The presentation -- whose title was -- “Alcoholics Anonymous: ‘AA and Mutual Aid Facilitation’ “-- was hosted by Mike Hedges MS.

The aim was to help professionals and parliamentarians get a better understanding of Alcoholics Anonymous. One of our key objectives is to dispel the myth that AA is in any way a ‘secret society’. While our members are anonymous, our organisation is most definitely not.

The presentation included a welcome and opening remarks from Mike Hedges MS, followed by a response from the Trustee for Wales and Borders Region of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Chair of Wales & Borders Region (Stewart B.) contributed followed by two members of the fellowship sharing their experience strength and hope. We concluded with a Question & Answer session from the floor and buffet refreshments.

One of the notable things about this event was the significant increase in the numbers of Welsh Parliamentarians and their staff attending.

The event was much appreciated by all who took part.

Jonathan P.
GSB Trustee