

Board Reports

to

Conference 2025

AA Service News

AA Service News (AASN) has grown in size and quantity. At the last count, it was carrying the message to 4000+ alcoholics in print and to 2000 alcoholics digitally, at no cost to the recipient, and will continue to do so on a quarterly basis to individuals, groups, intergroups and regions. As always, AA Service News is placed on the AAGB website, and in the Document Library. It helps meet AA's primary purpose by carrying the message throughout the Fellowship. It comprises your stories about the service you carry out daily.

Also included are:

- Conference questions and recommendations in the winter and summer editions respectively
- Regular messages from the General Secretary
- Board meeting bullet points
- Job adverts for sub committees
- Parliamentary events across Great Britain
- Regular updates on special projects requested by the Fellowship such as the British Big Book, and how the website project has unfolded

There are also occasional requests for shares on particular topics for new AA pamphlets, such as Armed Services, Mental Health and more recently the British Big Book. Given the increased number of applications for sub committee vacancies, we know you are reading it and we are delighted. Your thoughts on improvements are always welcome, along with your articles on service and of course your pictures. Remember, AASN is all about you and you sharing your experience with other members.

As ever, we thank you for your contributions and making AASN an interesting, informative and enjoyable read.

Jo F and Holly A
GSB Trustees

Archives

My name is John, I am an alcoholic and currently the General Service Boards trustee responsibility for archives. I joined the archives subcommittee as a member in February 2018 and became a trustee after the 2022 conference ratification. I took over responsibility for archives after Thomas B rotated out as trustee at Conference 2023.

Archive Subcommittee Meetings

The archive subcommittee met four times during the past year two online and two at the general service office. We continue to invite the AA archivist and other staff from the Borthwick Institute to subcommittee meetings, as it has been informative and productive. In September Barbara M-O join the subcommittee.

Oral Histories

The subcommittee is appealing to archivists to record interview with long standing members of the fellowship. This initiative helps in preserving oral history and, with appropriate consent, allows us to share some of the interviews on the website. If you require assistance with this process, please reach out to the Fellowship Archivist.

Borthwick Institute Cataloguing Project

Emma Hollis the AA Borthwick Archivist works on the AA archives from Wednesday afternoon to Friday. Emma's priority is to finish the cataloguing of the outstanding physical archives and then the cataloguing of the AA digital records. Every December GSO deposits a new batch of archives at Borthwick Institute for Emma to process.

Archive Literature

The subcommittee continues to review existing literature and extend the guidance audio recording, archive displays and cataloguing/storing of digital archives.

Group histories

One of the main sources of information for group histories is the pink form. GSO puts together a spreadsheet for the archives sub-committee which contains Information on group numbers and other non-personal information. Certain groups have not submitted a pink form for years. It would help our work if groups would keep the group information UpToDate by letting GSO know of any changes to the group.

Revised section 2 A brief history of AA in Great Britain

The section entitled "A Brief History of AA in Great Britain" received approval with minor revisions at the 2024 conference.

The Archivist Network

Prior to the network meeting Emma Hollis gave a tour of the archive at the Borthwick Institute to interested network members.

The archive network meeting took place on September 20-21, 2024. A total of twenty members attended 13 in person and 7 online.

Those giving presentations included Emma Hollis, Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain Archivist on their work at the Borthwick institutes, Martin B (Fellowship Archivist) on their activities and a discussion on the best approach when interviewing old timers on their experiences in the fellowship. Charles C (subcommittee member) shared his experience on creating archival inventories. An update was given on the work of the archive subcommittee.

There was a sharing of experience from the attending archivists one example is the Glasgow regional convention display which included banners detailing the history of the first gay group in Glasgow, the first young person's group in Glasgow. Another is the continuation of the darkness into light project which has been running since 2022.

Zoom Presentation

In September members of the subcommittee and Emma Hollis the AA Borthwick Archivist gave an online presentation outlining the process of collecting archives at the general service office, catalogue and storing of archives at the Borthwick institute. The archive zoom presentation received positive feedback, resulting in requests for additional sessions planned for next year.

75th Banners

The banners designed for the 75th archive display at the Leeds City Museum continue to be used at AA event nationwide. They are available for use by the fellowship. if you like to use them at an AA event, please let the archive subcommittee know.

This report would not be complete without expressing my sincere gratitude to this hardworking and extremely supportive subcommittee.

John C
GSB Trustee

Armed Services

I would like to start my report with a huge thank you to all the intergroups and Regions Armed Service Liaison Officers who have been carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the Armed Services, health workers and their families.

Excerpt from Guidelines 2:1 - 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 levels within intergroup or region.

Update

- The Armed Services Sub-committee met four times this year two online and two at GSO. The subcommittee consists of one subcommittee member and two trustees. The last subcommittee member will rotate out in February 2026.
- There are several vacancies on the sub-committee which if not filled may impede the ability of the sub-committee in its role of supporting ASLO and Regional Armed Service Liaison Officer [RASLO].
- The terms of reference were reviewed and approved in May 2024.
- The ASLO 12th Steps list continues to be updated by the subcommittee. It contains 73 members and is available on Google document for telephone responders. The distribution for the Regions is: Eastern 12, London 6, Midlands 7, South Midlands 6, North Eastern 8, North West 6, South East 11, South West 6, Wales & Borders 3, Glasgow 1, Scotia 6 and Central European 1.
- In January 2025 according to the confidential directory there were 8 Regional and forty-eight Intergroup liaison officers in post. This is a slight increase from last year.
- New family style presentations are being developed and some national awareness raising to Armed Services Support Organisations has taken place.
- The sub-committee continues to update the existing Armed Services literature. It would like to create a new armed services pamphlet and is actively seeking armed service members to contribute to this. Unfortunately, we have had insufficient responses to take this project forward yet.
- A RASLO meeting was held on February 16th, 2024. There were 9 attendees including 4 subcommittee members. Many points were discussed including advertising on online channels, using AA e-mail address, problems with the flow of information between intergroups, regions and the subcommittee.

Seminar

A seminar was held on the 17th of February 2024. A total of 27 members attended the seminar 6 representing regions, 17 representing intergroups plus 4 sub-committee members.

The morning session included presentations and questions on the role of an intergroup/region armed service liaison officer, armed service sub-committee member, the role of the Armed Services subcommittee followed by feedback from liaison officers on their activities. The afternoon session continued with feedback from liaison officers. The final session was a workshop followed by feedback and a question-and-answer session. The topics of the workshop were internal communications, external communications, 12 step list and resources for armed services liaison officers.

Feedback indicates that significant work in carrying the message is being done at local level by ASLO and RASLO, but the large number of vacant positions impacts on communication and support.

Some of the responses when asked what was your favourite part of the seminar? included hearing different ways of carrying the message to Alcoholics, the positive impact of hearing a share from a still serving AA member, meeting other ASLO's and committee members. Talking with other ASLO's and hearing their experience of what they are doing in service. Great to connect to other ASLO's, RASLO's and other ex-servicemen / women. Learning about how subcommittees work. Learning what kind of event I can support.

This report would not be complete without expressing my sincere gratitude to this hardworking and extremely supportive subcommittee. We said goodbye to Mike S who rotated out in February 2024.

John C
GSB Trustee

British Big Book

At Conference 2024 the Fellowship asked, through Committee 5, Question 2: 'Would Conference discuss and consider the viability of creating an additional version of the Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous) incorporating stories from AAGB (including CER)?' Conference 2024 voted with a two thirds plus majority for the creation of an additional version of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. Committee 5 listed the general requirements as:

1. Retain existing content:

- The Preamble
- The Forewords
- The Doctors Opinion
- The first 164 pages
- The Appendices
- Stories of the Pioneers of AA

2. Incorporate new content:

Personal stories from Great Britain and English-Speaking Continental Europe, thereby providing us with a Big Book for AAGB that contains new, relevant and inclusive stories, making it contemporary to our Fellowship.

The British Big Book (B3) project Working Group has been set up to deliver this and meets monthly online. A call for stories from the fellowship is in the Winter edition of AA Service News.

The aim is to deliver the British Big Book to Conference for approval, no later than 2028.

Max J
GSB Trustee

Employment

It has been a massive learning curve as a newly inducted Trustee, who came into service earlier this year. I have been fortunate in the discipline I now chair, as it has a well-established team of dedicated and informed sub committee members to guide me into service and to work with.

The subcommittee has carried the message of recovery to employers such as Network Rail & NatWest Enable Disability network which are rolling programs. After our last presentation in January 2025 the wellbeing team leader kindly contacted us to say that one attendee had reached out to AA as a result of the presentation.

We have been using the new 'Blue Light Video' when reconnecting with emergency services such as the Police, London Fire Brigade & RNLI. The video was well received.

We started a relationship with Premier Foods: our presentation was part of their health & safety week and the local RELO attended in line with our remit to create local contacts to continue AA support. On the 4th of July we gave a presentation to National Theatre Well-being team & Building Manager which employs around 1500 staff, the meeting was attended by 12 people, we left AA posters & literature for the back of house area. One of our team who attends regular theatre & opera had a ball walking through the Stage Door.

I gave a presentation to members of the Welsh Senedd in November. I found the updated AAGB website most useful as it gives a step-by-step brief on how to present AA to professionals including downloadable AA literature.

At our yearly Regional Liaison Meeting we shared and came together to find solutions such as, asking PI Ecomms on guidance on how to use LinkedIn. We are currently working on ways to refresh our presentation material to reach all types of employers. A subcommittee member shared an exciting new way to contact & meet Employers. The Employment Liaison team at The Potteries and District Intergroup join their local Chambers of Commerce which resulted in successful contact with over 1000 business leaders, the initiative has been taken up by other Regions. Britain has 53 Chambers of Commerce representing over 50,000 businesses across the UK, which employ more than 6 million people.

This year at Conference the Employment Liaison Officer leaflet was passed. Conference 2025 will be presented with a revised external facing leaflet for employers.

The outgoing Secretary has said how much they enjoyed working as part of the Employment subcommittee team, "it has been a privilege to work alongside AAs who are committed to service."

Tony S
GSB Trustee

First Response Online

The First Response Online Sub Committee (FROSC) is responsible for the administration of our two online services: Chat Now and the Online Response Service (ORS) which are live chat and email services.

The services are continuing to do vital primary purpose work by being the hand of AA for anyone who is reaching out for help with their drinking.

In the past year we have been working hard to attract more members to join the services. We attended the Northern National and Southern National Conventions, as well as the North East Regional Forum, where we found that members were very interested and enthusiastic. As a result, we are delighted to have many new responders, and hope that we continue to get new applications.

We are continuing to spread the message about Chat Now and ORS and will be holding an online workshop on Saturday 7th June 2025.

We have also been working on the training guides for both Chat Now and ORS which have now been fully updated, including guidance on how best to respond to enquiries from minors and to any safeguarding issue. We have streamlined the application process and introduced a new job description and application form. All current responders have now undertaken DBS checks, and we continue to screen chats and emails to ensure that we fulfil our safeguarding responsibilities.

In the past, the two services have operated somewhat independently of each other, and the sub committee has made great progress in bringing them together to simplify all our procedures and enable each service to share experience and learn from each other. My sincere thanks to all members of FROSC and to all our responders for the work that they do in fulfilling our primary purpose.

Holly A
GSB Trustee

Health

Barbara O and Kieran M, Trustees for Health, presented to Conference 2024 on the revised National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidance for treating people with Alcohol Use Disorders. The Guidance – published as Quality Standard (QS) 11 - recognises 12-step fellowship programmes as effective ways of “maintaining abstinence” in their words – ‘staying stopped’ in ours.

NICE addresses QS11 to Health and Social Care, and also Criminal Justice, professionals in England and Wales. It underpins QS11 with 5 Quality Statements – which managers may or may not interpret as performance measures. We believe this opens doors for members doing Health service in England and Wales. (NICE Quality Standards don’t apply to Scotland, but can inform practice, as the services in Regions and Intergroups in Scotland show.) We thank you all for your service.

Since Conference 2024, AA members have told us that The Samaritans does not include AA in its national Directory of Resources. We approached The Samaritans’ headquarters, drawing attention to QS11. Unfortunately, we have received a disappointing reply.

Conference 2024 approved a new Guide for Health Liaison Officers. With thanks to the Literature SC for proofreading, and GSO staff for design, it is now available from the online Shop (product code 3071).

We have published online articles for professionals:

[NICE work!](#)

[Alcohol problems in older people](#)

Copies of these articles also appeared in AA Service News.

We have written up internal notes about the NICE guidance for members doing service in Health and Criminal Justice in England and Wales.

We’re currently refreshing and rebuilding health resources on the website. Published resources will appear on the Health Service page or in the Health section of the new Document Library. Internal resources and templates will be in the Health Filestore.

The Annual Health Meeting with Regional Health Liaison Officers (HLOs) in September was inspiring. We were pleased to welcome and hear from Intergroup HLOs who joined online on Saturday morning too. Many HLOs are current or former health professionals who can guide the Fellowship in our approaches to professionals - and the ever-changing machinery of government in Health. We thank all for sharing their experience. Cooperation with Public Information Liaison Officers continues to be really productive.

At the Annual Meeting, we learned that hospitals and treatment centres are increasingly requiring members who visit for service purposes to have DBS checks. And the degree of the check can vary from hospital to hospital. We noted that following Safeguarding protocols as requested can protect members. But it does also place an added cost on individual members in Health service.

We noted that Intergroups and Safeguarding Liaison Officers usually step in to support members and resolve issues. We’re grateful for their support.

We began 2024 with four vacancies on the Health SC and have been delighted to welcome three new members this year. We are planning a Health Seminar in York on 27 September 2025.

We also thank Barbara O, who rotated out as Health Trustee at Conference 2024, for her service, good humour, and light touch.

Carmel G
GSB Trustee

Inclusivity Committee

It is best if I give a brief outline of how the Inclusivity Committee came into being. At the beginning of 2024 at the Board meeting in January the Board set up the Diversity Group which with discussion morphed into the Inclusivity Committee (IC) which is Trustee led to oversee different working groups (WG) to explore different aspects of what Inclusivity means/does for us in AA. There are now 3 (WG) the Race2Day WG, the LGBTQIA+WG and the Accessibility WG.

The Race2Day WG has been working for 2 years following a Question for Conference in 2021 and one of their new projects are a 'History Project'. The aim of this is to gather stories from 'People of Colour' members who have been in the fellowship a long time to those who are new. To be published in all our media outlets even including our new revamped website.

The LGBTQIA+ WG, formed after Conference 2024 asked for a rewrite of the 'LGBT Voices' Pamphlet.

And the Accessibility WG encompasses the breadth of the fellowship, from older people to members with Long-term mental health conditions, Motor or Mobility issues like wheelchair users, hearing difficulties and the need for sign language. These are some of the demographics the Accessibility WG will be taking a considered look at in a very exciting 2025.

Tony S
GSB Trustee

Literature

Conference 2024 approved changes and additions to the AA Service and Structure handbooks, as follows:

Service handbook

- A new Publications Chapter comprising Share, Roundabout and AA Calendar and Diary and committee delivering this work
- Revisions to the Chapter Probation and Criminal Justice Service

Structure handbook

- Point 2, under Introduction, has a revised history bringing AA Great Britain fully up-to-date.

Each handbook has a **new glossary of terms**, hopefully making them more accessible to readers.

Literature revisions/new leaflets

- 'Health Liaison Officers'
- 'Employment Officers'
- The 'Little Book' was reviewed and extended to provide members with a meeting-in-a-pocket/key texts often referred to and read from the 'Big Book'. It's referenced now as 'Little Book 2'.

New pamphlets:

Pamphlet on 'Probation and Criminal Justice Service'
'DOES ANYONE ELSE LOOK LIKE ME IN ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS'

Up and coming literature items for Conference 2025

Service handbook

- 'Service Disciplines - Executive Summary' - new
- 'What professionals have said about Alcoholics Anonymous' - new
- Introductory paragraph - for the new Appendix (former Chapter 4) - new

- Appendix (TBA): 'For AA Members Employed in the Alcoholism Field' - new / using same text for requested leaflet
- Chapter 1: 'Public Information' - revision
- Chapter 3: 'AA and Electronic Communications' - revision
- Chapter 6 (Health), point 6.13 'Alcoholics Anonymous/12-Step Facilitation (AA/TSF) NICE Recommendation and Cochrane Evidence Review' - new
- Chapter 10: 'National Telephones' - revised
- Chapter 13: 'Publications' - 13.6 Literature - new section

Structure handbook

- 'The General Service Board', page 162 - insert 2 new paragraphs between the existing 4 and 5 paragraph - revised

Plenary items

- 'AA in Prisons' - new leaflet
- 'AA and Mental Health' - new pamphlet
- 'A brief guide to AA' – revision
- 'Alcoholics Anonymous as a Resource for Employers' - revision

Other work

Literature sub committee also has updated its 'Literature Design Guide', for use by the committee, and has also updated its AAGB web page.

And finally...

An **ENORMOUS** thank you to the Literature Sub Committee for their phenomenally hard work and commitment to AA's literature over the past year.

Jo F
GSB Trustee

PI & EComms

First things first so mention must be made of the sad loss of Tom Fox in May 2024. Tom was a member of the PI & EComms Sub Committee and made a huge contribution to the website project and, indeed, to all the work of the subcommittee. His wit and discerning wisdom are still sadly missed but his legacy does live on, not least in the success of the new website.

The PI & Ecomms Sub Committee takes on work assigned to it by the GSB through questions discussed at Conference. In the past year, in conjunction with GSO, we have evaluated the provision of an online forum to facilitate communication, as requested by Committee 2 Q2, and investigated the requirements and cost of creating an AAGB app as requested by Committee 6, Q1. We noted that an online forum had been used by AA previously and was stopped because of the challenge and difficulty in moderating the forum. Moderation is required to safeguard forum users but is challenging to provide consistently and safely. Therefore, we believe that other forms of online communication are more appropriate than an AAGB web forum.

Investigations into building an AAGB app returned budget costs starting at £25K for a very basic app rising sharply if additional features are included. Consequently, it was not felt that the Fellowship should commit to this level of expenditure at this time.

Understandably, a significant focus of the PI & EComms Sub Committee in 2024 has been the new Fellowship website and more on that below. However, in addition to this task, the Sub Committee has continued to provide and support users of the AAGB Filestore, Workplace and the Intergroup and Regional

microsites. The Helpdesk facility on the AABG website continues to receive almost daily requests for assistance from newcomers and members alike. Many thanks to the to all the Sub Committee members for their diligence and constant service looking after these facilities.

For members of the Fellowship doing service at Intergroup and Region, we continue to offer generic email addresses to help preserve anonymity and aid in GDPR compliance. Please help out by completing the Intergroup and Region Officer Registration Form following rotations of service posts. This form is available from the website Document Library and includes a tick box to request an aamail.org email address. Timely updates ensure that the Confidential Directory is kept up to date

Activities in in the 12 months to April 2025

Website update

The new AA GB website was launched on the 13th May 2024 after eighteen months of dedicated and consistent effort by the project team members. There were a few teething troubles which, once identified, were speedily resolved. Since then, the new website has proven to be a rock solid and reliable platform. Regular monitoring of traffic to the website shows us that the number of visitors is usually 30 – 35% higher than traffic to the old website. This is a great result with visitor numbers continuing to trend upwards.

After coming out of project phase, the website is in a “Business as Usual” mode now. This includes managing ongoing tasks such as updating shop categories on the website, updating the contents of the document library and improvements to the Group Registration Form (Pink Form) as well as regular content updates and adding news items.

Alcoholics Anonymous’ Anonymous Ad Campaign

Following an approach by JC Decaux and a presentation at Conference 2024, the GSB, GSO and PI & EComms SC collaborated with JC Decaux and The Raised Eyebrow design agency on an innovative advertising campaign across London, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, Bristol and Southampton. The campaign ran during the first week of July 2024 and from Boxing Day until the end of January 2025 on prominent digital billboards in well-travelled locations. A range of “anonymous” ads displayed a variety of specially selected phrases containing only two A’s, designed to spark the curiosity of people seeing the ads. There was a significant uptick of visits to the website and calls to the National Helpline during and just after each run of ads.

In accordance with our traditions, a nominal fee was paid to JC Decaux for the space and the design agency fully recompensed for their creative input.

Workplace for Public Information

Each service discipline holds an annual Regional Liaison meeting in York and, as a trial, we invited both the Regional PILO’s and ECLO’s to a combined meeting in August 2024. Service specific sessions for PI and EComms were mixed with joint sessions and a combined wrap up session on Saturday morning. A huge amount of enthusiastic discussion and collaboration took place with lots of sharing of experience and information. Several new Liaison Officers spoke up about how useful it was to be able to talk to experienced LO’s and find out how to get started in post. It was so successful, the PI & EComms Subcommittee was asked to facilitate an online session for further collaboration. This was held in February 2025.

PI Newsletter

The PI Newsletter has been relaunched, initially on a quarterly basis, with the first edition sent out to Region and Intergroup Chairs and PILO’s. Please feel free to distribute additional copies electronically or in printed form. We would be really pleased to receive your PI related news for consideration and possible inclusion in future editions of the newsletter. Send your news items to aainformation@qsogb.org.uk.

Family Look Guidelines

As a reminder, when communicating or presenting when doing service on behalf of AA, following the AA "Family Look" fosters **consistency, trust, and recognition** and contributes to the overall effectiveness of the communication. The Family Look Guidelines are available in the Document Library on the AA GB Website.

Literature Work

Literature work by the Sub Committee has included updating the Hints and Tips for Internet Safety card and reviewing Chapters 1 and 3 in the AA Service Handbook before passing them on to the Literature Sub-Committee.

Tim B
GSB Trustee

Prisons

I am pleased to say this year we have attracted more members onto our subcommittee, and this has enabled us to work in more areas. This year we have been concentrating on finding out which of our prisons have AA meetings and those without. This is ever changing, and we ask our Liaison Officers (LO) to inform us of any changes as they occur. We are in the process of getting this into the Document Library in the form of a map which can be updated as needed. The Prison information in the Document Library is in the process of being updated and rewritten when needed.

Beyond the Bars, a quarterly paper, has been reinstated and is now in its 2nd edition. We are asking for stories both from AA sponsors and prisoners to be submitted.

In July we hosted a joint Prison/Probation Regional Liaison Officer meeting in York where valuable information is passed both ways.

We are asking Conference to approve a leaflet giving information on how to proceed as a prison sponsor/LO. This will provide much needed guidance for those new to prison service if accepted.

I was invited to attend a Prison seminar in Bulgaria this September. This was both beneficial and informative allowing me to see how AA works in prisons in another country. I was grateful for this opportunity.

This year we will be celebrating 60 years of AA within HMP Barlinnie, Scotland. This is our longest running prison meeting in the UK.

In the coming year we hope to get the work on the Document Library complete, rewrite the Prison section of the Service handbook ready for Conference 2026 along with other things as they arise.

It has been a pleasure to work alongside the enthusiastic Prison Subcommittee and thank them all for their hard work.

Zelma K
GSB Trustee

Probation/Community Justice

The Probation Sub Committee (SC) has had another productive and busy year. Following Board approval, the SC now has five members. As cooperation with Probation and community justice (CJS) agencies throughout Great Britain is increasing we hope to fill our two remaining spaces to support the Fellowship's wonderful service work in this discipline.

More AA groups, with Probation/Criminal Justice Service Liaison Officers' (LOs) support, have been getting the Chit System in place. Figures from our website show that in December 2023, 603 Alcoholics Anonymous groups in GB were listed as offering it. This figure has risen to 764 at the end of January 2025. There are also 39 online meetings offering the Chit system. Reports from Intergroups are showing the Chit System is available in many areas of Great Britain supporting those who want or need proof of attendance to support their recovery in AA. We never know when we will need this crucial tool.

In April, Conference approved the new leaflet produced by the SC 'AA as a Resource for Criminal Justice Professionals' which is now available in the AA family style on our website. Our gratitude to the Literature Subcommittee who helped develop it for Conference 2024. The previous leaflet has now been discontinued. During May the Probation SC delivered a national workshop online for Liaison Officers and members interested in this area of service. Over 55 members were in attendance and requested that this is run annually. The aim was not only to carry the message but to do so in a cost-effective and efficient way. All agreed that the workshop was an immense success. Our gratitude to GSO staff, who helped facilitate this innovative format.

Our co-operation with HMPPS Recovery Focussed Approved Premises has continued and in June we gave the first ever online Alcoholics Anonymous Awareness presentation to all 105 Approved Premises in England and Wales for staff and residents. This was not only a first for AA but also the Approved Premises, requiring careful planning to ensure Alcoholics Anonymous message reached as many people as possible while following our traditions and safeguarding guidance. LOs and SC members are continuing to give presentations to Recovery Focussed Approved Premises reinvigorating and enthusing cooperation at local levels.

In September we were invited to present to the HMPPS Health & Justice Leads at their Quarterly National Meeting online. Our presentation included information about the NICE guidance, gave an overview of the service Alcoholics Anonymous provides and finished with a positive question and answer session. Our aim was to raise HMPPS managers' awareness to aid support for Intergroups and Regions.

The SC has also been cooperating with other disciplines giving Chit presentations when requested: to Prison LOs at the Scottish Zonal meeting, and online to the Armed Services SC. We have been approached by developing overseas AA structures interested in Probation/CJS service including Bulgaria and Ukraine.

Our efforts in Scotland have been invigorated by new members joining the Subcommittee and they have been working with Intergroups and Regions to engage with the Scottish Social Work Departments across the country. We planned this strategy with Tom Fox, former GSB Vice Chair and NAT, who we sadly miss.

Developments continue with The Scottish Courts and HMCTS in England and Wales. LOs and RLOs are doing great service in many areas, including at the Glasgow Alcohol Court. Cooperative working has also been progressing with Police Services in England and Wales, and Scotland. The Custody Suite project in London is also progressing well. Criminal Justice professionals were invited to and attended the Westminster Parliamentary event.

The Probation Sub Committee continues to review content for our discipline on the GB website and develop resources for Liaison Officers.

Hamish McS
GSB Trustee

Roundabout

The subcommittee have attended three online meetings, 7th June and 9th August and 6th December 2024.

As Scottish Regions are requesting a Roundabout stall at their conventions it was decided that the Roundabout subcommittee would man stalls at the following Conventions in 2024/5:

Convention dates

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| 21st June | – | Glasgow – Ian attended |
| 13th July | – | Irvine, North East Ayrshire - Ian attended |
| 3rd August | – | Aberdeen – Cath attended |
| 31st August | – | Dundee – Ian attended |
| 13-15th Sept | – | Stornoway – Jan attended |
| 7 th -8 th Feb 2025 | – | Oban – Andrina attended |
| 9 th -11 th May 2025 | – | Scottish – Ian to attend |

It is of major importance to raise awareness of the Roundabout magazine with convention attendees, to obtain articles and interviews and shares from them, as well as encouraging new subscriptions to the Scottish magazine. It is also a way of attracting people into Service and all this is done by the members of the subcommittee with the aid of banners and making available back copies of the magazine.

Subcommittee meetings scheduled for 2025:

Subcommittee Meeting - 31st January and 1st February in Pitlochry. The Atholl Centre provided meals for the whole weekend and it was cheaper than the hotels there. The subcommittee managed to complete an induction course for the new member of the subcommittee. An Agenda for the Regional Liaison Officers Workshop was agreed.

1st March - Regional Liaison Officers Workshop in the Renfield St Stephen's Centre at 260 Bath Street, Glasgow. This was well attended by Regional and Intergroup Liaison Officers and also people who help with the Roundabout. Great topics were discussed and ideas will be taken on board.

Online subcommittee meetings scheduled for 2025:

6th June.....8th August.....10th October...5th December.....**All online**

Everything is going well with the Roundabout. I have been keeping in touch with the subcommittee, especially Cath, Editor and Jan, Secretary.

Cath and Ian, Link Officer, attended the Share Annual meeting in York and they really enjoyed the experience. They would like to thank everyone for making them so welcome.

Andrina C
GSB Trustee

Share

In January last year the new pricing came into effect. It was quite a complicated switch over, taking into account prepaid subscriptions. The staff at GSO worked hard to ensure that everyone was charged correctly.

The Fellowship has been very supportive of the changes that have taken place over the past 12 months. We had some teething problems as we tried to work out the best way to accommodate the accessibility guidelines, alongside suggestions from our regular subscribers. Everyone kindly bore with us as our font grew

and shrank until finally, we now believe we have it right. Thank you for all the positive and constructive feedback we've received, we appreciate your support.

Alongside all the larger changes that were taking place, the Share team were beavering away to hit deadlines every month, make an impact at The London Convention as well as producing artwork for new Banners, Bookmarks and Wallet Cards.

We are delighted that our current Asst. Editor, Bridget, will be staying on as Editor when Agnes rotates out at the end of next year. Caroline, who has been an Editorial Reader, will step into Bridget's shoes, so a smooth rotation and continuity for the next four years is assured. For anyone interested in joining us we have a new role on the Share team 'Share Liaison Officers Coordinator' which is currently being advertised as a vacancy in the magazine and AASN. This will help to bridge the gap between the SLO's and the Editorial team. We are excited to see how this service position will shape up over time.

Our 2024 annual SLO's meeting at GSO was filled with enthusiasm and fantastic ideas on how to provide the Fellowship with the best version of Share magazine possible. We are grateful to all of you wonderful intergroup and region officers who put time and effort into this cause.

Finally, big thank you to the Share team for all their hard work to help our magazine through this period of growth, and to our subscribers and readers for your support.

Charon B
GSB Trustee, Share

Survey

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain [GSB GB]) Limited have conducted a survey of the Fellowship every five years since 1972.

The intention of these surveys is to learn more about the Fellowship in GB and Continental Europe so that AA's message of recovery may be disseminated more effectively to the still suffering alcoholic, thus helping us to fulfil our primary purpose.

The Survey Sub Committee was established as a separate subcommittee tasked to deliver the 2020 Survey. Previously the Survey was delivered by the PI Subcommittee. Due to Covid and lockdown the 2020 survey was delivered online for the first time. The decision to continue the survey online has been agreed using what was learned in 2020 to improve the content and method of communication to the Fellowship and increase engagement.

The results of the 2020 survey were reported to Conference 2021 and the committee produced and infographic leaflet for the fellowship and to be used as a public information outreach tool.

The committee are currently finalising the content of the questionnaire and the timeline including communication to the fellowship. The survey will be launched in 2025 and the final results will be reported to Conference 2026.

Max J
GSB Trustee

Telephones

The National Telephone Sub Committee (NTSC) received a task from Conference in 2021 which read as follows:

We would also recommend that this opportunity be taken to review the national telephone service as a whole, including Continental European Region, to promote unity and consistency.

Just for clarification the 0800 number is simply a call distribution system, it has no function as a helpline, this is done by the local groups.

A working party was set up, reviews completed, numerous meetings with various telecoms companies were had and a decision was finally taken, by the GSB from the recommendations of the NTSC, to ask Gamma Communications to take over the call distribution from BT. Unfortunately, Gamma was not able to deliver the product it had promised us.

Since this is now dead in the water we are essentially back to square one! The number of helplines has always caused problems. Disorganised service provided by some of these helplines has not helped when trying to resolve the current situation. So having had discussions at the last NTSC meeting we decided to offer our thoughts and to possibly go back to Conference for direction. Firstly, seeking direction from the GSB.

The issue was discussed at length at the November 2024 GSB meeting and it was decided that we would go back and revisit another provider, who earlier wasn't able to meet all our needs, specifically call distribution and call blocking. The reason for the revisit was because they had been working on providing new solutions for the above-mentioned needs, not just for us, but also for other clients.

We are now in the process of talking to the new provider, ensuring that they can provide all our needs. With this step forward, and if all our requirements are met, we are hoping to have a test period of thirty days to see how the system operates.

We were asked to promote 'Unity and consistency' across the helplines. Having 39 helplines with 39 different ways of operating makes this very difficult. It should be noted that although the NTSC asked the fellowship to look at reducing the number of helplines by rationalising at regional level, we now have an increase in the number from 37 to 39 local helplines!

Whatever solution is agreed on will require the cooperation of ALL helplines.

The NTSC will give this one more try to come up with a better solution as recommended by Conference 2021. We are optimistic that we can present something at the next Conference.

Levey P
GSB Trustee

Young People

The Young People's Sub Committee (YPSC) was delighted to hold a Roadshow in Glasgow in May 2024, which was attended by approximately 60 people. Presentations included topics such as the history of the YPLO role, sponsoring into service, experience of being a member of the YPSC and how it can lead on to other service positions, and the role of Conference. Those who attended were enthusiastic and engaged, and feedback suggests that people found the event to be inspiring and informative.

The YPSC will be holding our next Roadshow in Birmingham on 21st June 2025, and the format will be a combination of presentations, a panel discussion and a workshop.

Based on discussion at the Glasgow Roadshow, and following very useful input from the RYPLO's at our annual meeting, the Sub Committee will be putting together some safeguarding guidance for YPLO's when they are visiting schools, youth clubs and other outside agencies. We will be reaching out to YPLO's for their experience in putting this together.

We are also working on a newsletter containing shares about the various initiatives and projects being undertaken by YPLO's across the country. The idea is for the newsletter to hopefully act as inspiration for serving officers, and also to share with the wider Fellowship the work that is being done by Young People.

It is a pleasure to work with the Young People's service community, which continues to be vibrant and enthusiastic, with great dedication to carrying the message of recovery to younger people.

Holly A
GSB Trustee

National Conventions

Northern

The 48th National Northern Convention (NNC) took place at the Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool, in March 2024. 1101 tickets were sold this year, an increase of 14% on the previous year. This has been the highest attendance over the last 20 years and the committee members appreciate all the support from the Fellowship.

The NNC is supported by 3 regions, Midlands, Northeast and Northwest and the committee comprises regional delegates, the Executive Committee, the NW Region Trustee and 2 representatives from Al-Anon. The committee meets 4 times a year with the AGM taking place in October. Regional Chairs are also invited to the AGM.

The programme included: Regional Archives presentation, Chat Now and On-line Response, Yellow Brick Road Recovery Banner, Service meeting presented by a Non-Alcoholic Trustee on behalf of the Health GSB SC, Old-timer meeting, Disco Friday and Saturday evening, a quiet room, AA approved Literature stand, raffle (with good prizes), Al-anon participation and AA related films were shown in the cinema.

The raffle and ticket sales generate income for the next year's event and the Tradition 7 contributions are sent directly to GSO. The raffle income and Tradition 7 contributions were down slightly compared to last year 2023.

The committee have worked tirelessly and with due diligence over the last 12 months, in preparation for the 49th NNC. The theme for this year's is "A New Beginning". It will take place on Thursday 27th - Sunday 30th March 2025 and the committee looks forward to welcoming you.

Flyers for the event were distributed through the Regional Assemblies and they were also available from GSO. The flyer was also added to the AA GB National Website, in the events section.

The 50th National Northern Convention will take place in 2026 and the committee has already started preparing for this. The committee is keen to celebrate this milestone and to give the Fellowship a joyful experience.

Angela S
GSB Trustee

Southern

The Southern National Convention 2024 took place on the 20th - 22nd September at Sand Bay Holiday Park in Weston Super Mare. Attendance peaked at 800 people with 628 people staying on site and a further 172 weekend or day visitors. General feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

A full programme of Fellowship activities was held over the weekend with live entertainment on the Friday and Saturday nights. There was also the option to stay on site for an additional night of Fellowship. Our friends at Al-Anon were in attendance throughout the weekend and the First Response Online Sub Committee hosted a workshop on the Saturday afternoon which was well received.

Following a period of uncertainty and disappointment after the Hayling Island site became unavailable, the organising Committee was extremely pleased to see so many people enjoy the weekend in 2024. The Convention is self-supporting with a sufficient prudent reserve to comfortably plan for the 2025 Convention.

The 2025 event will be the 50th Southern National Convention with the theme of "Our Pick Struck Gold!". Approximately 400 bookings have already been taken as of the end of January 2025. The Conference is looking forward to a bumper event to celebrate the golden anniversary!

Tim B
GSB Trustee

Welsh

The Welsh National Convention (WNC) was held this year on the weekend of 30th/31st May at the Metropole hotel, Llandrindod Wells. There were 197 attendees with a total of 2,300 years sobriety with the longest 50 years and the shortest 4 days.

Platform speaker meetings were held over the weekend along with a Welsh speaker meeting on the Saturday afternoon with simultaneous translation into English via headsets.

There was entertainment on the Friday evening with musicians and a disco and raffle were enjoyed on the Saturday evening.

The Sunday morning spiritual service was held in both English and Welsh with a choir of our Welsh speaking members leading Calon Lan (pure heart).

Marathon come and go meetings were run alongside the above.

The WNC will take place at the Metropole hotel Llandrindod Wells 30th May to 1st June 2025.

Due to inflation we have had to raise the Registration to £15 for part or full weekend. This is the first rise in some years. The theme is Love and Gratitude. There will be information about Young People and Telephone disciplines. A workshop on sponsorship will be held. Tabletop and Marathon come and go meetings, Raffle, disco and entertainment not forgetting our platform meeting held in Welsh with a simultaneous translation on Saturday. Fliers have been circulated also available on the Wales and Borders web page.

We look forward to another successful year. Although this is a small National Convention, the committee will be doing everything they can to make this a successful convention and there will be a warm Welsh welcome for anyone attending.

Zelma K
GSB Trustee

Scottish

The 67th Scottish National Convention (SNC), Queens Hall, Dunoon 26th to 28th April 2024

The SNC website <https://scottishnationalconvention.co.uk/> aided with planning and event management.

The convention had its regular meetings hosted by each Scottish Region, as well as a Young Persons and Old Timers meetings. More meetings were 'open' this year to encourage attendance by our non-alcoholic friends. The Saturday night meeting included an AI Anon speaker and a sobriety countdown ranging from 59 years to 4 days continuous sobriety. An AI Anon meeting room was also provided. The 'service area' was popular with Roundabout, National Telephones & FROSC and Probation / Criminal Justice represented, as well as a well-stocked AA literature stand. The entertainment was popular, and a few members took advantage of the great weather and went cold water swimming!

Feedback forms were incredibly positive.

The Committee AGM took place in July. Although the convention was not fully self-supporting, primarily due to a reduction in registrations, Tradition 7 contributions were up from the previous year to £1552.36 reflecting the gratitude and positivity of members. The Scottish Regional Chairs present reviewed the TOR and accounts and encouraged the committee to look at cost saving and increasing attendance numbers. The Committee have taken this onboard reducing various costs and have been working effectively, meeting online with one in person meeting planned prior to the convention.

The 68th Scottish National Convention 9th to 11th May 2025 will be again at The Queens Hall, Dunoon, we look forward to welcoming you!

Hamish McS
GSB Trustee to the Scottish National Convention

Parliamentary Events

Westminster

Last year's event, held in Portcullis House on 21 of May 2024, was a tremendous success. Our sponsoring MP was Rachael Maskell, Labour (Co-op) MP for York Central. Our professional speakers were:

Richard Scullion, Police Sergeant, Custody Management & Specialist Operations.
Mike Trace CEO Forward Trust.

We also had two very impressive speakers from the Fellowship sharing their experience, strength and hope.

We had 56 attendees, all of whom were very engaged and positive about the event and the Fellowship. This was reflected by the fact that 52 of the attendees filled out and submitted feedback forms. Notable positives were that:

- 100% stated that they would recommend the presentation to another professional
- 100% stated that they would recommend AA to a suffering alcoholic
- 10 attendees stated that they would like to attend an open AA meeting.

We have learned lots from this year's event and hope that will bear fruit for future events. Planning for the 2025 event has been underway for the past six months. We have struggled to find a sponsoring MP this year which has led us to widening our reach to include the House of Lords. This seems, so far, to be a very positive move and we're hoping it will produce better engagement from members of Parliament. We now have a

date set for Tuesday June 3, 2025, in the Cholmondeley Room, in the House of Lords, and our sponsor will be Lord Cameron of Dillington.

Gretchen S
GSB Trustee

Senydd

This year's presentation to professionals was held at the Senydd, Cardiff Bay on the 28th November 11am – 2pm. There were about 25 people present.

The aim of this presentation is to inform professionals on what AA can do for them and to let them know who and what we are.

The presentation was hosted by Peredur Owen Griffiths MS, Plaid Cymru who introduced our Trustee for Wales and Borders who gave an overview of how our structure has its place in Wales, followed by Tony S, Trustee for Employment speaking about how AA can assist employers followed by the Blue light video. This was followed by two of our members sharing their ESH and a Q and A session.

Zelma K
GSB Trustee

Holyrood

Due to problems in finding an MSP to sponsor this event in 2024, there was no event at Holyrood in 2024.

The committee has since gotten the support of Marie McNair, MSP for Clydebank and Milngavie to sponsor the event which is scheduled for Wednesday 12 March 2025 in the Fleming Room in Holyrood.

The new Chair of the committee, Andrina C, Trustee for Glasgow Region, had to pull out recently due to health reasons and I (Gretchen S, Vice Chair (GSB) have stepped in to help until Andrina is able to return. Anne Marie, who oversees the Northern Service Office has also been very instrumental in getting the committee up to speed with such short notice.

The committee has agreed fellowship speakers and a communication plan to invite:

- MSP's,
- Health and Social Care Professionals.
- Drug and Alcohol Teams.
- General Practitioners and Hospital Administrators

to come and hear about what we do. The title and theme of the event is to be: Dispelling the Myth: What do you know about AA? The event will draw upon some of the experience strength and hope to be found in the Scottish archives and talked about by a member of the Archives Sub Committee that is based in Scotland as well as another member of the fellowship.

The Scottish Parliamentary event is always a great success and there is no doubt it will be again in March. It has been a joy and a privilege for me to work with the committee and I look forward to the event. Hopefully Andrina will be well enough to attend the event, which would make it perfect.

Gretchen S
GSB Trustee

28th World Service Meeting

'The Three Legacies in Our Digital Era: Our Great Responsibility to the Alcoholic Being Born Today'

The 28th World Service Meeting took place in New York from 27th to 31st October 2024 and was attended by delegates from 38 countries, and I had the privilege of attending as one of the two delegates from Great Britain and Continental European Region. Presentations from various countries included 'AA in a Virtual World', 'Finding Balance Between Innovations and Traditions', 'Expressing Our Gratitude Through Service' and 'Country to Country Sponsorship.' There were also presentations on the International Literature Fund, the World Service Meeting Fund, and Licensing and Translation of literature.

The meeting included workshops covering topics such as 'Are Our Groups Really Practicing the Traditions?', and 'Online Groups in the World: Here to Stay', which provided an opportunity for delegates to share experience on the ways in which their structures are adapting to the increase in online meetings.

Reflecting the theme of the meeting, much of the discussion throughout the week focused on how we can best utilise the technology now available to us to carry the message of recovery to the still suffering alcoholic, whilst also being mindful of the challenges that these innovations may present.

The meeting offered an opportunity to learn about the various structures around the world, and the similarities between us and the ways in which we differ. Discussion during the workshop titled, 'The Seventh Tradition: Self-Supporting in the Digital Era', provided a fascinating insight into how many countries send their Tradition 7 contributions through their structure. The 60/30/10% principle was commonly used in several countries, where they send 60% of their funds to the service level below the group, 30% to the service level below that, and retain 10% for the running of their group.

One of the highlights for me was the chance to see examples of AA literature from all around the world. Our 'Family Look' literature was much admired, and of particular interest to the other delegates were our Service and Structure Handbooks, as well as our 'Sponsorship into Service' leaflet. I learned of the challenges faced by many countries in the licensing and translation of literature, and that when translating the Big Book, many structures took the opportunity to include stories from their own membership. Seeing the Big Book in so many different forms and translations was extraordinary, and this feeling of unity was enhanced at the close of the meeting when everyone joined hands, and the delegates took turns to recite the Serenity Prayer in every language represented.

Whilst in New York, we were taken for a visit to the US/Canada General Service Office and had the chance to meet many of the staff members and to view the extensive archives. The GSO staff did an extraordinary job of transporting about 70 visitors on the subway to the office and back again, without losing a single delegate! We were also treated to several impromptu and enthusiastic sing-a-longs by the Latin American delegates, which certainly added to the international feel of the event!

We were fortunate to be taken to visit 'Stepping Stones' - the home of Bill and Lois Wilson which is about an hour outside of New York City. The house has been perfectly preserved and is full of archives and mementos showing the rich history of the Fellowship. We were able to see the very first printing of the first edition of the Big Book, in which Bill had written a dedication to Lois in recognition of her support. The table at which Bill and Ebby discussed a spiritual solution to alcoholism is sitting in the kitchen, and the desk that Bill W used while writing the Big Book is in his writing shed, which he named 'Wit's End.' It was an incredibly moving and emotional experience to be in the presence of so much of the history of this remarkable Fellowship.

To finish off an incredibly busy trip, the World Service Meeting delegates were invited to observe some of the meetings of the US/Canada General Service Board. One of the parts that I found particularly interesting was the way in which their Conference process differs from ours when it comes to the selection of topics for discussion at Conference. Whilst our Conference Questions are selected by a Steering Committee, elected by members at Conference the previous year, many of their 'Proposed Agenda Items' are in fact selected by the

General Service Board themselves. It was very interesting to see the ways in which our structure and processes differ from those in US/Canada, and indeed the rest of the world, and shows that there is not a 'one size fits all' approach.

The service structures around the world vary greatly in terms of their size and how long they have been established, and each is developing to meet the specific and varying needs of each country. I came away from the whole experience with a strong sense of how fortunate we are in AAGB in comparison to many countries that have significant challenges that we have either moved through or are simply not an issue for us. The whole meeting was a wonderful opportunity to learn from each other, share experience, and offer support. The overwhelming feeling of unity and our shared purpose was a powerful and inspiring experience, and I am very grateful for the opportunity to have taken part in it.

Holly A

First Term World Service Delegate and GSB Trustee