

FINAL REPORT

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
GREAT BRITAIN

Fiftieth
General Service Conference

17-19 April 2015
The Henley Suite
Park Inn Hotel, North Street, York

*In the Spirit
of
Love and Service*



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General Service Conference

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FIFTIETH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2015

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DIGEST OF AGENDA

Friday 17 April 2015

Registration and Reception

Opening Session

Committee Meetings Commence

Nominations - Conference Chair 2016

Presentation of
General Service Board Reports
(Session 1)

Saturday 18 April 2015

Committee Meetings Continue

Presentation of
General Service Board Reports
(Session 2)

Open Forum

Sunday 19 April 2015

Presentation of Committee Reports

Election of Chair for the Fifty-First General Service
Conference

Confirmation of
Board Members Elect

Closing Address

FRIDAY 17 APRIL

The Fiftieth 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 and the General Service Office. All full sessions were held in the Henley Suite.

After lunch, registration and distribution of folders commenced at around 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 2.45pm, Committee proceedings commenced at 4.00pm including welcome and introduction to Committees.

The Conference comprised 94 delegates from sixteen Regions; 22 members of the General Service Board, Nicki W - Conference Chair (Eastern Region), Roundabout representative, Share Editor, the General Secretary and 5 members of staff from the General Service Office. Also in attendance were 11 Observers from the following countries:

Belgium	1
Denmark	1
Germany	1
Ireland	2
Poland	2
Portugal	1
Romania	2
Slovenia	1

Total in attendance 136.

Opening of Conference by Nicki W (Conference Chair 2015)

Hello Conference, my name is Nicki and I am an alcoholic. I'd like to welcome you all to the fiftieth General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain. A very special welcome to the first year delegates known affectionately as 'red dotters', I certainly know how daunting it is to attend your first Conference and I hope you find it an enchanting experience and I know you will receive plenty of support, love and guidance from everybody here. For returning delegates, Board members and staff welcome back and a special welcome to our observers we are all glad that you are here.

I would like to thank the Conference Steering Committee – Andrew, Craig, Jeroen, Jim F, Jim G, Terry, our two Board members Roger and Tom along with Roger and Sharon from GSO. Thank you for all your dedication, hard work and support.

Could we have a moment's silence to remember why we are here and the still suffering alcoholic.

I will now open the meeting with the Preamble:

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

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.

AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organisation or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

Now A Declaration of Unity:

*This we owe to A.A.'s future;
To place our common welfare first;
To keep our Fellowship united.
For on A.A. unity depend our lives,
And the lives of those to come.*

Nicki then invited the General Secretary, Roger B to read the Twelve Traditions and then continued with her **Keynote Address:**

In the Spirit of Love and Service

Hello Conference, my name is Nicki and I am an alcoholic. It is my pleasure and privilege to share some of my experience of love, service and my journey in Alcoholics Anonymous.

When deciding on the theme for Conference, I prayed for guidance and it came to me whilst at my home group which is a Step and Traditions meeting. We were reading from the twelve and twelve and the phrase "In the Spirit of Love and Service" jumped out at me, as this has been my experience in my time in recovery so far. Through love, guidance and support I have been blessed with people coming into my life at the right time to show me the next right thing to do.

I was sponsored into service early in my sobriety, by my first sponsor Margaret who would nominate me for any service she was rotating out of. From emptying the ash trays (yes, you could smoke in meeting then!) making the tea, washing up, becoming greeter, then literature, treasurer and secretary. I was always guided, taught and even allowed to learn from my mistakes but was never judged. I was always told I could ask questions at any time and there was always someone who would help me. This I realise now in hindsight, was my first experiences of unconditional love in the Fellowship.

The first Conference I attended as a Red Dotter was another spiritual experience, to have the responsibility to be a trusted servant and pass on the views and opinions of each member from each group. To feel the love in the room, as the answer is formulated and know this is the conscience of the Fellowship as a whole. To be a part of AA growing, moving with the times and keeping the Fellowship safe for the newcomers yet to come.

I would like to thank Eastern Region who took the time to prepare me and my fellow delegates for Conference, by having an hour meeting before every Region meeting and having past delegates present who shared their experience. We were given the opportunity to ask any questions on what to prepare and what to expect. We were also told that even though we may come to Conference with a view from the Region, that if during the sessions we changed our mind on the response, we had every right to go with our conscience.

At Conference last year, I was full of fear about not being good enough as Chair of my Committee. Having to stand on stage and present the conscience of Committee 5. I remember calling my sister who is also in the Fellowship on the Saturday night in tears. She told me; by doing the service I do in AA it's my way of giving back. She told me she had faith in me and that God was always with me. Even though I took some comfort from her words of support, I had a

sleepless night and woke early in following morning unable to face breakfast. I remember sitting on the stage in the morning and being gripped with fear, but as the Chair called my name I stood up and God removed my fear. God had done for me what I couldn't do for myself. I remember even though members shared their feeling on the response, I only felt love and support in the room. I experienced what had been previously mentioned, it is ok to disagree without being disagreeable. It truly was an example to me of Love, Service and Unity.

I've been sober in Alcoholics Anonymous for over 22 years a day at a time, I came in as a scared and frightened child and through the programme of recovery, the grace of God and service I was shown a way I could change and become a better person who I like today.

I was always told never to become complacent or become distant from AA, to give back wherever possible and so I try to continue to the best of my ability to reach out my hand to the newcomer and show that a sober way of life is more than they can image. I believe in our saying "you have to give it away to keep it".

Service has played a big part of my recovery and still does today; it has and continues to help me grow as a person. When I was asked if I wanted to go forward as Chair of Conference, my immediately response was absolutely not. This was due to fear of not being good enough and believing someone else would do a far better job, than I could do. But I asked for guidance yet again from my sponsor and trusted friends in the Fellowship, who told me to put my name in the ring and see what happens. I decided I wouldn't let fear stop me and I would leave the decision up to Conference and God, but I cannot explain how shocked I was when my name was called and my only comment was "God has a great sense of humour and I will do the job to the best of my ability".

I have had great examples from members and was told to "keep in the middle of the bed", as it's harder to fall out that way. I believe the disease I suffer from is all about "self" and by continuing to do service it helps me think of others, to grow spiritually and to always be there for the newcomer, least I forget where I have come from.

By continuing to do service and living a spiritual way of life we remain safe and protected. Thank you.

Nicki went on to introduce each of the six Committee Chairs to Conference and then handed over to Andrew H, alternate Conference Chair to give his report.

Conference Steering Committee Report

Andrew H (North East Region), Alternate Chair

My name is Andrew and I am an alcoholic, I have the honour this year of serving our fellowship in the role of Alternate Conference Chair. As part of that role, I am asked to write a report on the activities of the Steering Committee for AA Service News.

This is the 50th AA Conference in the UK and the Steering Committee and Conference this year is chaired by Nicki W from Eastern Region. The other members of the Committee are the chairs of the six Conference Committees, elected at Conference this year. The six Chairs decide and vote on which questions submitted by the Fellowship, are selected using the Terms of Reference for Conference 2015 and for the Fellowship to answer. Also on the Committee is our General Secretary (Roger B), Sharon from GSO (Conference Co-ordinator) and two members of the General Service Board (Tom S and Roger E). These four members do not vote but offer invaluable advice and guidance through their wisdom and experience.

Having found AA in January 2004, I spent about eighteen months after my first meeting continuing to drink and attend meetings. However, I eventually took my last drink but still needed much more than just not drinking. I had no intention of being involved in service; I

thought I could take what I wanted and not give anything back. The Fellowship had other ideas and I was elected as a Greeter when just a few weeks sober. After a few weeks I was no longer required for that role as somebody else, who was newer and had a few weeks sobriety was given the position. My first lesson in rotation, I hadn't wanted the job but I didn't want to give it up either. I was advised I could still help within in the Group!

Shortly afterwards I volunteered to help with refreshments and did this service with a man who has been a great influence on me ever since. He was involved in Intergroup and Region, I didn't know what this meant but it sounded interesting. From this beginning I became involved in various aspects of service within my home group as a GSR, a liaison post at Intergroup and a role in Region. This lead me to becoming a Conference Delegate in 2013, I was 7 years sober. I had decided that I would be 10 years sober before I considered Conference. However the subject kept coming up and I mentioned it to an old friend from my original home group, little did I know that he was the Chair of his Committee at Conference. He asked if I wanted to know God's will for me and if I did, I needed to put myself in the position for him to carry it out. With this and other encouragement I sought nomination through my Region and here I am not yet ten years sober and at my third Conference.

I felt truly honoured when Committee Six elected me as their Chair and when I was passed the brown envelope with the minutes etc. of the previous Steering Committee meetings and read them, I felt a fear and anxiety that I would not be up to the job.

The Steering Committee met for the first time on 9th May at GSO. Following the reading of the Preamble and the Traditions a Secretary (Jim G – London Region North)* and Alternate Chair (me – North East Region) were elected. The General Secretary (Roger B) took us through the History of the Conference Steering Committee, Guidance Notes, Conference Steering Committee and Conference Chair's initial briefings and advised us to read thoroughly before the next meeting. We then discussed the Terms of Reference and looked at the recommendations of Conference 2014 and agreed the Agenda for Conference 2015. Nicki W (Chair) proposed the theme of '**In the Spirit of Love and Service**' for Conference 2015, this was accepted unanimously. Although it was planned to continue the meeting on 10th May, this was not required.

It was then time to wait for the questions to arrive. These were sent out in blocks by Sharon (GSO) and each of the CSC members looked at the questions against the criteria for suitability in the CSC Terms of Reference. By the time all questions were submitted there were 54 in total. We met again on 19th and 20th September to go through and vote on which questions to accept, or agree to contact the questioner for clarification. Arriving at this meeting I felt a great sense of inadequacy, thinking that the other Chairs would know exactly what they were doing and I had done it all wrong. As always in AA, when I went into the meeting I realised my fears were unfounded and I certainly wasn't alone. Over this weekend we were able to work through all the questions taking each question and deciding whether it was accepted, rejected or referred back to the submitter. Some questions required further discussion, so we set aside time at the end of the meeting to go through in more detail. This way we were able to look at all questions and request for minor modifications if required or suggest that more background information was required.

There was a theme running through one area of questioning so we took the most pertinent of these and asked for minor rewording to ensure all areas of all questions on this theme were answered. For all questions that were accepted with minor rewording, we all thank the submitters for replying promptly. Having accepted the questions that were to be asked at Conference 2015, the Committee Chairs set about allocating the questions to the relevant Committees. This was done by expressing an interest in a question but for the most part names went in the hat to ensure fairness.

As the result of the questions submitted we also took inventory of the Steering Committee process and have added an additional Term of Reference for updating and feedback on questions

that have been referred to a Subcommittee, this will enable the questioner to be updated. The Committee Chairs were allocated the unaccepted questions and wrote to each questioner explaining in full the reasons for their questions not being accepted. Some questioners requested further detail and all members of the CSC provided feedback through our Chair Nicki and Conference Co-ordinator Sharon

In our February meeting we ensured we were all aware of our responsibilities over the weekend of Conference. We also discussed potential changes to the Chairs' briefing notes based on our experience of Service on the Steering Committee and made minor alterations.

I feel greatly honoured to have been allowed the honour of serving the Fellowship in this role and would like to thank the man who sponsored me through the Twelve Steps and still does. Also a great thanks to all of you who have made this fellowship a wonderful place to put at the heart of my life.

*This was recorded as Jeroen S (Continental European Region in AA Service News – My error).

Roger B, General Secretary, was asked to read the orientation containing last-minute changes and safety information, and the National Convention dates which are:

Scottish Convention – 8th – 10th May 2015
Welsh Convention – 29 – 31st May 2015
Southern Convention – 4th – 6th September 2015
Northern Convention – 18th – 20th March 2016

Nicki went on to explain the voting procedure and how these votes would be counted to which Conference agreed and eight tellers were selected from 2nd year delegates to undertake this task for the whole weekend.

The first full session of Conference ended at 3.45 pm with Nicki asking everyone to join her in saying the Serenity Prayer.

FRIDAY EVENING

Nicki welcomed everyone back and opened the second full session of Conference at 7.45 pm with a moment's silence and the Preamble, asked for nominations for Conference Chair 2016 before handing over to Willie MacD, Chair of the Board, to introduce the General Service Board Report.

NOMINATIONS FOR CONFERENCE CHAIR 2016

The under mentioned were proposed and seconded for the Chair of the Fifty-First General Service Conference 2016:

Terry A	-	London Region South
Dan F	-	Continental European Region
Jim F	-	Scotia Region
Andrew H	-	North East Region
Jeroen S	-	Continental European 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.

General Service Board Report

(Willie MacD – Chair GSB)

Good evening Conference, my name is Willie and I am an alcoholic, it is my privilege and honour, as Chair of the Board of Trustees, to present the Board Reports to Conference.

Firstly, a warm welcome to each and every one of you, especially our first year delegates and our delegates who are in their final year. I would also like to thank the overseas observers for attending our Conference and this year we have eleven, the second year delegates who have gained the experience from last year and who will be next year's third year delegates with all that experience under their belts. A big thank you to the alternates especially those who have arrived at short notice and I would like to add that you are not expected to know everything, none of us are, just be calm and enjoy the Conference.

I would like to thank Nicki, Conference Chair, and the Conference Steering Committee for all the hard work that they have done over the past year.

My thanks to the General Service Office staff, lead by our General Secretary, Roger Booth, for their ongoing work, commitment and support and also to the staff at our Northern and Service Offices.

The General Service Board have carried out and completed all the recommendations proposed by Conference 2014.

During the course of Conference, Trustees will be presenting their reports/proposals in the usual manner and I have no wish to pre-empt them. We will have reports from Joe, Honorary Treasurer, Telephones, Literature, Probation/Criminal Justice, a report from two of our non-alcoholic Trustees, a joint report from Share and Roundabout, Public Information and Electronic Communications. That time is allocated by the Conference Steering Committee and we try to make the best use of it and get as many Board reports as we can. The ones that are not being reported here at Conference will be included in the final report.

A Probation and Criminal Justice Services seminar was held at York in June 2014.

The Young People's project continues at pace, A Message for Young People animation video has been approved by the Board and is now completed and available to view on the website.

Public Information continue to run events at Westminster, Holyrood, and the Welsh Assembly. Our Non Alcoholic Trustees represent us at a public level, co-operating with the professional community. We have had a presence at 19 professional conference and exhibitions in the past year.

The next European Service Meeting will be held at York in October 2015 and two of our Board members will attend as first and second term delegates.

In October 2014, Roger Booth and I attended the World Service Meeting in Warsaw Poland. This year Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain sponsored the Czech Republic thus allowing them to send a delegate to attend on their behalf. A separate report has been written and, since attending the meeting, the Board has agreed to send an annual donation to the International Literature Fund, which this year was £5000.

The Sub Sahara South African Service Meeting will be held in June this year in Johannesburg. This meeting is jointly funded by GSO USA/Canada and GSO GB and helps carry the message to developing countries by the sharing of experience.

Board Trustees attend four Board meetings and workshops a year. We have sixteen Sub-Committees, four National conventions, three Parliamentary events, a World Service Meeting, a European Service Meeting, Sub Sahara South African Meeting, two Forums which Trustees have taken part in, North West 14th June and South East 16th November.

Trustees have attended the Danish, Polish, German and Romanian Conferences in the past year sharing their experience, strength and hope.

My personal sincere thanks to our Board Trustees, alcoholic and non alcoholic for their dedication, hard work, support and who freely give their time, in fulfilling our primary purpose of carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. As always Trustees will be present throughout Conference to answers questions.

Finance

(Joe H – Treasurer GSB)

My name is Joe and I am an alcoholic and I have the honour of being Honorary Treasurer. I would like to present the financial report from the Annual Report which every group in our GB structure received and all the figures will be taken from that.

My report is split into three different parts:

- Provide overview of 2013/14 Financial Year's account
- Focus on cost of literature and Gift Aid
- Provide an update on Group & Inter group contributions for current financial year.

Looking at a summary of the finances:

	YEAR TO SEPTEMBER 2014 all funds	YEAR TO SEPTEMBER 2013 all funds
INCOME	£1,282,837	£1,375,104
	Down by £92,267	
EXPENDITURE	£1,260,484	£1,228,118
	Increase of £32,366	
SURPLUS	£22,353 Before investments	£146,986 Before investments
	Down by £124.633	

The centre column is the relevant column for the 2013/14 financial year and the right hand column is the comparator of the previous year. It does involve all funds that's the unrestricted and the restricted funds and our income went down by over £92,000 to £1,200,000. The expenditure went up by over £32,000 compared with the previous year to over £1,200,000 and the surplus before taking into account the movement of investments was over £22,000 compared with the previous year of £146,000 so that was down by over £124,000.

Looking overall at the balance sheet which takes into account fixed assets which are fixtures and fittings of three offices, current assets such as literature which we have bought but not yet sold and it covers both restricted and unrestricted funds. The restricted funds being the Development Fund and the European Service Meeting Fund. All that on the balance sheet came to a total of over £2,100,000.

It is not all cash that we can spend and to get a closer view of that we need to take out the fixed assets, take out the current assets and just look at the cash that is available that, if we needed to, we could get our hands on and that would include investments, cash on deposit and what is in the current account. At the end of September that total came to over £1,800,000. From that we need to subtract the Prudent Reserve (which is over 1.25 year's expenditure and operating costs) and that is set at £1,600,000. So take that away from the £1,800,000 and we are left with just over £279,000. That for us is a very significant figure because that we look at week in and week out as it tells us whether we can pay the bills without dipping into the Prudent Reserve.

Having monitored that all year and look at the figure there of £279,000 I can state that despite the fall in contributions and our overall surplus, we were still in a stable financial position at the end of September 2014.

Focusing on the cost of literature. In the Accounts it should read Literature Income and that includes income from Share, Roundabout, diaries and calendars and all other literature sold. Literature expenses include the cost of external printing.

**Example taken from financial year
end 2013/14 all funds**

Literature Income	= £538,446
	LESS
Literature Expenses	= £191,717
Surplus	= £346,729

This surplus covers the following:

In order to drive down the unit cost of a book what we have to do within as much as we can afford is to buy in bulk. That's good but unfortunately we don't have the space at GSO to store them so what we have to do is hire part of a warehouse at Pocklington, a town near York and we keep the mass storage there and bring them to GSO as necessary. The cost of that is covered by the surplus. The subsidy for damaged literature is covered by the surplus and the damaged literature, particularly coming over from America, is significant. The shipping in of books from America that is also quite a significant expense. Hot off the press is the fact that we have just got the Licence from AA World Services to print Language of the Heart over here, so that is one less book but we will still have to bring books over here for the foreseeable future from America, because things like AA Comes of Age, Dr Bob and the Good Oldtimers, Pass it On we just don't sell enough of them in this country to make it economically viable.

Where we can do internal printing we do so and there is a cost of ink which is covered in the surplus, photocopying, all the postage, staff and associated premises overheads. The Public Information leaflets, there were 19 professional Conferences that we attended and all of those required professional leaflets from ourselves – PI leaflets as opposed to the 'free' literature.

The 'free of charge' literature comes out of the surplus, the Confidential Directory circulated to every trusted servant, all the stationery, the Illustrated Literature Catalogue and more that are covered by the surplus.

Gift Aid. During Intergroup and Regional discussions you may have come across the fact that Gift Aid has changed. However, it has not changed for Alcoholics Anonymous, it came in for all UK charities with a Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GSAD) but HMRC does not apply this to Alcoholics Anonymous. Two reasons are because of the way we collect our monies through various anonymous voluntary donations and, secondly, because there is the issue that we want to know who is Gift Aiding money to Alcoholics Anonymous and that they are members of AA.

Gift Aiding means that we can claim the tax back a person paid on the donation made to AA. The form is still on our website or obtainable from GSO. Donations don't have to be Gift Aided but it is good if they are and personal donations up to £10,000 can be made per year.

This also includes legacies of the same amount. What we have come across in the past is that some people have said that, yes, leaving a legacy to AA is all well and good but it means that because a last will and testament is a matter of public record my membership of Alcoholics Anonymous is going to be public. You can get round that quite simply by just making out what is called a Side Letter with an instruction line in your last will and testament to say that the

Solicitor has been given a Side Letter that I wish him to put into action, and then there is no question that in your will you are saying that you are a member of AA.

Update on Group and Intergroup Contributions as of 31/3/15.

For the second quarter of this current financial year, from January to March 2015, that is up by over £42,000 to £210,600 for this year and looking at the year to date which takes in the first quarter and the second quarter that's up nearly £33,000 on last year to £304,000.

The only fact on expenditure that I have to give you has already been given by Willie which is the £5,000 to the World Literature Fund. I can see other expenditures down the pipeline but I want to give facts to Conference not guesstimations.

Looking ahead to the forthcoming year we have currently the reserves to maintain all services to the Fellowship and support projects to raise professional and public awareness of AA and to carry its message of recovery.

Summing up we are still in a stable financial position, as long as Group and Intergroup contributions remain regular.

Thank you and the Regions you represent for your contributions.

Telephones

(Judy F)

My name is Judy and I am an alcoholic and the discipline I am responsible for is Telephones. Before I begin on the presentation of the proposal I would like to thank the Sub Committee that we have, there are only three members, four with me, who worked really hard in order that I could produce this presentation. Whilst I am on this subject if anyone would like to join the Committee please get in touch with me because we really do want to increase the numbers as we do have a lot to do.

On the 31st October last year we signed a new contract for the 0845 number and we are now paying 1.1p per minute in order to use the 0845 helpline number. All of this is in the report sent out in February.

I think one of our biggest achievements this year has been the 50% reduction that we got for entry into the BT phonebook and that was negotiated by our Treasurer, Davy, and that was backdated to January and is taking effect now.

Proposal to Conference 2015

Ofcom have now released their final recommendations regarding the clarification of, and making transparent the cost implications of calling non-geographic numbers. The NTSC can confirm that continuing to use a non-geographic number will NOT involve revenue sharing – we will not, therefore, be contravening Tradition 7.

From 26th June, 2015 all Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) literature will have to display the following disclaimer

'Calls from mobile phones to 0845 numbers may incur a charge from the mobile network'

The present situation is as follows:

Whichever number the fellowship decides to use there will be a charge of £50.00 per quarter plus charges detailed below based on a call minute commitment of 200,000.

Underachievement Charges (UAC's):

All commitment tariffs are liable for UAC's; customers achieving a minimum of 90% of commitment will not be liable. UAC's are applied if you fail to achieve 90% of your commitment.

As an example, committing to 200,000 call minutes for the 0845 number, the following is true:

1. If you achieve 90% (i.e. 180,000 call minutes) - No UAC's applies
2. If you achieve 85% (i.e. 170,000 call minutes) - £490 UAC's applies
3. If you achieve 80% (i.e. 160,000 call minutes) - £620 UAC's applies"

0845:

Cost TO AA:

1.10 pence per minute (ppm), (Negotiated from 2.10 ppm).
Approximate annual cost £2,200.00

Cost to the Caller:

No more than 4 pence per minute from a BT Landline, various costs if called from another Landline provider or from a mobile network (30-50 ppm; for Pay-as-you-Go users, the cost would be between 8 - 40ppm.).

0800:

Cost TO AA: Before any negotiation 3.6ppm. Approximate annual cost £7,200.00.

Cost to the Caller: Currently various if not called from BT landline Free for all callers from 26 June 2015

0300:

Cost TO AA: Before any negotiation 3.4ppm. Approximate annual cost £6,800.00

Cost to the Caller: Same as calling a 01 or 02 number no real difference whether they call from a landline or mobile unless they have exceeded their call plan allowance with their mobile provider

Estimated costs for calls to AA Helplines

Cost per call	0845	03xx	0800
Cost to caller (landline)	4ppm from BT – subject to call plan.	Various: subject to subscribers call plan	Currently various if not called from BT landline Free for all callers from 26 June 2015
Cost to caller (mobile)	8 - 50ppm	Various: subject to subscribers call plan	Currently various if not called from BT landline Free for all callers from 26 June 2015
Cost to AA	1.1 ppm	3.4ppm	3.6ppm

Estimated costs for calls to AA Helplines

Total cost to AA	0845	03xx	0800
Cost to AA (based on 200,000 minutes p.a.)	£2,200	£6,800	£7,200

The Terms of Reference for the telephone service state that our responsibility as a Committee is not only to review the existing telephone service but also '*...to enable the suffering alcoholic access to a local contact through a single national telephone number, in a manner which is efficient, effective and economic.*

The NTSC and the General Service Board (GSB) considered the financial implications of all three options. We also took into consideration the overall decline in call volumes to the current 0845 number in recent years. It was concluded that it would be in the best interests of both our Fellowship and the suffering alcoholic to offer a free phone helpline from June 2015.

The GSB and the NTSC, therefore, recommend to Conference that we adopt an 0800 National telephone number.

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

Literature

(Carol H)

My name is Carol and I am an alcoholic and I am also the Chair of the Literature Committee who I would like to thank, both the current members and those who rotated out over the past year for their commitment and hard work. In total we lost five members during the year and although we now have three new members we are still short of people, and we really need more members.

In our Terms of Reference we require a minimum of four with a maximum of eight and right now we have three and that is not an ideal situation. If Conference sends us recommendations we can cope with these but it may be difficult to fulfil our remit in other areas as much as we would like to such as requests from Sub Committees and Liaison Officers to review pieces of literature, our ongoing review of all literature and requests from individual members of the Fellowship. This means we may be hesitant in taking on new work if we have not got the Committee members to deal with it and in the end it is you, the membership, who are short

changed. Please take this request back to your Regions and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Our job description is on the website under the Members section, in the Document Library and also under Service Vacancies and it will be in the next issue of AA Service News. At this moment a piece is being written, by a member of the Committee, about the joys of being on the Literature Committee and it really is good. The word 'pernickety' has been used every year about Literature and it is such an excellent word and it does describe us, if you are meticulous and a bit pedantic you will just fit right in.

On to the Literature which was passed by Conference last year and produced this year:

There were two new posters 'Trapped? There is a way out' and 'If drink is costing you more than money' have now been produced.

The revised 'Illustrated Twelve Concepts' which was corrected in line with our service structure and adapted to A5 format is now available.

'The AA Group' pamphlet again corrected in line with our service structure, brought up to date and checked against past Conference recommendations and amended where necessary is now available.

Items this weekend:

The revised wording of Chapter Nine of the AA Service Handbook has gone to Committee No. 6 and if approved tomorrow it will go into the next reprint of the Handbook.

As I said to you in my report we were unable to review the pamphlet 'AA and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic' since this is copyrighted to AA World Services and we did get in touch with New York and they have no immediate plans to review the leaflet. So the Committee thought that we would ask through AA Service News for LGBT members to submit their experience in the Fellowship which could go into a booklet, much like Inside Stories which is used in prisons, this sort of shape and size, a booklet which maybe could be a companion piece to the existing leaflet. This booklet will come back to Conference next year for approval.

Now we are presenting for your approval the two posters which have been produced by the Young Peoples Project team, which was in response to a recommendation by Committee No. 2 at Conference 2013, 'This Committee recommends that the 'Too Young' poster be updated with input from younger members'.

Those of you who were here last year will remember Phil showing you these in their draft form and these were produced entirely by the Young Peoples Team who sent us in the Literature Committee drafts for our comments, and we thought they were professionally produced and suitable for their target audience. For Regions who do not use the helpline number on the bottom posters will be produced with this left vacant so they can use their own number.

I would like to propose that you approve these posters.

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

The second piece of literature is the proposed pamphlet for Agnostic and Atheist members, this was requested by Committee No. 3 last year, 'The Committee agreed that, yes, the needs of agnostic and atheist members are adequately provided for throughout AA's literature.

However, the Committee recommends, based on the view from the Fellowship, that relevant existing Conference approved literature be summarised in a pamphlet'.

I would like to emphasise that in using relevant existing Conference approved literature we were doing what we were asked to do. We were not asked to produce new content but to provide a reference to existing content.

I would like to propose that we re-draft the document especially since we have had so much feedback since the document went out to the Fellowship and some of it has been mightily constructive and we can use it. We are still staying with the Conference recommendation that we use only existing Conference approved literature and we are not talking about new content. So we can do that and bring it back to you next year.

In addition we would also like to ask, as for the LGBT members, through AA Service News the agnostic and atheist members for their experiences in the Fellowship and those can be added to the draft to make one document to come back next year.

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

Probation/Criminal Justice

(Clive D)

My name is Clive and I am an alcoholic. A lot of you will know that the Probation Service in England & Wales has had a very turbulent past eighteen months and I will give a brief description of what has happened there, not that, in itself, we should be discussing as Tradition Ten comes in here but because a lot of Liaison Officers were disheartened because the Probation Service were not talking to them.

The Probation Service and Probation Officers did not know who their employers were going to be, never mind what policy was going to be presented to outside agencies like ourselves and other Twelve Step fellowships as well who have always been viewed with suspicion because we do not charge for our services. That really is fact from my own experience and others.

The effect was that 35 Probation Trusts were abandoned and replaced by 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies. The Community Rehabilitation Companies are private companies, some formed of charities but most formed of commercial organisations and as such a profit element has come into Probation, as we know it, although the staff of the Rehabilitation companies (CRCs) are not always called Probation Officers anymore, Community Support Officers which has resonance of Police officers, Rehabilitation Officers, Support Officers call them what you will. Each one of the 21 CRCs has different names for their staff.

So the Probation service were in a good frame of mind to talk to nobody in particular and for us to knock on the door and say, hey can we talk to you, it was go away or worse to that effect.

This process was not finally settled until December 2014 so over the period of review up to September 2014 and then beyond has impacted on the service and also the service we can provide.

Several Intergroups reported that contact with local offices was difficult due to them not knowing and indeed if there is a policy towards contact with AA but, with the help of the Sub Committee, and with there only being two of us we have no problem organising a conference call, there is some information available on the website via the link to the Probation Sub Committee. It is not something that we can put on as a web page because there are links to the

private companies as well, but the information is available to Liaison officers via the Sub Committee and if Liaison Officers contact us we can give them the link to who the companies are that run the Probation services locally.

Then, to really complicate matters, there is still a National Probation service which deals with ex-prisoners who may represent a threat to the community. There are still Senior Probation Officers who deal with the more troublesome cases, so we have private companies and a national probation service that's why one of the things that I wanted to do was to highlight, if the proposed changes to Chapter 9 of the AA Service Handbook Great Britain is passed tomorrow by Conference, that the Probation Liaison Officer and Criminal Justice Social Workers in Scotland is far more than just dealing with probation, they deal with the Courts, the Police, the Bail Hostels, Magistrate Associations and all sorts of things like that, so it is not just about probation in itself. If anybody gets disheartened because the Probation Service won't talk to them there is plenty of other people to talk to. I can give you some addresses if you are interested.

The Probation Seminar held last June at the Park Inn York attended by 35 members and did create some enthusiasm.

In the past Liaison Officers traditionally had contact with the Court Services and Police and this has continued in many places so ensuring a presence at some stage in the probation system and our colleagues in Scotland have been doing this for many years under the Fellowship service of Criminal Justice Services and continue to do so.

Under the period under review we have been represented at several outside Conferences:

Ministry of Justice – Transforming Rehabilitation contacts interested parties in the Justice system such as PCCs and officers of the companies bidding for the new contracts
Ministry of Justice Transforming Rehabilitation – talks to stakeholders
Ministry of Justice re “modernising the Justice system”
Probation Institute Annual Conference

One of the areas we are looking at (we being the Sub Committee, myself and Nigel C) is Police and Crime Commissioners because there is a get in there with the local police services and if the local Chief Constable is being a bit obstructive, may not be, but there is one way to find out by going via his boss as see what is what. I have found this in all spheres of service that if you aim for the top it will filter down, aim for the bottom and there is nowhere to filter.

These outside meetings and conferences do help and the role of the Non Alcoholic Trustees (NATs) is invaluable in this, talking to people both in terms of writing a letter of introduction for us or indeed coming along and giving moral support so thank you to the NATS for that.

The Fellowship are looking at, prompted by the Sub Committee, what College and University courses for training Probation Officers are available and there are two major education services in this country, Portsmouth University and the West of Scotland University based in Lanarkshire which do courses based on Social Work aspect of Probation.

The annual meeting of the Regional Probation Liaison Officers meeting was held at GSO on 20th June 2014. 7 Regions were represented along with a rep from the Literature Committee who gave an update on the Handbook, which was virtually ready to go. Now we decided not to call it the Handbook because it was upsetting a lot of people demanding that it was referred to Conference so we decided to call it a Liaison Officers Pack. Reports were received from the Regions, briefly, giving a snapshot of activity.

The one thing that does come out of the Regional reports is that the CHIT system, which is a self reporting of people on Probation to their Probation Officers of attendance at AA meetings, is alive and well. It does work given goodwill on the Fellowship's part, there are no anonymity issues, there are no cost issues other than a bit of paper with a bit of typing on – unless you want it to be. I am aware that London Region North and South have special chits that cannot be copied in florescent print. Whatever you do with it the costs are minimal and it is a selling point if you get to meet someone in prison supervision let them know we have been doing this for years and it does help the Probation services because it is free.

There is a full guide as to what the Chit System is available for those who do not know.

We are aware that the title of the discipline is Probation/Criminal Justice Services and there seems to be some feeling that it is England for Probation and Criminal Justice Services for Scotland and it is not it the whole lot. We are aware that it is a Fellowship with a charity for the whole of Great Britain so we have been looking at services in Scotland and I recently went along, accompanied by Charlie, Prison Liaison for Glasgow Region, to speak to the Scottish Judiciary and the person we spoke to was in charge of the training of all JPs, Magistrates and Sheriffs in Scotland and he has promised us a place on some of the training schemes. Where he cannot promise us a place he has given us a good recommendation so things are looking up there.

We have plans to speak to Police Scotland which is good because there is only one Police Force in Scotland and use the recommendation as a letter of introduction.

We have done some work and there is plenty to do and there always will be, so please give it a go and if you don't fancy coming on the Sub Committee give us a ring and see how you can help us or email me.

Non Alcoholic Trustees

Ash Kahn

Hello everyone my name is Ash and I am one of your Non Alcoholic Trustees and I am here to bring to your attention the fact that there is another survey which is just about to happen.

As you know we do a survey every five years and this has been going on since 1972 and the idea is that we collect information about:

- demographics
- length of sobriety
- length of membership
- frequency of attending meetings
- and how people hear of AA

The reason why we do it is to keep the Fellowship generally informed on current trends in membership characteristics about AA, to provide information to the professional community and the general public as part of AA's primary purpose to carry our message to the still suffering alcoholic.

We have standardised the way in which this is being done. Over the years we have had University Departments, people who are Board members, all bringing a different methodology to it so it has been very difficult to compare surveys with each other, but for the last three surveys it has been undertaken by a marketing company, Market Means, in a standardised manner.

I will run through the procedure for this:

- Phase 1 – survey form sent to all group secretaries and relates to Group attendance during the week 20th to 26th April, 2015. This relates to the people attending the group between Monday 20th to 26th and there is quite a lot of important information as people want to get an idea of the number of newcomers. As you know Public Health England and various other people have been promoting AA in talks around the country and we want to see what impact that has. We may also get information regarding the telephones etc. as if there is an increase this may be some indication
- Sample selected from the returned forms for Phase 2. The group secretary fills in the data on people attending. If you are attending an AA meeting during the relevant dates, can you just remind your group secretary to fill in the form. This has to be returned the following week to GSO who pass it on to Marketing Means who do an analysis.
- Phase 2 – selected sample of groups. Secretaries will receive a pack of survey forms to distribute to group members during the week of 15th – 21st June 2015. Marketing Means looks at the data and then decides to choose which groups to sample to give a representative sample from which to look at the people actually attending the various groups.

Another reason I have come here is if you look at the Regional response rates:

Region Response Rate

Region	Supplied	Returned	RR%	RR% 2005
East Of Scotland Region	96	49	51%	37
Eastern Region	297	141	47%	40
Glasgow Region	225	71	32%	31
Highland & Islands Region	82	42	51%	38
London Region (North)	410	125	30%	25
London Region (South)	197	64	32%	26
Midlands Region	281	148	53%	35
North East Region	249	109	44%	32
North West Region	319	160	50%	30
Not A Defined Region	57	30	53%	27
Scotia Region	207	104	50%	38
South East Region	349	187	54%	46
South Midlands Region	263	129	49%	40
South West Region	234	126	54%	43
South West Scotland Region	130	73	56%	43
Wales And Borders Region	132	62	47%	39
Total	3528	1620	46%	35%

In the first column, the blue one, you can see the response rate we got in 2010 and if you compare it with the response rate of 2005 there is a big improvement but, if you look at it generally speaking, the response rate is about 50% and some are as low as 30%. I would like to encourage you to encourage your group secretaries to make sure that we get a better response rate because that gives a better quality of data.

Please get in touch with as many group secretaries as you can and ask them to do the survey and we will improve on what happened five years ago. Thank you.

Martin Weegmann

I thought I would do something a little bit more engaging by giving you a personal/professional share, and it is a share of the approximately 20 years that I have specialised in substance misuse, drugs and alcohol but obviously just a few very small moments from that time and it is an ongoing walk of course and it hasn't finished. I want to explain a little bit about my relationship to Alcoholics Anonymous in that time as a still suffering non-alcoholic.

I'd like to start with this person, Max Glatt, one of the people who put addiction psychiatry on the map in the 1960s in this country and he knew suffering from the inside, not because of alcoholism but for other reasons his family history.

When I first came into the field in 1990 it was to work on Max Glatt's Unit which was a regional drug and alcohol programme in Ealing, West London. Max Glatt, of course, had long, long retired but his name was there and the tradition he had created was there. It is a little bit painful for me to talk about Max because the unit that he had set up and eventually became a Detox Unit closed about two months ago and I was at the final event. So it is very sad for the end of that area.

When I came in as a very naïve psychologist on to the drug and alcohol programme one of the things that first struck me was the power of group therapy, of human association of people coming together to try to overcome their problems and they were very formidable problems as we know. People had been seriously ill, some of them near to death before coming on to the programme and I was just struck how quickly after detox physically people began to normalise and how they could begin to co-operate in groups, talk and reflect on their problems and behave in "normal ways", in a very short space of time.

In a way the ethos of the unit was living together and learning together, and in many ways I think this is what happens in Alcoholics Anonymous. It's a way of trying to learn about one's self and to live differently.

I was very impressed then by some extraordinary changes that took place and when my colleagues used to say to me alcoholics never change I used to think I have seen enormous changes in a few weeks when people are in the right condition. It may be just the beginning of their journey of recovery but it is an important bit of that journey. Also, I saw that human beings are very good at creatively accounting for things that are unpalatable. I always remember, a smile when I think of it, when one chap had been through the programme and at the end they always had a review about what people had learnt and he said well, I don't think I am an alcoholic and I don't really think that I have got a serious drink problem, but I will admit that I have an ethanol dilemma.

The group programme went in 1993 and I went to the community to work and I worked with the Community Alcohol Team and what I found over time was that a lot of my clients were also attending AA as well as other fellowship groups – not all of them. Over time I took more and

more of an interest in what they were receiving from those groups and asked them to tell me more particularly what are you learning about yourself as a result of going to those meetings. As a result of them telling me, I hopefully opened my mind a little bit because it wasn't a tradition I knew about, as a non-alcoholic, but the best source of information is about asking people who are in that position themselves and I think it helped me in my psychotherapy with people with addiction problems and with alcoholism.

I found myself using some of the wisdom that I was learning about, some things which are deceptively simple but really important, you get your emotions back and that's very good news, you begin to feel again but it is also very difficult news as you feel the things you have been blocking for maybe decades, the distress, the agonies of addiction. I am not sure if this is from AA or part of a recovery wisdom "Hurt people, hurt people". The human need to pass on a bit of suffering for somebody else, very strong isn't it and you don't have to be an alcoholic to do that. How in therapy, as well as elsewhere, you can begin to gain insight and limit how much you hurt others as well as yourself – the process of overcoming yourself.

I think psychotherapy, like anything else, is encouraging people to have open minds, like a parachute, it kind of works best when it is open, but I think the message there is for professionals as well because we are very good at having our own prejudices, me included, and by listening to people in AA and in therapy too. I like to think that my mind has broadened and I was learning things that I would not have got elsewhere.

A big turning point for me came when I took the step of going to open meetings in London, I went for a number of years fairly regularly and I grew to love them. There is no substitute to me going there, listening and seeing and it is something that I will never forget.

The ingredients of human change are very difficult to define, we know when it happened but can't put our finger on it, was it that or that, usually it is an accumulation of things and as they say in AA it has to be recovery a day at a time, it's never guaranteed it is a process not an event and you have to keep working at it. You may get support from many different sources, whether it be your sponsor or somebody at the door and I was very touched by what somebody said earlier about being a greeter and not being able to look people in the eye and then gradually being able to face one's fellows. These things are very humanising.

One of my clients who went to her first AA meeting, I encouraged this over quite a period of time and she eventually went and she said, "Do you know what, I have not been hugged in my lifetime but I was hugged last week when I went to AA. I have been spat at, people have crossed the other side of the street, shouted at but I haven't been hugged". For her it was a truly overwhelming experience.

These are some of the things that I have learnt along the way:

My clients are my best teachers
Listening is the most important art
All people need encouragement
Don't just see the problem
Professionals need 'open minds' like anyone else
'Step 1': "We admitted we were powerless over our clients..."
Change happens. Recovery happens

'Thank you' to AA for what you have given to me.

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

SATURDAY EVENING

Continuation of General Service Board Reports

Nicki welcomed everyone back and hoped that everyone had had a productive day. She asked for a moment's silence to remember why we are here, think of the still suffering alcoholic and also gather our thoughts for the evening's session. Nicki then invited Geoff H (GSB) to commence the continuation of General Service Board reports.

Health

(Geoff H)

Good evening Conference, I'm Geoff and I'm an alcoholic. I would like to give an overview of what Health Liaison has been up to during the last year and I would like to start with a definition, this is quite important really because very often people get confused as to the dividing line between Public Information (PI) and Health Liaison. Very often where there is not a Health Liaison officer (HLO) in post that discipline is covered by PI anyway. So this is how I see it, the ultimate aim of Health Liaison is to carry the AA message to people working in the health care field, so that they may be encouraged to enable their clients to access our Fellowship. I call that Facilitating Access to Alcoholics Anonymous because that is what it is all about in carrying the message and we hope that people are enabled to come to our Fellowship and we will give them that help wherever it is required.

Another way of look at it is bridging the gap between the treatment community and the recovery community, the recovery community of course being us and a lot of Health liaison takes place at the interface between those two positions.

These are some of the specific areas that HLOs have been co-operating in for a long time now:

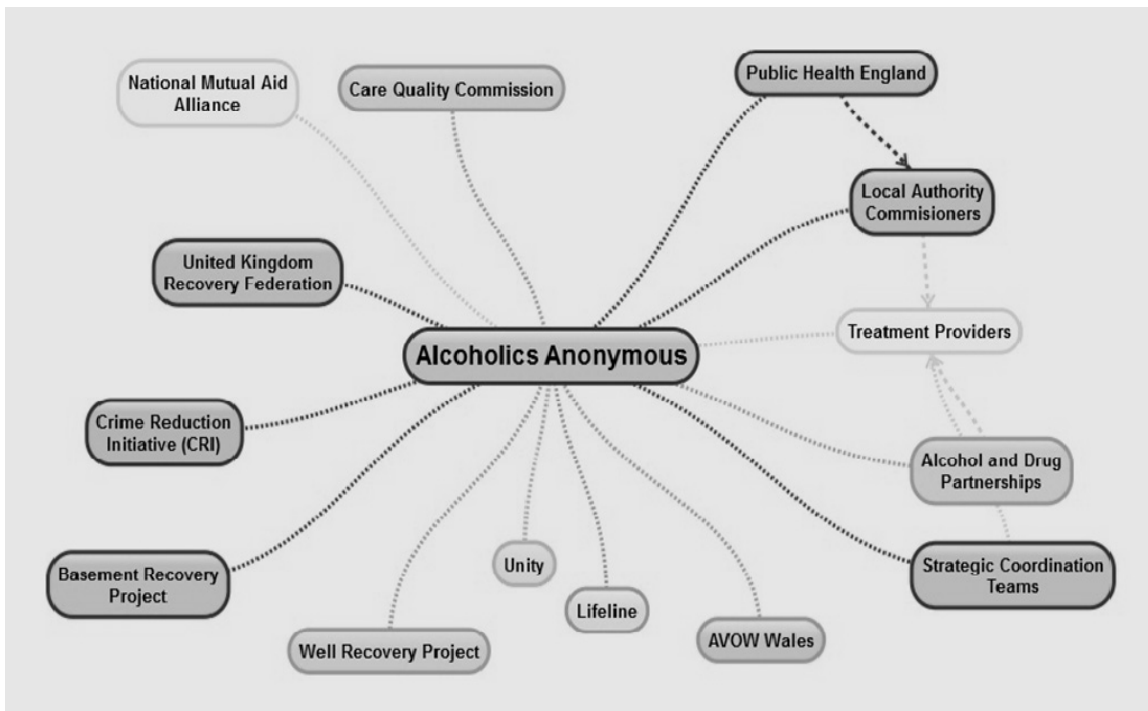
- Psychiatrists and GPs
- Occupational health services
- In-patient facilities
- Substance misuse services
- Detoxification facilities
- Forensic mental health services
- Starting meetings in treatment facilities

This is the famous quote by Bill W which he made in 1958 called *'Let's Be Friendly with our Friends: Friends on the Alcoholism Front'*:

'So let us work alongside all these projects of promise to hasten the recovery of those millions who have not yet found their way out. These varied labors do not need our special endorsement; they need only a helping hand when, as individuals, we can possibly give it'. (*Bill W, 1958*).

Bill was writing at a time when big things were happening in the States in the substance misuse field and note that he wrote this 23 years after the first meeting of AA. By that time a lot of people were becoming interested in what was happening in the alcoholism field. Bill was saying to the members then let us not be afraid of these people, it is not about endorsement, it's all about affiliation and these people are our friends so let's be friendly with them so that the message is carried to these organisations which, hopefully, will enable people to come to AA meetings. This is my reading of Bill for that time.

In preparing for this presentation, I was thinking about the friends that we have, the friends we have made connections with out there during the last year, some smaller and quite local organisations and some national organisations as well, all for carrying the message:



These are only some of the external bodies who we have made connections with for example the Crime Reduction Initiative (CRI) who secured a big contract within Birmingham and they are responsible for all the substance misuse services in Birmingham and I am mentioning this because they really are AA friendly and the HLOs who work in that area have formed good relationships with them. The good thing is that it means that they will be encouraging their treatment providers to encourage their clients to go to AA meetings as an enhancement to their treatment, and also as a continuation to their treatment when it finishes.

There are some smaller organisations such as the Basement Recovery Project in Halifax which has AA meetings on several nights of the week there, the same as the Well Recovery Project in Lancaster.

There are some bigger national organisations like the Care Quality Commission and we have representation on the CQC and we have been able to provide some input for their inspectors when they consider substance misuse services to ensure that they are knowledgeable about mutual aid so we have been able to provide facts and figures about AA. The National Mutual Aid Alliance which is a developing organisation that meets in Manchester and is developing a set of tools for people who work in addiction units that will enable them to be proficient in enabling their clients to go to AA meetings. In Wales there is the Association of Voluntary Organisations and they are linking up with local AA meetings as well. So the picture is really encouraging and there are more that I couldn't possibly get on the chart above.

These are the connections we have been able to make during the last year and they are all AA friendly now.

I have mentioned Alcohol and Drug Partnerships and these are in Scotland. Scotland's commissioning arrangements have been fully devolved, each of the 32 local authorities in Scotland have an Alcohol & Drug Partnership so they take care of the commissioning and in

Wales they have a number of Strategic Co-ordination Teams. In England it is rather different, although the local authorities have budgets for alcohol services they still come under the influence of Public Health England and I am going to say in a moment where we are up to with Public Health England because there has been progress in that area since I last spoke to you about that.

One of our objectives is to be able to understand the Welsh and Scottish Commissioning arrangements more so if we can see whether we can make improved contact with them, so that is part of our work going forward over the next 12 months.

I'd like to talk about Public Health England (PHE) more and let you know where we are up to with that. They have a very ambitious project which they are probably right in the middle of now called Improving Access to Mutual Aid and the clue is in the title. For about the last year they have had a multi organisational steering group to steer their policy called Mutual Aid Reference Group and we have had membership of that, we have been able to let them know just how AA works and how to access us. The project is totally evidence based, it is based upon the considerable body of evidence most of it American, there is not much British based at the moment, it shows clearly that peoples engagement in Twelve Step fellowships increases the chances of sustained recovery. A new book has recently been published which is full of the research evidence and shows that Twelve Step fellowships work.

The following six documents have been produced:

- Briefing document on the evidence-base
- Facilitating Access to Mutual Aid
- Self-assessment Tool
- Guide for Commissioners
- Guide for Service Managers
- Professional Development Resource

I don't think that any more will be produced and have been produced for Commissioners and for Treatment Providers, the reason I am mentioning them is because AA is mentioned in all of them. At the very least our contact details and in some of them there is a reasonable description about what AA is and how it operates and how to access us. The name of the game is for them, (Public Health England), to influence Commissioners, the people who buy local addiction services to include access to Mutual Aid in their programmes.

The second document down gives a very good description on how addiction workers will help their clients to access mutual aid and encourage them in going, and have one to ones with them, whilst they are actually attending meetings, perhaps arranging to have AA members to meet them and take them to the meetings and to encourage them to become involved in the life of the meeting. Everyone here knows that is true, if we wish to stay sober a day at a time that we need not only to attend meetings but to involve ourselves in the life of the meetings that we go to, and we call that service.

PHE produced a strategy document and one of the objectives is to increase mutual aid participation by encouraging more people in treatment to access mutual aid and this is the biggest change since last year. The project began in London and we were very soon able to form links between the PHE lead staff and the Regional Health Liaison Officer in London Regions North and South, and they have had a lot of workshops together. Since then it has spread throughout the country, from there it went to the West Midlands, there is an excellent link up between the HLOs who work there and PHE. Another lovely example is earlier on this year in Cornwall AA had a couple of Road Shows and they invited the PHE Substance Misuse Lead who

gave a presentation and that ended up with him being presented with a copy of the Big Book by which he was suitably moved.

All of our Regions have now formed contacts with their opposite numbers in PHE and there is no standard pattern, they are all doing different things so I think we have a reasonable communication network now which is sort of running itself.

You would think wouldn't you, that more people would hear about AA coming out of treatment, the following came out of our last survey in 2010, which said that 13% of people first heard about AA whilst they were in treatment, so I am quite excited and looking forward to the results of the forthcoming membership survey, as I am hoping that that percentage will have gone up considerably.

It is difficult for us to measure whether there has been an increase in the number of people who come to meetings, it got to be anecdotal, some people I talk to say that they have not discerned any difference and others say that more people are coming and that is certainly the case of my own home group in Little Lancaster, we certainly get quite a few people coming from the local treatment centre.

I'd like to introduce the Health Sub Committee which consists of Andre M, Jack B, Phil H, Ranjan B and Jonathan Chick and myself are the two Trustees. We addressed ourselves to this Conference recommendation, the question to Conference last year was:

"Can the Fellowship share experience and make recommendations on how we can respond positively to the recovery agenda and external initiatives in the professional community"

Committee No. 1 made the following recommendations:

- Ensure that existing literature and information is available to outside agencies about what AA does and doesn't do
- Ensure there is sufficient supporting literature for groups to respond to possible increases in the number of newcomers
- Produce a set of slides for presentations to the professional community

The first was ensure there is existing literature available to outside agencies and the short answer is that we thought that there is sufficient literature.

The second one ensure there is sufficient supporting literature for groups to respond to possible increases in the number of newcomers. There were two big issues there that came up from the Regions, one that because a lot of people were coming from treatment centres they often did not put money in the pot and in the case of smaller groups it really did drain the group's resources, which is a fair point. The other big issue was people identifying themselves as addicts rather than alcoholics so the Sub Committee's response was to recommend a form of words to the Literature Committee for inclusion in the pamphlet 'The AA Group' and I understand that that is ongoing.

The final thing was to produce a set of slides for presentations to the professional community, we didn't try to reinvent the wheel, we tidied up one that was existing and we have called it 'Alcoholics Anonymous – A Resource for Health & Social Care for professionals. It's not elaborate, it quite simple and straightforward and presenters can adapt it to their own circumstances, it is available on our website under the Health discipline in the Health & Resources Section. It is also on the Health CD which has also been updated with a lot of

information for Health Liaison Officers and everything on the CD is now on the website so it is all downloadable.

What's ongoing? We are in the process of reviewing:

- Road to Sobriety
- Inside View of AA for Professionals
- Health Literature review
- Seminar March 2016
- Link-ups with Continental European Region

We had a fascinating link-up on March 13th with some of the members of the Netherlands Intergroup. We had the link-up with Webex and from our side we had a projector in the room with speakers in the room so we could see and hear the people concerned but they could not hear a word that we said because our microphone was not up to the job at all I'm afraid. What we need is a strong omni-directional microphone so I shall be making a recommendation for that shortly.

Their presentation was a demonstration AA meeting as a master class for mental health nurse specialists in training in Utrecht. This was organised by John, Dorien and Belia of Netherlands Intergroup. They had had contact with this college and during the course of the discussion they were asked if they could actually take an AA meeting into their training establishment and so they did.

The way they set it up was a three hour programme with two half-hour AA meetings. It began with an introduction and then they had the first AA meeting which lasted for 30 minutes and the orientation of this meeting was around the First Step. That meeting consisted of 8 AA members who were of various ages and varying lengths of sobriety and the mental health nurses in training who numbered 16 who just observed the meeting for the first one. They had a Question & Answer session about what happened.

They had a second 30 minute meeting and they were joined for this meeting by the 16 mental health nurses who were invited to share or to ask questions or to talk about their personal feelings in terms of what they saw, their personal feelings with working with people with alcohol problems etc. Apparently it was very, very productive.

This took place in the Annual Meeting of Regional Health Liaison Officers and we had a discussion about this subsequently, I asked the question do you think we could use this model over here and most people thought that we could, one of them is actually going to try it out in their Region. I am going to ask John, Dorien and Belia to write up a summary of this so we can put it on the website

Thank you.

SHARE and Roundabout

(Helen S and James K)

Hello Conference my name is Helen and I am an alcoholic and also your SHARE Trustee. I hope you have all come across SHARE Magazine in your travels in recovery and I am here tonight to talk about what SHARE is and what SHARE does.

SHARE is the Fellowship's magazine for England and Wales and the SHARE Editorial Team is the Sub Committee of the General Service Board. SHARE succeeded the AA 'Newsletter', which was started by AA members in London in October 1949 and SHARE's first issue was in October 1972.

What does SHARE do?

- SHARE publishes contributions from members based on their experience, strength and hope
- articles on AA's Steps, Traditions and Concepts
- articles on its historical roots
- articles on topical issues that arise in the Fellowship from time to time
- letters from readers
- and extracts from Conference – approved literature

Each month's issue includes information about:

- Groups starting and closing
- Change of Meeting Places or Time
- Group Contact details
-

The magazine also publicises

- Convention details
- The annual Calendar & Diary

A couple of years ago, you may remember, that for financial reasons, the Roundabout Diary and the SHARE Diary were united into one Fellowship Diary and the SHARE Editorial Team had a good think about this and we thought that we should be more inclusive and universal and GB wide if we could be, and so we did go to the Board and now, from 2016, we are renaming the SHARE Calendar as Fellowship Calendar and that will be a joint effort on the part of both Roundabout and SHARE.

- Each issue of SHARE has a subscription form
- The GSB holds the copyright of SHARE's entire content
- However, a contributor is able to keep copyright, but allow AA GB to use the image as and when it chooses

You can now purchase SHARE by bank transfer so I am hoping that subscriptions will go up in Continental European Region at least. A SHARE subscription is also available in CD Audio format.

What SHASRE does **not** do:

- Cannot print reference to, or quotations from, Non Conference- approved literature
- There is no payment for contributions and they cannot be returned
- The Editor cannot guarantee to publish every contribution
- SHARE cannot print obituaries or poetry
- Publication of members articles does not imply endorsement by AA, and opinions expressed are not attributed to AA, as a whole

SHARE is excellent value at still only £1 per issue. The last time SHARE went up was in 2001 and it has stayed at £1 since then and we really work hard at keeping the cost of SHARE down so that as many people can subscribe as possible, and groups too.

This is your ideal SHARE Team:

- CHAIR – The BOARD TRUSTEE, who is the link between the Team and the GSB Editor
- Assistant Editor / Proof Reader
- Editorial Readers x 3
- Calendar and Diaries Production Editor
- Secretary (from existing Team)
- Web Coordinator

Aided by:

- Regional Liaison Officers
- Intergroup Liaison Officers
- Group SHARE Representative

It's the Liaison Officers who help to boost subscriptions who also go around and twist your arm saying write that article you have been talking about for so long, or write a letter to SHARE. These are the people that we rely on to do that because three people cannot just do that job and in every Intergroup there should be a position for SHARE and in every Region so you can see that the numbers are lop-sided. So we need your help.

Do you need a stand for your next Convention? All you need to do is contact GSO on 01904 644026 and talk to Jenny and she will sort that out for you.

Now a bit about the picture formats that we use. For submitting photographs to SHARE use:

- Most modern digital cameras take excellent photographs in JPEG format
- If your camera resolution is 5 Megapix or better, on the best setting,
- simply email your picture to GSO – AAShare@gsogb.org.uk

Picture formats:

- LANDSCAPE is desirable for the CALENDAR
- PORTRAIT is ideal for the SHARE Magazine front cover (The Editor will crop to fit if needed)
- The GSB holds the copyright of SHARE's entire content
- *However*, a contributor is able to keep copyright, but allow AA GB to use the image as and when it chooses

All pictures are considered although we cannot use all pictures, we can't use pictures with recognisable places and we cannot use pictures where you might be able to recognise someone, even if you don't know them somebody in a doctor's surgery might, so the rest of the world is your oyster. I suggest everyone get out there with your cameras, phones, tablets etc. take pictures and send them in to SHARE.

In the April issue there is a little advertisement for the next Calendars so please be aware of that. All forms of media submission are welcome at SHARE, email, word format files, handwritten pen to paper and we get a lot of those still and audio files so all you have to do is stick it in the post or send it down the wires and they will be gratefully received, I promise you.

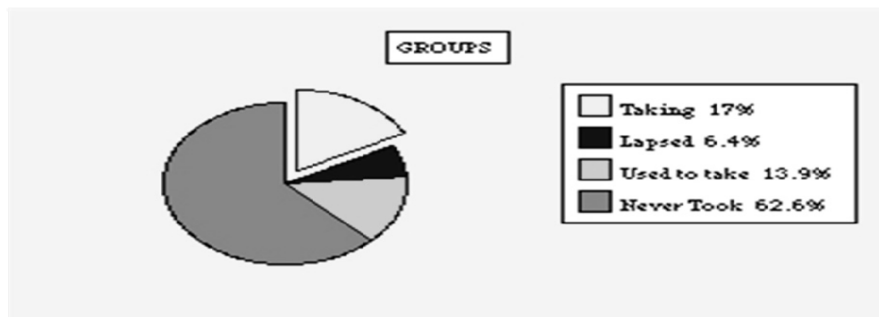
Thank you for your attention and I encourage every one of you to share your story of recovery through the pages of SHARE.

Good evening friends, my name is James and I am an alcoholic. Roundabout is very close to my heart and I was given my first copy of Roundabout at my very first meeting, not that month's Roundabout, January 1997 in Port Seaton was where I had my first meeting and I didn't get this copy of Roundabout until six years later at the Fife Convention where they had a table with copies of back issues, I was happy to make a donation for my birthday issue. What the Port Seaton group had, of course, was a box of back issues from which they gave me a handful to take home, read and digest so I have had Roundabout with me all my journey in sobriety.

Last night and again tonight we heard Trustee after Trustee coming up here and pleading for members of the Fellowship to come forward and assist in their Sub Committees, the written report I put in for this Conference is no different, and that is a plea for members of the Fellowship to come forward and help to produce Roundabout on a monthly basis but on this short presentation I would like to look another aspect of what the magazine does.

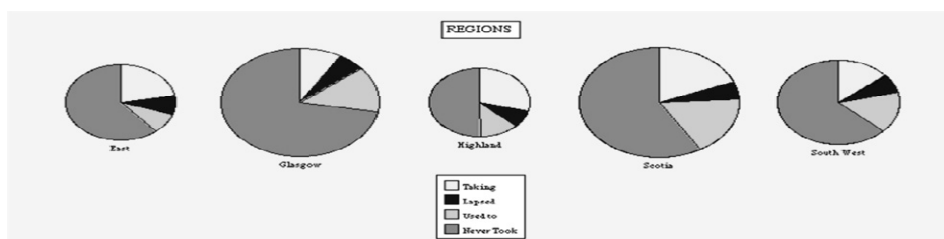
It is in itself a service and it was a service to me on that day in 1997. What I would like to do now is look at subscriptions to Roundabout. This chart comes from figures most recently March 2015 supplied by the General Service Office and it is only for Roundabout's supply to Groups in Scotland, missing our individual subscriptions, subscriptions to Groups or individuals out with Scotland, subscriptions taken out by Intergroups on behalf of prisons and hospitals, and there are probably some Group subscriptions missing because if they are sent to a member's house and on the subscription form they have not indicated which Group is taking them, they are not allocated to a Group for the purposes of this chart, so it is not an accurate chart but the best information we have got:

Scottish groups subscribing to Roundabout.



The figure to be remembered from this is that only 17% of our Groups are subscribing to Roundabout. Going a bit deeper into the figures, this takes them down by Region:

By region: groups which subscribe to Roundabout.



The size of each circle depicts the number of Groups per Region so you can see that Scotia and Glasgow are bigger than the other Regions, which is to be expected, but within that we can see a variation within the yellow segment which tells us which Groups within that Region are subscribing to Roundabout by the percentage of Groups in that area. Again, what I would like to pick out here is a little bit of Highland Region that the greater number of Groups in Highland Region subscribing to Roundabout and I suspect that that is because of the comparative distance between a lot of the meetings.

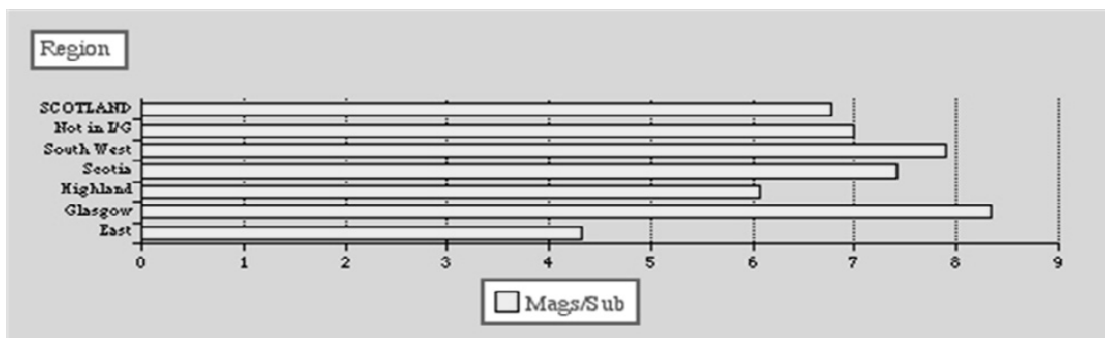
At our most recent Roundabout Liaison Meeting, we have an annual Roundabout meeting in Glasgow and all of the Roundabout officers are invited, one of our Roundabout Sub Committee members, Flora M, made a passionate plea to every Intergroup to take out subscriptions on behalf of prisons.

Flora also does prison sponsorship and she says that the magazines are welcomed in prison simply because the people who come along to their meetings can only get to that meeting on a weekly basis presumably and the Roundabout magazine is a welcome item to have during the rest of the week and that again is an aspect of service.

If those of us who subscribe to Roundabout keep it going as a viable concern, being a self supporting concern, then it will be there for the people who need it in a situation we, ourselves, might not actually need it but merely perceive it as something we like to have.

This chart takes us to how many Groups subscribe to Roundabout:

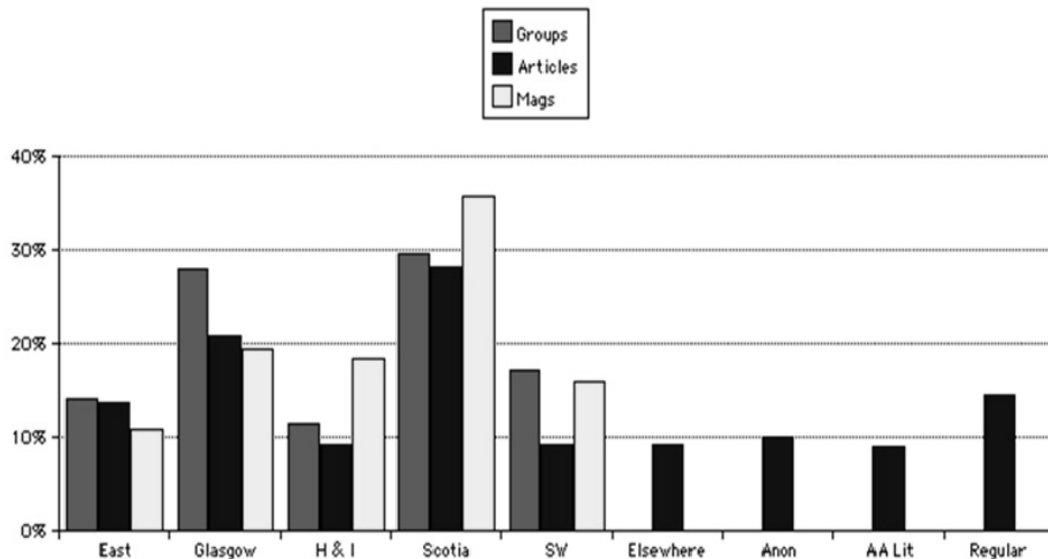
Average Roundabouts in each subscription.



For every Group in Scotland which subscribes to Roundabout they take about seven magazines for each subscription. If we take all the Groups in each Region then that factors at about one Roundabout for each Group in Scotland and there are variations in each Region. Highland on a per Group basis is taking more Roundabouts than other Groups in Scotland and I think that is due to the Groups in Highlands being more isolated than other Groups.

Where do our articles come from and I like to think that Bill Wilson had a lovely phrase that he coined for the first Editorial Team of Grapevine, he called them “Ink-stained wretches”, well I would like to think that the “Ink-stained wretches” today are not the Editorial Team, after all we don’t slave away at a printing works now, but those who sit down and write to Roundabout or Share as the case may be and from the chart below we can see that Scotia Region is the most “ink-stained” Region in Scotland.

One Year's Articles ...



Thank you very much.

Public Information

(Robert M)

Good evening, my name is Robert and I am an alcoholic. My main aim of this presentation is to inform you of how we came to, and carried out, the national media campaign. This started from Conference 2013 when Committee No. 2, Question 1 were asked 'Share experience on getting articles on AA in the local press and make suggestions on how the Fellowship can get articles into the national press'.

The response to that was:

In respect of the National Press, this Committee makes the following recommendations:

- a) Local initiatives aimed at the National Press are done in coordination with the PI Sub Committee
- b) To increase success, consideration be given to placing articles in magazines, professional journals and online press

It is recommended by this Committee that, in any contact with the media, the Traditions are observed.

Minority View: In view of the recent lack of success in placing articles in the National Press, consideration should be given, at National level, to seeking professional media assistance from either inside or outside AA.

Also that year Committee 3, Question 1 had an inventory question which said 'Would the Fellowship discuss and share experience on whether we as a fellowship are satisfied with the level of 12th Step work that is being done at the various levels of Service?'

The response to that was:

Improve visibility at national level through media and technology.

The brief was to target professionals in contact with problem drinkers, problem drinkers and the general public. To fulfil the General Service Board's (GSB) primary purpose in PI a strategy document was submitted to the GSB in May 2014. I should add that I inherited this mid-stream, my predecessor in PI, Joe, had initiated this campaign and when I took over PI I just followed on with it so most of the work had been done by Joe and the Sub Committee at that time.

A strategy document, produced by Joe, was submitted to the GSB and the aim of the document was to present to GSB for approval a national media strategy covering the financial year 2014/15.

There was some background which was that pilot AA information campaigns were held between 2006-2008, on buses in Scotland, London Underground, TV pilot, internet, radio and a print trial. The cost totalled just over £90,000.

Last year, a joint letter was signed by the four Non-Alcoholic Trustees (NATs). It was sent out in October 2013 to mark Alcoholics Anonymous Awareness Month. It went to the editors of each national newspaper in England, Scotland and Wales; each Sunday paper in Great Britain, specialist magazines and weekly papers for certain communities.

An edited, shortened version was distributed at the end of the year to mark New Year 2014, and re-edited and further shortened versions were sent to The Guardian on two further occasions when possible interested was expressed.

The NATs letter did not appear in any national title. It appeared in some local newspapers after it was circulated to Intergroup and Region PILOs.

The NATs letter and two members' stories appeared with AA Conference approved images in a full page advertisement in a supplement distributed with The Guardian on 4 January 2014. Distribution was limited to London, the South and South East, East Anglia and the Welsh Borders. We were under the impression that it would go out nationally but it didn't.

PISC meeting was held in March 2014 and we looked at ways of carrying the AA message through national media and this was discussed in great detail.

A presentation was given by an AA member, Chris H, who has a background in marketing and who holds a senior position in a media company. The presentation included a comparison on costs, advantages and disadvantages between TV and plasma screens and national newspaper advertising. Costs of national advertising campaigns by UK charities were also given:

National Press Costs

National Newspapers	Agency A	Agency B	Recommended Alternative Positions	AA Direct
Telegraph – 38x6 Colour Advertorial	£13,680	£7,000	Telegraph Mag - £3,000	No Reply
The Daily Mail – Full Page Colour Advertorial	£51,129	£40,000	Daily Mail Weekend - £20,000	£74,854
Daily Star – Full Page Colour Advertorial	£9,310	£7,000	Full Page Colour Classified - £3,500	No Reply
Daily Express – Full Page Colour Advertorial	£11,025	£9,000	Full Page Colour Classified - £4,500	No Reply
The Sun – Full Page Colour Advertorial	£55,586	£43,000	Full Page Colour Classified - £10,000	No Reply
The Times – Full Page Colour Advertorial	£20,000	£18,000	Full Page Colour Classified - £3,000	No Reply
Daily Mirror – Full Page Colour Advertorial	£16,660	£16,660	Full Page Colour Classified - £7,000	No Reply
Daily Record – Full Page Colour Advertorial	£4,760	£4,760	Full Page Colour Classified - £2,000	No Reply
Guardian Weekend Magazine	£3,000 (Test Jan 4) 58% Circulation	£3,000 Full Circulation	Full Page Colour Classified - £2,500	No Reply

This shows the newspapers and the two agencies who had contacted these newspapers and these are the quotes that they were given – I don't know who the agencies were. In the right hand column when AA contacted each of these newspapers directly we got no reply from any of them other than the Daily Mail and they quoted us almost £75,000 and this is just an example. The recommended alternatives by the media company, HUB, and this was their projected figures.

The recommendations that were also made in the strategy document were:

- The Medium – The Press, utilising selected papers from the national daily papers compared with TV. Why? Quotations received showed that production costs of a short film ranged between £10,000 and £18,000. Costs of using that material in a 30-second TV commercial ranged from £72,000 and £90,000 using a TV company rate card. Lower costs of nearly £40,000 to nearly £50,000 could be obtained buying the airtime through an agency.
 - Advantages of broadcast media included frequency, greater impact and effect; specific targeting by using plasma screens.
 - Disadvantages included cost, less reach and the conveying of only one message.
 - Advantage of using the national Press included reach, creative impact, lower costs and identification.
 - Disadvantages were less frequency and short 'life'.

The media company suggest that every newspaper is read or can be potentially read by at least seven people by getting passed on but having a short shelf life.

Which papers, indicative costs and when to be published? We decided at that time the Guardian Magazine, Daily Express, Daily Telegraph, Daily Star, Daily Record and The Times and the prices at that time potentially ranged from £7,000 down to £2,500. As I said this was just the strategy and not the actual figures.

Format – A long form advert as published in Guardian January 2014. The day to place the advert was suggested as Saturday as the rates should be lower than a Monday to Friday. Readers also have more time at weekends to read through newspapers and magazines.

What section of paper – TV listings part being one of the most popular and widely read sections of a newspaper. This is often kept around the house for a week.

Recommendation - Use of a marketing company - HUB Marketing.

Why use this company? - They proved to offer lowest Rate Card charges of the ones approached. We have personal contact with the firm. They have the experience and expertise, personal contact and 'buying power' to secure best rates.

Measuring Impact of National Newspaper Advert – To be negotiated with ECLIO GSB members and Telephones GSB member. The media agency also said that they would measure using their own software. As we have said before it is almost impossible to measure this.

Budget to be approved - £17,000 + £3,000 contingency = £20,000

This was presented to the Board and after much deliberation, it was agreed to proceed with this strategy and on no account would we go over the planned budget. On recommendation by HUB (media company), PISC then amended some of the content, as each article has to 'fit' each individual newspaper. Much work went on and Jeff B, on the PI Sub Committee, did a massive amount of work with HUB, we had to cut down the NATs' letters to 250 words, we amended the shares etc. because each newspaper have their own fonts, their own print sizes, even through own paper gauge etc., so we had to accommodate that and HUB did that work for us. There was a cost but it came under budget and was included in the price. Electronic Communications produced a QR code (quick recognition) which was added to the adverts to possibly assess the number of people targeting AA.

The following are the newspapers eventually used:

Guardian Magazine	-	Sat 4th Oct 2014	-	Published
Daily Express	-	Mon 20th Oct 2014	-	Published
Daily Telegraph	-	Sat 25th Oct 2014	-	Published
Daily Star	-	Fri 2nd Jan 2015	-	Published
Daily Record	-	Sat 17th Jan 2015	-	Published
The Times	-	Fri 23 rd Jan 2015	-	Published

The Times article was scheduled for 12th January 2015, but unforeseen circumstances delayed it till 23rd January. We were granted £500 recompense as a result.

To summarise, PISC and the GSB worked very hard in putting this campaign together. It was the first 'National' initiative since between 2006 and 2008. At the recent PISC meeting in January 2015, much discussion took place on how best to keep the momentum going at national level, not necessarily using that amount of money. From what I have heard from two members of the Sub Committee there are ways and means, because they work in the media, of approaching possibly newspapers or other mediums to keep the momentum going and keeping us in the national eye at a much reduced cost. This research is ongoing by the Sub Committee.

In the past the likes of the 2006-2008 campaign was done, dusted and then left, forgotten about and there was no momentum behind it and it didn't keep going so we would like to try and keep the AA profile in the national media, by whatever medium we can use.

Thank you.

Electronic Communications

(Wullie I and Tom S)

Good evening Conference, my name is Wullie, I am an alcoholic and Trustee for Electronic Communications and this is my fourth year as Trustee for Electronic Communications. Tom and I are going to do a joint presentation, I'll start off and then Tom will give you some figures and then I'll finish off the presentation.

Bill Wilson was a visionary and he wrote this for us in 1960:

"A vast communications net now covers the earth, even to its remotest reaches... nothing matters more to AA's future welfare than the manner in which we use the colossus of modern communication. Used unselfishly and well, it can produce results surpassing our present imagination."

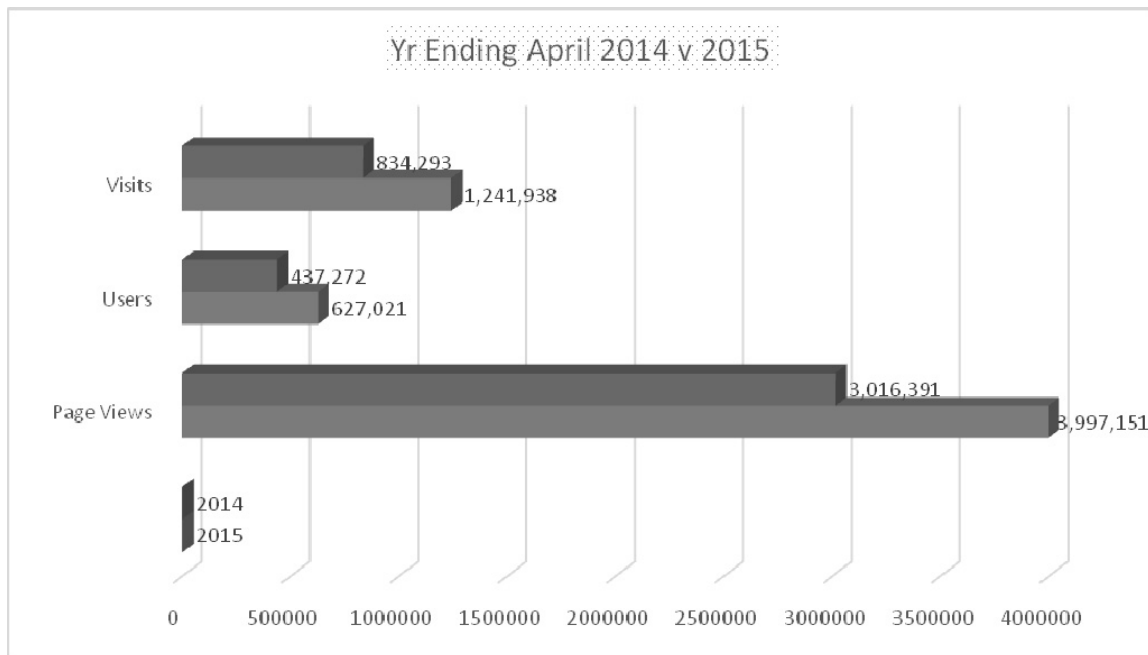
I don't think even Bill Wilson had an idea about the way that things have turned out but it has been our mantra for quite a few years now.

Tom will now take you through some site statistics.

Good evening Conference, my name is Tom and I am an alcoholic. I was just thinking about Bill W's statement because 25 years on from this statement I went for an interview, I am an IT consultant, with the mobile company called BT Cellnet and at that interview they presented on the table what best can be described as a brick with very large buttons, an antenna the size of my finger and it weighed a ton. They said to me that in a number of years this is going to be owned by everybody, everybody will have a mobile phone. I just high-tailed it out of there as I was still drinking, and I thought he was crazy. Now 30 years on from that, and this is the irony,

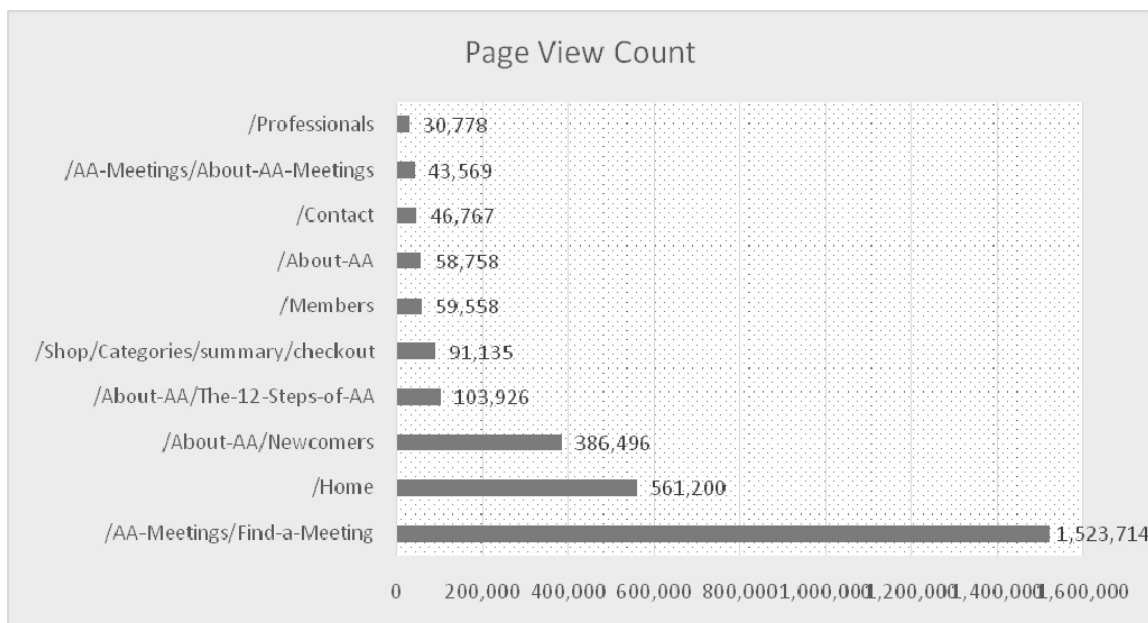
I'm working for that mobile company and the technological advances you can see because it is in our pockets and everyone has one today.

Site Statistics



This shows the comparative figures since the website started for the full years April to April 2014 versus 2015. The number of visits have gone up from 834,000 to 1,241,000 and the user base has gone up from 437,000 to 627,000. The number of page views is a staggering 4,000,000 thereabouts this year compared to 3000,000 the previous year so we are seeing between a 25-33% increase in use of the website over the two comparative years. It has been very effective as far as these statistics are showing.

Who is looking at our website and what pages are they looking at?



The first thing that I haven't included is the type of devices and the most popular is now the mobile phone at 48%, the second most popular is computers around 37% and tablets 15%. The

pages they are looking at and it is no surprise that meetings are the predominant pages that people look at especially those using their mobiles more and we do have the mobile site which recognises the device and reformats the presentation. What I like about this is the third line from the bottom about Newcomers, 386,000 page views and I think that means we are getting to the right audience here.

We have hundreds of pages and we have hundreds of statistics but the percentages just get so minimal that it is hardly worth going through those but what it will show us is that when we get to the less frequently viewed pages perhaps we should be looking at it and we can work on that.

If we look at the ranking, we have a ranking of popularity:

Ranking	Pages Viewed	Page View Count	% of Page Views
1	/AA-Meetings/Find-a-Meeting	1,523,714	38.12%
2	/Home	561,200	14.04%
5	/About-AA/Newcomers	147,495	3.69%
6	/About-AA/The-12-Steps-of-AA	103,926	2.60%
7	/Shop/Categories/summary/checkout	91,135	2.28%
9	/Members	59,558	1.49%
10	/About-AA	58,758	1.47%
13	/Contact	46,767	1.17%
14	/AA-Meetings/About-AA-Meetings	43,569	1.09%
15	/About-AA/Newcomers/Is-AA-for-you	41,171	1.03%
16	/About-AA/Newcomers/Starter-Pack	40,371	1.01%
17	/About-AA/Newcomers/Get-help-now	39,572	0.99%
18	/About-AA/Newcomers/About-Alcoholism	35,575	0.89%
21	/Professionals	30,778	0.77%
23	/About-AA/Newcomers/Members'-Stories	27,580	0.69%
24	/About-AA/Newcomers/Frequently-Asked-Questions	25,582	0.64%
37	/About-AA/Newcomers/A-Message-for-Young-People	25,582	0.64%

At the top of the ranking is obviously the meeting finder and fifth ranking is About AA Newcomers and About AA Newcomers is just one page. If you go down to number 15 you can see Is AA for you, then the Starter Pack, Get Help Now and About Alcoholism so people are now looking at that and professionals are now starting to look at us which is good. More about AA Newcomers and they are featuring in the top forty of the ranking.

Thank you Tom for some of the statistics and now a brief overview of what we do. We obviously do the website, facilitate email addresses for service positions and administer the Online Response Service (ORS). The ORS, for anybody who does not know, works very well and the figures for it are very encouraging but, unfortunately, of the sixteen Regions only seven are

represented and currently they have sixteen members. If anybody is interested please contact us or go onto the website and apply – it is a very rewarding service.

We have an opportunity to improve the way we carry the message and improve our communications both externally and internally.



Who We Are

At the centre of it are the Trustees and the Electronic Communications Sub Committee who are myself, Tom and James who worked with the supplier. We do the site administration, maintain the pages and update them, manage the Help Desk and advise of site improvements. Assisted by the General Service Office staff who keep the meeting database up to date, when you send your information in, they also monitor online changes and problems that may occur. We have the ORS working away, busy and their training is absolutely phenomenal. Lastly, we are assisted by the RECLOs and ECLOs who maintain the local microsites and each Intergroup and Region has its own microsite, and if you don't have one find out why, the site is there all you have to do is ask for access through the structure.

Over the last year the Young Peoples Project worked on a video for young people and the General Service Board commissioned it and it was produced. We have two versions of it on the website one for normal computers and one for IOS. I believe it is also available on one of the video channels and last time I checked it had had close to 8,000 views.

I am going to finish off this presentation by showing you the video. Thank you.

AA Service News Update

(Joe H)

The AA Service News is the principal medium for communication of service within the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) in Great Britain.

Articles within it give particular emphasis to matters affecting our primary purpose – which is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. These articles aim to provide a shared

experience of service at all levels within the Fellowship, ranging from Group through Intergroup and Region to Board and Conference level. Not forgetting European and World Service.

AA Service News has been produced and circulated quarterly. I would like to give a special mention to GSO staff who coordinate the production and enable it to go out on time by providing relevant information. Those who bring about its circulation are the many volunteers who gather four times a year on a Saturday morning at GSO and pack the envelopes. This is no easy task as at times there are several flyers and/or reports per envelope. To those people a very big thank you.

Members of the Fellowship and non-alcoholic trustees (NATS) are warmly encouraged to submit articles – in so far as they relate to service matters – either directly or via their Group Intergroup or Region to the Editor. Also people who having given service to the Fellowship and rotated out, they are asked to provide their personal perspective of the work they carried out.

It is this sharing of experience in service that not only benefits individuals but the Fellowship as a whole. If you have had a service event in the recent past please share it with AA Service News.

Three copies of AASN are posted to the mailing contact for all Groups in the GB Service Structure. It is also posted to all Intergroup and Regional officers and the General Service Board. AASN is free of charge to all recipients. If you do not see AASN appear at your Group ring and check the mail contact on your PINK SHEET held at GSO.

Archives Update (Tom B)

There really is not a lot to report this year from the Archives Sub Committee, as the members are mainly focusing on research into their individual disciplines, with the end result being the production of a book HISTORY OF THE AA SERVICE STRUCTURE GREAT BRITAIN as recommended by Conference a few years ago. The concentration at this time is on the early years, up until 1966, when after an exploratory Conference took place in Manchester to consider the formation of a General Service Conference Great Britain. In January 1966 the decision was taken and Conference was born.

Archives is now pleased to have its new web page up and running, thank you to Wullie I, Vice Chair GSB, and outgoing Electronics Communications and Tom S, Electronic Communications GSB, for their great work, also there was a Presentation at the Archives Network meeting in October.

There was also a very fine Presentation at that Network meeting by Jenny Micham and Dr Amanda Jones, Archivists from the Borthwick Institute, which now stores much of our Archives in a safe and secure environment.

Plans are under discussion for the Sub Committee to produce a little booklet to Celebrate 50 years of Conference.

Charlie, Sub-Committee member and NW Archivist did a fine display at the Southern National Convention, Stephen S, Fellowship Archivist will be doing the Northern National Convention in Blackpool.

Finally any articles or material you may have suitable for the Archives Newsletter PAST PARTICLES would be gratefully received by Stephen S at GSO.

Armed Services Update

(Robert M)

I would like to start my report with a huge thank you to all of the Groups, Intergroups and Regions who have been 'Carrying the Message of Alcoholics Anonymous' to all areas within Tri-Services and their families. No initiative goes unnoticed and my grateful thanks to all members at all levels, for their hard work over the last 12 months and for making my role a great deal easier. I am aware this report is quite large, but in my opinion, the information contained within is important to all ASLO's in post, at present and in the future.

Update

- AS (Armed Services) Regional Liaison meeting held on 21/22nd February 2014. Attendees included 1 member of AS Sub Committee, 8 Regional LO and 2 Regional Reps. Brian J, trustee elect, will be responsible for AS after Conference 2015
- Many points discussed especially communication between all ASLO's. It was agreed that everyone would be copied in on emails regarding events/initiatives.
- AS 12th Step list updated with approximately 100 members now available.
- An updated AS CD Pack was distributed and everyone made aware it was available on request from GSO.
- AS Website discussed and suggestions were made. File storage area is available and ASSC (Armed Services Sub Committee) continue to liaise with EC Trustee on populating the web pages.

Discussion was held on the possibility of an AS Seminar/Workshop to be held in February/March 2015 and it was unanimously proposed to put this to GSB. I am pleased to say this was endorsed by the GSB and the seminar will be held in the Park Inn, York, on the 21st February 2015. Seminar will include presentations by Paul T and Susanna R, former members of AS Sub Comm and Tim M, LRN Regional ASLO. Sessions planned are an open forum, general sharing and workshop, group discussions and Q +A.

Sample of Current Contacts with Armed Services in GB:

London Region North: Attending the Armed Forces Network (AFN) meetings and this participation has already spawned a number of local contacts, which are proving very useful to all concerned.

In a letter to Dr. Allie Bennington PhD, Welfare Development Officer, Tedworth House. (Help for Heroes), it was explained he had established contacts with and is in dialogue or cooperation with NHS England, the Department of Health, Support Command in Aldershot, London District, the London Veterans and Treatment Service, and around thirty charities, including Help for Heroes, Combat Stress, and the Royal British Legion, plus sundry other organisations.

ASLO asked if the opportunity may be available to cooperate with the Armed Forces Networks around the country and would be grateful if this option would be available to him or various counterparts and if so, when and where the AFN meetings are scheduled to take place.

Update:

Contact made with Ann Berry, who is a Commissioning Manager (Armed Forces Health Commissioning (Midlands & East)) within the NHS and responsible for running the 'Armed Forces Networks' (AFNs) for the West Midlands, East Midlands and East of England.

These networks gather together representatives of the services, service charities, the MoD, and the NHS, to discuss aspects of military and veterans' health. Each event has up to 100 people

attending, but the mail outs, which contain information packs concerning each of the topics discussed, go to upwards of 700 people. **(Background information to AFN included below)**. The events are incredible networking opportunities, because anyone attending is necessarily interested in cooperation and communication with other agencies. Therefore, an amazing channel for communicating AA's message.

We now have regular AA attendance at the London and South of England AFNs, and Ann would like an AA presence for the West Midlands, East Midlands, and East of England. In particular, she would like ASLOs to attend the next round of AFNs, in the first few months of 2015, possibly bringing along a stand with information materials, and presenting in person on (a) general information about AA and (b) myth-busting (i.e. dispelling common myths about AA that are regularly encountered in society at large). An information pack would then be sent out to everyone on the mailing list.

The above information was sent to all ASLO to ask if they would be happy for their contact details to be provided to Ann, so she can liaise with them directly and take this initiative forward.

Armed Forces Networks South of England (Information)

Background: The Armed Forces Networks (AFNs) have, since 2009, enabled and supported the delivery of the AF Covenant, policy intentions, transition protocols and the Government Mandate to the NHS and its subsequent Operating frameworks in their respective regions.

Aim of the AFN: To discuss, debate and develop how each AFN supports and can deliver appropriate care in the **local region** to the Armed Forces community including dependants, reservists, their families and veterans.

Armed Forces Networks (AFNs) were held in Oct/Nov 2014 in the South East, South Central and the South West. Building on the success from the meetings in June 2014 and taking into account the views and feedback from those attending; the October and November events focussed on updating attendees on relevant news from both NHS England and the MOD and included presentations from the Veterans Council, Mental Health, Reservists, Defence Business Services, Patient & Public Voice and Service Children's representatives.

Once again each event was a great success with in excess of 100 attendees over the 3 events and we would like to thank all attendees for their participation. Of significant note is the increase in the number of those attending from CCGs; who are responsible for veteran healthcare. Instrumental to this is the work of the CCG Co-Chairs and again thank each for their continued commitment in taking forward the good work that an AFN can generate focussing on their Local Area needs.

AFN Attendees



SUMMARY OF THEMES AND NEXT STEPS

Immediate next steps

- Develop themes stakeholders have identified to shape future events.
- To engage with organizations identified by stakeholders as being of interest.
- Initiate the use of online booking for all future network events.

The Key areas from all Networks identified:

- Themes identified and to be taken forward for future AFN events:
 - COBSEO
 - **Alcohol and substance misuse.**
 - MOD Community Covenant / Libor funding
 - Sharing of medical notes
 - GP system codes for veterans and reservists
 - Secondary care AF & Veterans NHS services overview
 - Defence Medical Welfare Service
 - BLESMA
 - RBL
- **Presentations to be incorporated into future AFN events:**
 - Bath University
 - **Alcoholics Anonymous**
 - DCMH Portsmouth and the wider military mental health provision
 - Gardening Leave – Horticultural Therapy
 - Promotion of GP system codes for veterans and reservists
 - Veterans Council update of website development

The next AFN events will be held during April/May 2015 and the dates and venues for these events will be emailed with a link to an online booking website. Actions from these events and overall feedback will be given at the next AFN.

- **Regional Updates:**

Eastern Region. ASLO made contact with the Naval paper 'Navy News', which is the monthly editorial for the Royal Navy. They would be prepared to consider a piece from us for publication.

S Midlands Region. ASLO remains in contact with a variety of senior military medical officers - Major General (Director General), Army Medical Services and Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Health)), Air Vice Marshal (Director Defence Primary Health Care Service) and Brigadier (Commander, 2 Medical Brigade), and take every opportunity to carry the message with their co-operation. AA has been invited to attend a joint Service Charities/NHS workshop at Tedworth House (Help for Heroes) in June.

East London. Contact established with DMCH Woolwich, with presentation to follow.

Essex. The local ASLO is in contact with the medical centre in Colchester garrison. When a potential candidate for AA is identified, the medical centre calls the ASLO, who comes in and meets with the individual and a member of the medical centre staff. The ASLO then takes the individual to meetings for two weeks or so to acclimatise him or her to AA, and then follows up afterwards.

Secondly, since the individual in question will firstly be based at a garrison but secondly have a home somewhere else in the country, the ASLO facilitates contact through the telephone service or the local ASLO in the individual's home town, so that when they return there, contact is already set up.

Thirdly, informal meetings are soon to be held within the garrison for anyone interested in AA. All of these services are facilitated through the mental health team, which deals with PTSD and problem drinking, amongst other issues.

North-West Region. ASLO in contact with the welfare officers and medical centre at Weeton Barracks and Fulwood Barracks.

ASLO attendance at health fairs at Fulwood Barracks. Local TA units have contact details of the ASLO.

Attended the 42 (NW) Brigade Health Committee meeting on the 11th of March 2014 at Fulwood Barracks in Preston, Lancs. The meeting was headed up by a new Brigadier and he was speaking to his TA Colonels and their reps. The Brigadier wants each unit to hold its own Health Fair sometime this year, and after giving a small presentation about AA the COs have the option to ask for an AA stand. It's up to them if they wish to include AA but the Brigadier seemed quite keen. There are six TA units involved.

- Presentation on AA and the Armed Services to an organisation called the Veterans Council at their head office near St Helens.
- Presentation to the organisation, Tom Harrison House, a new organisation in Liverpool. They help Veterans and Bluelight services with alcohol and drug problems. They said they will be happy to recommend AA to all their clients.

Scotia Region. ASLO in contact with local SSAFA representative to set up contact with Edinburgh Garrison, covering three barracks. The SSAFA representative is now the main point of contact with AA. AA display stand to be presented at the garrison open day.

AA literature provided to the SSAFA representative. Maintaining contact with the Edinburgh HIVE at Dreghorn Barracks. Arranged for GSO to send a PI pack direct to the Edinburgh HIVE Information Officer to maintain supply.

South-East Anglia. RAF Honington, RAF Woodbridge, and RAF Wattisham have been provided with information about AA, and the padres and/or welfare officers at all three have been visited. Contact also established with HIVES.

S. Midlands Region. This has been a quiet period in terms of activity within Region. However, the corporate body of ASLOs across the country is growing and they are in contact with each other.

ASLO remains in contact with a variety of senior military medical officers - Major General (Director General, Army Medical Services and Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Health)), Air Vice Marshal (Director Defence Primary Health Care Service) and Brigadier (Commander, 2 Medical Brigade), and take every opportunity to carry the message through them.

Forthcoming Activities:

AA has been invited to attend a joint Service Charities/NHS workshop at Tedworth House (Help for Heroes) in June.

Southdown. Attending the Veterans Outreach Support events held on the first Wednesday of each month alternately with Paul – former Para.

Veterans Outreach Support (VOS) Portsmouth: Alcohol Seminar - Thursday 23 October 2014

Theme: "Alcohol related problems in Portsmouth, with particular reference to the Military - Recognition and Management"

The estimated size of the veteran population in Portsmouth, (PO1 to PO6) is a little in excess of seventeen thousand. Whilst alcohol misuse in UK military personnel is now viewed as a disciplinary and performance issue, it nevertheless represents a significant and widely accepted public health issue which is not immediately apparent and may only emerge when re-entering civilian life.

The limited provision of specialised alcohol treatment services for this population is of concern. The local alcohol treatment services are aware they do not always feel competent to manage issues arising from previous military experience. Equally, reasons for not seeking help may be attributable to ignorance (not knowing where to go) and stigmatisation, combined with the inability to engage with civilian services.

In May 2014 the Veterans Outreach Support made the decision to develop a short-term alcohol intervention programme for veterans and their dependants. The aim of this initiative is to ensure that veterans have access to evidence based practices that recognises and respects the nature of the military experience, to facilitate appropriate referrals to existing mainstream primary and secondary care settings, and forge links with support services provided by both local authorities and the third sector. This Inaugural Seminar will give delegates the opportunity to hear from leading experts on a broad range of topics. It will provide the opportunity to engage with and explore the key alcohol issues in both serving and ex-service personnel. Confirmed speakers:

Dr Janet Maxwell, Director of Public Health for Portsmouth

Surgeon Captain John Sharpley Royal Navy, Defence Consultant Advisor in Psychiatry

Dr Julia Sinclair Consultant Psychiatrist, Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry, University of Southampton

Dr Richard Aspinall, Consultant Hepatologist, Queen Alexandra Hospital Cosham

Alan Knobel, Alcohol Strategy Co-ordinator, Portsmouth City Council

Patrick Hill, Former Band Master Royal Marines - Alcoholics Anonymous

Wayne Kirkham, Veterans Mental Health Lead, NHS England

Sue Atkins, Senior Sister Alcohol Specialist Nurse Service, Queen Alexandra Hospital, Cosham.

A summary of the day follows:

Delegates included representatives from service charities, drop in centres, housing offices, information hubs, drug & alcohol intervention services and other professionals.

Five AA members attended including Southdown Intergroup Chair, ASLO and PILO along with 2 female AA members.

AA had a 30 minute slot for presentation which included 15 minute Q&A. What was noticeable during these 30 minutes and not during the other presentations was the complete silence in the room while the delegates received a brief glimpse into the world of Alcoholics Anonymous.

All of these services now have detailed information of the AA Service Community database and how it works directly from the 0845 helpline.

Veterans Outreach Support (VOS) Portsmouth runs a drop in clinic on the first Wednesday of every month providing access to all kinds of support services – a practising barrister (retired RN) provides legal advice free of charge with follow up service. For example, doctors can give referrals and service charities are present.

West Kent. ASLO in contact with all bases in the area, which have his contact details. No formal follow-up procedure in place. ALSO contacted individually on occasion by currently serving soldiers/officers.

Wirral. ASLO in contact with the padre at Dale Barracks.

London Region North. In discussions with AWS (Army Welfare Service) in London District; meeting scheduled but cancelled because of illness; pamphlets sent; other material emailed; AWS happy with the materials sent and all staff briefed internally.

Efforts currently underway to ensure all AWS offices round the country have an AA connection. Covered so far: the North-West, the South-West, Edinburgh and Essex.

- Mail out of pamphlets to 34 Army HIVES' nationally. The project to include AA stories, pamphlets, and flyers aimed at service personnel and veterans on Army HIVE blogs has gone live and is being rolled out on all Army HIVE blogs around the country, to which everyone in the Army has access. The materials will be permanently available on the blogs under 'health' or 'welfare' tabs. <http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/23438.aspx>
- Mail out to and discussions with 'Walking with the Wounded' (a service charity) <http://walkingwiththewounded.org.uk/>
- Mail out to and discussions with the outreach coordinator for Combat Stress in the south of England (Cornwall to Norfolk); materials to be cascaded out to all clinical and welfare staff. Client base: several thousand, a large proportion of whom have alcohol problems.
- Mail out to and discussions with Defence Primary Healthcare Command regarding reservists (of which there are 28,000). Information about AA cascaded out to all clinical and welfare staff.
- Ongoing communications with the Armed Forces Community Directory to get AA entries not just nationally but for all Intergroups/Regions.
- Revision of AA stories with an armed services slant for use in PI activities.
- Attendance of the South of England Armed Forces Network meeting in Crawley (there are three for the South of England: Newbury, Crawley, and Tidworth, covering Cornwall to Kent; AA attendance arranged at two of the three).
- Invitation secured to speak at all three South of England Armed Forces Network meetings in May 2015, to around 150 professionals in the area of military and veterans' health, with onward distribution of the presentation to 750+ professionals in this domain, from Cornwall to Kent (MoD, CCGs, public health personnel in local authorities, tri-service personnel, and service charities).
- Coordination of AA attendance at the Midlands and East of England Armed Forces Network meetings underway, and the North of England Armed Forces Network coordinator has also been contacted to the same end.
- Introduced Al-Anon PI officers to various senior figures in military and veterans' health.
- Letter written, with accompanying information, to Veterans UK, which is an MOD agency <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk>

Charities: Help for Heroes: the South-West Region contact has been established and passed to the ASLO in South Midlands, who is based in Salisbury and can cover the South West; the North-West Region contact made has been passed to North-West and North-East Regional ASLOs; the Colchester contact has been passed to Essex Intergroup.

- Presentation given at a multi-agency hub meeting in June, in Tidworth, which covers much of the south of England.
- COBSEO (Confederation of Service Charities). Awaiting go-ahead on distribution of AA materials to all members.
- Big White Wall: presentation of AA information discussed. Awaiting BWW's internal decision on this.

Revised information sent to MHFA, and contact sought with national team to ensure up-to-date information is being provided to all of the trainers, including the Armed Services 12th-Stepper list.

- Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation—participation in monthly veterans' drop-ins ongoing.

MoD: Contact with Colonel Pat John, Support Command, Aldershot: contacted in early July seeking update. Colonel John to revert in the second week of July.

Other Public Sector: Presentation given to the London Armed Forces Network meeting in April, whose attendees included senior figures in the NHS, DH, Army, and charity sector.

- Contact information obtained from NHS England for the veterans' mental health leads for all regions around the country and passed on to other regions within AA.
- Army Engagement Team (<http://www.army.mod.uk/engagement/>) meeting held in Islington. Believed to have been positive in raising awareness of AA. Contact established at meeting with the Chief of Staff of London District and a possible lead has been provided for a senior person in the chaplaincy of London District.

Support Command

An introduction to Support Command, Aldershot, was made through NHS England/the Department of Health last year. The purpose of the contact was to establish a relationship at a national level, with the hope that any decision made at this level might be rolled out nationally, to ensure contact between AA and the Army throughout the country, particularly covering areas where there is no ASLO in place, either at Intergroup or Region. Lots of great work is being done locally, but there are some gaps.

A meeting was held in September 2013, and another, in September 2014, with a number of phone calls and emails in between. Progress has been made and we are now in discussion with Army HIVES and with the AWS (Army Welfare Service). What Army HIVES would like is a national mail out, which we are organising, and a system for connecting up the various HIVES with ASLOs, where such contact is not already in place, which can then be monitored periodically to ensure that contact is maintained. With AWS, we're undertaking a similar project, to connect local ASLOs with the AWS sites round the country, again where such contact is not already in place.

The hope is that these networks might be maintained, to ensure that ASLOs continue to cover neighbouring areas, in terms of contacts with AWS and HIVES, so that there are no 'blank spaces' on the map. One possibility is for this essentially national task to be undertaken by the national AS Sub Committee, possibly in the future. There might also be significant scope for ASLO work with the local garrison (as opposed to liaising with Support Command).

- **Outcome:**

Army Welfare Service (nationally) gave the go ahead to link up the local AWS branches around the country with the local ASLO or, in the absence thereof, the local PI Officer or a neighbouring or regional ASLO, in case they are interested in acquiring AA literature or having an AA member come along and explain AA to staff, as part of their training.

Similarly, Army HIVES (<http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/23438.aspx>) are keen to ensure that the local HIVES (of which there are 41, and of which there is one in Aldershot) are linked up with AA, in terms of having a local AA contact (again, ASLO, PI Officer, or a neighbouring or regional ASLO, for similar reasons to AWS).

PROPOSALS FOR HIVES

The HIVE hubs to be mailed packs of the hard copy leaflet 'A Message for Professionals', for onward distribution to the 41 individual HIVE sites, with a covering letter briefly explaining everything that AA has to offer.

This can serve as information for the staff at these sites. The pack would also include a single copy of the pamphlet 'AA and the Armed Services' for each of the 41 sites with information and a catalogue price list for outside agencies also included in the pack on how individual HIVES or persons interested in AA could obtain more literature.

The pack could also include a flyer explaining the 'Armed Services 12th-Stepper service', which is the option for someone phoning up AA and to be put in contact with an AA member with armed services experience, to provide additional personal identification and generally smooth the process of introduction.

We look at whether and how information about AA could be included in the training programme for HIVE staff:

(a) In the form of written materials or (b) In the form of presentations by AA Armed Services Liaison Officers ('ASLOs').

To establish a list of the 41 HIVE sites matched to a designated AA ASLO (which could be a Regional ASLO or an 'Intergroup' ASLO). The local ASLOs could then act as the point of contact for each HIVE, for several purposes:

- (a) organising presentations by the AA members to staff
- (b) facilitating the introduction of a potential AA member to AA
- (c) providing AA literature, if requested, for the HIVE in question
- (d) setting up and manning stalls at local health fairs.

We try and maintain this list into the future, to ensure that, when there is staff turnover or rotation, the one-for-one link between HIVE sites and AA is maintained. Where posts fall vacant within AA, we can identify who, from a neighbouring 'Intergroup' or region, could cover a particular HIVE going forward.

We examine the possibility of posting one or more AA stories on HIVE blog, anonymity preserved of course.

We produce copy for HIVE blog (which I understand could be 'perma-linked' somehow, so that the information remains available to interested users) introducing AA and tailored to servicemen/ women and/or their families. Provide links to the main AA website, details of how to contact AA (including the 'Armed Service 12th-Stepper service) and links to some basic AA

literature (the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and some of the pamphlets for newcomers, which are all available online.

Work and liaising with HIVES is continuing and looking very positive. (Some information on HIVE Network below)

The HIVE Information Network

The HIVE is an information network available to all members of the Service community. It serves both married and single personnel, together with their families, dependants and civilians employed by the Services. HIVE information centres support the chain of command and service communities through the provision of up-to-date and relevant information.

Worldwide, the HIVE information centres offer an extensive range of information on relocation, local unit and civilian facilities, places of interest, schools and further education, housing, **healthcare facilities**, employment and training opportunities.

They network worldwide, sourcing national and local information as needed. Information on relocations is one of our key areas of information support and is available either in advance or on arrival at the receiving unit. Information on the ways to communicate with those serving away on operational deployments is also available through HIVE information centres.

HIVE information support officers are not trained in welfare counselling. **They are however able to advise referral to those professional agencies best suited to the individual's circumstances.** All HIVE staff are bound to a code of confidentiality.

Find HIVE centres by region in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland -
<http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/23438.aspx>

Armed Forces Day 2014

The Armed Services' Day was held in Stirling on Saturday the 28th June. Scotia Region set up an 'AA Public Information Display Stand' in a giant Marquee along with 37 other exhibitors, with AA approved literature on display.

It was a large event with thousands of people attending. It was surprising the amount of members of the public who came to speak to us and took our literature with them.

Good contacts made with Military personnel, the other exhibitors and the general public.

Armed Forces Day 2015

Will be held in Guildford (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guildford-to-host-armed-forces-day-2015>). Mid-Surrey Intergroup is going to be handling this. This Intergroup does not have an ASLO, but they have agreed to handle Armed-Services related work within their PI discipline.

Armed Services Display Stand to be set up as part of Armed Services Day 2015 in either Hamilton or Motherwell.

Armed Services Plans for 2015

Maintain lasting links and raise awareness with organisations offering non-military support to service people e.g. - HIVES, AFN, AWS, Veterans UK, Combat Stress, Royal British Legion, SSAFA, RAFA, and RNA.

Continue to raise the profile of Armed Services Liaison Officers within the Fellowship. We are at present a comparatively small band of dedicated members, but with your help, we can perhaps pass on what was so freely given to you.

We will continue to carry out our primary purpose of carrying the AA message to UK Armed Forces personnel past and present and their families who may have a problem with alcohol.

As I rotate from GSB at Conference, I am sure you will give the same support to Brian as you have given me over the last 4 years. It's been a pleasure and a privilege, knowing and working with you all. My grateful thanks to everyone again. God Bless you.

Employment Update (Sandy MacV)

The Employment Discipline continues to go from strength to strength with a welcome increase in the number of Regional and Intergroup Liaison Officers over the past year.

Employment Liaison Officers in Post since 2011

Intergroups		Regions
25	2011	4
26	2012	4
25	2013	8
27	2014	10
31	2015	11

Feedback from Intergroups and Regions is positive and encouraging with interest in Alcoholics Anonymous coming from and being offered to all corners of employment. There is great interest coming from the DWP throughout the country.

At the 2014 Conference a new edition of HelloELO the newsletter for the Employment discipline was produced.

It had been hoped that this would be a regular contribution to the discipline. However, due to circumstances outwith our control, this was not to be. The Sub Committee are committed to resurrecting the newsletter and it is hoped that all being well we will be able to produce HelloELO on a bi-annual basis in the first instance.

We are grateful that with the help of the REELO Trustee we now have our website up and running.

As reported last year it is good to know that there is a whole chapter dedicated to employment in the Big Book.

When thinking of working with others I am reminded of Tradition 6:

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

A situation arose recently where a department mistakenly saw themselves as affiliated with AA. This was promptly rectified. It brought to mind that AA **Co-operation** and not affiliation protects our traditions.

With the enthusiasm shown by our Liaison Officers and the Sub Committee members the future for Employment looks positive.

Prisons Update

(Wullie I)

This is my first and final Prison report to Conference having been shadowed by Charlie R and Roger E whose support has been much appreciated.

Annual Prison Liaison Meeting

We started off the year with the annual meeting of Regional Officers in June, 10 of the 15 Regions were represented. As in previous years much sharing of experience took place. Lots of very positive work being done with a few frustrations along the way, just as it has always been in this vital service.

There was a proposal to hold a National Prison Workshop at York in June this year, plans are underway to facilitate this, inviting the Regional and Intergroup officers to attend.

Scottish Liaison Officers & Sponsors

I chaired the annual meeting of Scottish Liaison Officers & Sponsors at Stirling University. Once again a very good turnout, and the successes and challenges were discussed. Slow progress is being made regarding clearances issues.

Scottish Regional Prison Workshop

Scotia Region hosted this year's successful Prison Workshop.

Sub-committee

The Prison Sub-committee has gone through some more changes this year. We welcome Bruce B from Scotia Region onto the committee replacing Isobel to look after Scottish matters.

One of the standing items on our agenda is the prison map, which shows us where we stand in prisons across the country. The latest figures we have are of the 149 prisons we have meetings in 109 (same as last year) no meetings in 37 (36 last year) and we do not about 3 (4 last year).

Work is currently being undertaken to anglicize the pamphlet 'It sure beats sitting in a cell'. A letter from the Sub-committee to all Prison Governors is being prepared.

Through a Regional Prison Officer request, we are placing an ad every two months in the England and Wales in the Prison newspaper 'Inside Times' for this year.

Prison Postal Service Report:

England & Wales:

109 Male Sponsors, 45 Female Sponsors

At the moment we have 130 sponsors actively writing to a prisoner.

Scotland:

There are 8 regular correspondences but it can vary between six to twelve over the year.

NOMS:

Last year' reported National Offender Services (NOMS) a department within the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) had formed a new work group. This has now been disbanded

My thanks goes to all those enthusiastically involved in this area of service, which at times can be very frustrating, without their hard work and commitment we would not be able to reach out.

Young People's Project Update (Phil W)

The idea of re-launching the Young People's Project (YPP) was mooted at the February GSB meeting two years ago. The original project ran for three years from 2003 and the outcome was the pamphlet '*Younger People in AA*'.

The aim this time was to take inventory of the Fellowship's service structure and resources, including literature, posters and website and make recommendations to make AA more attractive and relevant to potential young members in Britain (and English speaking Europe) today.

The aims of the Project include:

- **Attracting** young people with alcohol problems into **recovery** in AA.
- **Engaging** young people in the **unity** of the Fellowship.
- **Sponsoring** young people into **service** via the service structure.

Committee 2 at Conference 2013 made a series of recommendations in response to questions about young people in the Fellowship. As the conscience of the Fellowship these set the agenda for the Project initially.

In AA Service News and on our website we put out an invitation, *Calling all younger members...*, for volunteers to join the YPP Team to develop the agenda. A circular was also sent out to the Regions as we would ideally like to have a network of young members from all over Great Britain.

Everyone who expressed an interest in the YP Project was invited to the Southern Service Office at the end of September 2013 for an introductory session which aimed to share experience and identify actions to move the project forward. Since that time there have been six further meetings half of which have been conducted on line.

The young team members have progressed a number of initiatives with GSB liaison and support, completing two new posters and an animation video titled *Alcohol and me, a message for young people* which can be found on our website. It has also had 6500 hits on YouTube at the time of writing.

Since Conference 2013 and the launch of the YP Project GSO has received a steady stream of enquiries from interested younger members seeking more information about eligibility and the role of a Young People's Liaison Officer. A job description has been drafted by the YP Project Team and is incorporated in a question for Conference 2015.

Several Intergroups and at least one Region have appointed a YPLO at the time of writing.

Other work in progress includes development of suggested content for a dedicated YP area on our website and preparations for a national YP Convention.

With my imminent rotation from the GSB I want to record my thanks to our YP team members for all their hard work and enthusiasm and the Board for its support. All good wishes to the YP Project going forward!

House of Commons Presentation

(Tom B)

The aim of the Presentation is to identify the profile of Alcoholics Anonymous with Parliamentarians of all political views, to invite people of professional standing to attend an Alcoholics Anonymous public event.

London North, London South together with surrounding Regions PIs/ Health Liaison officers make up the HoC Committee, these including Board Trustees from London Region South and London Region North, one of whom Chairs the Committee meetings, this Committee is responsible for the arranging and running the event.

Last year's event was a success, with very positive feedback, a good cross section of professional people who encounter alcoholics in the course of their professional duties attended. The invited speakers last year, Dr Jane Marshall (Consultant Psychiatrist) and Mark Gilman (Public Health England) all responders thoroughly enjoyed the event with very positive comments on our male and female AA speakers who gave a balanced and clear message that AA works. There was also a clear recognition of the impact of Mark Gilman's Presentation.

The message that AA works I think can be judged by the fact that all but one responder would recommend AA to the suffering alcoholic, 85% would invite AA to make a presentation in the workplace, 92% would welcome a less formal presentation later in the year and those who would be interested in an invitation to attending an open AA meeting themselves almost equally split, 33% yes 37% no.

The event is hosted each year by a Member of Parliament.

The Committee are working hard to make this year's presentation a success.

Scottish Parliament Event

(Robert M)

The AA Awareness event at Holyrood took place on the evening of 1st October, 2014 and was hosted by Christina McKelvie MSP, SNP. She commented that the AA reception comes at a time when Scottish society and its relationship with alcohol is the subject of much debate.

Robert M, Trustee for Public Information chaired the event and gave a presentation on PI and an overall view of what AA does and doesn't do. He explained the roles of our liaison officers and the part they play in co-operating with the professional community.

Ash Kahn (Non-Alcoholic Trustee) gave a presentation explaining the role of Alcoholics Anonymous with the professional and the recovery programme offered by AA.

Mark Gilman from NHS England gave a spirited and sometimes humorous presentation on the 12 Step programme of AA and how best the professional community could co-operate with Alcoholics Anonymous.

Lorraine from NSO gave an overview on the role of the NSO in carrying the message to professionals and the still suffering alcoholic.

Jim F shared his experience, strength and hope which was well received by all attendees.

There were 37 professionals in attendance who all received folders with AA literature at registration. All guests came from a good cross-section of the professional community and entered into a lively question and answer session near the end of the event. A buffet provided the opportunity for networking.

Christina McKelvie closed the event, thanking all who came along and she wished Alcoholics Anonymous well in all its endeavours.

Welsh Assembly Presentation

(Judy F)

This event took place on the evening of 11th November, 2014 at the Senedd (Welsh Assembly) in Cardiff Bay. Our host this year was Peter Black AM (Welsh Liberal Democrats).

Robert M. Trustee for PI gave a power point presentation with particular emphasis on the AA tradition of being 'fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions', (Tradition 7) and also dispelled any claims to religious affiliation stating the spiritual aspect of the programme.

Our two professional speakers this year were Dr Martin Weegmann, a Non Alcoholic Trustee, (NAT) and Dr. Ed Day, a senior clinical lecturer in addiction psychiatry.

Martin spoke of his personal involvement and experience within AA and how this has helped him to help others.

Dr Ed Day, spoke with authority and from first-hand experience, of the benefits that participation in peer groups have on an individual's recovery. His power point presentation stating scientific evidence was quite convincing; his endorsement of AA was glowing.

Our member speaker, Jason P gave a moving experience, strength and hope talk that touched a lot of people. This became apparent from the number of questions that were asked later on.

The events team that arranged the layout and technical equipment for us were excellent and available throughout the evening in order to offer support if necessary.

The catering and literature were organised by two committee members.

Although the total number of people who registered for the event via the website was 59, around forty actually attended. It was felt, however, that this was a successful event as there has been some 'follow-up' interest.

Northern National Convention

(Geoff H)

The Fortieth Northern National Convention took place over the weekend of 21/22/23 March 2014 at the Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool. A total of 1018 people attended, which represented a 33 per cent increase over the previous year. It is believed that this increase was accounted for by the convention being the fortieth. Some of the people who were in attendance had been at the very first Northern National Convention in 1975, a testimony to long-term sobriety and proof that this Programme works, one day at a time.

The Friday evening was designated as an open meeting and the speakers were from AA, Al-Anon and Alateen. Ash Khan, Non-Alcoholic Trustee, was also a speaker at this meeting and his talk, as both a psychiatrist and Board member, was very well received by the audience. A considerable numbers of invitations had been sent to a variety of professional people in the locality, but regrettably nobody availed themselves of this opportunity. (In retrospect it is considered that the timing may have been difficult for most professionals.)

The usual programme of activities took place over the weekend: main meetings, marathon meeting, old-timers' meeting, service meetings, literature stands and service displays, recovery films and evening entertainment. A superb display of archival material relating to the history of the Northern National Convention was staged by Charlie C, North West Region Archivist. A new service workshop took place, and the panel consisted of speakers who shared their experience of service in the AA group, intergroup, region and Conference. The convention closed with the Final Gathering at midday on Sunday.

Michaela L, committee member, once again conducted an analysis of the feedback form that attendees were asked to complete. 194 questionnaires were completed representing a return rate of 20 per cent, compared with 14 per cent the previous year. These surveys do help the committee to improve things for future conventions. 91 per cent of people said that they would return in future years.

Finally, I would like to express my profound thanks to the hard-working members of the committee. As I so often say, it is remarkable that such a big event is organised and run by such a small number of people.

Southern National Convention

(Tom B)

Last year's Convention was held on the first week of September, as has been the case in recent years since MILL RYTHE on Hayling Island became the venue. The weekend was a big success.

The weather was good and the atmosphere relaxing, pleasant and enjoyable. The event was a sell out with bookings closed well before the event and just under 800 people registered over the three days.

The feedback from the paying attendees was very encouraging, which was reflected in our suggestion box with just four complaints and many, many compliments and positive suggestions.

This year's Convention will take place once again at Mill Rythe, the theme for this year is, A NEW FREEDOM A NEW HAPPINESS; the dates for your calendar are 4th, 5th and 6th September.

Just a word on the good work of the Committee, who work nonstop over the three days, dedicate a good deal of time throughout the year to prepare, present and keep the whole event running smoothly. This can be an arduous task particularly if we are short of Committee members and sponsoring Regions can help greatly here by making sure they have at least one Rep on the Committee. Looking forward to seeing some of you at the Convention.

Scottish National Convention

(Charles R)

The 2014 Scottish Convention was again held at the Corrin Halls in Oban. Sadly the Convention was not fully self supporting, due to over 100 less registrations. The Convention reported a £1,600 shortfall in their prudent reserve. The 7th Tradition pot money sent to GSO.

The sale of AA literature was excellent given the attendance.

The Convention Committee worked in a diligent and harmonious manner throughout the year and during the Convention. Our thanks to all who chaired and shared giving a great example of carrying the AA message.

At the AGM/wash up meeting for the 2014 Convention, the newly elected committee reviewed the Terms of Reference before starting to plan the 2015, 59th Scottish Annual Convention which will be at Oban again this year.

Planning for the 2015 Convention is at an advanced stage and we are looking forward to welcoming members to Oban in May 9th 10th and 11th.

We would like to thank last year's committee for their hard work and also this year's committee for their dedication to make this Convention a great success.

Welsh National Convention

(Judy F)

The Welsh National Convention was, again, held in the town of Llandrindod Wells, Powys, at the beginning of June, 2014. Llandrindod Wells is to be found in the really beautiful 'heart of Wales'. The Theme for the Convention was 'One Primary Purpose'.

A power point presentation about Electronics Communications was given by Wullie I. who is the Trustee for this discipline. This was both interesting and informative, though, sadly, this was not as well attended as we had hoped.

Once again the speakers were lively and interesting. There was a Welsh language meeting where simultaneous translation was provided.

More people attended in 2014 and it was felt that this was due, in part, to flyers being distributed to all Intergrups and Regions early in the year.

Plans are well underway for this year - 2015. The theme will be 'Just for Today... Dim ond am heddiw...' and the dates are May, 29 -31, 2015. Speakers for this year have already been approached.

As in previous years, there will be a Welsh language meeting and as before simultaneous translation will be arranged. This year 'Come and Go meetings' meetings are to be held throughout Saturday – starting at 10am 'til late.

The commitment and dedication of members involved in organising this event was proved, in that more people attended in 2014 than in previous years. We hope 2015 will prove to be as successful, if not more so. A very warm welcome is extended to everyone.

Open Forum

(Non Voting Session)

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 Nicki asking all to join her in saying the Serenity Prayer, following which the preliminary Committee Reports were distributed and the opportunity given for Regions to discuss these.

SUNDAY 13 APRIL

Nicki welcomed everyone back to the final session of Conference, asked for a few moments silence to remember why we are here, to remember the still suffering alcoholic and gather thoughts before the morning session.

As agreed at Conference 1995 each recommendation will be voted on and whether or not it is a two-thirds majority will be recorded.

Nicki 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 60 - 61
Committee No. 2	Pages 62 - 64
Committee No. 3	Pages 65 - 66
Committee No. 4	Pages 67 - 68
Committee No. 5	Pages 69 - 70
Committee No. 6	Pages 71 - 72

ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR CONFERENCE 2016

The nominations received on Friday evening were presented and, after a vote, Jim F (Scotia Region) was duly elected.

CONFIRMATION OF BOARD MEMBERS

(Willie MacD, Chair GSB)

Good morning Conference, my name is Willie and I am an alcoholic. What a fantastic Conference this has been, I think we have fulfilled the theme 'In the Spirit of Love and Service' and for each and every one of you here, thank you.

Now for the confirmation of new Board Members, we have four new Board Members, three alcoholic Trustees and one non-alcoholic Trustee:

John H	-	North East Region
Brian J	-	South Midlands Region
Nigel P	-	Continental European Region

We have one non-alcoholic Trustee and with the Young People's Project your Board have been quite far thinking and I am pleased to introduce you to Dr. Sarah Flowers from Sussex. Sarah is one of the youngest members of the Board that we have ever had.

John, Brian, Nigel and Sarah welcome to the Board of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain.

We now have to say goodbye to some members of the Board and I would like to acknowledge Paul Miles in his absence, unfortunately he could not be with us this weekend. Paul served on Public Information, Finance and was part of the Survey Team. He also served on the Electronic Communication Committee and was part of the

Westminster event. I would like to acknowledge the service he has done for Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain. Paul came from a business background and I can assure you that he certainly kept us on our toes on the Board. He had a lot of different ideas and views and we would have loved for him to stay with us for another four years but, unfortunately, due to his time commitments he could not manage it. We have not quite finished with Paul yet as he is going to represent us at the Westminster event in June and, as ever, we put our Board members to work quite quickly, so Sarah will be going with him.

Next is my friend Robert M. Robert served on the Scottish National Convention, the Scottish Parliament, Public Information, Finance and Armed Services. I thank Robert for all his hard work, loyalty, trust and commitment that he has given to Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain. I valued his friendship, his honesty and his emotions. I wish you well in your journey in Alcoholics Anonymous, thank you.

Last, but not least, Phil W the Vice Chair of the Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. Phil served on Nominations, Young People's Project, British Sign Language Project, Health Committee, Welsh Assembly, Welsh National Convention, Sub Sahara African Service Meeting, AA Service News, Public Information and Electronic Communications. It would have been easier to name the ones he didn't serve on! Like the House of Commons, we have a father of the Board, the longest serving Trustee on the Board at this moment in time.

I will miss my friend Phil very much, someone I have trusted, learnt from his experience, his guidance, words of wisdom, his love of service, his love of AA and anything Welsh in that order! I am sure most of you know, those that have been attending for the last three years, the terrific amount of work Phil has done – he put his heart and soul into the Young People's Project and for that I thank him.

Phil, as you trudge the road to a happy destiny, go with my love and the gratitude of Conference, we wish you well.

In the spirit of rotation we give you our goodbyes and our eternal thanks for the service you have all given to AAGB. Thank you.

I would like to introduce you to the new Vice Chair, Wullie I. Wullie has been shadowing Phil for the last year and we welcome him to the Exec Committee of AAGB.

My thanks to the GSO staff who are here today and my thanks also to the staff at the Northern and Southern Service Offices for all their hard work.

Lastly, my thanks to Nicki, Conference Chair, for the wonderful job she has done this weekend. Also to Jeroen, Jim G, Craig, Terry, Jim F and Andrew H, your Conference Steering Committee.

On a personal note, to anyone who is not sure what has been happening over the weekend, is feeling a bit lost, a bit overwhelmed, thinking that everyone knows more than me, thinking I'm not coming back, that's how I felt at my first Conference, and my second Conference – I'm a slow learner! All I can say is keep coming back, it's a massive learning experience and some of us don't quite feel comfortable right away but it will happen with the love and fellowship of the people in this room.

I have a big ‘bee in my bonnet’ about gender balance and equality through every aspect of my life and it is great to see three females coming on to our Committees next year. I wish that was the case throughout our structure but sadly it’s not. On the Board of Alcoholics Anonymous we have four female Trustees and seventeen male Trustees, so we are a small bit unbalanced. Please, ladies, consider putting your name forward when your Regions are looking for Trustees, this is a fellowship of men and women.

Most of all I want to thank each and every one of you for making this Conference possible as without you it would not have happened, you are the conscience of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain. Although Conference is about to finish, the message from this Conference is just about to start with all of you reporting back and sharing the message of this Conference with your Intergroups, Regions, Groups and fellow members and for that I thank you and hope you have had a wonderful time.

Close of Conference

(Nicki W)

My name is Nicki and I am an alcoholic and it will be the last time I am saying that today as I’m not going to repeat it going home. God has done for me what I could not do for myself yet again and the theme ‘In the Spirit of Love and Service’ is what I felt from every one of you.

I would like to thank everyone present for all the hard work and service that you do and for the spirit and love which is in the conscience of the Fellowship in Great Britain today. A special thank you to the GSO staff, for all your hard work throughout the year and also for the hard work this weekend.

Thank you to the Conference Steering Committee who have taught me so much and it has been lovely getting to know you over the past year and thank you for the great job you have done this weekend.

I finish my service here today as a very grateful alcoholic, for the privilege you gave me of serving as Conference Chair and I thank you. It has taught me a lot, it’s been a roller-coaster but I would like to thank you all very much.

Nicki closed Conference by asking everyone to join her in saying the Serenity Prayer.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT CONFERENCE

The Fifty-First General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain will be held at the Park Inn, North Street, York on 22-24 April 2016.

FIFTIETH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2015

COMMITTEE No. 1

CHAIR JEROEN S CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

SECRETARY STEPHEN M LONDON REGION SOUTH

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

1. Would the Fellowship share experience and then make recommendations whether to recognise online groups?

This Committee shared experience and recommends the recognition of online groups. We request that the General Service Board GB investigate the implications and practicalities of this recommendation. They should also consider how such groups can be incorporated within the structure of AA GB. The Board to report back to General Service Conference 2016.

Voting unanimous.

**2. Multiple Home Groups
What are the pros and cons of having more than one home group?**

The following are lists of pros and cons of having more than one home group reflecting the views of the Fellowship brought to the Committee by its members. This list is by no means exhaustive.

PROS

- 1) Variety of groups.
- 2) Helping groups with service.
- 3) Wider circle of AA friends.
- 4) Financial implications (Tradition 7).
- 5) Personal circumstances e.g. working away from home.
- 6) Wider feeling of belonging.
- 7) More opportunities to seek sponsorship.
- 8) Freedom of choice for the individual.
- 9) Added security.
- 10) Greater opportunities to carry and hear the message.

CONS

- 1) Multiple votes undermining AA democracy.
- 2) Ego building.
- 3) Conflict of interest.
- 4) Denying service opportunities to others.
- 5) Weakening group structure.
- 6) Financial implications (Tradition 7).
- 7) Anonymity of group consciences.

- 8) Pressure to undertake too much service.
- 9) Avoid facing up to conflict by moving to alternative home group.
- 10) If committed to several home groups this could be used as an excuse not to get involved in other levels of service.
- 11) The pamphlet the AA Group and the AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain 2013 refers to one home group (singular).
- 12) Less likely to establish support, sustain friendships and celebrate anniversaries.
- 13) Undue influence by individuals.
- 14) Stifles diversity.

The background information given was found to be inadequate and did not refer to multiple home groups.

Voting unanimous.

3. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Lisa D of South West Region as Chair of Committee No. 1 for Conference 2016.

4. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Jo F of Eastern Region as Secretary of Committee No. 1 for Conference 2016.

All recommendations on Committee No. 1 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority with the exception of question no. 2 which was not accepted by Conference.

FIFTIETH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2015

COMMITTEE No. 2

CHAIR CRAIG F LONDON REGION SOUTH

SECRETARY CLIVE K EASTERN REGION

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

- 1. Would the Fellowship discuss if it would like to adopt the Young People's Liaison Officer (YPLO) position, to be incorporated into the Service Structure of AA Great Britain in line with the proposed role description outlined below.**

Committee 2 recommends that the Young People's Liaison Officer role is formally incorporated in the service structure at Intergroup and Region levels.

The following role description is suggested to go forward via the Literature Committee to Conference 2016 for approval and incorporation in the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain.

Young People's Liaison Officer (YPLO)

The Young People's Liaison Officer (YPLO) is a contact and conduit for young newcomers with a desire to stop drinking.

The YPLO is a full service position recommended for Intergroups and Regions with voice and voting rights equal to other service positions.

The YPLO position is recommended for a service term of three years and it is suggested that each Intergroup and Region create a maximum of one YPLO position with voting rights at their respective assembly.

One fundamental aim is to get more younger members into AA and involved in service generally. YPLOs should strive to be of service to AA in other disciplines, especially after rotating out of service as YPLO.

Qualifications:

- Having come into AA at the age of thirty or younger
- Having a minimum of two years continuous sobriety for Intergroup YPLO
- Having a minimum of three years continuous sobriety for Region YPLO
- Having a good working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

The YPLO receives and answers referred email and phone enquiries about AA from young people. This gives young people someone to talk with who has sober experience in Alcoholics Anonymous and who can share experience, strength and hope about getting sober at a young age.

A YPLO will be available to assist the Public Information Liaison Officer (PILO) with public information talks where the audience is anticipated to be of a younger age, such as schools, universities, young offenders' institutions etc. The YPLO could also be of assistance offering perspective to PILOs when creating PI presentations and other PI work in relation to carrying the message to young people.

A YPLO should develop a contact list of members of AA who got sober at the age of thirty or younger who are available and willing to be of service for PI talks and 12-Step calls.

All YPLOs are welcome and encouraged to participate on the Young Peoples Project Team of the General Service Board, for as long as that team is convened.

In the spirit of unity and fellowship YPLOs are encouraged to support other Intergroup and/or Region activities concerning young alcoholics. Such activities may include Workshops, PI events and Conventions targeting younger AAs.

A YPLO should encourage younger members of AA to get involved in all aspects of service where the recommended qualifications for sobriety are fully met. Younger AAs are needed in all disciplines eg. Literature, Electronic Communications and PI to ensure the perspective of young people in AA is represented.

Votes for: 17

Votes against: 1

A minority opinion was expressed: that the creation of this position was unnecessary in a structure that already contained many unfilled posts and the service was adequately covered under PI.

2. Retention of new members.

Could Conference share its experience with regard to how better to encourage Newcomers to 'keep coming back', to attend subsequent meetings and thereby improve their chances of long term sobriety and recovery? Make recommendations as to how this experience could be communicated effectively to the Fellowship as a whole.

This Committee shared its experience which recognised and fully endorsed the recommendations of Committee 1 at Conference 2011. It was also strongly felt that personal contact is the key to the retention and recovery of newcomers, i.e. one alcoholic talking to another alcoholic.

The Committee further recognises that more can be done, and therefore recommends the following:

- a) As personal contact is essential, both during and after meetings, this Committee suggests giving contact details to newcomers. It is therefore recommended that the blue contact card be produced with one side blank, to enable the newcomer to leave the meeting with general AA contact details and specific group details written on the blank side.
- b) That a checklist be designed by the Literature Sub-committee based upon the recommendations from Committee 1, Conference 2011 for circulation to all groups.

- c) That the Fellowship produce innovative online media to enable the newcomer to know what to expect when they attend Alcoholics Anonymous.

It is the experience of this Committee that 12th Stepping, personal contact, and then sponsorship are crucial to achieving sustained recovery.

Vote: Unanimous

3. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Mark S of North West Region as Chair of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2016.

4. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Holly A of South West Region as Secretary of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2016.

All recommendations on Committee No. 2 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority with the exception of question no. 1 which was passed with a simple majority.

FIFTIETH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2015

COMMITTEE No. 3

CHAIR JIM G LONDON REGION NORTH

SECRETARY AMANDA S LONDON REGION SOUTH

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

1. Would Conference discuss the idea of adding a "chat now" messenger service to the AA GB website?

This Committee welcomes the idea of a 'chat now' facility on the AA website as an additional way for the still suffering alcoholic to contact the Fellowship. However, we have serious concerns about its practicality, in particular with regard to the recruitment, training and supervision of responders. We therefore recommend that the Board undertakes a feasibility study and report back to Conference 2016.

The Committee's decision was unanimous.

2. Would the Fellowship discuss and make recommendations on how the national 'Directory of Intergroup and Regional officers Great Britain Continental Europe and the General Service Board Great Britain' is updated, published and distributed?

This Committee has discussed the options available for the updating, publishing and distribution of the national 'Directory of Intergroup and Regional Officers Great Britain, Continental Europe and the General Service Board of Great Britain' (the Directory) and recommends that subject to a Board feasibility study and a Data Protection Act 1998 audit:

When updating: The Directory continues to be updated only by the General Service Office (GSO). The Fellowship should be mindful that the Directory will only be as accurate as the information provided by Officers. It is the responsibility of Intergroup and Region Secretaries to update GSO via groupinformation@gsogb.org.uk or by post to The Records Department at AA GSO. All serving officers should continue to provide postal addresses to be held securely by GSO in order to distribute AA Service News etc.

When publishing: The Directory be published electronically by default with hard copies available at the request of eligible officers. All contact details will be published by default but officers can choose to opt out of having their postal address published. Please note without a valid email or postal address, officers may not be able to exchange information.

When distributing: The Directory be distributed as a password-protected electronic document. In the interest of data security, the password, which will be changed with each edition, will be sent in a separate email.

The Committee's decision was unanimous.

3. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Amanda S of London Region South as Chair of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2016.

4. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Sid D of Eastern Region as Secretary of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2016.

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

FIFTIETH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2015

COMMITTEE No. 4

CHAIR TERRY A LONDON REGION SOUTH

SECRETARY ROSS N SCOTIA REGION

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

1. Would the Fellowship discuss and make recommendations on how we can encourage more members to submit questions for discussion at Conference?

The Committee discussed this question, and our recommendations are:

- a) Raise awareness and encourage members at Group, Intergroup and Regions on how to submit questions for Conference.
- b) Sponsorship and encouragement of GSR's into their vital role in facilitating the submission of questions or topics for Conference.
- c) Pre and post Conference assemblies to enable GSR's to have access to all 6 conference delegates and alternates.
- d) The inclusion of the "Role and Function of Conference" and "How to submit a topic or question for Conference" leaflets into the winter and spring editions of AA Service News.
- e) Investigate and report on the feasibility of producing a proforma for submitting questions on AA GB website by the Board.

Voting Unanimous.

2. Would the Fellowship take inventory of the 'Where to Find' and discuss improving its effectiveness and make recommendations.

The Committee acknowledges that the printed version of the National Where to Find continues to fulfil a need within the fellowship and feels that the following recommendations would improve its effectiveness.

- a) It is the groups/meeting's responsibility to keep GSO updated via the pink form/website.
- b) In the event of a group/meeting closing the local Intergroup secretaries to coordinate the flow of group details to GSO GB.
- c) The information as to the duration of the meeting to be added.
- d) To include postcodes to the group entry.

Voting 17 For
 1 Abstention

Minority view Recorded: Lost opportunity to radically amend the national
Where to Find.

3. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Mike P of London Region North as Chair of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2016.

4. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Tim W of South Midlands Region as Secretary of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2016.

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

FIFTIETH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2015

COMMITTEE No. 5

CHAIR JIM F SCOTIA REGION

SECRETARY JENNY D WALES & BORDERS REGION

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

- 1. Would Conference consider the adequacy of guidance offered to groups (pages 82 – 85, The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain 2013) in situations of persistent inappropriate/predatory sexual/threatening/violent behaviour at meetings and online, by individuals, share best practice and make recommendations (including appropriate amendment to the Structure Handbook) to clarify the onus of responsibility on group members to disallow such conduct.**

Committee 5 considered this question and proposes the following amendments to the AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain 2013 pages 82-85 headed Violence and Personal Conduct.

5.1

1. Page 82 remove 'Conference 2000 determined that: and the " "
2. New second paragraph – 'Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. AA must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first, but individual welfare follows close afterward'. (Tradition One long form).
3. Page 83 Add to 'The aim of this guidance incidents of violence, all forms of harassment including sexual within meetings and on line.nationality, sexual orientation, gender, age... To read:

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

Page 83 under What can be done?

1. Add 4th paragraph:

In cases of persistent inappropriate/predatory sexual/threatening/violent behaviour that prevents the carrying of the AA message, groups may refer to the following by Bill W "This amount of charity does not mean that we cannot exclude those who disturb meetings or seriously interfere with the functioning of the group. Such people can be asked to quiet down or go elsewhere or, to come back when they are better able to participate". Letter from Bill W 1969.

Page 84 under What can be done about unacceptable behaviour?

1. Add 2d under 2 Group Action

- 2d) If the group conscience deems it necessary, unacceptable behaviour may result in temporary exclusion from the group. The ultimate decision on return of the offender rests with the group conscience.

2. Add under 3 At Groups Meetings

- c) First word inside the brackets to be 'including'.

A further recommendation is that the Literature Sub Committee conduct research as necessary to provide a pamphlet to address matters of inappropriate conduct.

The Committee as requested shared best practice, examples of which are as follows:

1. Regular group consciences that address the issue of inappropriate behaviour.
2. Provide clear information as to what group officers and members should do in the event of difficult behaviour and reassurance that intervening when it is required is not a personal issue but is necessary to keep the space safe.
3. Be clear that the group officers have the support of the whole group.
4. Draw attention to the Section Five Violence and Personal Conduct (p82-85 The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain 2013).
5. Have the Structure and Service Handbook on display at every meeting.
6. Consider reading out a statement agreed by the group conscience about personal conduct matters.
7. Emphasise the importance of sponsorship into service.
8. All members, especially newcomers, need to be greeted, made welcome and be protected.

Voting Unanimous.

2. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Carmel G of South East Region as Chair of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2016.

3. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Mark B of North West Region as Secretary of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2016.

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

FIFTIETH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2015

COMMITTEE No. 6

CHAIR ANDREW H NORTH EAST REGION

SECRETARY ROB D SOUTH WEST REGION

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

1. Would Conference consider ways to raise awareness of the 'Twelve Traditions Checklist' in the Fellowship?

This Committee considered and agreed that any method of raising awareness of the Traditions Checklist was extremely valuable.

When reviewing this question, the Committee realised the document issued as background information had subsequently been revised and approved by Conference 2007*, and it is this revised document which will be referred to in our response.

This Committee recommends that the document in its present form be referred to the Literature Sub-Committee to be reformatted into a leaflet.

This Committee further recommends that the Checklist Leaflet:

- a) be included on the literature list
- b) be prominent on the AA-GB website
- c) be considered for inclusion in Share, Roundabout and AA Service News.

This Committee recommends raising awareness of the Checklist:

- a) in workshops at Regions and Intergroups
- b) by Regional Representatives and GSRs highlighting it to their Intergroups and groups
- c) by using it in the sponsorship process for individual application.

With these recommendations the Committee were mindful of the cost implications to the Fellowship.

*Link to the revised 2007 document:

http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/download/1/Library/Documents/Conference%20Reports%20and%20Background/Conference%202007/Background/Traditions_Checklist_for_Conference_2007.pdf

Vote: unanimous

2. Review the revised Chapter Nine ‘Probation/Criminal Justice Service’ of the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain 2013.

This Committee agrees and recommends the adoption of the revised Chapter 9 of the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain 2013, at the next reprint, with the following minor amendments:

- a) 9.1 last paragraph: remove “In addition”, remove “(especially Magistrates or Justices Courts)”, and move paragraph so amended to above “9.1 Introduction”.
- b) 9.3.1: remove the word “boundaries” in the subtitle
- c) 9.4 paragraph 1 to be amended to read “and has up to four other members” at line 2.

Vote: unanimous to all changes

3. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Bruce B of Scotia Region as Chair of Committee No. 6 for Conference 2016.

4. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2016.

The Committee elected Judi H of Midlands Region as Secretary of Committee No. 6 for Conference 2016.

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

FIFTIETH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2015

LIST OF DELEGATES

CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN: NICKI W (Eastern Region)

GENERAL SERVICE BOARD

			COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
Willie	MacD			
Tom	B		4	
Clive	D		6	
Roger	E		4	
Judy	F		2	
Joe	H		6	
Carol	H		3	
Geoff	H		5	
John	H	(Elect)	5	
Wullie	I		3	
Brian	J	(Elect)	4	
James	K		1	
Sandy	MacV		2	
Robert	M		4	
Charles	R		5	
Helen	S		6	
Tom	S		1	
Phil	W		2	
Ash Kahn			5	
Martin Weegmann			6	
Sarah Flowers		(Elect)	2	

GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Roger B General Secretary
Sharon Smyth
Chris North
Angela Varley
Karen Martin
Jenny Pryke

SHARE

Amanda	B	5	3
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ROUNDAABOUT

Flora	M	4	2
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**COMMITTEE
NUMBER****TERM OF
SERVICE****EASTERN REGION**

Jo	F	1	1
Clive	K	2	2
Sid	D	3	1
Gail	S	4	3
Kevan	D	5	1
Andy	D	6	2

LONDON REGION NORTH

Fred	C	1	2
Mike K	K	2	3
Jim	G	3	3
Mike	P	4	2
Judith	W	5	3
Gregory	M	6	3

LONDON REGION SOUTH

Stephen	M	1	2
Craig	F	2	3
Amanda	S	3	2
Terry	A	4	3
Ranjan	B	5	2
Wayne	L	6	2

MIDLANDS REGION

Michael	G	1	3
Caroline	G	2	2
Paul	S	3	1
Dean	M	4	1
Barbara	O	5	3
Judi	H	6	2

NORTH EAST REGION

Graham	S	1	2
Carol	P	2	2
Kirk	T	3	1
Pauline	B	4	1
Darren	B	5	3
Andrew	H	6	3

**COMMITTEE
NUMBER**

**TERM OF
SERVICE**

NORTH WEST REGION

Mick	D	1	3
Mark	S	2	2
Diane	F	5	3
Douglas	F	4	3
Mark	B	3	3
Sophie	F	6	A

SOUTH EAST REGION

Carol	W	1	3
Eddie	C	2	2
Guy	D	3	2
Frank	L	4	2
Carmel	G	5	1
Andy	K	6	1

SOUTH MIDLANDS REGION

Mark	Mac	1	3
Belinda	M	2	1
Cas	S	3	A
Tim	W	4	2
Dave	B	5	3
Sandi	A	6	A

SOUTH WEST REGION

Lisa	D	1	2
Holly	A	2	1
Gloria	P-B	3	3
Mike	S	4	2
Rosemary	C	5	1
Rob	D	6	2

WALES & BORDERS REGION

Hywel	P	1	1
Dee	L	2	3
Jonathan	P	3	1
Neil	W	4	1
Jenny	D	5	1
Martyn	M	6	2

**COMMITTEE
NUMBER****TERM OF
SERVICE****EAST OF SCOTLAND REGION**

Stuart	W	1	1
Hamish	McS	2	1
Ian	D	3	2
Matt	Mc	4	1
John	McG	5	2
Alex	C	6	1

GLASGOW REGION

John	Mac	1	2
James	M	2	1
Wullie	D	3	1
Jim	T	4	2
Frank	B	5	2
Stevie	McC	6	1

HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS REGION

Marco	P	1	2
		2	
Watty	S	3	2
Russ	C	4	2
Jan	O	5	1
		6	

SCOTIA REGION

Andy	K	1	A
John	D	2	3
Michael	T	3	1
Ross	N	4	2
Jim	F	5	3
Bruce	B	6	2

SOUTH WEST SCOTLAND REGION

Linda	C	1	1
Ivie	S	2	1
Alistair	D	3	2
Richard	G	4	2
Kenny	M	5	1
Tom	H	6	3

		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
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CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION

Jeroen	S	1	3
Nigel	P	2	2
Rosalind	S-G	3	2
Dan	F	4	3
Patrick	L	5	3
Joel	B	6	A

OBSERVERS

James	V	(Belgium)	2	1
Sune	H-S	(Denmark)	3	1
Jurgen	R	(Germany)	1	2
Tony	O'C	(Ireland)	2	1
Sheila	K	(Ireland)	6	1
Wlodek	N	(Poland)	1	2
Pawel	W	(Poland)	5	1
Porfirio	S	(Portugal)	3	1
Marius	S	(Romania)	1	1
Mircea	F	(Romania)	5	2
Ivan	P	(Slovenia)	4	1

Glossary of Abbreviations used in this report

<i>AA</i>	-	<i>Alcoholics Anonymous</i>
<i>AAA</i>	-	<i>Alcoholics Anonymous Awareness</i>
<i>AASN</i>	-	<i>AA Service News</i>
<i>AAWS</i>	-	<i>Alcoholics Anonymous World Services</i>
<i>ASL</i>	-	<i>American Sign Language</i>
<i>ASLO</i>	-	<i>Armed Services Liaison Officer</i>
<i>BSL</i>	-	<i>British Sign Language</i>
<i>CER</i>	-	<i>Continental European Region</i>
<i>CMS</i>	-	<i>Content Management System</i>
<i>CSC</i>	-	<i>Conference Steering Committee</i>
<i>DAAT</i>	-	<i>Drug and Alcohol Teams</i>
<i>ECLO</i>	-	<i>Electronic Communication Liaison Officer</i>
<i>ECSC</i>	-	<i>Electronic Communication Sub 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>GSR</i>	-	<i>Group Service Representative</i>
<i>HLO</i>	-	<i>Health Liaison Officer</i>
<i>HSC</i>	-	<i>Health Sub Committee</i>
<i>MOJ</i>	-	<i>Ministry of Justice</i>
<i>NAT</i>	-	<i>Non-Alcoholic Trustee</i>
<i>NHS</i>	-	<i>National Health Service</i>
<i>NICE</i>	-	<i>National Institute for Clinical Excellence</i>
<i>NNC</i>	-	<i>Northern National Convention</i>
<i>NOMS</i>	-	<i>National Offender Management Service</i>
<i>NSO</i>	-	<i>Northern Service Office</i>
<i>NTA</i>	-	<i>National Treatment Agency</i>
<i>ORS</i>	-	<i>Online Response Service</i>
<i>PI</i>	-	<i>Public Information</i>
<i>PLO</i>	-	<i>Prison Liaison Officer</i>
<i>PPS</i>	-	<i>Prison Postal Service</i>
<i>PR</i>	-	<i>Public Relations</i>
<i>P/SS</i>	-	<i>Probation/Social Services</i>
<i>RECLO</i>	-	<i>Regional Electronic Communication Liaison Officer</i>
<i>RELO</i>	-	<i>Regional Employment Liaison Officer</i>
<i>RTLO</i>	-	<i>Regional Telephone Liaison Officer</i>
<i>SPPS</i>	-	<i>Scottish Prison Postal Service</i>
<i>SPS</i>	-	<i>Scottish Prison Service</i>
<i>SSAFA</i>	-	<i>Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen & Families Association</i>
<i>SSASM</i>	-	<i>Sub Saharan Africa Service Meeting</i>
<i>SSO</i>	-	<i>Southern Service Office</i>
<i>TLO</i>	-	<i>Telephone Liaison Officer</i>
<i>TOR</i>	-	<i>Terms of Reference</i>
<i>YPLO</i>	-	<i>Young Peoples Liaison Officer</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.

