

FINAL REPORT

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

GREAT BRITAIN

Fifty-Fourth General Service Conference

12-14 April 2019
The Henley Suite
Park Inn Hotel, North Street, York

PASS IT ON



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Fifty-Fourth
General Service Conference

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FIFTY-FOURTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2019

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DIGEST OF AGENDA

Friday 12 April 2019

Registration and Reception

Opening Session

Committee Meetings Commence

Nominations - Conference Chair 2020

Presentation of
General Service Board Reports
(Session 1)

Saturday 13 April 2019

Committee Meetings Continue

Presentation of
General Service Board Reports
(Session 2)

Open Forum

Sunday 14 April 2019

Presentation of Committee Reports

Election of Chair for the Fifty-Fifth General Service
Conference

Confirmation of
Board Members Elect

Closing Address

FRIDAY 12 APRIL

The Fifty-Fourth 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 93 delegates from sixteen Regions; 19 members of the General Service Board, Matt S - Conference Chair (Continental European Region), Roger B the outgoing General Secretary and Ranjan B the incoming General Secretary. 6 members of staff from the General Service Office attended. Also in attendance were 9 Observers from the following countries:

Bulgaria	1
Iceland	1
Ireland	2
Poland	2
Sweden	2
Turkey	1

Total in attendance 130.

Opening of Conference by Matt S (Conference Chair 2019)

Good afternoon Conference. My name is Matt, and I am an alcoholic.

It is my absolute privilege to be your Conference Chair this year, and it gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Fellowship, to welcome you all here to the 54th Annual General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain, here in York, England.

Could we now please have a moment of silence to reflect upon why we are here, and to remember the still suffering alcoholic.

The AA 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 A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

Welcome Conference 2019. A special welcome to the many “Red Dotters”. As first-time delegates to Conference, that little red dot on your name badge lets the rest of us know that we ought to do all we can to lend a helping hand. Please feel free to reach out at any time if you have any questions or need any support.

To our returning delegates, board members and office staff, welcome back and thank you for your continued service.

Welcome also to our overseas guests and observers. We appreciate you making the long journey to attend.

Thank you to my fellow Conference Steering Committee members for all their sterling service over the last year. Our Committee Chairs, Gretchen, Mike, Bob, Mark F., Mark D., and Justin, as well as Board members Maxine and Sandi. Thank you to Roger, our outgoing General Secretary, and Sharon, our Conference Coordinator, for their attentive support and guidance throughout the year. Thanks also to the office support staff for helping organise this great event.

I would now like to invite our outgoing General Secretary, Roger B., to read the Twelve Traditions of AA. Thank you, Roger.

KEY NOTE ADDRESS: PASS IT ON

My name is Matt, and I am an alcoholic.

It's a great thrill for me to be here in York with you all participating in the collective group conscience of AA once again. If you had told me seventeen years ago that today I would be sober, having the time of my life, and playing a small part in the wonderful fellowship that is AA Great Britain, I simply could not, and would not, have believed you.

The theme for this year's Conference is “Pass it On”. Many of you may recognise this as the title of the book about Bill W.'s story and how the AA message reached the world. I feel that these three simple words are just as relevant today as not only do they succinctly describe Bill's story, but they also perfectly describe my own recovery story and I'm sure that of many other members here as well.

The passing of AA's programme of recovery, as outlined in our Big Book, from one alcoholic to another, has been instrumental in saving my life and helping me to maintain an enjoyable sobriety. How this came about can perhaps be best communicated by simply sharing my own experience, and describing what it was like, what happened, and what it is like now.

First of all, I needed to become willing to receive AA's message before I could even think about being a link in AA's chain of recovery as, obviously, I can't pass on something that I haven't got. This tedious process was assisted by copious amount of alcohol and much self-inflicted suffering. Although, my love of drinking and low pain tolerance meant this preparation did not take very long.

The first time I got drunk, I experienced an amazing sense of ease and comfort. Drinking alcohol made it possible to be a part of life at last. I could now dance, talk to girls, have fun and relax; I absolutely loved it. Unknowingly, I also set off an allergic physical reaction. This unquenchable craving drove me, once everyone else had stopped drinking, to liberate a bottle of cooking brandy and drink it all, by myself, hidden in the pantry. Despite the ensuing head-spins and nauseating side effects (which I considered a small price to pay) I instantly forged an obsession with alcohol.

I drank as often as I could, and as much as I could. This was to be my pattern of drinking, more or less, for the next several years. What seemed to start out so innocently though, would ultimately turn into a living nightmare.

I will spare you the gory details. Suffice to say that, at 25 years of age, the rampaging alcoholic mental obsession and physical allergy had taken its toll and destroyed my life. Just before leaving my fifth rehabilitation unit, a frightening realisation dawned that I was going to drink again, whether I wanted to or not. It didn't matter how much I had learned in rehab, or how well I filled out my relapse prevention workbook, or how colourful my "trauma egg" was. Soon enough, the pain and suffering of life without alcohol would drive me so insane that I would repeat that desperate experiment of the first drink, hoping that this time it would be different. But I knew then that it was never going to be different. I had lost the ability to control and enjoy my drinking. The party was over. There was nothing left, save for the phenomenon of craving and drunken madness; drink driving, gambling, drugs, physical violence, suicide, and oblivion. Alcoholic death and destruction loomed, and there was nothing neither I nor anyone else could do about it. I had tried all kinds of medication, all kinds of mental therapies and emotional counselling. I even resided in a Buddhist monastery for a while and spoke with the local priest. My mum did everything she could, as well as my friends. But nothing had worked. I finally accepted that I was a hopeless alcoholic, and that it was only a matter of time before I drank, and for me to drink again was to die.

Devastated, and aware of the seriousness of my condition, I reluctantly returned to AA. It was not the first time, as I had been to many AA meetings before. Doctors had told me about AA, I had seen AA members visiting the rehabs, I had read pamphlets, and I had phoned the 24-hour helpline numerous times (at all hours of the night), but I never seriously thought it applied to me. This time though, my mind was slightly more open to at least the possibility of giving AA a try. Even so, for a defiant, grandiose and spiritually hostile alcoholic like myself, asking for the necessary help in AA was not an easy thing to do.

As I sat anxiously trembling in one of the Saturday night meetings in Sydney, Australia, I heard an AA member share their experience, strength and hope, in such a way that I was able to identify with the problem and be inspired by the solution. Here was an alcoholic who drank like me, felt like me, thought like me and suffered like me, yet had found a way out and had recovered from alcoholism. His own example was proof that it worked. He was an electrician from London and was now travelling the world. He was dating girls, keeping fit and having fun. And he was sober! He shared precisely how he recovered and said that if I wanted what he had, all I had to do was do what he did. When he approached me after the meeting, there was nothing left to do except ask him to be my sponsor. And just like that, he had passed it on, and I had accepted it.

I then started to follow suggestions, and sure enough I soon felt better. Accordingly, my ego also revived (as per usual) and I once again began doing it my way instead. The terror of the last drink faded from memory. I was again on thin ice. A few days later, after I arrived late to yet another meeting, my sponsor pulled me quietly aside and asked why I didn't arrive early to help set up as previously agreed. I replied, "Yeah, yeah... I know, I know..." to which he quickly responded "Matt, with all due respect, what exactly do you know?". I was shocked and offended, but this time there was no fight back. I had to concede that he was right. I was wrong. I knew absolutely nothing about staying sober. I could no longer deceive myself and defend my delusional thinking. And I was desperate. At last my great ego was defeated. I had finally let someone tell me the truth and hold me accountable, and this proved to be a pivotal moment in my recovery.

My sponsor immediately picked me up and said that if I were to put AA first and make it the central fact of my life, be of service and help others, I could recover and have a wonderful life. I

then surrendered to AA and commenced to work the 12 Steps. My sponsor's experience and practical advice was invaluable throughout, especially with Step 4 where he at first confided his own dark secrets to help shine the light on my hidden self-centred fears, resentments and defects of character. After Step 5, I learnt how to forgive and that feeling of "you don't understand, my case is different" vanished. I could look the world in the eye. I started to have a spiritual experience that has since expelled the mental obsession and allowed me to be comfortable in my own skin. As a result of the Steps, I found my Higher Power. Deep down I instinctively knew that everything is going to be okay, no matter what. I didn't need to drink anymore.

Having just recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body, I felt I owed both my sponsor and AA an enormous debt. When I enquired how I could ever repay the help given to me, my sponsor said "Matt, just pass it on". A simple instruction, yet deeply profound. I understand today that to "Pass it On" is essential also for my ongoing sobriety. My sponsor stressed the parts in the Big Book where it says that "strenuous work, one alcoholic with another, was vital to permanent recovery" (page VI) and that if I "failed to perfect and enlarge [my] spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, [I] could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead" (pages 14-15).

I also began to realise that I was just one of many other active AA's who are all trying to do the same. It was at my "Home Group" where I commenced my service in unity with my fellow members. Inspired by the enthusiasm of the old-timers who lead by example, laid the foundation, and set the standard, service permitted the practical expression of my inner surrender. Even though I did not want to help anyone initially, I found that the benefits received, such as freedom and peace of mind, motivated me to voluntarily seek continued ego-deflation and humility through service to others.

My first service position was making the tea, coffee and sandwiches, after which I became the literature officer and started to read AA books such as the 12 Steps & 12 Traditions and AA Comes of Age. Following my sponsor's lead, I was duly elected secretary, followed by group treasurer for two years. The GSR role then introduced me to the wider service structure. At intergroup I had the good fortune to serve on the 24-hour helpline, visit hospitals and institutions (most of which I was an ex-patient of), and participate in exciting public information activities.

After a few years I also had the privilege of being asked to sponsor others. Through sponsorship, I have experienced the magnificent reality of Alcoholics Anonymous. Passing it on to the still-suffering alcoholic has been the highlight of my recovery. To see others who were just as hopeless as me, ask for help, take the same action and get the same result, is truly awe inspiring. I understand how, and just like my sponsor before me, my own drinking experience is now one of my greatest assets and can be used to reach other alcoholics in a way that no non-alcoholic ever could. I find this empowering and is something that every AA member, with their own unique story, can tap into.

Upon this foundation, I have commenced to build a useful and rich life. I have done things in sobriety that I never would have thought possible. I quit smoking and stopped gambling. I was accepted back into university where I then graduated with Honours (due in no small part to my new found attitude of "I don't know, can you please show me?"). I got a job in the industry I studied for and had the opportunity to work abroad professionally in Asia, the US and Europe. A home group member once signed me up for a small fun run, and soon after I began racing in ironman triathlons. My mum is happy to see me, and my sister asks me to babysit her kids. I can sit alone in perfect ease and comfort and even meditate for ten days straight. I have climbed mountains in the Alps and Nepal. I too have experienced many of the joys, and challenges, of relationships.

Certainly though, I have also had periods of misfortune and ill health; depression, panic attacks, and my fair share of heart break. Throughout both the difficult times, and the good times, a resolute commitment to AA and reliance upon a Higher Power has ensured that at no time have I needed to take a drink.

I have spent the last several years based here in Europe, where I have been fortunate to be part of a great home group in Munich and to serve AA at Intergroup Bavaria and the Continental European Region. To be here today, back in Great Britain as your Conference Chair, is an honour.

As a result of passing on AA's simple programme of recovery that was passed on to me, I now live an enjoyable life, free from alcohol, and with a sense of peace and usefulness that is indescribably wonderful.

Thank you for the opportunity to be of service. I hope that you have an incredible Conference, and I wish you the very best for this weekend, as we continue to "Pass it On".

Thank you.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS

I would now like to introduce, and invite to the stage, each of our six Committee Chairs:

- Committee 1: **Mike E.** Midlands Region
- Committee 2: **Bob S.** South East Region
- Committee 3: **Gretchen S.** London Region South
- Committee 4: **Justin T.** South West Region
- Committee 5: **Mark F.** South East Region
- Committee 6: **Marc D.** South West Scotland Region.

CONFERENCE STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

I would like to invite Bob S, our Alternate Conference Chair, to give the Conference 2019 Steering Committee Report.

Good afternoon Conference. My name is Bob and I'm an alcoholic. My home group is the Friday night newcomers' meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous in Guildford. 30 years ago, I was referred by my employers to the Pinel House Alcohol Unit at Warlingham Park Hospital. I told the Consultant Psychiatrist there that I had ruined my recent wedding day and honeymoon, that I had just been suspended from my job, that I owed thousands of pounds to the bank and to numerous credit card companies and that I had been told by my GP that I had an enlarged liver and an alcohol-induced heart condition called atrial fibrillation. I was 31 years old.

Whilst awaiting admission into the unit I was advised by my wife (who by then was a member of Al-Anon) to try a local AA meeting in Oxted. I felt before attending my first meeting that a lot of people were on my case. My boss, my wife, my mum, my GP, the bank manager, the credit card companies – everyone expressing their concern but seemingly no-one who really understood why I had to drink. At the meeting that night I finally met people who had been there. It blew my mind! When asked if I would like a coffee, I refused – as I always did – fearing that my shaking hands would be noticed. I was asked to try half a cup and grip the cup tightly. Amazing – he knew what I was going through.

I took my last drink on Tuesday, 13th September 1988 and have been blessed since then with a happy marriage, two children and a rewarding career. Also, a wonderful life in Alcoholics Anonymous thanks to our incredible recovery programme, the AA fellowship and a loving Higher Power. I have been in service throughout this time, firstly at group level and then at intergroup and region. I joined the AA telephone service – firstly as a responder and a 12th stepper and then later as intergroup TLO, region TLO and then a member of the telephone subcommittee. I am now a member of the subcommittee for health and for the last three years I have had the honour of serving as Conference Delegate for South East Region. At Conference 2018 I was elected as Committee Chair for Conference 2019 Committee 2. My report to Conference today is a summary of the work carried out so far to prepare for Conference this weekend.

The Conference Steering Committee for 2019 first met in June 2018 - a few weeks after Conference finished in April. Matt S from Continental European Region introduced himself as Chair and was accompanied by Roger B (General Secretary) and Sharon (Conference Co-ordinator). Also on the Committee are the 6 committee chairs (Justin T, Mark D, Mark F, Gretchen S, Mike E and myself) and two board members (Maxine and Sandi). The terms of reference for questions were established and became the document that the Committee refers to when selecting questions submitted for Conference.

The Conference Steering Committee met again in September to discuss the 67 questions submitted before the deadline of 31st August. The Committee expressed its gratitude to all the members of the Fellowship who took the time to write and submit an excellent collection of questions. We then began the difficult process of reviewing all the questions for suitability as agenda items for Conference 2019. The reasons for non-acceptance vary – it could be because they have already been discussed at Conference during the last three years or perhaps because not enough background material has been supplied to support the question. In some cases, several questions related to the same subject matter. We therefore selected the one question that best captured the spirit of the others.

Although the questions covered a variety of current issues in Alcoholics Anonymous, there were some common themes such as young persons' concerns, safeguarding, conventions, literature and social media. There were also some new and innovative questions relating to Conference, the Big Book and the public perception of our image as portrayed by our literature and other communications materials. All this, plus more traditional issues such as the power of the purse and awareness of the Concepts for Service.

The Committee felt confident by the end of the September meeting that a strong collection of questions had been chosen. The questions covered not only the general themes highlighted in the original 67 questions but also some interesting topics that we felt would prove popular in discussions throughout our service structure. We then met again in October to finalise the questions and to allocate them to the six Conference committees.

Members of the Committee expressed the view gained from experience at previous Conferences that it is difficult to assume that some questions are 'short' and some are 'long'. Although the committees being tasked with discussing three questions rather than two would normally be allocated questions which are considered to be shorter than others, you can never tell until Conference is underway how deeply the Fellowship feels about each issue or how controversial that issue may turn out to be.

Having finalised the distribution of the 15 selected Conference questions to the committee chairs it was then agreed that the questions not accepted should be afforded a written response. AA members who have taken the time and trouble to write and submit a question for Conference are sent a written explanation of the reason why their question cannot be accepted on this occasion. I know from personal experience that members appreciate this courtesy – it has encouraged me to continue to submit questions for consideration at future Conferences when questions of my own couldn't be selected. The meeting then finished with a general discussion on other matters which relate to Conference – such as how to give delegates with a minority view the opportunity to present their views to the Fellowship.

Being a member of the Conference Steering Committee has been extremely rewarding for me. It has given me a greater appreciation of the Fellowship's commitment to the Conference process and the true spirit of our Conference theme 'Pass it on'. Just as I stay sober by passing the message as one alcoholic to another, so we work as a fellowship to ensure that our experience in service is passed on to others through continuous rotation.

It was the general view of all members of the Conference Steering Committee for Conference 2019 that we had taken the greatest possible care to select an interesting and pertinent set of questions. I hope you all agree that this year's questions have stimulated interesting debate throughout our Fellowship.

I hope that our six committees can agree on the best way forward so that Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain and Continental Europe can gain the maximum benefit from the suggestions and innovative ideas presented in these questions. As Chair of Committee Two, I very much look forward to discussing the questions allocated to my committee and to presenting our recommendations to Conference on Sunday morning.

I wish you all a very enjoyable and rewarding weekend.

ORIENTATION & CONVENTIONS

I would like to invite Ranjan, our incoming General Secretary, to share the Orientation and Conventions.

Ranjan read the orientation containing last minute changes, safety information and the National Convention dates which are:

Scottish Convention – 10th – 12th May 2019

Welsh Convention – 14th – 16th June 2019

Southern Convention – 30th August – 1st September 2019

Northern Convention – 20th – 22nd March 2020

Thank you Ranjan.

EXPLANATION OF VOTING PROCEDURE

As is customary, eight tellers are to be selected from the hat of second year delegates. Two tellers will be assigned to each of the four quadrants where they will be responsible for counting the votes in that section for the remainder of Conference.

The tellers will then count the yes votes, no votes and abstentions, confirm the count with each other, and when agreed, present them to the GSO staff member for recording.

The abstentions will be acknowledged but not included in the final outcome. A quorum of Conference shall consist of two thirds of all the Conference members registered.

The staff member will then calculate any majority or otherwise and pass the result to the Chair of Conference, who will then announce the result.

Thank you, tellers, for your service.

CLOSING OF FIRST SESSION

It is now almost time to go into your committees and discuss the questions. As trusted servants carrying the conscience of the groups in your region, you have been elected to take part in the 54th General Service Conference and make a valuable contribution to the evolution of our fellowship.

Experience has shown that patience, tolerance and kindness are helpful virtues, and always remember our guiding principles contained within our Three Legacies of the 12 Steps of Recovery, 12 Traditions of Unity and 12 Concepts of Service, that define amongst others; our primary purpose, our common welfare, our rights of participation, decision, and appeal, and our general warranties, which I will now read:

Concept XII: General Warranties of Conference: in all its proceedings the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the AA Tradition taking great care that the Conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself shall always remain democratic in thought and action.

Finally, to close out our first session, and in readiness for the start of committee proceedings at 4pm, I would like to invite everyone to stand and join me in saying the Declaration of Unity, to be followed by the Serenity Prayer.

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

And now the Serenity Prayer:

Serenity Prayer: *God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.*

Thank you.

FRIDAY EVENING

Matt 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 2020 before handing over to Nigel P, Chair of the Board, to introduce the General Service Board Report.

NOMINATIONS FOR CONFERENCE CHAIR 2020

The under mentioned were proposed and seconded for the Chair of the Fifty-Fifth General Service Conference 2020:

Marc D	-	South West Scotland Region
Gretchen S	-	London Region South
Justin T	-	South West Region
Ronald V	-	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

(Nigel P – Chair GSB)

Good evening Conference, my name is Nigel, and I'm an alcoholic. Welcome to Conference 2019, especially those of you who are here for the first time. I hope that you get as much out of it as I have from the Conferences that I have attended. I want to thank Matt as Conference Chair, the Conference Steering Committee, Sharon, our Conference Coordinator, and all our excellent support staff for making this possible.

It is my role here this evening to introduce the Board reports, but before I do, I'd like to talk a little about an item of concern that has arisen in the last 18 months.

In February 2018, following reasonable suspicion that fraud against the Charity had taken place, the Board carried out a thorough investigation, with the assistance of its legal advisors, and a fraud of £34,000 was uncovered. As a result of the expeditious work by the Board and the Charity's Chief Executive in addressing this matter, losses suffered by the Charity as a result of this fraud were successfully mitigated and reduced by over two-thirds. The Charity will consider, on a cost-benefit analysis, whether civil proceedings are appropriate as a means of recovering the remainder of the funds.

The perpetrator, a GSO staff member, was investigated and dismissed from employment.

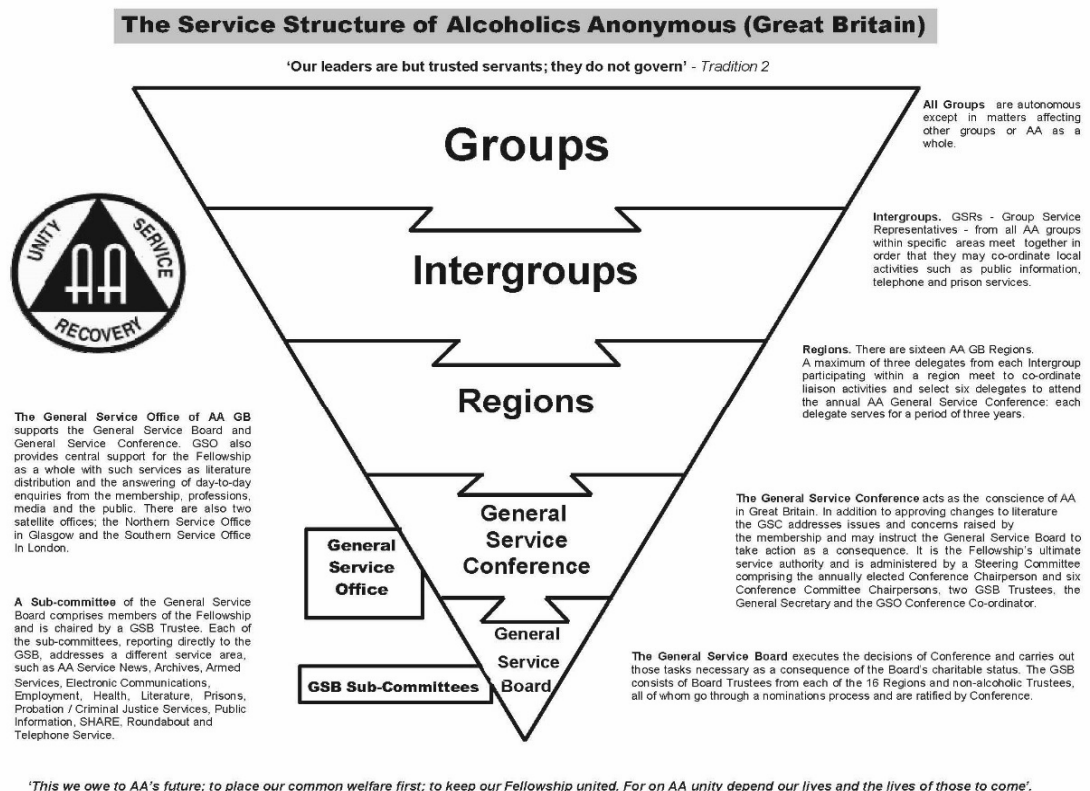
After taking advice from our solicitors and auditors, safeguards were put in place to prevent this from happening again. It is often the nature of a fraudulent act which makes it difficult to identify. However, greater scrutiny has been put in place, and financial control policies have been strengthened. The Trustees are satisfied that the strengthened policies will ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that fraud of this nature, or abuse of position, cannot occur in the future.

This was reported to the Charity Commission who declared themselves satisfied that the Charity had dealt with the matter appropriately and the issue closed. The fraud was reported to the

police, and after an investigation, the matter was sent to the CPS. After due deliberation, the CPS decided not to proceed with a prosecution.

Next, I'd like to talk about the Service Structure; it took me some years in service to understand it, and it held some surprises, and from some of the correspondence we've received this year, it is still not well understood by many members of the Fellowship. To those of you that are well informed on these matters, I hope you will excuse me, but if nothing else it might help our foreign observers see how we work.

I'm sure we are all familiar with this diagram:



and we can see from the diagram the lines of responsibility. The groups are responsible for the Intergroups, who they instruct and liaise with via the Group Service Representative. The Intergroups are responsible for the Regions, who they in turn instruct, and liaise with, via the Regional Representatives. The Regions are similarly responsible for the General Service Conference via their delegates, and it is via this body, the Groups instruct the General Service Board.

Note that throughout I have said they are responsible for, not responsible to. What does this mean? It means that The General Service Board must, via the service structure, answer to the Groups, but it is not responsible for the Groups – Group autonomy means that Groups can do as they please and the General Service Board is powerless to stop them, although we do hope they pay some heed to Tradition 4, especially the much forgotten second part! Each Tier in the structure is the same, answerable to, via the service structure, without authority over.

However, the General Service Board is a little different, as while all the other tiers are a part of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Board is not.

How can that be? It is to do with our traditions, mostly Tradition 3, which tells us that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking and while for all the other layers of the structure that is true, it is not true on the Board.

We have, for example, non-alcoholic Trustees who have no desire to stop drinking. Also, there are requirements for membership that go beyond the desire to stop drinking.

Membership of the Board confers legal responsibilities. Board members have signed, accepting personal legal liability for the Board's actions. As Board members, they are both directors of the company known as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain Ltd and Trustees of the charity of the same name and are governed by the laws and regulations relating to British companies and charities. These laws can prohibit certain people from becoming members of the Board.

This additional responsibility is covered in the caveat to the side of the GSB as it sits at the bottom of the Service Triangle which tells us that "The General Service Board executes the decisions of Conference and carries out those tasks necessary as a consequence of the Board's charitable status." The General Service Board is then merely a tool constructed by the Fellowship to provide it with legal status within Great Britain, and as such, will do all it can to comply with the decisions of Conference but must at all times operate within the legal constraints that apply to it.

Note too that the charity status of the General Service Board is not conferred upon the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous, so it is only the General Service Board that is allowed to use the Charity registration numbers that have been assigned to it.

That is more than enough from me; let's hear from our hard-working Trustees. If at any time you have any questions, please don't hesitate to talk to a myself or a Trustee; we are, for the most part, just another drunk who got sober like you did, and it is from your questions we learn.

Finance

(Brian J – Honorary Treasurer GSB)

My name is Brian and I am an alcoholic. It is an immense privilege to be stood up here today if somewhat terrifying. My job here this evening is to give you an overview of the Charity's accounts from the 2017-2018 financial year and examine various financial trends in certain aspects of the Charity's finances.

The General Service Board meets all the HMRC and Charity Commission legal and recommended stipulations relating to investments. In line with all other UK charities AA's investments are exempt from UK tax. No charity investments are held/managed in districts that fall under the 'tax avoidance' or 'politically unstable' umbrellas.

The General Service Board (the Charity) hold three funds:

1. **The Development Fund Account** (Restricted Account) is serviced by the royalties derived from the sale of the Hard Copy versions of the Big Book and The Twelve & Twelve. This money is used for Primary Purpose activities around the globe, mainly Sub-Sahara Africa. Primarily the setting up of AA infrastructure in these countries. Also helping to finance the translation of the Literature into local languages.
2. **European Service Meeting Account** (Restricted Account) which is serviced by the English speaking countries in Europe to fund their bi-annual meetings held in York.

3. **General Open Account** (Unrestricted Account) which is serviced by the contributions from the Fellowship, sale of AA literature, financial interest and Investment revenue. It is used to carry out Primary purpose work within the UK as directed by the Charity by the deliberations of the Conference Committees.

Our Investment Portfolio is run by a company called Churches, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA) and the Fellowship invests within their Ethical Fund.

The Fellowship hold **527,652** units in the Fund. Which at 30th September 2018 had a market value of **£2.39** / unit. This gives the Charities investment a market value **£1,287,033**

Due to normal fluctuations within the Stock Market and a certain amount of volatility due to Brexit we have seen the total value of our investment fluctuate over the past 12 months from a value at:

27th September 2017: **£1,184,862** to
30th September 2018: **£1,287,033** which is an increase of **£102,171**.

That can rise and fall due to the normal fluctuation of the stock market.

Income to the General Service Board through voluntary contributions, publications, reserves as shares and financial interest. We have no control over that money whatsoever and it is all generated by yourselves by literature which you buy and the contributions that you make and, also the grateful dead. Those are the people that gently and willingly leave us money in their wills.

Income from Fellowship contributions comes from group/intergroup and personal contributions, gratitude at group and intergroup level, Conventions and Conferences, Gift Aid Legacies and Asset Interest.

This year we gratefully received from you:

▪ Voluntary Contributions:	£856,171
▪ Publications:	£581,367
▪ Investments:	£ 42,642
▪ Deposit Account Interest:	£ 733
▪ Insurance Pay-Out	£ 25,000

Income from Publications

As shown in the accounts includes:

Income from Share & Roundabout plus diaries and calendars and all other 'listed' literature sold.

Cost of Publications

Represents all external printing of items on the Literature Stock list plus Share & Roundabout.

This is just an example taken from last year:

Income from publications =	£596,294	Up 32,830
	LESS	
Cost of Publications =	£291,676	Up 29,227
Surplus =	£304,618	Up 17,973

The literature surplus covers:

- Storage of literature
- Importing books from America & Cost of damaged literature
- Stationary, Internal Printing(ink) & Photocopying
- Postage & Packaging
- Staff and associated premises overheads
- P.I. Leaflets, Free Literature, Confidential Directory
- Group Treasurers Cashbook, Illustrated Literature Catalogue
- Conference Reports (Preliminary & Final Report)

Is this Surplus a Profit?

According to Bill W it is not.

“This net income to the groups and to AA’s General Services is actually the sum of a great many contributions which the book buyers make to the general welfare of Alcoholics Anonymous. The certain and continued solvency of our world services rests squarely upon these contributions.”

Concept Twelve; Warranty Two
The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain 2017 page 65

Reserves Policy

Concept 12 – Warranty Two:

Sufficient operating funds plus an ample reserve should be its prudent financial principle

Ample Reserve held by the charity should exceed 1 year's expenditure

Sufficient Operating funds are considered to be one quarter’s expenditure

This gives a total Free (Prudent) Reserve of over 1.25 year's expenditure (£2 million). AA & the Charity Commission recommended practice.

Prudent Reserve Calculation

Annual Expenditure	£1,597,288
Sufficient Operating Funds (One quarter of Annual Expenditure)	£ 399,322
Prudent Reserve Level (W2) (2018-2019)	£1,996,610

That is what we need to operate.

Taken from 2017/2018 Audited Accounts

Net Assets	£2,512,291
LESS	
Warranty 2 level (W2)	£1,996,610
Capital over & above W2	£ 515,681

This is the working capital that enables the GSB to fulfil its own primary purpose to the public, professionals and services to Alcoholics Anonymous without dipping into our prudent reserves and operating costs.

Some of the projects you have asked us to do are the cataloguing of the archives, young persons video, the 2022 Convention and the website.

Summary

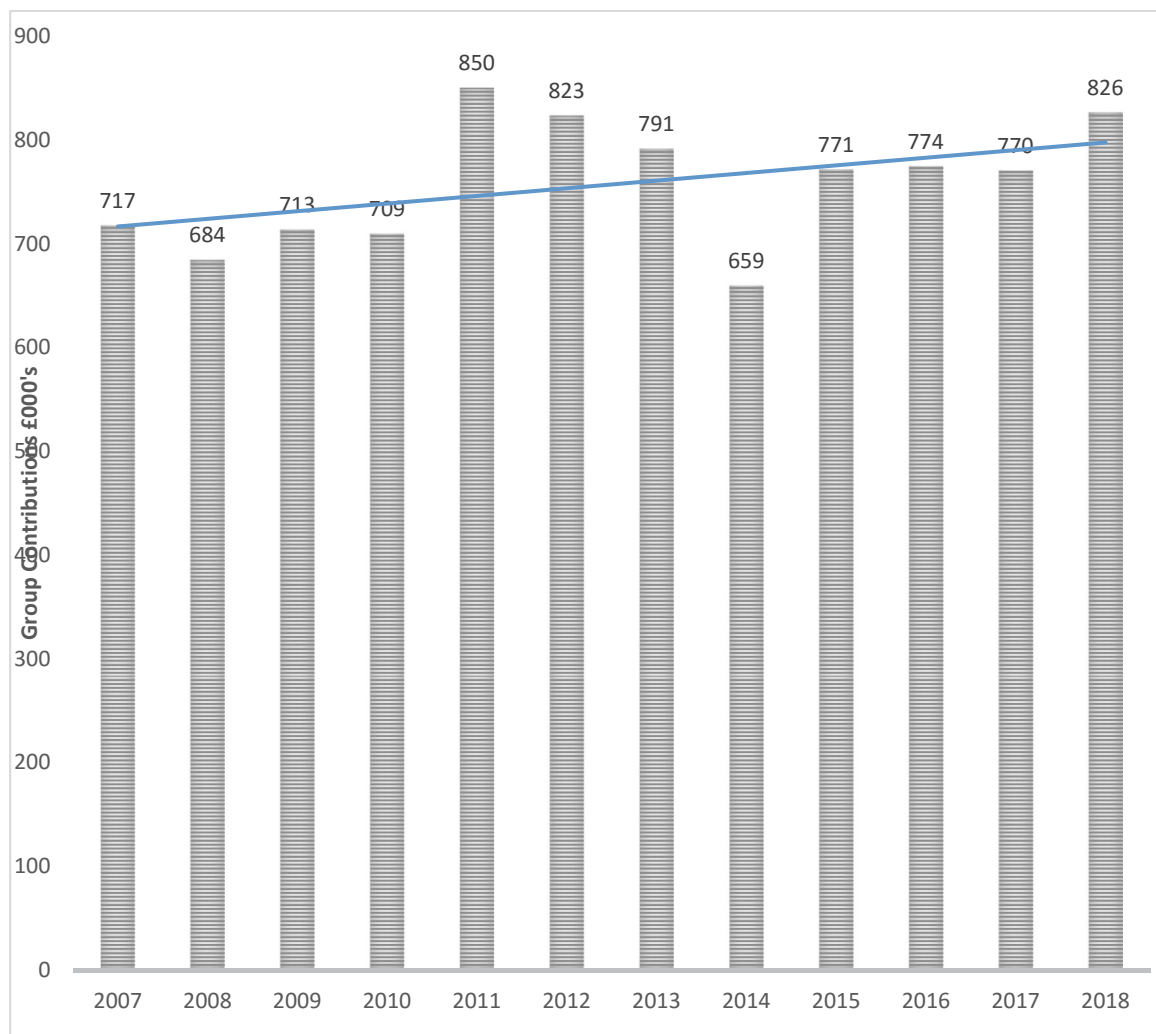
There continues to be much volatility in the financial markets due to BREXIT and other financial pressures.

This is causing some unrest within the financial circles, but the Charity's finances are still in a buoyant financial position.

This is mainly down to the Fellowship's continued support and generosity which allows GSB to carry on supporting the Fellowship.

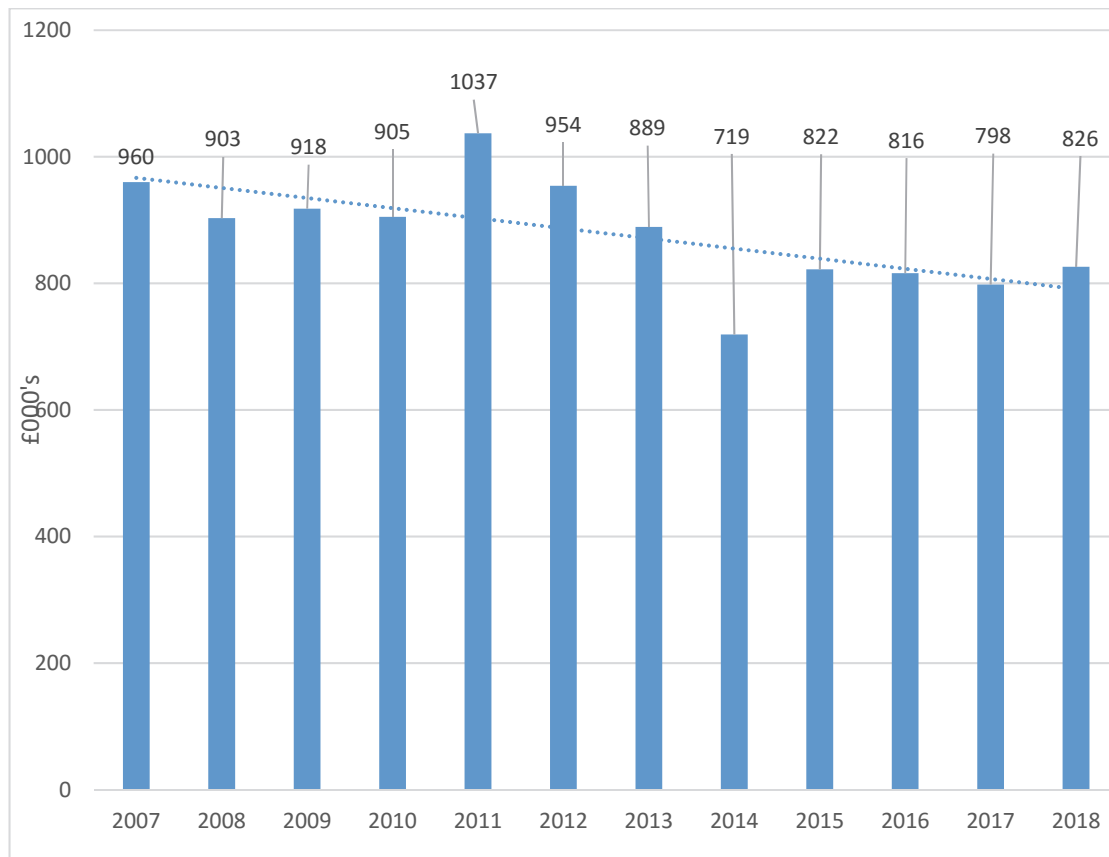
I'd like to thank the Fellowship for the amount of support and generosity you give to us in these uncertain times and I commend this financial report to you.

A Series of Graphs as an analysis of Financial Trends 2007 - 2018



Annual Group & Contributions to GSO 2007 to 2018

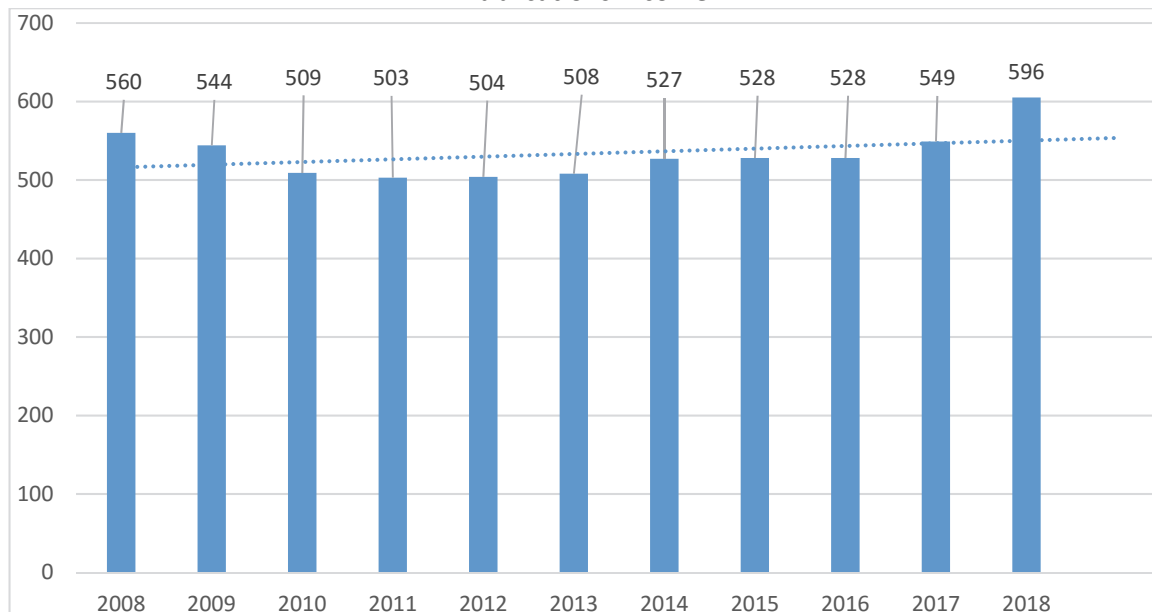
As you can see the figure that you contribute to us has been fairly consistent at around about £650-750,000 so the trend line is very slightly upwards. If you that take the same graph using the very same figures and make an Inflation Comparison 2007-2018:



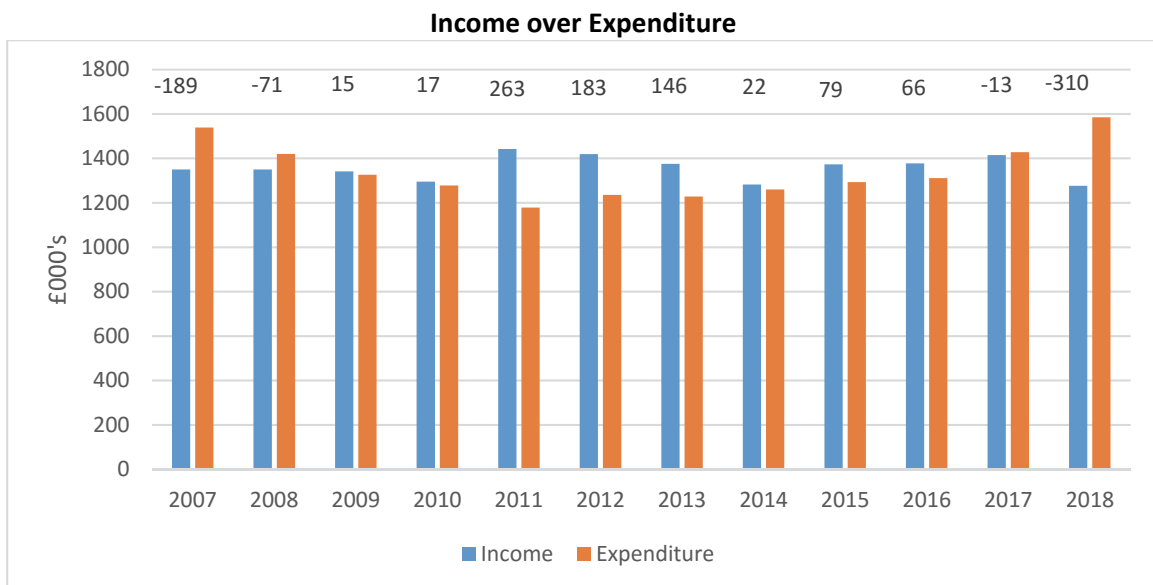
Group Contributions Inflation Comparison 2007 - 2018

The figures at the top of the pillars would be the figures required if that money had equal spending power today as it had when it was given to us whereas last year we received £770,000 and to have the same spending power this year we would need £798,000. The trendline here is downwards.

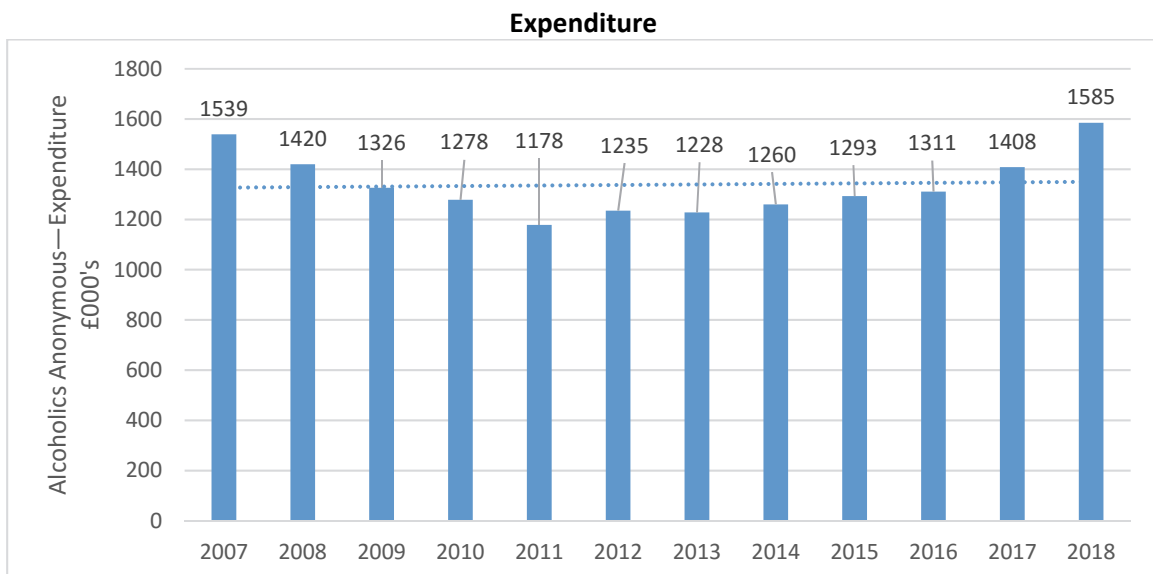
Publications Income



The publications income is basically stable varying from just over £500,000 to just under £600,000 and that is what is keeping us going. It produces 52% of the Fellowship's income and contributions produces 39% of the income.

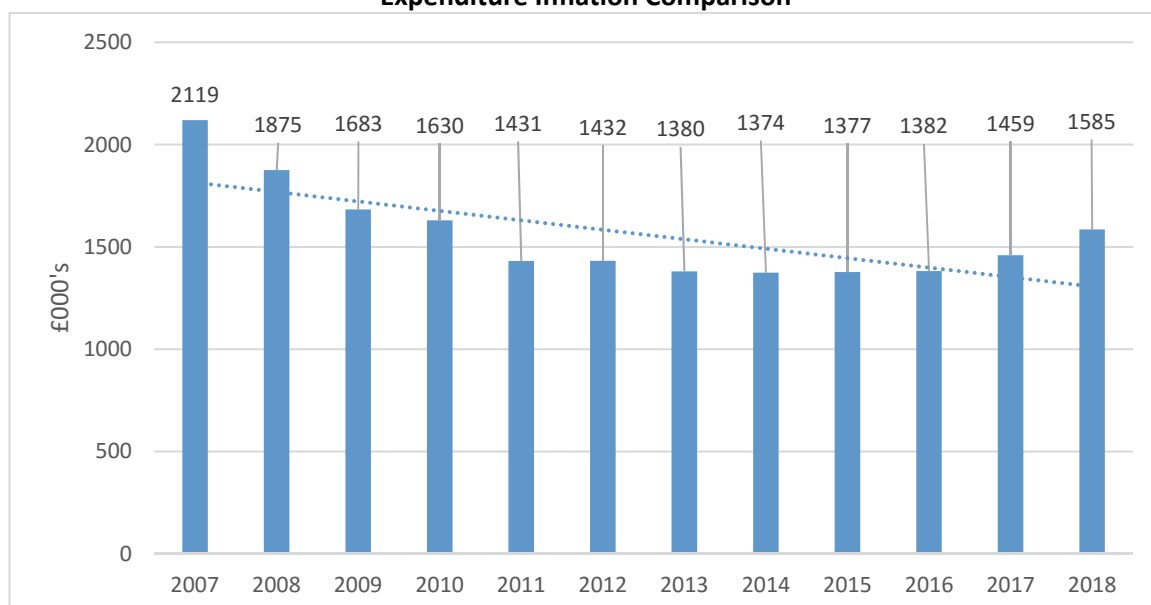


This year you can see that we were £310,000 overspent. Same as last year we were £13,000 overspent but the years previous to that we continued to be in the black so we are still stable, still solvent and still moving on at a good pace.



Expenditure was big this year and it was the same in 2007.

Expenditure Inflation Comparison



The Way Forward

The Fellowship has placed the charity in a financially strong position £515,681 (above W2 level) to meet challenges over the forthcoming period of uncertainty:

Inflation over the past two years has meant rent for AA rooms and refreshments has increased group costs.

New groups with small numbers means many groups just meeting expenses.

As long as the GSB decides on an annual basis the Fellowship's reserves remain at an ample level the charity will commit to the following four strategies:

1. Absorb all price rises and not pass them on to the Fellowship
2. Fund all approved projects without prioritisation
3. Support the development of AA overseas
4. Fulfil all services the Fellowship has requested

Any price rises relating to Groups when this approach is deemed non-viable will be implemented on an annual INCREMENTAL basis.

1. Price rises in literature & services

The fall in value of the £ is already causing some literature prices to rise, as some suppliers source paper materials from abroad.

All literature subsidies will be maintained e.g. free of charge literature including the Blue Handbooks.

2. Funding of projects

- The 75th Anniversary Convention
- The Archives Cataloguing over next 3 years, payments will be staggered. (This will require significant outlay of money).

- Continuing upgrading of the website
- 19 Professional Conferences booked so far for 2019.
(This number will increase as the year develops)
- All approved projects will be funded in spite of price rises
- Innovations in approaches to GSB's primary purpose work is welcomed from the GSB sub committees. Seminars or sub committee meetings will not be cut back.

3. Support development of AA overseas

Again bearing in mind the drop in value of the £, the GSB will maintain its level of contributions in real terms to:

- The World Service Literature fund
- Sponsorship of the Sub Saharan Service Conference.
- Building of AA Service Infrastructures in developing Countries
- The charity funded the first publication of AA literature in Bulgaria.

4. Services to the Fellowship

All services currently in place plus any subsequent services will be delivered without incurring further costs to Groups.

The suggested message to Groups, Intergroups and Regions is the same as last year (in order of priority):

1. Meet their prudent reserve
2. Finance their primary purpose work
3. When the two above are met make voluntary donations of any surplus monies to the Charity's account by their chosen method

Thank you, Conference.

Young People

(Amanda S)

Good evening Conference, my name is Amanda, I am an alcoholic and Young Peoples Trustee on the General Service Board. Joining me in a moment is Gemma, from the Young Peoples Sub Committee, Gemma will be sharing her experience, strength and hope in her role shortly but first let's look at how we got here.

Extract from Bill W's letter to ICYPAA (International Conference of Young People in AA), June 1969:

"... in recent years, I have found nothing for greater inspiration than the knowledge that AA of tomorrow will be safe, and certainly magnificent, in the keeping of you who are the younger generation of AA today."

In 2011 a handful of 'young' members from both sides of the River Thames met following the second EURYPAA convention in Dublin.

A self-appointed committee visit both London Region North and London Region South and out of that comes a London-wide event for young people where they encourage young people into service and looked at structured PI work specifically for young people.

In 2012 London Region North sponsored and funded a workshop “Are we carrying the message to young people?”

- Workshop was attended by over 100 people
- Lively discussion over the topic question
- Outcomes of the workshop were
 - New poster designed by creative member put forward to Conference
 - Conference question submission

In 2013 Conference question: **What can AA do to better carry the message to young alcoholics both inside and outside of the Fellowship?**

Conference said:

- Sponsored into active fellowship
- Service structure may seek to co-operate with YP conventions
- ECSC look at appropriate apps and social media to attract YP
- Young members encouraged to carry the message in schools and young offenders’ institutes
- Young person status highlighted on 12 step list
- Too Young poster to be updated with input from young members
- Intergroups and Regions can appoint YPLOs

In 2013 the Young Peoples Project Team formed by the General Service Board:

- AA poster tweaked with and ready for submission to the literature committee
- Proposal for A Message to Young People animated video
- Monitoring Young People’s Conventions
- Produced a discussion document for the role of YPLO
- Produced a report on Search Engine Optimisation which was taken to the board
- More of the YP community attending Intergroup and Region i.e. more YP coming in to the service structure

In 2014 the Young People’s Project Team carry on in preparation of the YPLO position being fully incorporated into the service structure

- Storyboard for an animated video based on “12 questions” designed and roughly animated for proposal to the literature committee
- Video given the “green light” for full production by a design agency
- Final video launched onto YouTube.... 6,500 hits in three months
(Conference was then shown the video)

In 2015 Conference question: **Would the fellowship discuss if it would like to adopt the Young Person’s Liaison Officer position?**

The answer was yes.

In 2015 Conference was asked: Conference: **Would the literature committee accept this poster in replacement of the old “Too Young?” poster?**

The answer was yes.

In 2016-2017 the Young Persons Sub Committee of the General Service Board was created and meets for the first time.

Remit agreed by Sub Committee for the first term to be establishing the committee and urging Regions to put liaison officers in place.

First Regional Liaison Officers meeting held in York gives lively discussion as to what the role entails.

In 2018 the First Young Persons Liaison Seminar in York with 30 attendees from Intergroups & Regions sharing ideas and enthusiasm.

In 2019 new YP Video and posters in production ready to come to Conference 2020.

Despite being the newest service discipline in the Fellowship, having come into existence at Conference 2015, we are being put under the spotlight so I thought it was important to share what we are doing and bust some myths that some of our work takes place separately from our traditional service structure.

I'd firstly like to thank my hard-working sub-committee – Gemma, Andrew, Dave and new members Helen and Mark. I'd like to also thank Jack, who rotated out of service and also welcome a new Trustee to the sub-committee, Sandi.

As you are aware Committee One are answering an inventory question on the Young People Liaison Officer service position and how it is integrating itself within our service structure.

We came into existence following a Conference question in 2015 and the following year the Young People's Sub-committee was formed.

Our primary purpose is to pass the message of recovery to the still suffering young alcoholic.

As a sub-committee over the past three years our initial aim has been to support as many Intergroup and Regional liaison officers into the position and to get them working with other disciplines.

We now have 35 Intergroup YPLO's in post and 6 Regional YPLO's and this is growing all the time.

Starting from the beginning is both rewarding and challenging at the same time with many liaison officers reporting some resistance to the role within their areas. It is important to say that the young people in AA want to be inclusive in the Fellowship and not exclusive.

The YPLO role is open to those who came into AA at the age of 30 or younger, and so will have experience of getting sober at a young age, the better to relate to the particular problems faced by young people seeking to live sober.

We want you to use the young people and YPLOs to help support your disciplines. Who better to talk to school children, youth clubs and university students than a young person already in recovery – that is how our YPLO's can work with Public Information officers.

We do not, as suggested by some of the Conference background information, work outside the service structure of AA, we work very much within our Steps, Traditions and Concepts and we do not endorse Conventions outside the Service structure of AA GB.

Young people can work with Prison Liaison officers, Health, Employment, Telephones, Armed Services and in fact many are already doing this very successfully as was made evident by our first

seminar last year which was full of young people full of enthusiasm and commitment to serve the Fellowship.

In a short space of time many YPLO's have helped changed lives with the work they are doing from innovative ideas such as going into gyms and nightclubs to carry the message to school talks and media interviews to working with universities and hospitals. Working with agencies like Homestart and homeless charities.

One YPLO regularly holds a tea and cake meeting at her home with other Intergroup officers to discuss ideas and how they can best work together.

Up and down the country they are making a difference.

As a sub committee we have setup a closed forum for those in service in the post to talk to one another and share ideas. Each time a new YPLO comes into post they are welcomed and offered support so they know they are not alone.

For those whose rock bottom comes much earlier than others knowing that they are not alone and that even at a young age there is life once you put down the drink these younger members are invaluable to show them there is another way.

I would now like to handover to Gemma who has come to share her experience in the role.

Good evening Conference, my name is Gemma and I am an alcoholic and I don't want to repeat what Amanda has so thoroughly covered so I am going to stick with my experience of the discipline of Young Persons.

When a group of younger members and I met up in 2011 for the first time we had one question and that was, can we unify younger members across AA in order to better carry the message to alcoholics both inside and outside the Fellowship? We felt if we could unite younger members and work together we could address how AA might look to young problems drinkers outside the Fellowship who had not made it to us yet and we felt that there was a need for there to be a discipline that could bring the particular experience of younger members into focus. We fantasized about a time in the future when there would be a list of all young members in each Intergroup that would be available to show up where a younger face or voice would be beneficial in such as young offenders institutes, 12th step lists and that sort of thing.

My experience when we first went to London Region South touting the idea of a young person's service position wasn't met with open arms. They rightly questioned why young people should be treated specially and differently and they told us to fill the vacancies that already existed and what did young mean anyway. But we kept going back and back and back wanting to be ready to share our experience when any younger person's input was needed.

I did get a place at the regional table at London Region South when I was sponsored into becoming an alternate and then full delegate and this is my final year at Conference and I am delighted to have just signed up to another three years at Region when I was elected Chair of London Region South.

Without the continuous acceptance of the Young Persons discipline by Conference over the years, I would not have stuck around to do service beyond group level mainly because I am a precious, millennial, snowflake princess and I would have just felt that Intergroup and Region was not a place that I was wanted and that AA had little consideration for the particular experience and skill sets that the younger members can bring especially to outward facing 12th Step work.

The introduction of this discipline has provided a platform for a lot of members to feel really useful while actually being useful and I am pretty sure that there are people doing YPLO service that would not be doing service at all at Intergroup and Region and I am one of those people. I believe that once people are at Intergroup and Region there is a strong chance that they will stay in the service structure and that's been my experience. I'm now Region for life and that is because I was eventually invited to the Region table as someone to be listened to.

The way information is getting to alcoholics is ever changing and I feel that younger members must be part of the conversations around AA adapting to external changes and adopting new ways of reaching those out there. So young people must be present at Intergroup, at Region and at national level of service either as a sub committee member or here at Conference.

For three years now I have loved being a member of the inaugural sub committee for this discipline which I care so deeply about. I have recently assisted with the casting of the Young Peoples video which is in production and the pride that I felt listening to young members tell their stories has just been incredible. The same old stories, the same old feelings, the same old consequences but spoken with a tone that I don't recognise because I am no longer in my twenties.

The video is going to be different to the films that were passed at Conference last year, it is aimed at a different audience and I don't think that there would have been the appetite to regenerate any of our videos without the Young Peoples discipline existing.

These roles at YPLO are as much about unity as they are about carrying the message to the still suffering alcoholic and when I have been present in discussions, face to face at seminars or online I see unity and singleness of purpose that has really improved since the wider Fellowship pushed young people forward.

It has been a great privilege to serve the Fellowship doing something that I feel so passionately about which is supporting the effort to make AA attractive to those that need it.

Thanks for listening.

Literature

(Denise H)

Good Evening Conference. My name is Denise, I'm an alcoholic and the Chair of the Literature Sub-committee.

It is a great honour and privilege to serve on the General Service Board as a Trustee that has responsibility for Literature.

Before I present the report I would like to give my thanks to the members of the sub-committee for all their outstanding efforts this year.

On behalf of the Literature Sub-Committee, I have the pleasure in presenting to the Fellowship, several pieces of literature for consideration by Conference 2019.

The literature items were sent out the 7th December 2018 to Intergroup Secretaries, Regional Chairs and Secretaries, Trustees and Conference delegates, as well as being put on the AA website. Anyone who does not have an email address automatically gets a hard copy sent to them.

Background information has been provided demonstrating how this literature came about.

Members of the Fellowship were invited to ask questions or offer suggestions about these pieces of literature before the 31st March 2019.

Feedback was received from various members, all of which were considered, in depth.

New Literature

This brings me onto the new piece of New Literature:

Now that I'm a GSR

With some feedback, the Literature Sub Committee have made the following changes to the pamphlet:

Front page:

The purpose of this pamphlet is to outline the role and responsibilities of **ADD *the*** GSR at group and intergroup level.

Section – Service Structure of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain

Regions.

There are sixteen AA GB Regions. A maximum of 3 ~~DELETE delegates~~ **INSERT *representatives*** from each intergroup in the region meet to co-ordinate liaison activities and select six delegates to attend the annual AA General Service Conference.

Bottom of this page

This we owe to AA'S future at the end of this sentence INSERT (*Declaration of Unity*)

Section: What do I do for my group?

Point 11 – Inform your group about the Conference process and facilitate discussion of Conference questions ~~DELETE and submission of questions for Conference.~~

Section: What do I do at Intergroup?

Delete Number 1 And Replace With:

Express your group's conscience at intergroup meetings rather than your own. As a trusted servant however, in line with the spirit of Concept III (Right of Decision) and Concept IV (Right of Participation), you have the right to cast your vote according to your own judgment and conscience at that time.

Delete number 6

Bottom of the 'How do I get support section'

Change telephone number to 0800 9177 650

Insert – help@aamail.org

That's all the amendments!

Therefore, can Conference please vote to accept 'Now that I'm a GSR pamphlet'

Conference approved the above proposal with a two-thirds plus majority including a change to the telephone and email address in the contact details.

Revisions to Existing Literature

The next items are from the AA Starter Pack, firstly:

Who Me - This pamphlet as been amended as follows:

Who Me Section

3rd paragraph – **replace jail with prison**

Back page:

Under www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Insert – help@aamail.org

That's all the amendments.

Can Conference please vote to accept **The Who Me Pamphlet**

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

The next item is **A Newcomer Asks**

First amendment:

Why do you keep on going to meetings after you are cured?

Revisions

We in the Fellowship of AA believe there is no such thing as a cure for alcoholism. We can never return to normal drinking. ~~DELETE and our ability to stay away from alcohol depends on maintaining our physical, mental and spiritual health. DELETE This we can achieve~~ **INSERT However, we can stay away from alcohol** by going to meetings regularly and putting into practice what we learn there. In addition, we find it helps us to stay sober if we help other alcoholics.

Second amendment:

How can I contact AA?

Replace the whole first paragraph up to Remember

~~Look for Alcoholics Anonymous in your local telephone directory; in many places a local AA number is also included in the useful numbers section. These telephones are manned by volunteers who will be happy to answer your questions or put you in touch with those who can. If there is no AA telephone service close to you, write or phone the General Service Office for Great Britain at the address opposite.~~

Remember that alcoholism is a progressive illness continue as before with

You can get details from www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk On the website there is a facility which allows you to message an AA member who will be happy to answer your questions. You will also find an email address and the phone number for our national helpline. If you prefer you can write to the General Service Office for Great Britain at the address on the back of this leaflet. If you are outside Great Britain you may wish to search for AA in your area.

Remember that alcohol [continue as before]

Section – Some other AA pamphlets

**Problems other than alcoholic – change to *Alcohol*
ADD – *Who Me?***

Back page:

Under www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Insert – help@aamail.org

These are all the amendments.

Can Conference please vote to accept **The Newcomer Asks** pamphlet

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

There is a proposed revision which has gone to Committee: This is:

1. AA Structure Handbook – Page 79 (from Conference 2018 – Committee 3 Question 2)

Finally

The AA in Treatment Setting leaflet, The General Service Conference – The Conscience of AA GB pamphlet, and the 5 Posters passed by Conference 2018 are now available from GSO.

I would just like to say thank you to all those who provided feedback to the literature it is really appreciated.

This concludes my report to Conference.

Matt closed the Friday evening session in the customary way by asking everyone to join him in the saying of the Serenity Prayer.

SATURDAY EVENING

Continuation of General Service Board Reports

Matt welcomed everyone back. He 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 and read the Preamble. Matt then invited Norman B (GSB) to commence the continuation of General Service Board reports.

Electronic Communications

(Norman B)

Good evening Conference. My name is Norman, I'm an alcoholic and Trustee for East of Scotland Region. My responsibility is Electronic Communications and my intention is to just go through what we have been doing in the past year and where we are now with various different items.

At the top of the list I have put GDPR, it's not the most exciting subject but it is important and it took a fair amount of time, after Conference last year, you might have seen a lot of emails in your own mailboxes from companies and, to be honest, it was a bit over-hyped in our opinion but nonetheless important.

If you were following the previous data protection regulations actually you didn't have a lot to worry about but they have been tightened up a bit and penalties are more severe. What happened was GSO produced a privacy statement and it is mentioned at the bottom of all the webpages of our website and, as Nigel mentioned yesterday, we have no control over what the Fellowship does but we did post suggestions to the Fellowship as to how they could handle it.

It is important because people assume that it is only computers and certainly that's the majority but if your Region is keeping records on paper or a computer then we have to follow the regulations then do be aware that you do have to keep records. The people whose information is being stored have to be aware that it is being kept and they have to be kept securely.

Finding a Meeting

A lot of people know this but there may be some things that people are not aware of. Looking at our present website if you go to the Meeting Finder which I am sure you are all familiar with, I still hear comments that this is no good on a mobile phone. It was changed a year ago, at the Conference a year ago, James, my predecessor, demonstrated how it works, and if you open that page on your mobile you will be able to see it. What I did not know, until relatively recently, was that if you go to the menu at the top right, you can then open a further menu, then page and add page shortcut which will add a shortcut to that page to the home screen of your mobile. If you tap that shortcut on your mobile it opens the screen and then if you select search near me and any day takes you to local meetings and details and directions to those meetings.

help@aamail.org

This is a link to the Online Response Service (ORS) and it has been running for a few years and it has been used a lot. A newcomer can click this and an email goes to our online response team. In the past twelve months they have dealt with more than 10,000 emails and have helped more than 3,000 newcomers and I would suggest that that is quite an impressive tally.

Chat Now

This is relatively new and started in October 2016 and this is reached from the website as well and they have dealt with over 14,000 Chats in the last twelve months. I presume everyone knows what I mean about Chat – it is an online chat one-to-one with someone, which you see on many websites. We have at the moment 23 active responders and we could do with more.

The Chat Now service is looked after by one of the Electronic Communications Sub Committee members, Ben, who is here, and I thank you for your work as it does take a lot of organising and I am very grateful for that.

Generic Email Addresses

This is not new but it is worth reiterating. If we have for example a new Health Liaison Officer in a Region (HLO) he or she might decide not to use their own email address and that is quite understandable, so they are quite diligent and set up a special one, calling it what they like on gmail or whatever. That's all very well but when they are communicating with the outside world that is then the address associated with Health for AA in that particular region. When he or she rotates out that is still the address that is being kept by the external agencies so what we encourage people to do is to apply for an aamail.org email address. It is a simple enough procedure and the name has to be in the Confidential Directory before we issue the address, so if you are not up to date in the Confidential Directory please do so and there is a form online or send an email to the helpdesk. We will then allocate a generic address for example health.myregion@aamail.org so that is then the address that is saved by the external agency. When the member rotates out that address is then passed on to the next Health Liaison Officer. It works so please use it.

Helpdesk

The helpdesk is for service and is not intended for newcomers and if you have any problems please fill it in and we will attempt to help.

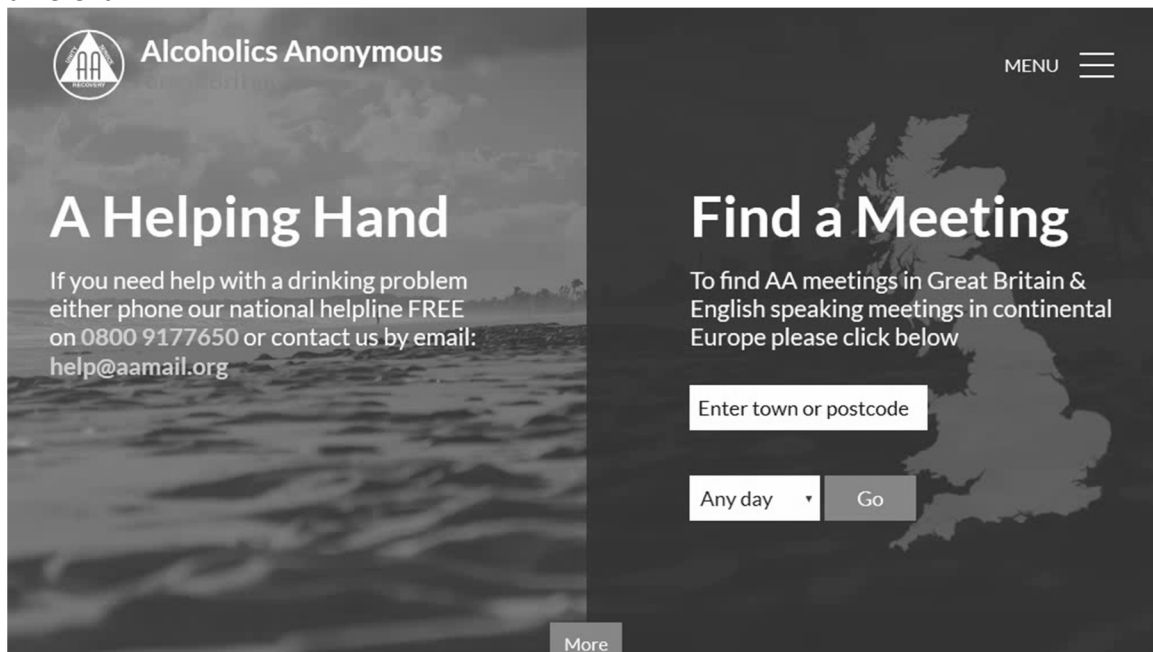
Filestore

That has been rebuilt in the past few months. There has been a lot of work going on in the background, stuff which you are not seeing and we are going to talk about the website shortly and what you see on the website is what we call the 'front end' but there is a lot of stuff going on in the 'back end'. It's things that have to happen to make the website work basically. Filestore is one of them that has been changed and it is now more secure, complies with GDPR and so on, and that is where you should be putting your files. When you want to connect to it go to the File Storage Area page and click and this will take you to a new screen and the one difference is that everyone, each individual user, has to register. It is a quick process and does not take long but it keeps us compliant.

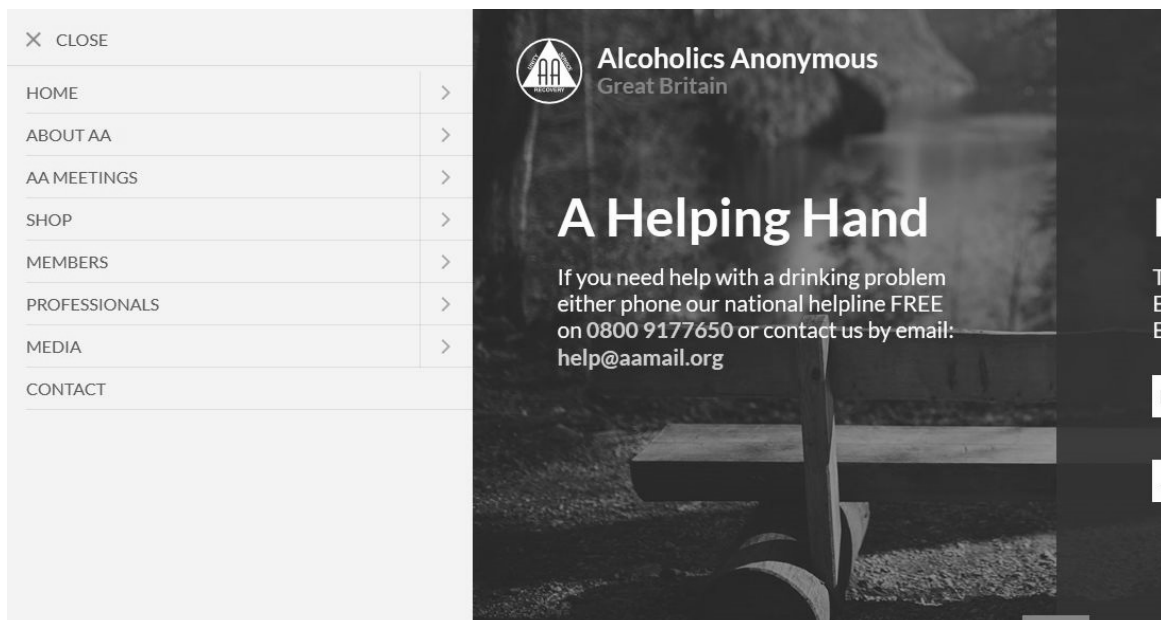
There were some comments when we launched the new filestore that we did not announce in advance that we were going to do it and that was for a very good reason, because if we had said it was going to be launched next Wednesday, then there would have been a huge amount of people wanting to register on the same day and that would have overloaded our server and would have overloaded our webmaster which would not have been fair. It also gave us a chance then to iron out any wee bugs that cropped up in the first few registrations.

The New Website

It has been redesigned and the content at the moment is the same but the interface looks different:



This is the homepage and at the top right we will see the Menu where you can select for example, About AA.



As you can see there is Members section, Shop etc with sub menus.

I think that you will agree that the interface is more attractive and more modern and I believe that it is a great improvement.

Conference Referrals

These are points that came from Conference last year:

- **Speaker Audio Files on Website?**

There are thousands of them out there and I am sure that many people will have listened to many of them. The problem is that you have probably heard a few things being said that aren't strictly by the book. As AAGB we have to respect our Traditions and couldn't publish any share that did not follow our Traditions. I remember being at a convention once and heard a very, very powerful share from a man and he had the attention of everyone in that room including a lot of newcomers but towards the end of his share he said I have never found it necessary to read the Big Book so obviously we could not publish that, we would not be able to use that. What it does mean is that somebody would have to sit down and listen to every share to decide if it was appropriate or not.

The Board has decided that we will record audio version of Share and Roundabout articles which have already been approved and they will appear somewhere, and I say somewhere deliberately, because it could be on our website or certainly linked to our website but they may be put on an external site and the decision on that will depend on voting tomorrow morning on one of Committee 5's questions so at the moment I cannot tell you where they are going to go but they are being done.

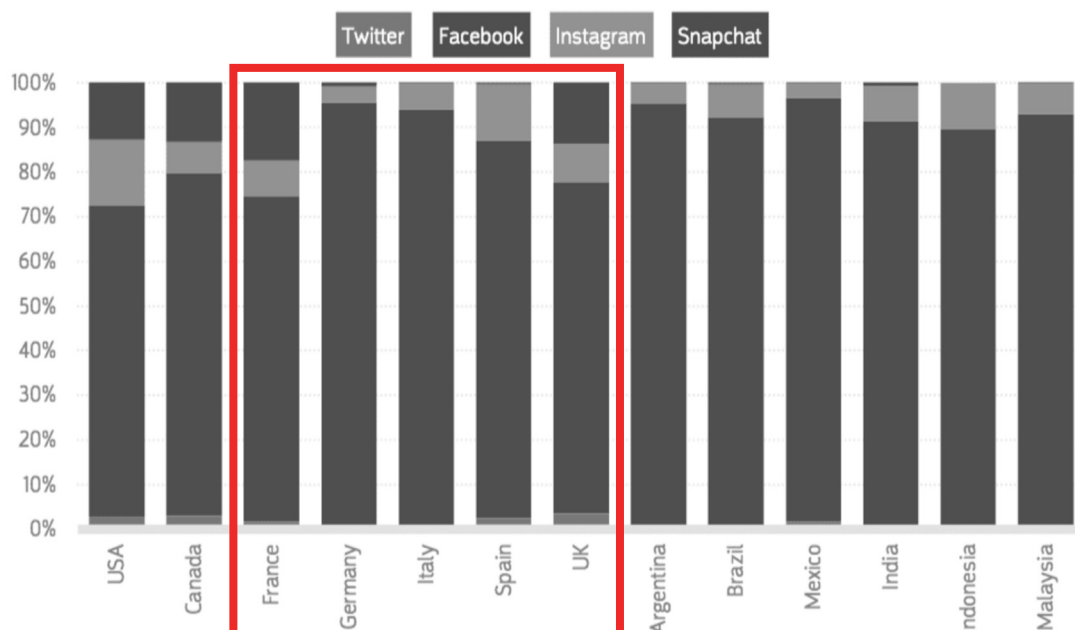
- **Would Conference discuss the idea of adding a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) AA Helpline service to the AA GB website?**

This is actually a telephones question but I am answering it anyway. All telephone lines are changing from analogue to digital. It is a progressive process which is happening and our Northern Service Office in Glasgow is already on digital VoIP. Any calls for example from Skype to our helpline number will work now so there is nothing to be done.

- **Would Conference consider how the Fellowship's social media presence can be improved to enhance AA's ability to carry the message?**

This is quite a big one. Obviously social media is used considerably

Social Networks' Share of Time
Share of Combined Minutes for 4 Major Social Networking Apps



From the you can see the darkest bar is Facebook and on the right of the box is the UK, then we have Spain, Italy, Germany and France. So in the UK we are at the 80% mark, Germany and Italy are very much higher.

So we concentrated mainly on Facebook because that is the one that most people do seem to use. Various ways that we could appear on Facebook:

We could take a page and allow people to post on it – that would require 24hour moderation because we have no control over what people post. It could range from something that is not in accordance with our Traditions to a full extreme of someone who has relapsed and has posted his or her opinion of AA. We don't want the public to see that.

Another option is the secret or private or closed group. There are a number of them around and I know that they are very popular and you need to be invited to join and a newcomer trying to search for one would not necessarily find one. There are different levels of secrecy. Our main concern is the anonymity of our Fellowship. We do know that if you click on a page and want to follow it or be its friend that information is recorded against your profile. We know that if you click and add a comment to a page that is recorded. If you 'like' something that is recorded also. Facebook know an awful lot more about us than maybe we would like. That can risk targeted advertising and depending upon what people have 'liked' or expressed an interest in we could be seeing adverts coming out to the Fellowship for rehab clinics, possibly alcohol and who knows what.

The other thing that I didn't know until I read it is that many employers will look at the profiles of applicants for jobs and 37% of employers have said that they do that and if the applicant is showing any interest in alcohol or drugs then they are side-lined.

So, taking all of that into consideration we discovered that although we can disable comments on our page, we cannot disable 'likes' so we can't stop that data harvesting.

The Board's decision is that there is a serious risk of anonymity being compromised and we would be irresponsible if we allowed that or encouraged that and we recommend no presence on social media.

Finally, I would just like to thank my sub-committee, they are all hardworking people and there are seven of us in total and they are:

Allan	Filestore
Ben	ChatNow
Caspar	Microsites, GDPR, Workplace
Eleanor	Online Response Service
Greg	Webmaster
John	Postmaster

I thank them all and the GSO staff for the work that they do as well in maintaining our website.

We currently have approval from the Board to increase our number by two as we are pretty stretched and we have no backup for any of these roles, so we are currently advertising the two vacancies and, in fact, since the advert went out Ben has said that he wishes to stand down from the committee so, in fact, we have three vacancies. If you know anyone who might be interested, and we are not looking for a Bill Gates look alike, but have reasonable IT skills, if you have any webpage design experience then that's even better but please think about applying to join us. Thank you.

Health

(Terri S)

Good evening Conference, my name is Terri and I am an alcoholic. Since joining the General Service Board in 2018, I have had the honour and privilege to serve as Trustee with the service responsibility for Health for Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain. It has been an enjoyable year, but mostly it has been a very steep learning experience for me. I am very fortunate to work with an amazing group of members of this Fellowship who make up the Health Subcommittee. These members, working within our guidelines and traditions, work diligently and responsibly the length and breadth of Great Britain, to fulfil our primary purpose and to carry the AA message to the still suffering alcoholic. In this instance, through the medium of the multi-disciplined Healthcare Professionals, most of whom initially, have to be convinced that AA has a message and an enduring efficacy that should be heard.

The Health Subcommittee, who are responsible to the General Service Board, currently consists of myself as Chair, Dr Mani Mendikhani, a Non Alcoholic Trustee, and seven members as follows:

Stephen M	-	London Region South
Bob S	-	South East Region
Robin H	-	South East Region
Gabriel S	-	London Region North
Marika C	-	London Region North
Graham B	-	Eastern Region
Jan O	-	Highlands & Islands Region

I think Bob, Graham and Gabriel are here this evening and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for helping me get through this last year.

Additionally, each member of the Subcommittee has responsibility for two other Regions who have no direct representation on the Health Subcommittee. This service carried out on behalf of the General Service Board and our fellowship is varied and extensive. Dr Mani Mendikhani NAT and the members of the HSC work diligently to fulfil our primary purpose to all disciplines within the Healthcare Sector.

I will this evening, share with you a flavour of the work carried out on behalf of the GSB and the Fellowship.

Throughout the year Regional and Intergroup Health Liaison Officers have attended and represented AA to ensure that the message is carried to all disciplines within the health sector.

We have, and will continue to represent you at the following conferences and events, which are not exhaustive:

NHS England/Wales/Scotland
Royal College of General Practitioners,
Chief Nursing Officer Conference
Pulse Live Conference
The Medical Council on Alcoholism
Public Health England / Scotland
NICE Annual Conference
UNISON Annual Health Care Conference
10th European Action on Alcohol Conference
European Conference on Mental Health

Universities in England and Scotland

This is a snapshot of the time and effort given by the Health Sub Committee and HLO's to carry the message to the Healthcare Professionals, who in turn have the authority to inform frontline staff. These frontline staff are the conduit by which the IHLO's and RHIO's access the patient in need, and by doing so carry the message to the *man and woman on the bed...*

An excellent example of this in action is in Glasgow Region, where Dr George Benson, the head of the newly formed addiction services gateway project, has liaised with the RHLO and the IHLOs to facilitate a direct link between the ward-based addiction nurses and the Northern Service Office. The nurse phones directly to the NSO, the staff members consult a list of approved responders and within a very short time, 2 AA members 12 step the patient at the bedside. Providing a free resource, with free aftercare. This health service initiative is looking to be extended to the embryonic home detox programme.

UNIVERSITIES

In Universities from the south coast of England to the Western Isles of Scotland, more than one thousand student nurses have attended an AA presentation which includes "What AA is and What AA isn't" - the Preamble - they listen in silence, often in tears, as a member shares their experience strength and hope with them. These presentations have become a regular part of the nursing degree course curriculum, and unanimously voted the most informative and interesting presentation of the course. It has recently been confirmed that the University of Edinburgh will include an AA presentation on the student nursing curriculum.

NHS ENGLAND

One of the many doors opened to the Health Subcommittee last year was when Alcoholics Anonymous GB was invited, along with other organisations, to respond to a request from a Westminster Government initiative to cooperatively participate in contributing to the new NHS England Long Term 10 Year Plan.

This plan, targeting people suffering from mental ill health, includes alcohol dependency and alcohol disorders. The Health Subcommittee worked diligently on ensuring that AA's response was within Traditions and Guidelines. emphasising that we are a free resource, and that we are here and willing to respond wherever, and whenever the hand of AA is needed.

The follow on from that initiative has seen the General Secretary and a contributing member of the Health Sub Committee invited along to the Official Presentation of the NHS 10-year plan.

This input was no more than AA had already agreed and had been offering in the existing NICE guidelines.

OPEN MEETING WORKSHOPS

The Open Meeting was developed by Continental European Region, with the first one being delivered by AA Utrecht, in the Netherlands, by invitation to the European Conference on Mental Health. This was followed by the Prague Intergroups' successful Open Meeting presentation at the Annual European Conference in 2016.

The first AAGB Open Meeting was presented at Sussex Medical School for final year Psychiatric Registrars. This was organised by Dr Sarah Flowers, who was at that time an AA NAT, and Ranjan B who was a member of the Health Sub Committee. From the success of this first Open Meeting

an invitation followed to present an Open Meeting at the University of Brighton Campus for trainee Physiotherapists. Robin H and Stephen M joined the team delivering the Open Meetings. At this juncture Dr Martin Weegman, NAT and a Clinical Psychologist, invited the Health Subcommittee to hold an Open Meeting at the Annual Conference of the National Association of Clinical Psychologists in York. This allowed the Health Sub Committee to invite the local intergroup to participate. The successful feedback from these meetings was nothing short of phenomenal from the Professionals who attended.

There were some hiccups however with AA members themselves. Initially the Open Meeting was called a Demonstration Meeting which caused confusion as to the type of meeting they were participating in. In 2018 after reviewing these concerns and the enduring positive feedback from the Professionals, the Health Subcommittee renamed it Open Meeting Workshop.

The exponential growth of these meetings and their impact on the professionals who attend cannot be overstated. The Open Meeting Workshops have been delivered from, the Highlands to the South Coast, to more than one thousand participants , including, vocational trainee doctors, student psychiatrists and psychologists, GP's and health practice staff including community psychiatric nurses, addiction nurses, management and reception staff, frontline emergency services, including firemen, para medics, prisons and police officers, criminal justice and probation personnel, homeless unit staff, street pastors and carers have been included and welcomed.

The Open Meeting Workshop is now on the curriculum at the Universities of London, Surrey, Sussex, Brighton and throughout AAGB, and as the demand increases the format has been changed and adapted to meet the location and audience participation.

Initially I was sceptical until I witnessed my first Open Meeting Workshop - ignorance prior to investigation - I was so spiritually moved that I immediately accepted that this gift was yet another tool in AA's Spiritual toolkit.

I attended my second Open Meeting Workshop organised by the IPILO and Edinburgh Intergroup. At the end of the meeting the stranger next to me turned with tears streaming down his face, he said he had never witnessed anything so powerful and moving before. He was Dr Eric Carlin, Director of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh and now an AA NAT (elect). Proof if I ever needed it that the Power in the room is tangible to the professional. If you have not attended an Open Meeting Workshop keep an open mind and read the article in the latest edition of the AA Service News, which contains feedback from Professionals who attended their first Open Meeting Workshop.

FUTURE EVENTS

MIMS

AAGB has been invited to attend the annual Learning Live Conference by MIMS. There will be 1,000 invited delegates in attendance. MIMS is the prescribing guide for all medical and dental practitioners and is one of the most authoritative medical publications in the UK.

Dr Mani Mendhikani AA NAT, GS Ranjan and Daniele Regional HLO and others will present to 150 delegates in the Lecture Theatre, all one thousand delegates will have links to each of the presentations and the video link of the event will be available and viewed by thousands more medical professionals. AA carrying the message to the widest possible audience.

MEDICAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM

I attended my first Symposium at the MCA in London last year. London Region South represented the Fellowship with a well-stocked Literature table. Throughout the networking lunch Nigel P, Chair of the General Service Board, Dr Mani Mendikhani, AA NAT and myself joined Daniele V and Geraldine M who had organised the literature table to network, distribute literature, explain AA and to make new friends.

In 2016 Professor Jonathan Chick, now retired AA NAT, was invited to present the prestigious Max Glatt memorial lecture at the Symposium.

The General Service Board recognised that this would be a wonderful venue and opportunity to present an Open Meeting Workshop to so many senior professionals who attend this Medical Symposium. Negotiations are ongoing for AA to be represented at this year's event.

CONCLUSION

In co-operation, with these professional organisations, and many more, the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Health Subcommittee and Health Liaison Officers work diligently on behalf of the members of our wonderful Fellowship and together we can put our hands up, and out, on behalf of AAGB to say that yes we alcoholics are carrying on with our legacy *to pass it on to the man or woman on the bed....*

75th Anniversary Convention

(Roger E and Clive K)

My name is Roger and I am an alcoholic.

In 2016 there was a Conference question:

Would Conference consider the feasibility of holding a single celebratory convention in 2022 to mark the 75th year of AA in Great Britain? This could be along the lines of the 50th anniversary celebration held in 1997. The 50th year anniversary event involved the participation of all 16 Regions of Great Britain and Continental Europe and was held at a convenient location in order to maximise participation across the whole Fellowship.

Committee 3 Recommendation was:

This Committee unanimously agrees that it is feasible to hold a single celebratory convention in 2022 to mark the 75th year of AA in Great Britain.

Therefore we recommend that the Board (GSB) appoints a convention committee, formed from the Regions as soon as possible and pays special attention to the following:

1. Finance (aim to be self-supporting)
2. Location
3. Lessons learnt from the 50th Anniversary celebrations

All recommendations of Committee 3 were passed with a two-thirds majority

Asking for it was the easy bit and now it was a question of how we were going to do it. I will explain a little bit about the Sub Committee:

To meet these aims and criteria the GSB would form a working sub-committee comprising of 6 delegates taken from nominations and endorsements from AA GB, interviewed, appointed and approved through GSB as per all other sub-committees. They will serve for the whole term until after the event without rotation (six years).

The sub-committee will be chaired by the Vice Chair of GSB (rotational)

The Hon Treasurer of GSB will also serve on the sub-committee (rotational)

The Sub-Committee's first meeting was 13th – 14th January 2017

The members of the sub-committee brought a comprehensive range of Convention experience together with them ALSO representing a wide geographical area of AA GB

The first meeting agreed:

1. the Terms of Reference of the Committee
2. to obtain and review the records of the 50th Anniversary Convention
3. consider which venues could be considered (Transport Links, Size etc.)
4. to involve the Fellowship as much as possible in this event from the start

Where we are now

- The Venue has been booked and the deposit paid (Leeds Arena is the venue and can be viewed on their Website)
The reason Leeds was chosen as geographically it was ideal but also there is a wide range of accommodation prices. The transport links were the best of the venues that we looked at. We wanted it to be accessible from a cost point of view so therefore accommodation was important.
- After a comprehensive review and lessons learnt from the 50th Convention a detailed budget forecast has been agreed with the aim of being self-supporting
- All committee members have been allocated their areas of responsibility
- 75th Anniversary Working Group has been formed to produce a commemorative brochure and Clive is here as he is the Archives Trustee who is heading this up and would like to say a few words:

Good evening Conference. My name is Clive and I am an alcoholic and very privileged and very grateful to be sober and standing here and Roger here volunteered me for this Working Group which I was very happy to accept as I was told a long time ago don't refuse anything you are asked to do in AA to do with service.

The purpose of this Working Group is to produce an anniversary publication basically along the lines of Share and Roundabout to go in the registration packs at the 75th Anniversary Convention and the Working Group is only a small group consisting of myself as chair and a representative of the 75th Anniversary Convention Committee, the Archives Sub Committee, the Share Sub Committee and the Roundabout Sub Committee and what we are trying to do is engage the Fellowship to send in regional histories including founding intergroups of the region and founding groups. We want it to be all inclusive and we wouldn't want the Working Group to produce the magazine and hope that the Fellowship gets involved with this. We have a wonderful secretary who happens to be our Share

editor and he keeps me in line! It's coming together and the magazine is hopefully going to be a B6 size which is the same size as the 50th Anniversary Share and we are just working out how much it is going to cost. We invited Mark Comer who publishes Share magazine along to the last meeting that we had in February and he is very supportive of AA as well and does a wonderful job with Share. He is, at the moment, in the process of doing costings for us and we will inform the Board when we get that information. Work is ongoing and letters went out, thanks to the GSO staff, last year to the Regional and Intergroup Archivists and Regional Chairs asking for help and we have had some positive feedback.

The Committee have discussed the format of the magazine and we don't want it to be all text and that would put anyone off, just reading loads of text and hopefully there will be pictures, not of people of course, but of places and also anecdotes from old timers.

Thanks to the GSO staff for allowing us to display some of the Kelvingrove exhibition archive banners here at Conference and we are hoping that at the 75th Anniversary Convention there will be banners for each Region displaying a potted history with time lines. It is a wonderful opportunity to preserve our history in AA and I am so grateful to my Working Group colleagues, one of whom is here, Ranald from Roundabout, to my fellow Trustees for their encouragement and support and to the GSO staff for their unstinting, unwavering support to me. Thanks for listening.

- 75th Anniversary stands have attended conventions and will until the end of 2021

Fellowship Involvement

- A logo competition was held with in excess of 100 entries and the winner was announced at last year's Conference
- The 75th Anniversary Brochure Working Group sub-committee have contacted all Region Archivists requesting them to contribute an article on the background of their Regions formation and development
- Surveys have and are requesting the Fellowship to put forward their ideas for possible inclusion these will continue up to the end of 2021 because we want to know what you think and we are open to any ideas at all.

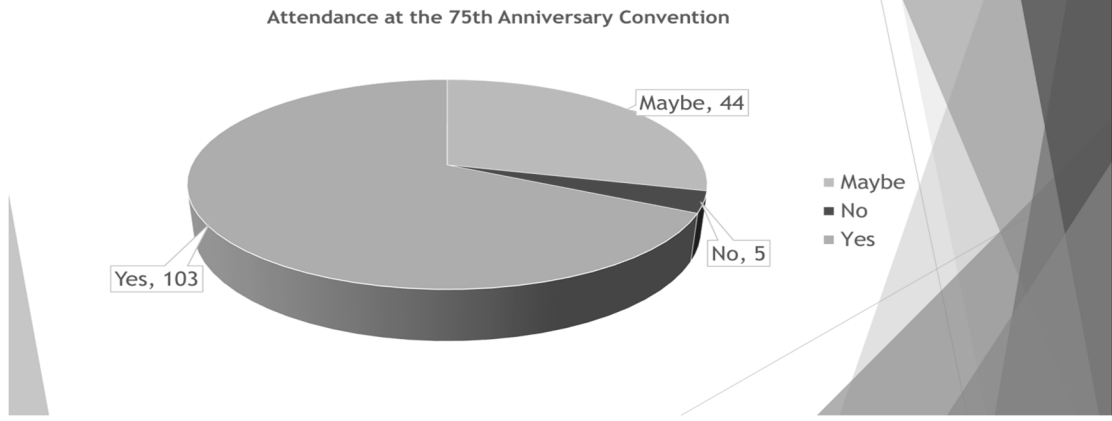
Survey

The 75th Anniversary Convention Sub Committee has commissioned a survey to the Fellowship to ensure the Convention is as inclusive as possible. The input into the survey will help the Committee with the event and take into account the wishes of the Fellowship.

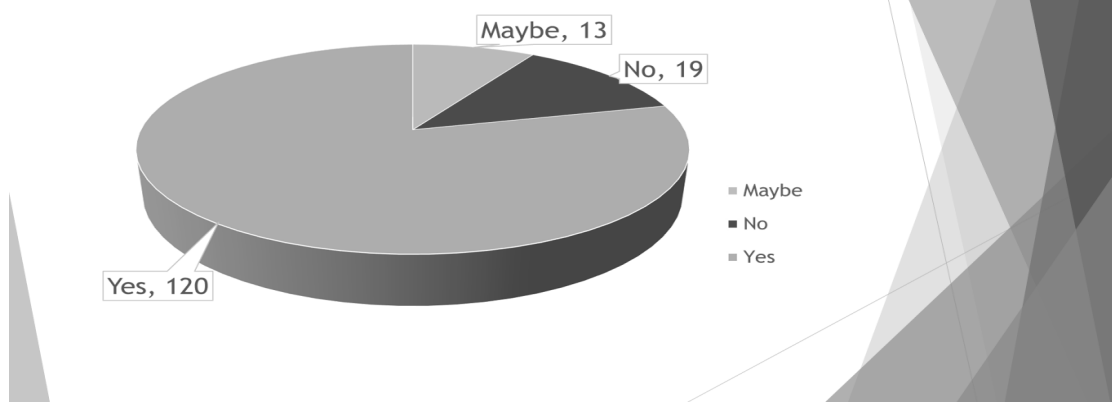
The survey is still available for members to complete and the Committee would appreciate as much feedback as possible.

Returns of completed surveys to date have been received from all the National Conventions, Regions, local Conventions and other Sub Committees and the results are as follows:

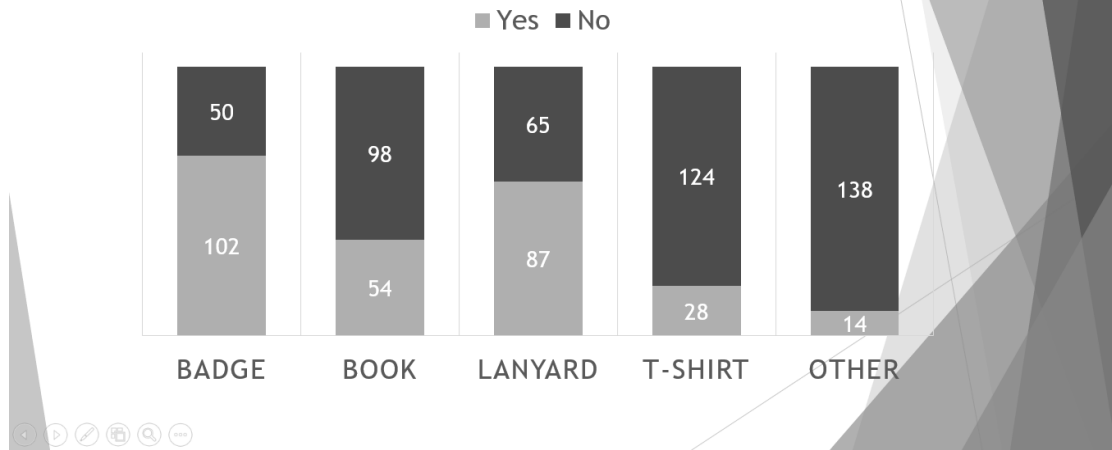
Q1. Will you attend the 75th Anniversary Convention?



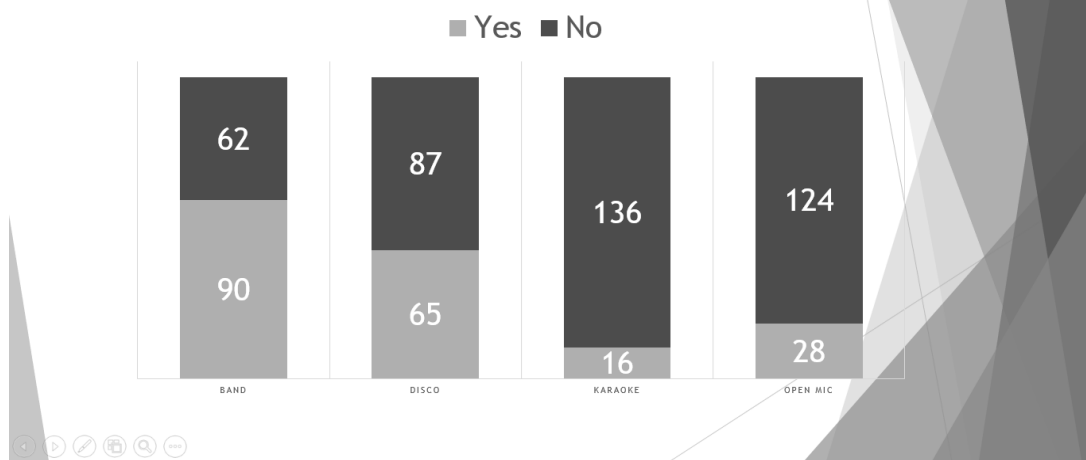
Q2. Would you like to see an Archive Display?



Q3. What would you like to see as part of the Registration pack?



Q4. What entertainment would you to see at the Convention?



The figures above are slightly out of date as we have some more to put on from the past two weeks but the main objective is that you can see that we are listening and we do want to know what peoples' priorities are.

Website Launch

Again, to keep you informed the Sub Committee have developed a website specifically for the 75th Anniversary Convention and is being launched around Conference 2019 but is not quite ready but we are nearly there. We want you to be fully informed all the way through and we want this to be a really good event and I think it should be.

The website will provide information on the following:

- Venue
- Travelling to the venue
- In and around Leeds
- Accommodation options
- Sign up to the newsletter
- Volunteering
- On-line Survey

As yet you cannot register for the Convention as the Sub Committee are still working on the:

- Costs
- Registration Price

To ensure the 75th Anniversary Convention is self-supporting as requested by Conference 2017.

Website: www.aa75.co.uk

We now have to concentrate on the details:

- Layout of the venue (visit of the Committee 26-27 April) so that decisions can be made where and when meetings, service workshops, archive displays, stands etc will take place. We would like quite a focus on service disciplines and we will be, over the next couple of years, asking the service disciplines to think about how they would like to present themselves at this event.
- Agreeing the programme of the event
- Competitive purchasing process
- Setting up Payment Systems. We anticipate bookings being available from about a year beforehand
- Committee members forming specific sub-committees which will require further involvement and help from members of the Fellowship

We look forward to this event being an enjoyable and successful celebration of our wonderful Fellowship.

I would just say that the Committee we have has got a lot of experience in the regional conventions, geographically the spread of them is brilliant and they do a lot of work and it is a privilege for me to be involved in this event and I expect it to be a really successful event.

AA Service News Update

(Erik A)

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

The Winter issue contains the Conference Questions and the Summer edition the recommendations from the General Service Conference pertaining to those questions.

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

Copies are posted to the mailing contacts for all Groups registered in the Great Britain Service Structure, to intergroup and regional officers and the General Service Board. If your group is not receiving AASN, please check that your Group Registration details are up-to-date via the Pink Form at the General Service Office. If in doubt, please contact the office.

I became responsible for AASN this year after the Summer issue had been completed. I want to thank Roger, our outgoing General Secretary, for putting together the Autumn edition and helping me learn the publication process.

I also owe a big debt of gratitude to the staff at GSO for their work to collate and pass along information for each issue, and especially to Sharon who gently helps me keep to the deadlines.

Thank you also to the volunteers – the AA members who gather at GSO four times a year to stuff the envelopes (usually including additional notices) so that AASN can be posted on time.

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

We welcome news and articles about service and service events all year round.

Archives Update

(Clive K)

The Archives Subcommittee met four times during the past year and have been very proactive in their discussions on various issues during this time. These issues include the following: The Kelvingrove Public Exhibition "From Darkness to Light", lessons learned and how to take this forward; The Borthwick Institute Cataloguing and Digitisation Project; The 75th Anniversary Special Publication and ways in which to enhance and improve the support it gives to the Archivist Network.

The Kelvingrove Public Exhibition: This event was hosted by the 5 Scottish Regions and was opened by the Granddaughter of Sir Phillip D who along with Grace O were among the founder members of AA in Great Britain. This was the first of its kind to be held in a public space in this case, the Kelvingrove Museum in Glasgow. The Archivists worked alongside members from PI to put on an extremely successful event. The subcommittee are building on the success of this and similar exhibitions have been held in Manchester and other locations. It has been agreed to have a permanent display at GSO. This will take the form of banners displayed on the wall in the Archives room. The subcommittee are also keen to work with members of other service disciplines to help to enhance carrying the AA message to the still suffering alcoholic.

The Borthwick Institute Cataloguing and Digitisation Project: Conference 2016 unanimously endorsed the Committee 5 Question 1 recommendation to make the Fellowship's Archive more accessible digitally and therefore more widely accessible to the whole membership. The Borthwick Institute presented the General Service Board with a project proposal in May last year which fully meets the remit of Conference. They carried out a comprehensive assessment of the Archive held at GSO, along with the Archive material which they already hold in their storage facility. The Borthwick have employed a professional Archivist to carry out this project which is now at the cataloguing stage. This cataloguing stage will take some considerable time and the Board are being kept fully updated on progress by the Borthwick through the Trustee, Fellowship Archivist, General Secretary and Projects Coordinator at GSO.

The 75th Anniversary Publication Working Group: This working group was set up by the Board to oversee the production of a special publication along the lines of Share and Roundabout to commemorate this momentous occasion in the history of AA GB. It will also celebrate Share Magazines 50th Anniversary and commemorate the major contribution that Roundabout has made to AA's history especially in Scotland. It comprises of members from the Archives, Share, Roundabout and 75th Anniversary subcommittees. It is chaired by the Archives Trustee who reports to the Board on its progress. It also provides regular reports to all its constituent subcommittees listed above. Work is progressing well and it plans to produce the completed publication by June 2021. It has asked the Fellowship to provide material in the form of Regional

histories including founder Groups and Intergroups. This also includes history of service disciplines.

The Archivist Network: The annual meeting of the Network took place in September last year. It was well attended and the discussions were lively and informative. The subcommittee came away with much food for thought and have started to implement ways in which to enhance and improve communication with the Network. These include circulating reports received from Archivists to the whole network and sending out bullet point summaries of subcommittee meetings. The subcommittee are also in the process of planning the first ever Archives Seminar to be held in September this year. This will include guest speakers addressing a range of topics including the Borthwick Institute Cataloguing and Digitisation Project, the Kelvingrove Exhibition and Preservation and Conservation of archive collections.

The Archives Subcommittee: This report would not be complete without expressing my sincerest gratitude to this hardworking and extremely supportive subcommittee. We now have in place a Fellowship Archivist, Harry R from North West Region. He took up post in September and was introduced to the Network at its annual meeting. We lost two members during the year who sadly had to step down due to moving house and illness, Miriam T from South West Region and Graham S from South East Region were stalwarts of the subcommittee and we wish them well. We gained two members, Martin B from Scotia Region and John C from North East Region. The subcommittee now comprises of Martin B, John C, Joanna B from South East Region, Jim S from East of Scotland Region, Harry R as Fellowship Archivist, Emma W from GSO who is the Projects Administrator and myself.

My heartfelt gratitude also goes to Joe H, my predecessor for his invaluable support, insight and encouragement when I took on this role.

I must also express my sincere debt of gratitude to Jenny, Roger, Emma and all the Staff at GSO for all their invaluable support and help during this past year.

Archives is an extremely interesting and rewarding discipline which continues to go from strength to strength thanks to the unwavering commitment and support of the Archivist Network throughout our Fellowship, the Subcommittee and the GSO staff.

Armed Services Update

(Mike P)

I am the new Trustee for the Armed Services and was ratified into the post last Conference and it has been a privilege to serve with the Subcommittee, RASLO's and ASLO's up and down the country. I would like to thank them for all their hard work in making the Armed Services pleasure to be part of.

Excerpt from Guideline 21

AA and The Armed Services: 'Intergroups and Regions are responsible for the appointment of an Armed Services Liaison Officer [ASLO] to work in conjunction with other Intergroup and Regional officers. The role of the ASLO is to establish and maintain communication between Alcoholics Anonymous and The Royal Navy, The Army and The Royal Air Force and to report back at all areas within Intergroup or Region. It is also important to cultivate similar contact and communication with Community Welfare Officers and organisations such as Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen & Families Association (SSAFA) and Veterans-U.K. Familiarity with the local area and a thorough working knowledge of the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain 2017 are vital before accepting the role of ASLO'.

At our last Sub Committee meeting in September we decided to amend our Terms of Reference TOR's at the February meeting.

- The 34 Hives are still receiving literature and posters
- The website has been updated and a CD with new handbook and two new stories.
- A white border will be placed around the QR code on the new Armed Services poster
- Provided information for Joanna Hrycak, Armed Services Covenant Project Manager, Joint Commissioning Team, People Directorate, Milton Keynes Council
- Inroads are being made to the RAF and to various barracks around the country.

Health Fairs were attended at Imphal Barracks and we were invited back in December by the CO to do a presentation.

A celebration of Bill Wilson's visit to Winchester Cathedral 100yrs ago was organised and was attended by 800 people it was a great success and many veterans were there. Our Newsletter has been sent out as was discussed in the September meeting.

There was a Seminar which was well attended we had a guest speaker Major Mohammad Farout and a Q&A session and presentations.

A presentation at RAF Cranwell to welfare and employment officers from around the country as part of their training. Interest was shown in, perhaps, having such presentations at the individual bases. Contact details circulated should they wish this to go ahead,

It has been discussed and the go ahead for the Armed Services to have a stand at all the National conventions awaiting acknowledgement from the Convention Committees.

There have been many inroads to various barracks, there are some coffees mornings being held where the problems of alcohol are discussed these are in garrison towns and have an Alcoholics Anonymous presence.

There has been continued contact with US Military installations of RAF Molesworth, RAF Alconbury, RAF Mildenhall and RAF Lakenheath.

It is understood that the Chief of Defence staff has recognised that there is a problem with alcohol in the forces and has issued a directive that this should be tackled.

It has been noticed that some personnel from barracks where some presentations were given are seen attending meetings and this is a result of the ASLO's & RASLO's giving of their time and I thank them for their service and time.

In summary we have continued to maintain contact with the following:

- Director General, Army Medical Services.
- Services Medical Directorate.
- Service Base Medical Centres.
- SAAFA
- Royal British Legion.
- Combat Stress.
- Help the Hero's etc.

We also maintain our contact with publications such as:

- Pathfinder (Resettlement Information Magazine)

- Soldier (Internal Army Magazine)
- Civvy street (a relatively new publication)

The MoD intranet (Internal forces information website)

Flyers and copies of the Armed Services Pamphlet were handed out in West Lanarkshire to various members of different Groups, to be displayed with their Groups Literature.

Contact has been made with Leuchers Barracks Hive, (Hives are Welfare Centres for Service Communities), who have taken over the responsibility for the Army Bases in Scotland as the Edinburgh Hive has closed for the foreseeable future. GSO to send Armed Services and Park Bench Posters to the Leuchers Hive officer, who is then distributing them around the Scottish Barracks Medical Centres, in Edinburgh, Leuchers, Kinloss and Fort George in Inverness.

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>

This concludes my report for conference

Criminal Justice Update

(Pat McG)

It has been a very busy year for the Criminal Justice Partnership with all the changes that has been happening at the Ministry of Justice.

Most of the talk involved prevention intervention recovery, Governors being in charge of budgets, Alignment of Probation Services.

Failure of Community Rehabilitation Company's Communication not Isolation, Empowering Prisoners Education, Technology the future paperless and Courts & Lawyers digital evidence inmates history digitalised, REHABILITATION & RESPECT.

Shortage of staff and funding, experienced staff leaving and new staff having to be trained up losing valuable experience.

We have had area zonal meetings in Warrington, Cambridge, Stirling, and Swindon where the Ministry of Justice gave a presentation and problems were identified with Clearance & Security.

Moving forward the two sub-committees are now up to strength and we have a new Trustee for the Probation sub-committee.

There are many tasks to be carried out including invites to various meetings like training establishments, pre-release classes compiling a list of contacts for inmates on release to keep the continuity of recovery in the community.

More co-operation with health teams etc, DRUG STRATEGY MEETINGS.

CHIT SYSTEM encouraging more groups to get involved pre-release pamphlet there is much to be done updating website and resources for Prison & Probation.

A SEMINAR will be taking place in the Park Inn on the 29th June 2019 for the CRIMINAL JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP for anyone interested in this SERVICE.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all liaison officers involved in Probation & Prisons for all the hard work they have put in and to keep up that good work with the help of the Fellowship and Sub-Committees we shall overcome the many problems.

Employment Update

(Denise H)

The Employment Discipline held their four quarterly Sub Committee meetings for 2018 and the Annual Regional Employment Liaison Officers meeting took place at GSO in York on Friday the 15-16 June. This meeting was preceded by a short Sub Committee meeting. Whilst the numbers attending the Employment Liaison Officers were low the content and quality of discussion was very positive. We received the reports from the Liaison Officers in attendance and the Sub Committee members were impressed by the amount of work being carried out by the Liaison Officers throughout the country.

A summary of work of the Employment Sub Committee is as follows:

1. **Website:** work continued throughout the year
2. **Hello ELO:** two newsletters were produced and distributed via the website and P.I. Service News. The first was in July and the latest in December and these included articles from Sub Committee members and Liaison officers
3. **Glasgow Forum:** The Employment Trustee attended at the Forum in October
4. **Videos:** Some members of the committee were involved in the production of the Employment Video
5. **Liaison Officer Reports:** we received reports from Intergroup and Regional Employment Liaison Officers who have contacted a wide and varied number of employers from many different areas of business.

Liaison Officers have been in contact with: The Department of Works and Pensions, local job centres, the Police, G.P.'s, Railways, Large employer's assistance programmes, the BBC, Large Hotels, Legal Practices, Occupational Health, Health Centres, Banks, Construction Companies, Institute of Personal Development, Metropolitan Police, Trade Unions and many others, passing on our message of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Looking ahead to 2019

At our final Sub Committee meeting in October we welcomed Mike P. Trustee for London Region North to the meeting who will be taking over the role as Trustee for Employment in January 2019. The committee still needs new members as the workload continues to grow. Overall it was another successful year and the members of the Employment Sub Committee are looking forward to 2019.

However, whilst each committee meeting proved to be productive it was agreed that future plans need to be put in place for 2019. The committee looked at what we could do to further carry the message to Employers. One of the most pressing needs was to try to recruit more Employment Liaisons Officers at Region level and support them to recruit officers at Intergroup level. Some suggestions of how to do this are to:

1. Have a presence at the 4 National Conventions
2. Hold a Seminar in York, at the Park Inn, on the 21 - 22 June
3. Trustee for Employment to attend the annual Chairs meeting to raise awareness of our resources
4. Attend National Conferences aimed at Employers i.e. Chartered Institute for Personnel

Development (CIPD)

5. Attend at Regional Forums
6. Develop a range of materials and resources to raise the awareness of Employment, such as pull up banners, posters and fliers, specific for Employers.

As an Employment discipline it is our purpose to carry AA's message to employers and to this end 2018 has been a success. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Employment Sub-Committee members and all those Employment Liaison Officers at Intergroup and Region level who work tirelessly to carry the message of our programme of recovery to Employers.

Fellowship Survey Update

(Mani Mehdikhani and Clive K)

The Board set up the Survey Subcommittee during the year to meet the remit of Conference 2017 Committee 5 Question 2. The subcommittee have met twice so far. The terms of reference were agreed and there are currently 3 members with the addition of 2 Trustees and the Projects Administrator at GSO. The subcommittee reports to the Board through the Trustees.

Work on producing the questions for the 2020 survey is well under way. The subcommittee are also discussing ways of how best to publicise this survey throughout the whole Fellowship. Marketing Means are involved with its production and will collate the results again as they have done for the past few surveys.

Our sincere thanks go to Lindsay K, Tillmann S and John W for their invaluable supportive and enthusiastic contributions to the subcommittee. Our gratitude also goes to Emma, Jenny, Roger and all the Staff at GSO for their unwavering support and commitment.

Public Information Update

(Peter F)

Public Information (PI) operates through AA members, Groups, Intergroup, Regions. the PI Subcommittee and our Non Alcoholic Trustees assist with carrying the message to every area of the wider Community. PI is often the first contact the public have with the Fellowship.

Media Events

The PI Subcommittee is very conscious of all our Traditions which underpin our activity, especially when dealing with the media and external bodies. We are guided by the Public Information Section in the AA Service Handbook.

The need for adherence to the Traditions continues to be carefully explained to Journalists, their Editors and the Producers of TV Programmes. We have where necessary editorial control of the filming and editing of AA content.

During the year we have released articles for the press on our Public information events at the Parliaments of Holyrood, Westminster and the Welsh Assembly in Cardiff.

A Press release earlier in the year entitled 'Dying for a Drink' was put on the AA website in January has been picked up by Regional Newspapers and the content published.

During the spring and summer of 2018 Northdown Intergroup PI members ran a whole series of events in Winchester to celebrate the Centenary of Bill's visit to Winchester and his memorable sighting of Thomas Thetcher's tombstone in the Cathedral Graveyard. AA was able to put on a display commemorating the event in Winchester library, and in the cathedral later on in the year.

In July, Winchester Festival commissioned a play about Bill W; it was written by a local playwright and was attended by many people in the Cathedral.

This was followed in August by an AA meeting in the Cathedral to celebrate the 100th anniversary day of Bill W's actual visit to Winchester. A couple of weeks later one of our Non Alcoholic Trustees, Mani was interviewed by BBC TV on its 'Songs of Praise' programme in front of Thomas Thetcher's tombstone. This was a memorable record of Bill's W story and about the work the AA Fellowship does. In total the Winchester Bill W centenary story gave AA considerable exposure to both national, regional television, radio and press.

Advertising Campaigns

The two London Regions North and South, ran a large Poster Campaign on the London Underground in October. It was very impressive to see so many of our In-house AA posters on the London Underground at several stations!

Newcastle Intergroup likewise ran a Poster Campaign on their Public Transport System in November.

PI Video for Professionals

The new AA videos were approved by Conference in April, completed in the autumn of 2018 and made available to professionals through our AA website to all Intergroup and Regional PI teams. The PI video has been well received and is available with videos of the other AA disciplines for Health, Employment, Armed Services, Employment, Prison and Probation on the Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain website under latest news –click on videos for Professionals.

PI Sub Committee

We met four times during 2018. We continue to encourage Intergroup PI Initiatives with events for professionals and in working with both their local press and regional television. We held a Regional PI Officers' Meeting in York in September which was well attended. We held a six Southern region PI Officers event in Guildford, followed by the second one for the four Northern Regions in Warrington in December. The final event for Scottish PI liaison officers will be in Glasgow in March 2019. These events are motivating our PI teams and giving them a wealth of information and experience.

Alcohol Awareness month.

Even more Nationwide AA PI activity took place during the U.K.'s Alcohol Awareness week in November, much of the Fellowship's activity has been reported in the monthly PI Newsletter. It is clear many more Intergroups are now setting up a PI Service group within their Intergroup; the Public Information Officer (PILO) being the facilitator. This means much more PI activity within all the areas of Great Britain. We continued to emphasise at the PI Regional Events the importance of each Intergroup running PI Team as a group committee; with its own budget and annual programme of activity and events. Page 21 of the 2017 Service Manual has some helpful advice on forming a PI service committee.

PI Service News

This publication is circulated throughout the Fellowship at the beginning of each month. Any member can request a copy of the PI Service news from his PI team or intergroup secretary and by requesting to be added to GSO's circulation list. PISN shares current PI experiences, and acts

as an archive for reference; It is distributed by E mail. We are most grateful to our editor who continues to produce this excellent publication on a monthly basis. Please keep your local PI news flowing and good luck with all your primary purpose work in 2019.

Telephones Updates

(Jonathan P)

Terms of Reference for the National Telephone Sub-committee (NTSC)

To maintain the existing telephone system, 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.

To keep the use and cost of the system under constant review.

To be responsible for all changes to the system and to liaise with the system providers following consultation with Regions.

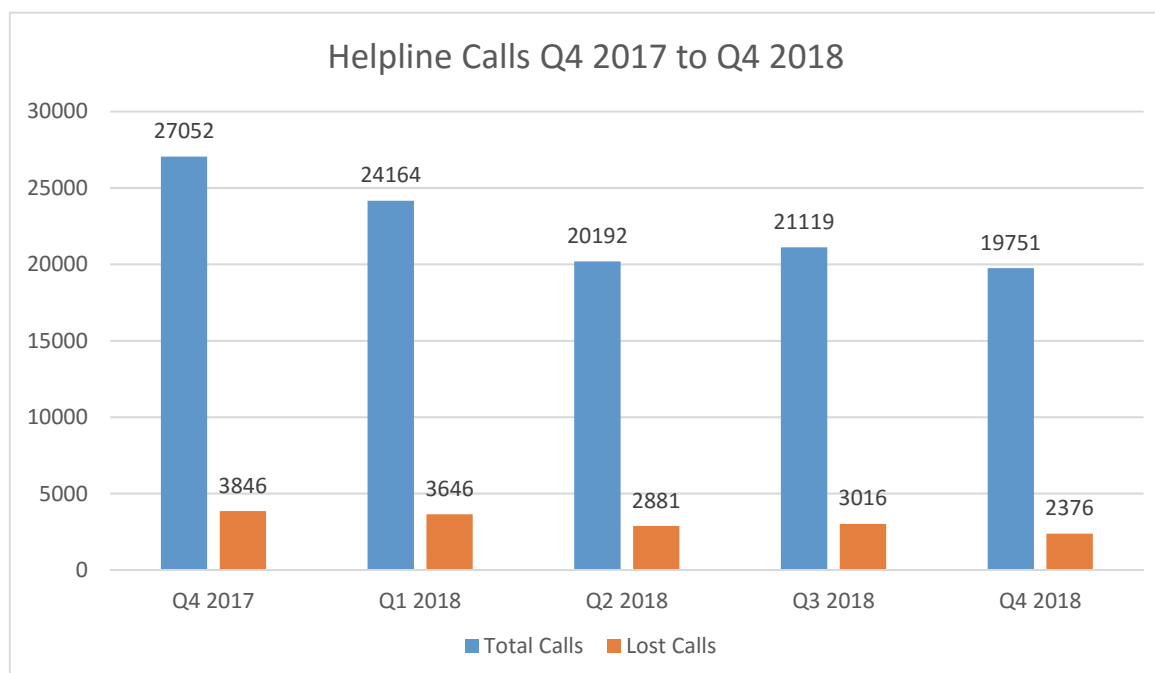
To investigate any new technology which may be beneficial to the Fellowship's telephone service.

To keep constant review of the facilities offered by other service providers.

The committee is a sub-committee of the Board and will be chaired by the Trustee with responsibility for the telephone service. Membership will normally consist of a minimum of four and a maximum of eight members drawn from participating Regions, who are suitably experienced to participate in committee functions. Where possible this will recognise geographical spread.

Membership of the Committee will be for a period of four years, allowing one year for sponsorship, thus the committee will be increased during sponsorship periods.

The subcommittee has been hard at work, supporting Regional Telephone Liaison Officers (RTLOs) and TLOs, some of whom are having a hard time introducing new digital services. At the annual meeting of RTLOs in August 2018, a representative from BT attended, with a wide-ranging



discussion of the issues involved. A continuing problem is the failure of old BT infrastructure, leading to local Helpline numbers being dropped. This has been stressful for all concerned in trying to maintain the usual access for the suffering alcoholic to a local contact. Even when there has been a planned transfer from the old analogue to digital, things have gone badly wrong. Nevertheless, where helplines have successfully transferred there is praise for the ease of use and the benefits that a digital service can provide.

Telephone administrators (i.e. RTLOs) and responders are looking forward to reliable access to various features of the new AA website. There is an understanding that implementing the full features of the website takes time. Liaison between NTSC and ECSC is important and will continue.

It would seem calls to the Helpline peaked last year. Looking at Q4 2017 compared with Q4 2018 we can see that there has been a 27% decline. However, looking at the last three quarters the call volume is much the same. So, after year on year increases since the 0800 number was introduced, Helpline calls are levelling out.

At the same time lost calls, including Ring Tone No Reply (RTNR) calls (a caller phoning and no one picking up the phone) have declined. It is worth pointing out that the majority of the RTNR calls were under 10 seconds giving little time for the responder to pick up.

The number of calls to the 0845-number reduced to such a low level that the decision was taken to disconnect it. If anyone comes across the 0845 number still being displayed, please remove/delete it.

The Helpline depends on the tens of RTLOs, the scores of TLOs, the hundreds of Telephone Responders, and the thousands of Twelve Steppers. The Service they all provide is essential, valuable, rewarding and is always in need of more people coming forward to be involved at all levels.

We are all responsible for passing the message to the suffering alcoholic.

Roundabout Update

(Stevie S)

Roundabout this past year has gone through a change of Editor. Our retiring Editor is a hard act to follow but fortunately with the support of an excellent committee our new Editor should find the role fulfilling.

All dates for the issue of the magazine were met although December was dodgy as we went through the transition of Editors. The sub-committee rallied round to make sure that the schedule was met.

The Magazine produced a print run of 1400 per month Down from the heady days over the 80s and 90s of 3000-3500 approximately.

The magazine is still a great way to carry the message to the still suffering Alcoholic as well as an enhancement to many members sobriety, and long may it continue to do so.

SHARE Update

(Maxine W)

I have been Trustee on the Share Sub Committee for ten months now and it has been a rewarding and educational experience.

Share continues to be a useful tool for the Fellowship and maintains its unique identity. The sub-committee, led by our new editor Stuart, works hard to keep standards high and production on

time. We have welcomed two new members to the Share team this year and added the new position of proof reader/secretary. We only require an assistant editor to complete our sub-committee.

We held a well-attended workshop in November and we will seek to implement some of their ideas and suggestions at our next meeting in March. We hope to expand our readership and attract some of the younger audience in AA to participate and subscribe. We have a well-balanced team, who enjoy their service. Our editor and Roundabout editor have been invited to the Continental European Conference in Cologne in April to share their experience, which I am sure will be a mutually beneficial exercise.

There is good news on the diaries - all 800 are now sold, please relay this information to anybody thinking of ordering. There are less than a hundred of the calendars remaining so orders need to be made sooner rather than later.

Share subscriptions show a slight increase and January itself has been a bumper month with nearly a thousand extra copies ordered.

We look forward to another productive and self-supporting year in 2019.

National Conventions Updates

Northern (Denise H)

The Forty-Fourth Northern National Convention took place on the 23rd, 25th and 25th March 2018 at Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool. It was a fantastic convention with a great turnout, as usual, with a total of 1056 people attending with an increase of 135 from last year. The three main meetings were chaired by the Chairs from each the sponsoring Regions, North West, North East and Midlands. I had the great privilege of chairing the Final Gathering on a Sunday morning which was such a humbling experience to which I am truly grateful.

The opening of the Convention began on a Friday evening with a large 'Opening Convention Gathering' which was designated as an open public one, shared with Al-Anon and was attended by the Deputy Mayor of Blackpool. There was a varied programme with a full schedule of AA meetings, which included young people's and old timers' meetings, as well a service seminar, marathon meetings and a full programme of Al-Anon meetings. Entertainment was provided on the Friday and Saturday evenings with a DJ and open mic sessions. The cinema again was very popular with a good selection of AA-related films being shown continuously during Friday and Saturday. The Road to Recovery Banner where AA members put their sobriety dates on had over 8000 years of sobriety. Again Charlie, the Archivist produced a magnificent display to showcase the wonderful memoirs of years past.

Following the closed AA meeting on a Sunday morning the Final Gathering (spiritual meeting) had AA and Al-Anon speakers and the usual sobriety countdown took place, with the longest-sober member presenting a copy of the Big Book to the newest person in recovery. The decibel-rating of the audience singing 'One Day at a Time' was thunderous and the meeting ended with the entire audience holding hands in a circle around the hall whilst saying the Serenity Prayer. An overwhelming and emotional spiritual experience felt by all was a testimony to the wonderfully uplifting Convention that, once again had many of us feeling ever so grateful to be part of such a wonderful fellowship.

Raffle ticket sales were £1,965 and Literature sales were £1,534.80. The income over expenditure revealed a surplus of £2867, and the Tradition 7 'Pot' was £1,313.20, (which is accounted for separately) and was sent directly to GSO.

Overall it was a wonderful convention, enjoyed by all and I am already looking forward to the 45th on the 22nd, 23rd and 24th March 2019.

Southern

(Peter F)

The Southern National Convention took place over the weekend of 1st, 2nd and 3rd of September 2018 at Mill Rythe on Hayling Island.

There was an excellent programme over the three days which included Open meetings, separate meetings for AA and AI Anon and AI-Ateen. There was the Saturday evening dance with the Mill Rythe live band which saw great support followed by the AA and AI Anon Raffles. This year on Sunday morning we started with shares by the old timers then followed by the Spiritual Meeting, complete with a home-grown choir. We finished with the Sobriety countdown. The attendance was 832 registered attendees both from AA members; this is again an increase on the previous year. All the resort's rooms were taken and we continue to get many members coming locally for the day or all the days!

The event was self-supporting and an increased contribution of £5000 was sent to GSO.

At the AGM in January this year each of the six supporting Regional Chairs attended with Treasurers or Secretaries. The accounts were accepted for 2017/2018 and the incoming Executive Committee for the 2019 convention was ratified. The full complement of the Southern National Committee Executive is in place for 2019.

Each of the six Regions nominate two representatives for the organising committee and there remains at present a few members to fill from two of the Regions. We trust that shortly we will have a full complement as it is a very rewarding service opportunity.

The Convention for this year is from the Friday August 30th to Sunday 1st September at Mill Rythe, Hayling Island. With the new booking system in place Mill Rythe can be contacted directly quoting the AA Southern National Convention for a room reservation. There are also nearby hotels, B&B's etc. Do come along on August 30th for a Great Weekend.

Scottish

(Stevie S)

Our 2018 Scottish Convention was relaunched after a year's absence and was marvellous.

The Convention was held during May at the Stirling Park Hotel that is within the delightful grounds of Stirling University...and we were fortunately blessed with great weather for the weekend.

Our sub-committee was a whole new committee and whilst there were some teething problems to be overcome, they all worked together to give our Fellowship a memorable weekend.

The Convention was well attended with many visitors from all Regions of Scotland together with visitors from England Wales and Ireland.

On behalf of AAGB we would like to thank the sub-committee for all of their work, and we look forward to our 2019 Convention which once again will be held at the same venue.

Welsh

(Jonathan P)

Once again Wales and Borders Region offered a very warm welcome to all those who attended the convention. The theme was 'Sobrwydd - tiath gyffrous' 'Sobriety – an exciting journey'. The venue as usual, The Metropole Hotel, Temple Street, Llandrindod Wells, Powys which is in the beautiful heart of Wales.

The number of people who came to the convention was again up from the previous year – now well over 200, from all parts of the UK and Ireland. We welcomed old friends and new visitors alike.

The meetings were very well attended, and the speakers were, as always, lively, eloquent and entertaining, in carrying the message. A Welsh Language meeting, also well attended, was held and despite an issue with translation, was well received by both Welsh and English listeners. Come and Go meetings ran throughout Saturday.

A workshop on Health run by Stuart B. was a success and builds on the excellent work done by him and others to promote AA in the Health Services across Wales.

Everyone enjoyed the Quiz – always a talking point, and the dance and disco were a success.

The planning for the 28th Convention in 2019, is well in hand, and the theme remains the same. All the speakers have been confirmed and the entertainment organised. The dates are the 14-16th June 2019 and we look forward to seeing you there.

The Committee has, once again, worked extremely hard to create an interesting and enjoyable Convention. The feedback from all who attended was warm, positive and encouraging.

Parliamentary Events Updates

House of Commons, Westminster Event

(Peter F)

The 13th event this year took place on October 23rd. This year's event was another successful occasion and I would like to thank the members of the Committee for all their hard work over the year. Members come from the Regions of London North, London South, South East and South Midlands. Bi-monthly committee meetings were held from November 2017 until the final wash-up meeting in November 2018.

The aim of the Event is to explain the effectiveness and work of Alcoholics Anonymous to Parliamentarians of all political parties and to members of professional groups which included Drug and Alcohol Agencies, Health Services, Police, Churches, Social Services, Housing Associations and the Criminal Justice Service.

This 2018 PI presentation was held in the Attlee Suite, Portcullis House, at Westminster and was sponsored by The Hon Liam Byrne MP, Chairman of the Cross-Party Parliamentary Group for children of alcoholics. Liam Byrne opened by speaking not only of the problems of alcoholism but of his own concerns of the affect alcoholism has but the affect it has on their children. He estimated there are over 200,000 children so affected in the UK.

Our professional speaker was Doctor Ash Khan, previously for eight years our Non Alcoholic Trustee, who spoke with his extensive knowledge on the issues of alcoholism and offered a strong endorsement of AA quoting from his deep professional knowledge.

Our AA speakers were Helen and Justin both of whom gave moving accounts of their journey to sobriety and how AA had transformed their lives from the desperate situation they had found themselves in.

We are grateful to our host Liam Byrne, Dr Ash Kahn and our two AA speakers, Helen and Justin, for giving us their time, knowledge and for sharing their experience.

This year we had a very good attendance with a gathering of over a hundred, including politicians and professionals. Guy D chaired the event giving a very able introduction on what AA can offer to the professional community. Guy lead an excellent Q&A session at the end of the evening.

Preparations are under way for the next presentation to be held in October 2019.

Scottish Parliament Event

(Stevie S)

Our 2018 Scottish Parliament Event was held during October and our Sponsoring MSP was Monica Lennon.

Our event was well attended with many representatives from both the Scottish Prison Service and the Scottish Health Service.

All five regions from Scotland participated in the event helping to show the Unity Recovery and Service of AA to great effect.

Monica Lennon opened the event and her knowledge and support for Alcoholics Anonymous was refreshing, we could certainly do with a few more like Monica.

Our AA speakers shared their experience on Health and Prisons giving an overview of the work our AA members give on a daily basis helping to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic in co-operation with our friends from the Health and Prison services.

We then had an AA share from a member with over 40 years sobriety, a day at a time, which reflected in part what AA means when we talk about recovery.

Hopefully, in time, the efforts of all who helped with our event will come to fruition.

It was a great event to be involved in and to see AA working in Unity as we should.

Many thanks to all who were involved.

Welsh Assembly Event

(Jonathan P)

The event took place at Ty Hywel, Welsh Assembly Campus on Tuesday 13th November 2018. Caroline Jones AM sponsored the event and opened with a supportive introduction to the purpose and value of AA.

There were 14 professional attendees together with the GSO staff and 7 members of the Fellowship. The Wales and Borders Trustee gave an overview of AA and how it works with outside agencies, followed by a showing of the new Health and PI videos.

Terry B and Nicola R shared their experience, strength and hope, which was followed by a Q&A session.

There was much positive feedback from participants. People feeling that the presentation was “insightful”, “honest”, “encouraging” and “very useful”.

As a result of this presentation there have been requests for meetings to be set up in several Hospitals and requests for PI/ Health input to a variety of Services and Projects.

Next year’s event will be on 12th November 2019 and will, once again, be sponsored by Caroline Jones AM.

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 Matt thanking everyone for their hard work and asking all to join him in saying the Serenity Prayer, following which the preliminary Committee Reports were distributed and the opportunity given for Regions to discuss these.

SUNDAY 14 APRIL

Matt 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.

Matt then invited the Chairs 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	59 – 60
Committee No. 2	Pages	61 – 62
Committee No. 3	Pages	63 – 65
Committee No. 4	Pages	66 – 68
Committee No. 5	Pages	69 – 70
Committee No. 6	Pages	71 – 72

ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR CONFERENCE 2020

The nominations received on Friday evening were presented and, after a vote, Marc D (South West Scotland Region) was duly elected.

CONFIRMATION OF BOARD MEMBERS

(Nigel P, Chair GSB)

Good afternoon Conference, my name is Nigel, and I am an alcoholic. Almost the final bit of the proceedings. First of all my congratulations to Marc on becoming Conference Chair for next year.

Well, I don't know about everybody else, but I've had a great time, meeting up with friends old and new – and all here with but one thing in mind – demonstrating that an attitude of gratitude is nothing compared to appreciation in action – doing service. All of you here this weekend have spent time challenging yourselves to have often difficult conversations that will help the Fellowship move forward in the ever-changing world in which we live.

I have had the good fortune to spend time talking with many of you and hearing of your lives of service and sobriety – long may that continue. For some of you, it is time to leave us, your term as delegates has come to an end, and even as I thank you for your service, I would suggest that it isn't over yet. Please go back to your groups, to your meetings, and tell them what doing service does for you. It is all too easy to let a sense of humility prevent you from doing so, but remember that humility is being right sized. It is a fact that you have done this service, let the rest of AA know about it, and of course, start looking for your next service role.

For the rest, I hope to see you next year.

Generally, at this time, it is the Chair's job to say a sad farewell to trustees that are leaving us, I am happy to say that I don't have to do that this year because we have none. However we do have what I consider a significant loss to the Fellowship, and that is the retirement of the Chief Executive to the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain Limited and Managing Director of the General Service Office of the General Service Board of Alcoholics

Anonymous Great Britain Limited. Our 8th General Secretary or as we know him, simply Roger B. Throughout the weekend much praise has been lavished on him, and all of it well deserved, he has been a real asset to the Fellowship, and a fantastic source of help to many - myself included - I hope he enjoys his well-deserved retirement.

In his place we welcome Ranjan. Ranjan took up his new role at the beginning of 2019 and has spent his time up to now learning the ropes. Over the last couple of months, he has spent his time sitting in Roger's chair and acting as General Secretary, while Roger has been relegated to the naughty seat in the corner allowing Ranjan to get good practical experience actually doing the job. I am extremely impressed with the way he has taken up his new position and look forward to working with him over the remaining two years of my tenure as chair. Welcome, Ranjan.

So it is now time for confirmation of 3 new Non Alcoholic Board members which means introducing them to you and let you know the disciplines they have been allocated, sadly prior engagements have prevented two of them being here in person today, but I will none the less, introduce them in their absence:

With us today is Andrew Wetherell, we have asked Andrew to join the Employment Subcommittee.

Next is Eric Carlin, who Terri spoke of yesterday - Eric will be joining the PI Subcommittee.

Last is Thomas Baldwin - because Thomas lives in York I have asked him not to take up a specific discipline, as I would like him to get involved in looking at how the various disciplines work together, with a view to better integration. In addition, he will work with the Archives Subcommittee looking specifically at work being done for us by the Borthwick Institute.

These people, despite not suffering from alcoholism have volunteered their time to help us, and for that, I am incredibly grateful.

That's all from me, I hope you all have a safe journey home.

Thank you Conference.

Close of Conference

(Matt S)

Conference 2019 is now drawing to a close. It's been an absolute joy and privilege to have shared this weekend with you.

Firstly, a huge amount of thanks to the GSO staff; Sharon, Mandy, Jenny, Sophie, and Emma for the untiring help and support both in the lead up to and over the course of the weekend.

Thank you, Roger, for your service and dedication all these years, we will miss you.

Thank you, Keith, for the outstanding audio-visual service.

Thanks also to the hotel staff for looking after us this weekend.

Thank you to our trusted servants on the Board, your service is invaluable. We appreciate the inspiring services in Health and Young Persons, look forward to the publication of our new literature items as well as the new website, and can't wait for the 75th Anniversary, which is shaping up to be a great event.

Thank you to the Conference 2019 Steering Committee once again. It was a pleasure to both serve with and get to know you.

Thank you again to our overseas observers for your valuable participation.

Thank you also to all the AA members and groups who took the time to provide meaningful answers to the questions. Conference cannot function without your continued participation and contributions.

Thank you to all the delegates - the quality of this year's recommendations is testament to your hard work and thorough preparations. As you report back, you may hear some say, "I can't believe they asked this question" or "not this question, again". Kindly remind them that we look forward to receiving *their* Questions for Conference 2020, before the deadline of August 31, 2019. You can also give them a copy of the new "General Service Conference" booklet, which clearly describes how to submit a question and maps out the annual process.

A particular thanks to the third-year delegates. As you step aside in the spirit of rotation, remember that the experience gained here is indispensable to the future of our fellowship. As elder statespersons, your sure knowledge and humble example plays a vital role in our collective group conscience. There's also still a lot of service to do. Keep an eye on the AA Service News subcommittee vacancies, and I'm sure there is plenty to do at your home group.

One alcoholic, passing on AA's 12 Step recovery programme to another, in a way that *only* another alcoholic can, forms the basis of our wonderful fellowship. This repeatable method, synthesised through chance and good fortune by our founders who borrowed freely from timeless spiritual principles universal to humanity, works. It really does.

This weekend has also shown that AA is more than the 12 Steps. Over the years as AA's have tried to carry the message, the experience gained on how we can best work together in unity has been distilled down into our 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts for Service. Today, as temporary custodians of all Three Legacies, we have the responsibility to ensure the integrity and simplicity of the AA way of life is maintained throughout our services as we humbly "Pass it On" now and in to the future. So that not only we can stay sober, but that the alcoholics yet to come may also find AA and enjoy the same chance to recover as we did.

Thank you for the opportunity to be your Chair. It has been a humbling and rewarding experience for which I am truly grateful. I wish next year's Conference Chair, Marc and Steering Committee all the very best for 2020.

This concludes the business for Conference 2019. But before we go our separate ways, I would like to read from the Big Book, "A Vision for You", on page 164.

"Our book is meant to be suggestive only. We realize we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us. Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, if your own house is in order. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven't got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us.

Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny. May God bless you and keep you—until then."

Finally, I would like to thank my sponsor Wayne, and my home groups; Road to Recovery and the Munich Newcomers. And to close, I would like to invite everyone to stand and join me in saying the Responsibility Pledge, to be followed by the Serenity Prayer.

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

And now the Serenity Prayer:

***Serenity Prayer:** God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.*

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT CONFERENCE

The Fifty-Fifth General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain will be held at the Park Inn, North Street, York on 17-19 April 2020.

FIFTY-FOURTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2019

COMMITTEE No. 1

CHAIR MIKE E MIDLANDS REGION

SECRETARY CHARON B LONDON REGION NORTH

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

1. Inventory Question

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

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

- a) The experience of the Fellowship ranged from no experience with YPLOs to a positive response from Intergroups and Regions where there are people in position. Where there are YPLOs in position, those areas have benefitted from the collaboration with other disciplines including PI, Prisons, Employment and Health.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Vote for - unanimous

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

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

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

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

Vote for: unanimous

3. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2020.

The Committee elected Geoff C of Eastern Region as Chair of Committee No. 1 for Conference 2020.

4. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2020.

The Committee elected Shirley S of South East Region as Secretary of Committee No. 1 for Conference 2020.

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

FIFTY-FOURTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2019

COMMITTEE No. 2

CHAIR BOB S SOUTH EAST REGION

SECRETARY JOHNNY J SOUTH MIDLANDS REGION

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

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

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

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

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

The recommendation of Committee Two is therefore as follows:

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

The Committee's response was unanimous

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

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

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

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

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

The Committee’s response was approved unanimously.

3. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2020.

The Committee elected Johnny J of South Midlands Region as Chair of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2020.

4. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2020.

The Committee elected Carina H of Continental European Region as Secretary of Committee No. 2 for Conference 2020.

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

FIFTY-FOURTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2019

COMMITTEE No. 3

CHAIR GRETCHEN S LONDON REGION SOUTH

SECRETARY ALLAN M EAST OF SCOTLAND REGION

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

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

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

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

- a. Concern whether the background information has been sufficiently researched, specifically in relation to
 - i. the indicative figure of £2,000
 - ii. whether manual voting is time consuming in relation to digital voting
- b. Expense - funds being spent on activities other than primary purpose work
- c. Whether equipment would be rented or purchased
- d. Which voting mechanisms (voting buttons /phone apps) we would use
- e. Digital solution better protects the anonymity of voters
- f. Moving to a digital solution would mean 'loss of Fellowship' through teller service positions being removed.

The committee agreed this response by:

15 for
0 against
1 abstention

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

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

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

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

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

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

The committee recommends that:

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

Carried unanimously

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

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

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

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

The committee agreed this response by:

13 for
0 against
3 absentions

4. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2020.

The Committee elected Allan M from East of Scotland Region as Chair of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2020.

5. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2020.

The Committee elected Kathryn C from North East Region as Secretary of Committee No. 3 for Conference 2020.

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

FIFTY-FOURTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2019

COMMITTEE No. 4

CHAIR JUSTIN T SOUTH WEST REGION

SECRETARY TIM M LONDON REGION NORTH

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

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

This question provoked lively discussion within the Fellowship.

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

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

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

The vote was unanimous.

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

a. The Committee reported the following experience of the practice of the Twelve Concepts for Service at group, intergroup, and region levels, amongst other examples:

- i. Knowledge of the Concepts within the Fellowship was generally limited, with some exceptions.
- ii. The principles contained within the Concepts are widely observed in practice at group level and throughout the structure, without the Concepts in question being referred to explicitly.

- b. The Committee reported the following examples, amongst others, of the Concepts as applied in practice at group level:

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

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

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

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

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

Concept XI: rotation of officers is commonly observed.

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

- c. The Committee found that, given limited awareness of the Concepts, further application requires improved knowledge, through the following recommended means, amongst others:
- i. Encouraging use of existing literature, particularly the *Twelve Concepts Checklist*, *The Twelve Concepts for Service in Great Britain Illustrated*, and Section 6 of *The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain*.
 - ii. Coverage in *Share*, *Roundabout*, *AA Service News*, and at conventions.
 - iii. Active sponsorship into awareness and use of the Concepts as service tools.
 - iv. The option of the three scrolls (Steps, Traditions, and Concepts) as a single purchase.
 - v. General Service Board reviewing the possibility of producing an animated video on the Twelve Concepts for the AAGB Website.

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

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

The vote was unanimous.

3. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2020.

The Committee elected Ranald Mac, Highlands and Islands Region as Chair of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2020.

4. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2020.

The Committee elected Tim M, London North Region as Secretary of Committee No. 4 for Conference 2020.

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

FIFTY-FOURTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2019

COMMITTEE No. 5

CHAIR MARK F SOUTH EAST REGION

SECRETARY ZELMA K WALES & BORDERS REGION

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

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

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

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

Some of the reasons given were:

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

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

Voting: The Committee result was carried unanimously.

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

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

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

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

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

- a. Duplication of the current meeting finder therefore it is not needed.

- b. Minimal requirement for offline use.
- c. Unknown build and running costs.
- d. Affiliation to outside organisations e.g. Google Play and Apple Store may contravene Tradition 6.
- e. Requires additional regular updates to meetings list.
- f. Possible demise of the hard copy of the Where to Find in some Regions.

20% were undecided.

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

Voting: The Committee result was carried unanimously.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Voting: Substantial unanimity

4. Elect Committee Chairman for Conference 2020.

The Committee elected Zelma K, Wales & Borders Region as Chair of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2020.

5. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2020.

The Committee elected Dena A, Continental European Region as Secretary of Committee No. 5 for Conference 2020.

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

FIFTY-FOURTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2019

COMMITTEE No. 6

CHAIR MARC D SOUTH WEST SCOTLAND REGION

SECRETARY SUE C MIDLANDS REGION

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

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

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

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

The committee heard experience of effective safeguarding strategies:

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

The committee recommends consideration of the following:

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

The committee unanimously agreed with the recommendation.

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

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

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

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

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

The committee unanimously agreed with the recommendation.

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

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

The committee unanimously agrees with the proposed changes.

- 4. Elect Committee Chair for Conference 2020.**

The Committee elected Adelle S, Scotia Region as Chair of Committee No. 6 for Conference 2020.

- 5. Elect Committee Secretary for Conference 2020.**

The Committee elected Michael McL, Glasgow Region as Secretary of Committee No. 6 for Conference 2020.

Question 1 and Question 3 on Committee No. 3 were passed with a two-thirds plus majority and Question 2 was passed unanimously.

FIFTY-FOURTH GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2019

LIST OF DELEGATES

CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN: **MATT S** (Continental European Region)

GENERAL SERVICE BOARD

		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
Nigel	P		
Sandi	A	1	
Erik	A	6	
Norman	B	5	
Roger	E	6	
Peter	F	4	
Denise	H	2	
Brian	J	4	
Clive	K	6	
Pat	McG	3	
Jonathan	P	3	
Mike	P	1	
Peter	S	6	
Amanda	S	1	
Stevie	S	3	
Terri	S	5	
Maxine	W	2	
Mani Mehdikhani		2	
Andrew Wetherell	(Elect)	5	

GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Roger B General Secretary
Ranjan B Incoming General Secretary
Sharon Smyth
Sophie Perring
Chris North
Jenny Pryke
Mandy Tervet
Emma W

		COMMITTEE NUMBER	TERM OF SERVICE
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EASTERN REGION

Geoff	C	1	2
Trevor	E	2	3
David	C	3	2
Shirley	C	4	1
Graham	B	5	2
John	P	6	3

LONDON REGION NORTH

Charon	B	1	2
Marco	L	2	A
Mary	W	3	A
Tim	M	4	1
Sean	N	5	2
Gabriel	S	6	1

LONDON REGION SOUTH

Gemma	B	1	3
Tony	S	2	1
Gretchen	S	3	3
Ian	E	4	1
Oswin	T	5	3
Ben	D	6	3

MIDLANDS REGION

Michael	E	1	3
Steve	W	2	3
Alex	J	3	2
Linda	D	4	2
Jill	R	5	2
Sue	C	6	3

NORTH EAST REGION

Kirk	T	1	3
Lee	M	2	3
Kathryn	C	3	1
Gareth	P	4	2
Jan	C	5	1
Ian	M	6	1

**COMMITTEE
NUMBER**

**TERM OF
SERVICE**

NORTH WEST REGION

Charlie	C	1	1
Geoff	F	2	3
Peter	M	3	1
Eva	L	4	2
Mary	M	5	3
Angela	S	6	1

SOUTH EAST REGION

Shirley	S	1	1
Bob	S	2	3
Mick	Q	3	3
Charles	R	4	3
Mark	F	5	2
John	S	6	A

SOUTH MIDLANDS REGION

Suzanne	G	1	1
Johnny	J	2	2
Tim	B	3	1
Keith	V	4	1
Mark	H	5	1
Corinne	C	6	1

SOUTH WEST REGION

Chris	S	1	3
Jo	R	2	2
David	K	3	2
Justin	T	4	3
John	P	5	2
Ian	G	6	3

WALES & BORDERS REGION

Graham	S	1	2
Stuart	B	2	3
Roger	E	3	1
John	M	4	2
Zelma	K	5	2
Terry	B	6	A

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

Norman	W	1	1
Anne	T	2	1
Allan	MacL	3	2
Alan	P	4	3
Lana	K	5	3
Gerry	K	6	A

GLASGOW REGION

Eric	N	1	1
Ronnie	R	2	3
Thomas	S	3	2
Elaine	C	4	1
Hugh	S	5	3
Michael	McL	6	1

HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS REGION

Donnie	MacR	1	3
Marion	McK	2	2
DJ	Mac	3	3
Ranald	MacA	4	2
Russ	C	5	3
		6	

SCOTIA REGION

Mary	M	1	3
Robert	B	2	1
Caroline	G	3	3
Bill	B	4	3
Ray	S	5	1
Adelle	S	6	2

SOUTH WEST SCOTLAND REGION

Lenard	C	1	2
		2	
Willie	H	3	3
Jackie	B	4	3
		5	
Marc	D	6	3

**COMMITTEE
NUMBER****TERM OF
SERVICE****CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN REGION**

Ronald	vV	1	3
Carina	H	2	1
Tim	S	3	3
Daniel	G	4	1
Dena	A	5	1
Levey	P	6	1

OBSERVERS

Iliana	T	(Bulgaria)	4	1
Jon	O	(Iceland)	1	1
Anthony	McN	(Ireland)	3	1
Kenny	P	(Ireland)	2	1
Alicja	P	(Poland)	1	1
Tadeusz	C	(Poland)	2	1
Thomas	O	(Sweden)	5	1
Ylva	B	(Sweden)	6	1
Fatma	Z	(Turkey)	4	1

Glossary of Abbreviations Used

<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 AA 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 AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
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.
7. Every AA 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. AA 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 AA name ought never to 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.

