



Alcoholics Anonymous
Great Britain
and English Speaking Continental Europe

Guidelines For Regional Secretaries

Our Suggestions
Regional Secretaries
2023

Contents

<u>Working document notes</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Introduction</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Welcome</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Regional Secretaries Meeting</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>“Now that I am Secretary . . .”</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Description and Boundaries</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Qualifications for Role as Secretary</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Relationships and Responsibilities</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>PART ONE: Communication and Time</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>1) Communication</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Telephone and conversation</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>First things first!</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Text Messages or email</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>General comments</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Methods and language used</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Document Formats and Distribution</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Date and Author</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>email</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>AA Email address</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>BCC Fields</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Distribution Lists</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Resources</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>AAGB Website</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Confidential Directory</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Previous documents and email</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>IT Skills and File Organisation</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Equipment required by the Regional Secretary</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Region Members</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Region Executive</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Other Regional Secretaries</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Structure and Service Handbooks</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Terms of Reference</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Regional Officers Reports</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Letters and Signatures</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Page Size, Fonts and Logo</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>2) Time, time, time</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Possible annual timeline</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>PART TWO: The Regional Assembly</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>1) Before the Assembly</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Venue, dates, requirements, costs</u>	<u>16</u>

Venue	16
Assembly Dates	16
Frequency of Regional Assemblies	16
Notification	16
The Agenda	16
Agenda	19
Steering Committee Reports	19
Liaison Officers Reports	19
Matters Arising	19
Requesting Officer and Intergroup Reports	22
Inventory of Items to Take to The Regional Assembly	22
2) During the Assembly	22
Recording The Minute for the Assembly	29
Attendance Register	29
Apologies	29
Establishing the quorum	29
Voting and ballots	30
Recording decisions, including minority views	30
Time Keeping	30
Other responsibilities	30
Setting up the room	30
Getting yourself organised	30
Helping others	30
Counter-signing cheques	30
Clearing up	30
3) After the Assembly	30
The Minute	30
Writing the minute	30
Approval of minute	31
Distribution of Minute	31
Regional Bulletin and Regional Reports for Intergroups	31
Updating Records	31
4) The Annual General Meeting (AGM)	31
5) The Extraordinary Regional Assembly	32
PART THREE: Between Assemblies	33
1) Record Keeping	33
Attendance Register	33
Regional Officers and Service Opportunities	33
Historical Roll of Officers	33
Terms of Reference	33

<u>Decision Digest</u>	<u>33</u>
<u>Previous Minutes</u>	<u>33</u>
<u>Contact Details and Distribution Lists</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>Correspondence</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>Reimbursement of Expenses</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>Updating AA Meeting Details</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>How do I register a new group, or update the information for an existing meeting?</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>Where do I find the 'Pink Form'?</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>How do I submit the information in paper format?</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>How do I submit the information on-line?</u>	<u>35</u>
<u>Why is it important to register your group AND KEEP THE INFORMATION UP TO DATE?</u>	<u>35</u>
2) <u>Conference</u>	<u>35</u>
3) <u>Regional Forum</u>	<u>36</u>
4) <u>Regional Inventory</u>	<u>36</u>
5) <u>Regional Workshop</u>	<u>36</u>
6) <u>Communication between Regional Secretaries</u>	<u>36</u>
<u>Email Addresses For Regional Secretaries</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>PART FOUR: More Resources</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>Personal Stories</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>An experience of growing into the service role of regional secretary</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>Regional Secretary Position</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>PART FIVE: Documents and Templates</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>List of specimen documents and templates</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>PART SIX: Text Submitted to the LSC</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>Text submitted to Literature Subcommittee</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>Proposed Text for The AA Service Handbook</u>	<u>42</u>
<u>PART SEVEN: Glossary and Index</u>	<u>45</u>
<u>Glossary of Terms</u>	<u>45</u>
<u>Where to find</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>Congratulations!</u>	<u>49</u>

Working document notes

Please continue to regard this as a preliminary working draft document. I'm sure that there is plenty for alteration, repositioning, reduction and removal! We are continuing to develop content and define the structure for this guide. There are additional tasks, such as the production of document templates.

Additions, other than reformatting, since last distribution include;

Cover revision to include (AA) Great Britain and English Speaking Continental Europe	
"AA Great Britain/ AA(GB)" revised to "(AA) Great Britain and English Speaking Continental Europe" throughout	
Remove previous highlights	
Grammar, punctuation and formatting updated	
Equipment Required	
Where to Find (alphabetic index) reformatted	
List of documents and templates modified	
Part 6 renamed from "deleted items" to Text submitted . . .	
Glossary of terms and index moved to end of document	
Content page renamed and reformatted	
Inserted "Taking the Minute Section"	
Reformatting	
Updated index and glossary	

Introduction

Welcome

Thank you for your service as a Secretary for our wonderful Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. This document has been prepared collaboratively by the Regional Secretaries, in order to provide guidance and assistance to each other, and to allow us to pass on our experience to those who follow us on their journey.

Look for the similarities and consider the differences! We are unable to lay down any hard and fast rules or recommendations given the differences between our Regions and their established practices, but we have attempted to outline what has worked reliably for us.

At first glance you may feel daunted or intimidated by the wealth of knowledge that is presented here. Please do not be discouraged – we have tried to be comprehensive, so that we might provide both a basic text, and a reference. If you are in a rush to find help with a particular topic, then have a look at the [Index](#) and the [Where to Find](#) sections.

Help is always at hand, and is often only an email or phone call away! Don't be shy to ask for help, as we were all new in position not that long ago!

Regional Secretaries Meeting

The Regional Secretaries normally gather for a physical meeting at GSO in June of each year. This is a great opportunity to get to meet each other and to share our recent experience. Following the meeting in 2022, the Regional Secretaries have continued to meet regularly at virtual meetings, to allow the preparation of this document, but also, and more importantly, to grow in service together. We hope that this pattern of collaboration and service sponsorship will continue over the years to come. Those who have chosen to not participate have sadly missed out on a remarkable opportunity and experience. Why not join with us in this endeavour?

“Now that I am Secretary . . .”

Perhaps better described as “Now that Region have decided that I serve them as Regional Secretary”!

There are a few important tasks to get on with right at the start, that will make this work seem less formidable and pave the way forwards. Don't rush headlong into writing up your first minutes! Find some quiet time and write a list of things to be done. If you read this document you will find lots of useful information to help you with this. Some of the priorities on your list will be to:

- Complete a [Intergroup / Region Officer Registration Form](#)
- Set up your new email account, gaining access to the correspondence chain
- Distribute copies of this form to other newly appointed officers
- Arrange to meet with the outgoing secretary to talk through current issues and to take advice. There may be some materials and assets available such as paper, envelopes, stamps etc.
- Arrange to meet with the Region Chair and Region Treasurer

- The you might think of writing the draft minute, and have some deadlines to work to.
- Remember that we are all apprentices, and that mistakes are inevitable!
- To start off with it is a good idea to use the outgoing secretary as a service sponsor to keep you on the right path.
- Share and discuss documents and communication with the Chair before you distribute them!

Description and Boundaries

The Secretary is a member of the Regional Assembly Executive, a voting member on procedures and policies put forward by the executive with access to the Region Bank account for the purpose of approving payments made by the Treasurer. The Secretary is the main point of contact for distribution of information to and from all members of the assembly. The Secretary should work with the Executive and Regional Officers to ensure their information is distributed to all intergroup Secretaries. It is the work of the intergroup Secretaries to distribute regional information to their members.

Qualifications for Role as Secretary

- Suggested minimum three years continuous sobriety, a sponsor and home group
- A maximum term of three years should be served in the role (suggested not to return before 1 year), and ratified annually at the AGM
- Knowledge of 12 steps/traditions/concepts
- Previous service at Intergroup or Region and understanding of AA Service Structure
- Best practice to use electronic formats where possible

Relationships and Responsibilities

The Regional Secretary should establish a working relationship with all Intergroup Secretaries and contacts at GSO in order to provide continuity for the Region and GSO.

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Compilation and distribution of Region Minutes
- Compilation of Agenda, along with the Chair/Executive, and its distribution
- Ensure that a Attendance Register is circulated prior to each Regional Assembly to record the details of those present for the circulation list
- Advising GSO of details of new Liaison Officers for the Confidential Directory and AA email via the Intergroup / Region Officer Registration Form
- Liaison with Intergroups as required
- Assistance with and attendance at the Regional Forum
- Liaison with Chair/Treasurer/Trustee
- Letters of approval for Sub-committee/GSO positions
- Coordination between Region members
- Maintaining up to date distribution lists
- Record keeping
- Any required correspondence with GSO
- Coordination with GSO and Region Trustee for Conference Delegates
- Coordination with GSO and relevant Officers for Liaison Officers meetings in York
- Booking of room for Region Assembly / Forum
- Annual attendance at Regional Secretary's meeting at York (great fun)

- Passing records, for example, signed Minutes, to Regional Archivist and to GSO
- Encourage sponsorship into service

PART ONE: Communication and Time

1) Communication

Telephone and conversation

First things first!

One of the easiest and most rapid ways to find the answer to your question is to telephone the Region member concerned and ask! Often we might see each other at other AA meetings or events, and can find a quiet corner for a discussion. These are often most helpful. Some of us have regular calls with the Chair and other members of the Regional Executive, and often use virtual meetings for this purpose. Regular short conversations are preferred to irregular lengthy calls.

Text Messages or email

Occasions may arise where you will need to make urgent contact with Region Members, for example a late decision to change to a virtual meeting because of bad weather. In this situation you might send a text message alerting members of the situation, and asking them to look at their email. Avoid sending group text messages, and avoid sending virtual meeting login details by text as it is less secure than email.

In general, communication by email is preferred whenever possible, as it keeps all of the relevant information in one place. What would you prefer?

General comments

Methods and language used

Gender-neutral language

Adopting gender-neutral language is a powerful way to promote gender equality, thereby avoiding bias toward a particular sex or gender. It is, therefore less likely to convey stereotypes. It avoids word choices, which may be interpreted as biased or discriminatory. It makes everyone feel welcome. A regular review of the AA handbooks helps to ensure this is reflected consistently.

Anonymity, and language of the heart

Over time you will be able to change the language that you would have normally used to that which would be appropriate in AA literature. There is only a need to record the names of individuals, when they are associated with a minority opinion, and there is a need to record this. In most other situations you will find that you might convey the substance of the dialogue without the use of names, thereby removing personality and simply expressing the principles.

Try to avoid the use of conditional terms such as “must”, and “ought”, substituting words such as “suggestion”, or “might”.

Document Formats and Distribution

The Regional Secretary serves Region and responds to their expressed preferences. There is a trend towards the use of digital documents, which need to be accessible to all members.

There may be some who still prefer the use of physical documents, especially when a signature is required.

Our documents have three main purposes:

- 1) Providing a record
- 2) Providing an archive
- 3) Recording a permission

We have the freedom of choice in the method used to prepare these documents. Distribution needs to be in an accessible format, often as paired *.doc and *.pdf files.

The most common method of distribution is by email, though some Regions may use FileStore or externally provided cloud storage. This method may be limited by the IT skills of those we serve.

Date and Author

It is useful to make sure that each document you produce is dated, to prevent confusion. This is especially important with documents that require revision.

It is also worthwhile considering if your name is important, perhaps signing as Regional Secretary is sufficient. You may also wish to include the factual information that the document has been produced in collaboration with others (eg Region Chair).

email

AA Email address

I have my own personal spreadsheet that holds Email addresses with a rotation table and who is in position.

Requesting AA email addresses procedure is a little confusing, but I asked for clarification.

Request forms can be sent from an individual or a Registered Officer to Chris North at GSO (Chris.North@gsogb.org.uk) as she needs to update the Confidential Directory prior to the AA Email address being granted. If the individual sends it directly to Chris then a registered officer needs to email and clarify. If the form is sent via a registered officer, then no further authentication is required.

BCC Fields

When sending any reports or Minutes to any groups or individuals I will always use the BCC Field in order to hide other email addresses. If any member would like to contact a non AA listed member then they can do this through myself unless the individual has stated it is fine for the other person to contact them directly. I feel this is the correct action as this is not over kill with GDPR and if anything does happen I will have a record of that person stating its ok for that individual to contact them.

Distribution Lists

These can be a useful and efficient method of sending out information to multiple recipients. Be aware that each list requires vigilant updating. Unfortunately, some members do not grasp the implication of reply all! Remember to place your distribution list in the bcc field. It may be useful to include yourself, as well as vacant positions using the

generic aamail.org address, thereby providing members in new service positions sight of relevant communications.

Resources

AAGB Website

This is an excellent resource, but does have its limitations, which are currently being addressed. It is worthwhile taking time to explore, and familiarise yourself with the document library, where you will find useful forms and other items. Whilst you are there, check out your Region microsite – you may need to ask your RECLO to make some changes or provide updated information, such as meeting dates.

Confidential Directory

The Confidential Directory is a secure password protected pdf file listing contact details for all trusted servants at intergroup, region, subcommittee and board.

The information it contains is reliant on frequent updating.

To access the Confidential Directory you will need to request a link, from a registered AAmail.org account. You will be sent a password by text message. Passwords change approximately every 6 months. Make sure to check the information held for your region, and complete new officer registration forms as required.

Previous documents and email

In our modern age, most of our correspondence may be found in the secretary's email account. Different secretaries have different levels of organisation. There may be organised folders and there might not. Searching with your email client may lead you in the right direction. It is a good idea to get into the habit of using precise and unique email headers to facilitate searching. Speak with your predecessor and learn how they organised things.

IT Skills and File Organisation

a) IT Skills

Ideally, any suitably qualified member who is willing to take the role of Regional Secretary should be allowed to do so, and IT skills, are something that can be learnt with the help of others. You will need to obtain some proficiency using email, and word processing, as well as some simple use of spreadsheets and file storage.

b) File Organisation

You will need to create a filing system with which you can work, and reliably retrieve information. Look at how your predecessor has addressed this and discuss with them. Another useful source of advice would be your Electronic Communications Liaison Officer.

It is far easier to develop a system from the start, rather than trying to reorganise things later. You may choose to use folders within your email client, as well as or instead of a similar arrangement on your computer. A typical example is given below;

Parent	Child	Grandchild	Great Grandchild
Your Region	Regional Assemblies	Date 1	Agenda Minutes Reports
		Date 2	Agenda Minutes Reports
		Date 3	Agenda Minutes Reports

c) *File Naming*

It is very frustrating when we overwrite a file, or have difficulty in retrieving what we think we have done previously. Consider how you name your files. If we call the latest Region Minute, "Minute" then this only gives us the category of the document, and our search may give us a lot to choose from.

If we use an expanded name, such as "Region Minute for 15th December 2022", then it becomes much easier to find.

You may well want to expand even further, in order to discriminate between "Region Minute for 15th December 2022 DRAFT" and "Region Minute for 15th December 2022 FINAL".

As a final suggestion you may wish to include the revision date as `yyyymmdd` at the beginning of the name, again to make it easy to find the most recent copy that you are working on, giving "20221215 Region Minute for 15th December 2022 FINAL".

Remember that these are suggestions only, and that you may decide to use whatever system works for you, remembering that you have a responsibility to be able to pass this on to your successor.

d) *Backing up your files*

Just do it! Don't rely on a single computer, or a single form of cloud storage, as this is inviting disaster!

Equipment required by the Regional Secretary

- Some Regions may supply a laptop computer to the Regional Secretary.
- Printer
- Scanner may be useful, but not essential
- Paper, envelopes, pens
- Ballot cards
- Word processing and spreadsheet software, available from Google
- Access to email
- Telephone

Please also refer to "[Items to take to the Regional Assembly](#)" below.

Region Members

Have fun getting to know other members, and encourage everyone to feel part of region. Everyone is keen to help, and might enjoy being asked for advice.

Region Executive

Variously known as Region Executive / Steering Committee / Top Table, this group of Regional Officers have the responsibility to review proceedings, and to make decisions on behalf of Region, when these cannot wait until the next Regional Assembly. Some Regions might not have an Executive, but simply rely on conversation between Chair and Secretary. Others have a more structured approach. Typically members comprise Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, with other co-opted members as required.

There may be two Regional Executive meetings planned between assemblies; the first to review the minute, decisions and action points, and the second to draw up the agenda, read reports and sweep up the leaves before the full Assembly. You might also be asked to provide minutes for these meetings.

Other Regional Secretaries

You will be given the opportunity to meet with other Regional Secretaries at the annual service meeting in June. This is a great opportunity to share experience, strength and hope, and to get some new idea to try out, and guidance on persistent difficulties. We benefit greatly by continuing to meet through the year, and to talk about issues as they arise. It's reassuring and comforting to be connected to a neutral person with experience to talk to, and to listen to their suggestions.

Structure and Service Handbooks

The Handbooks contain a wealth of information, that is being constantly reviewed and revised. One of the duties of the secretary is to provide copies for region members. It is one of the first references to reach for.

Terms of Reference

This is described fully [later in this document](#), and [an example is included for reference](#).

Regional Officers Reports

As per the useful information shared at the regional Secretaries meeting in York in July, I have taken on board some very helpful tips for reports and for when to send these out and request these.

I have set in motion in our Region, that reports need to be sent in by Officers no later than 2 weeks prior to the assembly. I have set a reminder to request these 3 weeks prior to the assembly to get these in time to circulate.

Once I have the reports in, I will then circulate these with the Minutes and the agenda with a note stating that these will no longer be printed off and must be read prior to the assembly. Any points raised on the reports will then be discussed at the assembly and will not then be re-read by the officers, this saves time on the length of meeting.

Letters and Signatures

You may wish to create a letterhead including the relevant AA logo, shown on the cover of this document. Letters within the Fellowship may include nominations, support, questions and responses. Normally these have been requested by your Region, and are often signed by Chair and Secretary together.

External letters may be in response to enquiries by other organisations or individuals. It may be prudent to regard these as a PI opportunity, and to gather assistance from additional members.

[An example may be found in PART 5: Specimens and Templates.](#)

Page Size, Fonts and Logo

Keep it simple by setting up your documents for printing on A4 paper.

Use a common font that is easy to read, and use a point size that is adequate for those with visual challenges – usually 11pt Ariel or Calibri, as a minimum as used in this document. Beware of using decorative fonts which may be difficult to read in printed or projected formats.

There is **only one logo** that we might use, as indicated in the Service Handbook. For convenience it is reproduced here:



2) Time, time, time

It might be true that there is never enough time to do everything, but with practice and a little self discipline it is possible to cover most of the ground, whilst also leaving adequate time for other activities. We would recommend keeping an eye on correspondence, and dealing with items as they arise. It helps to have regular conversation with those we work with. Establishing the dates for Regional Assemblies, allows us to set recommended dates for submission of reports, and develop a framework for our activities.

We may encourage others, by adopting a calm and planned approach, rather than frenetic activity and ill-considered demands immediately before an assembly or other meeting. Beware of self-imposed deadlines, and complacency at quiet times – there is always something to do!

Possible annual timeline

	Region	Regional Executive	Other
November	AGM		
December		2 weeks after AGM	
January		2 weeks before RA	
February	Assembly		
March	Pre-Conference	2 weeks after RA	
April		2 weeks before RA	Conference
June	Assembly		Regional Sec's Mtg
July		2 weeks after RA	

August		2 weeks before RA	
September	Assembly	2 weeks after RA	
October		3 weeks before AGM	
			Regional Forum

Doing a little often, as we have learnt, is the way to best manage our time.

PART TWO: The Regional Assembly

1) Before the Assembly

Venue, dates, requirements, costs

The Regional Secretary has the responsibility for the organisation of our meetings, but works closely with the Regional Executive in determining appropriate actions.

Venue

The venue for Assemblies is usually chosen by the Region members, once the Secretary has drawn up a shortlist of possibilities, considering:

- Geographical location
- Access (transport, parking, mobility)
- Audiovisual facilities (projection, hybrid possibilities, hearing loop)
- General suitability (tables, chairs, toilets, refreshments)
- Cost

Assembly Dates

Regional Assembly dates are usually set at the AGM. Many Regions meet on a Sunday to ensure that those who are in employment are not deterred from participating.

Frequency of Regional Assemblies

Regions tend to hold between 4 and 6 Regional Assemblies per annum, as decided by that Region, and in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Service Handbook.

Notification

It is courteous to distribute a reminder along with a request for reports, 3-4 weeks prior to the Assembly. This allows time for the Regional Executive to prepare the agenda and review reports prior to their distribution before the Assembly, giving adequate time for members to consider any points that they might wish to raise.

The Agenda

As a Regional Secretary you will use your AA-email app to send out documents to various people, sometimes to several people at once. Below are some tips for sending emails to your Region's membership as a group.

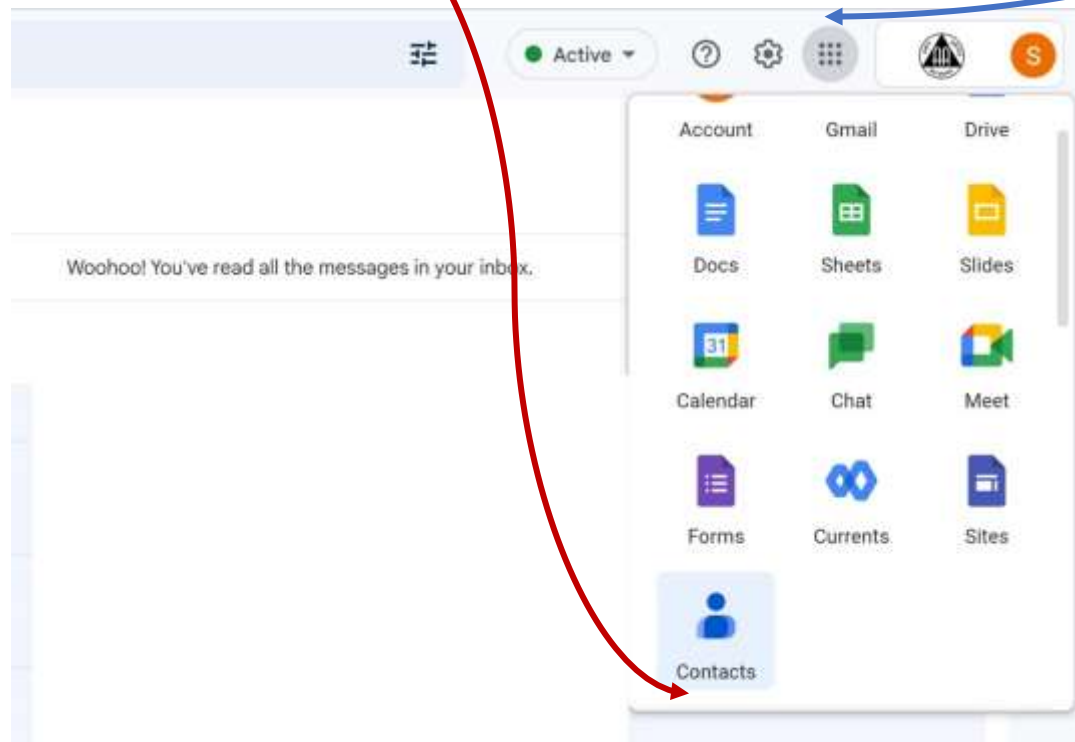
When it comes to writing an agenda for your Region, they may have a template for you to use but if not there is one at the end of this document for you to adapt. You might ask your Region's Chair to help you with the agenda at first and once you are confident you will send the draft agenda to your Chair for approval.

Once approved, the agenda is sent, along with the Minutes from the last Meeting, and any other documents that are needed for the coming Meeting, to the Region's members, and other interested parties (as agreed by your Region e.g., these might include people who are not currently active at Region but hold other service positions that mean they should stay abreast of Region business).

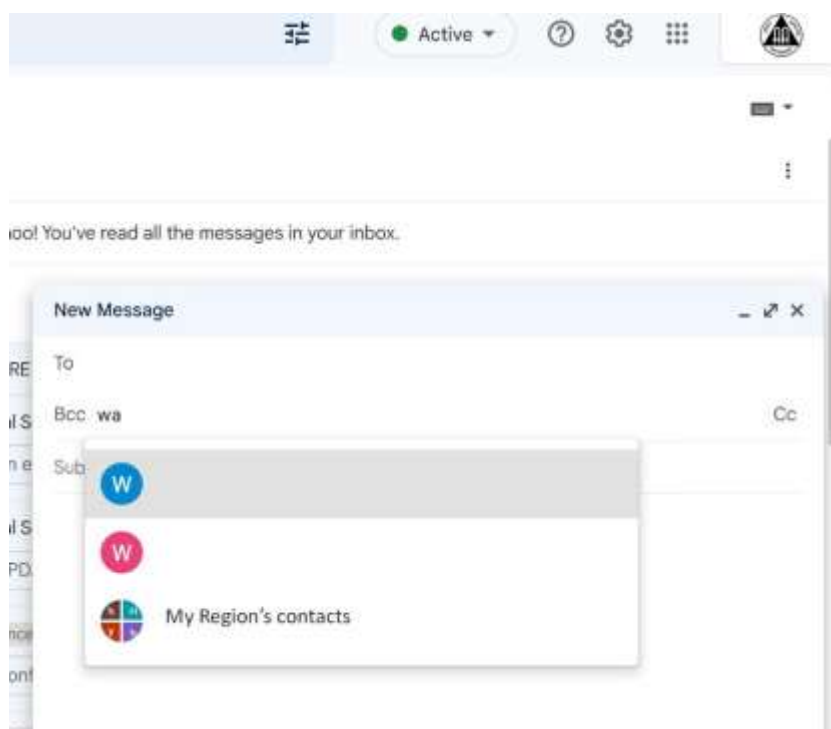
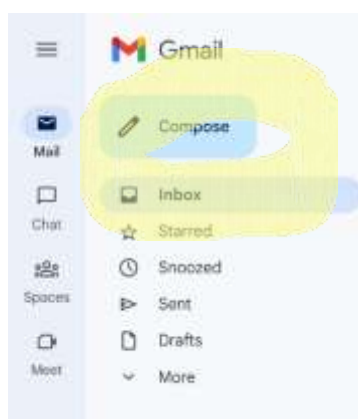
Do not worry about compiling a list of recipients, their contact details should be saved in the AA-email app that you inherited when you took the role.

To find your members contact details on your aamail.org account click on the grey circle with the dots on to reveal the icons below.

Then click onto the contacts icon to reveal the contact details used by the previous Secretary. Alternatively, you could click onto the compose button on the top left of your aamail.org screen. When the new message pops up type the first letters of your Region's name into the **Bcc** line (the Bcc option must be used for GDPR as it makes the email addresses invisible to other



recipients. This is especially important as some contacts may be using personal email addresses) Hopefully, an icon will appear, as below, and by clicking on it your Region's contacts will magically appear!



If you have any questions about your Regional Secretaries email account ask someone else who has one if they can help you.

Preamble and readings	Most Regions begin their Meetings/Assemblies with the Preamble, the Traditions and the Concepts. However, in line with Tradition Four, each group should be autonomous.
A moment of silence	It is suggested that a short silence is observed to acknowledge gratitude and show respect at all AA Meetings.
Introductions	At many Meetings each person will be asked by the Chair to introduce themselves as an alcoholic, adding their role at Region or reason for being there, e.g., as a visitor. This can be observed at virtual and hybrid meetings too.
Apologies	Members or Officers who cannot attend usually send their apologies, in advance, to the Secretary. The Secretary will read them out and they will be noted in the Meeting's Minutes.
Notice of AOB	This is an opportunity for members to bring new AA business to the Meeting, perhaps from their work as a Region Liaison Officer.
Adoption of Minutes of previous Meeting	Any objections or queries about the accuracy of the last Meeting's minutes should be raised at this point. If a correction is needed it will be made. Once all are satisfied with the minutes they will be adopted as correct and a copy sent to mailto:groupinformation@gsogb.org.uk

The agenda should have a 'heading' containing the name of the group who are Meeting, the Meeting's venue, and/or log on details (for hybrid or online Meetings). It could look something like this:

MY REGION'S MEETING

In person at the Meeting Rooms, My City

Online at Meeting: ID 1234567 - Passcode: mypasscode

Sunday 1st January 2023

10:30 – 12:30 - lunch- 13:45 – 15:00

Agenda

The first section of the agenda lists the formal, process usually used to open AA's Region Meetings. We know from our group Meetings that as soon as the Preamble is started the atmosphere in the room shifts as we come together with a singleness of purpose as the Meeting begins.

It is customary for each Regional Officer to write a progress report to be presented at the Meeting. It is up to you whether you want them emailed to you before, at, or after the Meeting. A gentle reminder of your preference sent out with the agenda could be helpful for all parties.

As you will receive digital copies of all reports, there is no need to take any notes on them during the Meeting.

Steering Committee Reports

- Chair
- Vice-chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Trustee

Liaison Officers Reports

- Health
- Prisons
- Archivist
- Employment
- Share
- Telephones
- Public Information
- Probation
- Armed Services
- Young Persons
- Electronic Communications

Matters Arising

'Matters arising,' the agenda's second section, lists topics to be discussed, it usually includes points from the last Meeting and any new business. Below are some hypothetical examples.

Matters arising	Familiarise yourself with the agenda's topics, e.g.,
A) Potential new Meeting venue	Perhaps the Treasurer is leading on this but you might want to remind them to bring details of the potential new venues to the Meeting.
B) Service vacancies	As Secretary you should be fully aware of service vacancies and liaise with your Intergroup Reps to try and fill them. Perhaps you might suggest a Service Workshop at a future Region Meeting.
C) Equipment for Hybrid Meetings	A member with technical knowledge may have been tasked with researching the market for the best deals. You might want to check in with them a week or so before the Meeting to make sure they bring the information to the Meeting.
D) Safeguarding	Safeguarding has been used as an example as it affects us all and it is a regular topic at Region Meetings. It could easily be a topic like sponsorship, telephone service or the Seventh Tradition. When such a matter is on the agenda it seems wise to read the most up to date information, possibly in the most recent Conference Report. You don't have to know everything at all times but it seems sensible to familiarise yourself with items on your agenda.
E) Date of next Meeting	
F) AOB	This could be something that has occurred to a member as a result of discussions during the meeting or something that has been forgotten about. Such points may become agenda items for the next Meeting or they might be Action Points that should be acted upon before the next meeting. For example, members of a new AA meeting in your Region have reached out to you as Region Secretary. So pass their details to a Region Rep from the nearest Intergroup. it's important to list out the tasks that need to be completed, their respective deadlines, and who is responsible for each item on the list.

Finally, the meeting will finish with the Serenity Prayer and the time of closing noted for the Minutes.

During the Meeting you can use the agenda as a template for writing notes for the Meeting's minutes.

MY REGION'S MEETING
In person at the Meeting Rooms, My City
Online at Meeting: ID 1234567 - Passcode: mypasscode
Sunday 1st January 2023
10:30 – 12:30 - lunch- 13:45 – 15:00

AGENDA

<p>1. Welcome & Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Preamble b. Concepts c. Traditions d. Aims of Region 	<p>2. Intergroup Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Intergroup w b. Intergroup x c. Intergroup y d. Intergroup z
<p>3. Attendance register</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Apologies b) Adoption of Minutes of previous Meeting <p>4. Steering Committee reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chair 2. Vice-chair 3. Treasurer 4. Secretary 5. Trustee <p>5. Liaison Officers' Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Archivist 2) Armed Services 3) Electronic Communications 4) Employment 5) Health 6) Prisons 7) Probation 8) Public Information 9) Share 10) Telephones 11) Young Persons 	<p>6. Matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Point 1 b) Point 2 c) Point 3 d) Point 4 e) A.O.B. f) Date of next meeting <p>Serenity prayer and close</p>

Requesting Officer and Intergroup Reports

It is customary to remind officers and Intergroups that reports are required in advance of the meeting, often in conjunction with distribution of the draft agenda. Reports received and distributed prior to the meeting will save time at the Assembly, as they might be taken as read, with the writer only taking questions arising from their report.

It is especially useful to request annual reports for the AGM, and also to ask for a final report when an officer is due to rotate out of position.

Inventory of Items to Take to The Regional Assembly

- Agenda (at least 5 physical copies)
- Attendance Register
- Blank paper or notebook
- Charger
- Copies of reports
- Display items / Regional Banner / Slogans / Safeguarding Card
- Flyers that you have received
- GDPR permission form for collecting contact details
- Intergroup / Region Officer Registration Forms
- Laptop
- Pens
- Playpen
- Previous draft minute to refer to
- Previous draft minute to write on
- Regional Bulletin
- Service Handbooks
- Service News
- Tea / Coffee / Milk / Sugar / Sweetener / Biscuits / Kitchen roll
- Watch / phone / clock
- Your expenses

2) During the Assembly

For Your Information, below is an excerpt from the Gov.UK website

<https://d.docs.live.net/0d72d8754856d277/AA/Region/August%2028th/6th%20Nov%2022/Minute%20taking%20-%20an%20overview.docx>

General

A good minute of a meeting will be:

- i. brief but intelligible;
- ii. self-contained;
- iii. in the main, impersonal; and
- iv. to the full extent that the discussion allows, decisive.

Brevity should be sought in two ways.

- First, a minute should be selective. It is not a substitute for a verbatim record. It should not attempt to reproduce, however summarily, what every speaker said, it should record only the essence of the discussion. The temptation is always to make minutes too long.
- Second, the points selected for inclusion in the minute should be recorded as briefly as possible. Make use of any striking phrases used in the discussion: this will help to reflect the tone of the meeting.

Background:

All AA Regions must keep accurate records of every meeting they hold, these records are known as the minutes. Although we have included examples of different Regions' minutes here, there is no template for an AA minute. Content is more important than style and each Region is free to choose how they record their business. The minutes should be an accurate and transparent log of the decisions made by the Region's rotating officers. At the beginning of each Regional meeting, the minutes of the previous meeting are ratified, and any necessary changes are made before the meeting begins.

The Secretary should send the ratified minutes to GSO. Although the minutes may include an attendance register, a copy of it should be sent to GSO as a separate document (an example can be seen on page 4), This is because copies of the minutes and attendance register are used for different archival purposes (groupinformation@aamail.org)

Preparation for the Regional Assembly:

In the run up to a Regional Assembly the Secretary will write a draft agenda. There is no timetable setting out the number of days or weeks that an agenda should be sent out prior to a Regional Assembly; each Region is autonomous.

Once approved by the Chair, the Secretary should send the agenda, and the minutes from the previous meeting, via email, to members of the Region, and other interested parties.

The Secretary may also use this email to remind the Region's Officers to prepare reports for coming Assembly and send digital copies to them. These reports are attached to the minutes when they are sent out, some include them as appendices and some include them in the appropriate section within the body of the minutes.

This email could also be a prompt for those who cannot attend to send apologies. If the meeting is to be held online or as a hybrid meeting, a link for this could also be included in this email.

A few days prior to the meeting

If there is an online element to the meeting it is advisable to make sure that the designated technician, equipment and software will be in the right place at the right time, on the day. It might be helpful if someone from Region oversees the setting up of the meeting space, tables, chairs, water etc.

On the day of the meeting:

There is no right or wrong way to take notes for your minutes, whether you make handwritten notes, use a shorthand, or have good keyboard skills, all that matters is that they are legible to you.

It seems logical to use the agenda as a writing frame for your note taking during the meeting. After all, the finished minutes will be the Region's response to that agenda. If you prefer to hand write your notes you might consider printing an agenda with larger gaps between each point or section to accommodate your notes.

If you prefer a digital approach, you could type straight on to a renamed (to avoid confusion) digital copy of the agenda.

After the meeting

First experiences of writing up Regional minutes may differ because of the varying levels of sponsorship and support received. Most of us inherited a master copy or template that had been used by our predecessor. Usually this can be found in a folder on our Regional Secretaries' aamail page. If you can locate it, it is a good place to start as the layout remains pretty constant from one meeting to the next, and from one Secretary to the next. You will also find copies of old minutes on your Regional Secretary's email account that you could use as exemplars.

It is personal choice as to when, where and how you write the minute. Some Secretaries write them up straight after the meeting and once approved by the Chair or executive (this will vary from one Region to another), the minutes can be e-mailed out to the membership. It is important that all members receive a copy before the next Assembly.

"An important factor is the availability of elected members to devote time to the work without adversely affecting their family or careers".

p.93 AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain 6th Edition 2021.

[illegible]



Alcoholics Anonymous Wales & Borders Region
Minutes for the 164th Regional Assembly
5th June 2022

Welcome & Readings:

- ☐ Hywel P - Preamble
- ☐ Andy D- Concepts
- ☐ Lizzie – Traditions
- ☐ Helen - Aims of Region

Introductions Around Room

Present:

Hywel P (Chair), Vikki C (Secretary), Zelma K(Trustee), Sandra (Observer), Lizzie (Observer), Helen (Secretary Shropshire IG) Andy D (GSR CDIG) Amanda T (Observer), Jackie G (Regional representative Welsh Borders)

Apologies:

Barry, P Janette, Ali, Tony, David B

Previous Minutes:

Accuracy: Proposed – Jackie, seconded – .Vikki

Matters Arising – In future, should Region meetings be hybrid or in person?

Reports:

1. Chair – Hywel P –Some AA members have received an email suggesting that there has been someone pretending to be an AA member attending Fellowship meetings in North Wales. The information was false, a Scam, and the GSO has dealt with the matter.

I have investigated the possibility of having a hybrid meeting, will be discussed under AOB.

2. Vice-Chair – Vacant

Below the Region's logo, date and time of the meeting, the first item recorded on the minutes is usually the attendance register. A simple table, like the one below, can be customised to suit your needs and you are welcome to adapt the example below, if you wish. It can be copied from the minutes and pasted into a separate document to be sent to GSO for attendance archives (groupinformation@aamail.org).

It is important to consider GDPR when recording anyone's personal details and the introduction of aamail has simplified things greatly. Further information on AA's data protection policy can be found here:

<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/download/1/Library/Documents/Data%20Protection/Data%20Protection%20Policy%20-%202012%20Apr%202022.pdf>

Attendance – Coastal Regional Assembly				
Name	Position	AA email address	Intergroup	Date elected
Allie A	Chair	chair.coast@aamail.org	North	01.02.22
Amy B	Vice Chair	vicechair.coast@aamail.org	West	12.10.22
Archie C	GSB Trustee	trustee.coast@aamail.org	East	23.08.21
Bob A	Regional Public Information LO		South	09.03.22
Brian B	Regional Prisons LO		Left	01.02.22
Bella C	Region rep		Right	16.04.21
Bruce D	Region rep		East	23.08.21
Blanche E	RYPLO		South	30.03.22
Bea F	Region Employment LO		North	01.02.22
Babs G	Observer		West	

Regional AGM Regional Venue Region Street Region RE1 1AA		December 4th 2022 10:00 – 15:00 Hybrid passcode 164164
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Welcome and Readings

- Preamble –
- Concepts –
- Traditions –
- Aims –

Introductions Around Room

- Apologies:
- Previous Minutes:
- Accuracy: Proposed, Seconded

Matters Arising:

Reports: Enter the names of the readers

- Chair –
- Vice-Chair –
- GSB Trustee –
- Secretary –
- Treasurer –

Officers' Reports:

- Health –
- Prisons –
- Archives –
- Employment –
- Share –
- Telephones –
- Public Information –
- Probation –
- Armed Services –
- Young Persons –
- Electronic Communications –

Some Secretaries enter an Officer's report in the main body of the minute, underneath their name.

Others put all the reports as appendix at the end of the minute.

Some prefer making a zip file containing the original documents as they were received from each Officer.

Intergroup Reports:

- Cardiff & District –
- North West Wales –
- Shropshire –
- South East Wales –
- Swansea & District –
- Welsh Borders –
- West Wales –
- Senedd Committee -

Regional Convention - taking place on the weekend of...

General Service Conference

Conference/Alternate Delegates:

Committee One:
Committee Two:
Committee Three:
Committee Four:
Committee Five:
Committee Six:

GSO will contact Regional Secretaries at the end of the year asking for the names of the Region's Delegates.

The Secretary will send a registration form to each Delegate asking them to complete it and return it to GSO.

Alternate Delegates:

One:
Two:
Three:
Four:
Five:
Six:

Regional Service Post Vacancies:

Any Other Business:

Date of Next Meeting:
Meeting closed with Serenity Prayer.

Recording The Minute for the Assembly

You will need to find out what works best for yourself. Some find traditional pen and paper easier than trying to type. Don't try to write down everything, but focus on the topic and comments. Having some prepared materials, such as the agenda and attendance sheet helps. Don't be shy to ask for time to record a particular point, especially if you have been engaged in the conversation; be aware of the conflict between participating and recording what has been said.

Attendance Register

You will need to record who is present, both Region members and observers.

Apologies

Similarly, you will need to record the apologies that you have received; there is no need to record the reason for absence.

Establishing the quorum

By counting the number of members present who hold voting rights, and checking the number of intergroups represented, you will be able to check that the Assembly is quorate.

[See Terms of Reference for definition](#) of a quorum.

Voting and ballots

Your Region will have decided if they vote by show of hands or by ballots. As Secretary you are responsible for counting the votes and then announcing the result.

Recording decisions, including minority views

You will need to record the number of votes for, number against, and number of abstentions. The terms we use are unanimous, substantial majority, and undecided. Be prepared to suggest either rephrasing the motion, or deferring the vote until the next Assembly.

Time Keeping

The secretary has the responsibility of trying to keep the meeting running to time. You might wish to consider the following points which we have found useful;

- When discussing the agenda with the Regional Executive, try to estimate the time required for each item.
- Defer contentious issues towards the end of the meeting.
- Accept that a decision is not possible and defer the item to a later Assembly, allowing members to consider the important points.
- Estimate when you will take a break, and then ask members to keep to time
- If reports have been distributed well in advance of the meeting, then take points for discussion only.
- Remind the Chair of pressure of time as appropriate.

Other responsibilities

Setting up the room

Traditionally, the secretary is often the first to arrive and may start by opening up and setting up the room. Don't be shy of asking others to help.

Getting yourself organised

Make sure you preserve time to get yourself comfortable and organised. Does the projector work? Beware of trailing cables. Go to the loo!

Helping others

Make sure that the Chair has the appropriate paperwork as a guide.

Counter-signing cheques

You might be asked to countersign cheques during the break or at the end of the Assembly.

Clearing up

Leaving a good impression never offends!

3) After the Assembly

The Minute

Writing the minute

It is usually a good idea to write up the minute whilst it is fresh in your mind, though there are occasions where you might like to delay a little while to allow emotions to settle. Once you have finished, make sure that you read it through carefully and remove unnecessary

text. If you use a previous minute as a template, take care not to overwrite the original, and also to change the dates appropriately.

The choice of how you would like your minute to appear lies between yourself and your Region. There is wide variation between Regions, and you will intuitively know what is most helpful. In this electronic age, bookmarking and links may be useful, though we have to ensure that these documents are accessible to all who have a desire to read them.

Approval of minute

The draft minute will be approved by the Chair, or Regional Executive. There may be a few minor changes required.

Distribution of Minute

Following approval, the minute is distributed by email to Region Members, Intergroup Chairs and Intergroup Secretaries. You may wish to incorporate reports into the minute, or to distribute these separately. Some regions may use FileStore as an alternative. Some members may require a physical copy.

Regional Bulletin and Regional Reports for Intergroups

You may be asked by GSRs to provide bullet points that they may report back to Intergroup. You might feel that this is their responsibility, but some of us have found it useful to provide this information, and to also use it as the basis for a Regional Bulletin, that might be sent on to groups by the Intergroup Secretaries. The aim of this exercise is to allow members to engage with structure and to attract members into service, as well as informing them of our activity on their behalf.

[An example may be found in PART 5: Specimens and Templates.](#)

Updating Records

Please read the relevant section below covering this important aspect of our work.

[See PART 3 Section 1 Record Keeping](#)

4) The Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The AGM has some special features, and it is wise to consider these in advance. It may be that extra time is required, to nominate and elect new officers, as well as to carry out some annual tasks. Often the AGM may be more highly attended than other Assemblies.

5) The Extraordinary Regional Assembly

Occasionally it may be necessary for the Regional Executive to call for an Extraordinary Assembly to address matters that might not be decided by the executive, and which might not wait until the scheduled Assembly. This situation may arise if there is a backlog of incomplete business, or the need to replace trusted servants at short notice. Region needs to be given adequate notice and the background information for the items placed on the agenda.

PART THREE: Between Assemblies

1) Record Keeping

Attendance Register

Keeping this register prevents argument. It clearly demonstrates if a quorum are present, and also shows who is in each position and has voting rights. This document may be included as a page of your minute.

Regional Officers and Service Opportunities

You might wish to consider keeping a separate document recording the current officers and vacancies. You may wish to include the anticipated date of rotation out of position, so that this may be planned for in a proactive fashion.

Historical Roll of Officers

It is helpful to work with your Archivist, to establish a list of those who have been involved in service at region over the years. This information becomes especially useful when considering those who might wish to consider potential nomination for Board Trustee.

Terms of Reference

Each Region may wish to define the responsibilities of regional officers, voting rights, and the required quorum (the minimum number of members of an assembly that must be present at any of its meetings to make the proceedings of that meeting valid).

Such terms of reference are prepared by the executive (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer), before being approved by the Regional Assembly.

The terms of reference are distributed to all officers, and reviewed at each Assembly, or as needed.

[An example may be found in PART 5: Specimens and Templates.](#)

Decision Digest

It might be useful to prepare a table of the decisions made at each Regional Assembly. This allows ease of reference, rather than having to trawl through previous minutes. You might choose to include this information in your Regional Bulletin, if you prepare such a document. This information may be collected together in a single document or spreadsheet which has consistency and is searchable.

[An example may be found in PART 5: Specimens and Templates.](#)

Previous Minutes

You will need to produce a final minute for the previous Assembly, following it's approval, making any required amendments. You may wish to discuss this with the Region Chair / Executive, before;

- Sending the final version to GSO

- Distributing to Region Members
- Archiving a copy on FileStore
- Archiving a personal copy

Contact Details and Distribution Lists

These are constantly reviewed and updated. Never assume they are correct! ***It is essential that you collect the signature of each person for whom you are recording details, so that you have their expressed permission to do so, fulfilling the requirements of GDPR.*** These contact details should not be used for any purpose other than the business of your Region.

Correspondence

There is little physical correspondence to the Regional Secretary. You may wish to file this physically, or to convert it into an electronic format and store it for future retrieval.

Periodically, you will receive AA Service News, Notice of Service Meetings and notification of Conventions. It is normal practice to forward these to Region members and you affiliated Intergrups, to be certain that they have received this information.

Reimbursement of Expenses

Remember to keep a record of your expenditure (paper, envelopes, printer consumables, photocopying, etc) so that you might claim for reimbursement via the Region Treasurer.

Updating AA Meeting Details

OR REGISTERING A NEW GROUP WITH GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE (GSO)

Commonly known amongst the Fellowship as 'submitting the Pink Form for your group'

How do I register a new group, or update the information for an existing meeting?

Your new group is now up and running, which is great news! Experience suggests that after a period of 3-4 months, the group ought to know if it has enough support to continue to meet and be self-supporting.

If the answer to the above is 'yes', it is recommended that the new group registers with GSO in York. By registering the group, it ensures that the meeting will be listed online in the 'Where to Find' listing and the group will also receive communications from GSO such as AA Service News etc.

An AA member can register the new group by completing the 'Pink Form'. The 'Pink Form' is used in the same way to make any changes to the group's information. For example, a change in start/finish time of the meeting, change in format, etc.

Where do I find the 'Pink Form'?

There are two options available on how to submit your information – you can either do this in **paper format** or **on line** through [the AA website](#):

How do I submit the information in paper format?

Go to the following website - <https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk>

Click on the 'Menu' option and select 'Members' and then click on 'Document Library'.

Choose 'Forms' from the drop-down menu.

You will then see that there is a document (PDF version) called 'Group Registration Form For All Groups (Pink Form)'.

Print off the form and complete the relevant information. To ensure you complete the form accurately, it is best to refer to the document (PDF version) called 'Group Registration Form (Notes)'.

The completed form then needs to be sent to GSO at the following address:
General Service Office, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York, YO1 7NJ.
Contact details for GSO are: Telephone: 01904 644026 /
Email: aainformation@gsogb.org.uk

Once the group is registered with GSO, a 'starter pack' can be ordered from the Office for £20, which, at the time of writing, contains the following material:

- 1 each of: Big Book (soft cover) / 12 Steps 12 Traditions / 44 Questions & Answers / This is AA / Young People in AA / AA for the Woman / Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered / Do You Think You're Different? / Too Young? / The AA Group / Growing into Service / Let it Stay Here card / Service Handbook and Structure Handbook
- 3 each of: Is AA For You? / 15 Points / A Newcomer Asks / Who Me? / How It Works / Just For Today card / Wallet Card (Steps, Traditions, Prayer) / Internet Safety card / AA at a Glance / A Message to Young People / A4 Posters - Contact AA / Trapped / Too Young?

How do I submit the information on-line?

If you wish to submit the information on line, you can do so.

Go to the following website - <https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk>

Click on the 'Menu' option and select 'AA Meetings' and then click on 'Submitting your Meeting Information (Pink Form)'.

A blank form will appear so that you can complete all the relevant information in the fields provided and then click 'Submit'.

Why is it important to register your group AND KEEP THE INFORMATION UP TO DATE?

When the new group is on the lists of intergroup and General Service Office and in the local and national 'Where to Find' systems, then the opportunities for the still suffering alcoholic to find AA have been increased. Those involved in the birth of the group will have done valuable service to the Fellowship, and we will all hope that the group continues to fulfil its primary purpose for years to come.

2) Conference

It is helpful to consider these responsibilities chronologically. There is significant variation between Regions in the role of the Regional Secretary and that of the Conference Delegates Subcommittee.

October:	The Regional Secretary will receive Conference Delegate registration forms from the Conference Co-ordinator to be distributed to the committee Conference Delegates for their region.
December:	Conference questions will be sent to Regional Secretaries (Service News) to be disseminated to Regional Representatives. Regional

	Representatives will send collated intergroup responses to Regional Secretaries to be distributed to Region for Pre-Conference discussion so a Region response can be collated
Pre-Conference meeting:	Secretary may minute Regional collective responses, including minority opinions.
Post-Conference meeting:	Secretary may share Conference outcomes (via Service News or Region meeting minutes).

3) Regional Forum

The Regional Secretary may be involved in:

- Liaising with GSO staff on availability of speakers and potential dates in relation to other regions forums.
- Identifying appropriate venues and liaising with venue staff on costings, room use, refreshments etc.
- Disseminating information on forum venue and topics to Regional Representatives and wider fellowship.
- Registering interest/ticketing.

However, a sub-committee may be formed to deal with some, or all, of the above tasks.

4) Regional Inventory

Regions are encouraged to undertake a periodic Regional Inventory. This may require an additional Assembly, or the extension of an existing date. Please refer to the Service Handbook.

5) Regional Workshop

Occasion may arise where Region requires to undertake a Regional Workshop, as opposed to a Regional Forum. This may be organised by a subcommittee.

6) Communication between Regional Secretaries

There are presently 15 regions on mainland Great Britain and one further region representing English speaking Continental Europe.

Regional officers represent the same service disciplines as intergroups and provide a forum for discussion, exchange of information/best practice and an opportunity for initiatives which carry AA's message over a larger geographical area.

Detailed below are the generic email addresses for Regional Secretaries to enable us to communicate with each other and share thoughts, ideas and suggestions!

See [Regional Secretaries' Meeting](#) above.

Email Addresses For Regional Secretaries

REGION	EMAIL ADDRESS
East of Scotland	secretary.eos@aamail.org
Eastern	secretary.east@aamail.org
Glasgow	secretary.gla@aamail.org
Highlands & Islands	secretary.hai@aamail.org
London (South)	secretary.ls@aamail.org
London (North)	secretary.ln@aamail.org
Midlands	secretary.mid@aamail.org
North East	secretary.ne@aamail.org
North West	secretary.nw@aamail.org
Scotia	secretary.scotia@aamail.org
South East	secretary.se@aamail.org
South Midlands	secretary.sm@aamail.org
South West	secretary.sw@aamail.org
South West Scotland	secretary.sws@aamail.org
Wales & Borders	secretary.wb@aamail.org
Continental Europe	secretary.cer@aamail.org



Big red button!
Press here to email all Regional Secretaries!
Opens a new message in your email client

PART FOUR: More Resources

Personal Stories

An experience of growing into the service role of regional secretary

I am currently only in the first few months of this 3 year service position and during this time have attended a region meeting online and more recently face to face – including our AGM. I have also attended the annual meeting of fellow Regional secretaries at General Service Office (GSO), from where the initiative to hold monthly meetings of secretaries on zoom arose. During that time, chaired by a very capable member and secretary, the team have put together a document for consideration by the Literature sub-committee relating to the role of the region secretary and are in the process of developing a more detailed internal document for the use of existing and more particularly incoming secretaries.

Why am I telling you this? To illustrate how rapidly changing this role has been for me in just a few short months and it's exhilarating. I thought I knew my way around region, the service structure, the AA web site, Conference, having served in several other roles but I've witnessed the opportunities for growth are boundless. I didn't think there was much about AA 'business' I didn't know – how wrong I was.

I have made new friends in the region assemblies, from parts of Yorkshire I would never otherwise have visited and been overawed by the enthusiasm and passion of members for our fellowship and in carrying the message. Whilst my role is 'internal service' I recognise and am passionate about its value. Its crucial role in being the conduit between the levels of the service structure – to and fro. I have found availability and reliability has been much valued by my region and I endeavour to serve them well. It's truly a privilege to hold this post and one day at a time I hope I can repay the trust placed in me.

The responsibility itself I initially found to be heavy, not having been sponsored into the role, and requiring some bedding in time but with the support of the members of our steering committee and now more specifically with meeting other regional secretaries on a monthly basis who willingly share their coping strategies and skills, it has become lighter. I was just today sent the means to format a word document by a new found friend in service which has increased my confidence. The aim of compiling the Guideline document was for members like myself who may have little other support.

I have taken the lead in organising and taking part in a one day workshop discovering skills and courage I never dreamt I possessed. I have had cause to liaise with GSO staff – dedicated to doing their best for our fellowship. I have acquired the working knowledge of an aa email address and compiling a contacts list for emails. I am a co-signatory for our bank account. All this in a few short months – as well as the regular secretary duties at the region assemblies.

I am excited to see how the role develops and how much more I find out about myself in navigating the challenges. It has been and I'm sure will continue to be an unexpected opportunity for personal growth and one I'm privileged to have been entrusted with.
In fellowship

Regional Secretary Position

Since I have been in the position of secretary for my region I have learnt so much. At first, I was very nervous as I really didn't know what I was doing but thankfully I had a very good Secretary before me that left me a guide. I also know I am not alone, and others can point me in the right direction.

The job itself is very rewarding. It is a very busy position and entails quite a bit of time, but I was told to give back to something that saved my life and I do it with joy.

As Secretary you are in a very responsible position, and it has taught me to be more organised, but it has also taught me a lot more about AA as a whole and how it works. The great thing about all of this is that I have met some great people and knowing that I am being a servant to this wonderful fellowship.

PART FIVE: Documents and Templates

May be included as separate document

List of specimen documents and templates

Region Letterhead	Example of Region Letterhead
Agenda	Example of Agenda 1
	Example of Agenda 2
	Example of Agenda 3
Minutes	Example Minute 1
	Example Minute 2
	Example Minute 3
Regional Bulletin / Newsletter	Example of Regional Bulletin 1
	Example of Regional Bulletin 2
Attendance Register	
Regional Assembly Report for Intergroup	
Contact Details for Regional Officers	
Regional Forum Agenda / Flyer	
Terms of Reference	
Decision Digest	
AA logo	
Intergroup and Regional Officer Registration Form	AA website
Regional Officers Report Template	
Intergroup Report Template	

PART SIX: Text Submitted to the LSC

Text submitted to Literature Subcommittee

[Included here as a reference, as we all agreed this together, and might decide to use this as the introduction and layout of this document]

Our list is intended to be suggestive only, promoting unity in service, and reflecting on our own experience, as well as those before us, and to help those yet to come.

The Regional Secretary is trusted as the main channel of communication both to, and from, Region. Such communication may be vertical between Region and the Intergroups we serve, and GSO, or horizontal between members of the Regional Assembly, and between Regions. We also support the passage of relevant information between members and our non-alcoholic friends. Messages may be verbal, postal or electronic. The Regional Secretary is required to be available and approachable and should use clear, unbiased, understandable language in keeping with our Traditions.

The Regional Secretary is a member of the Regional Executive, and as such is usually a co-signatory for Region Funds. The agenda for the Regional Assembly, the minutes, and other pertinent documents are reviewed by the Regional Executive together, vested with the Right of Decision embodied in our 3rd Concept.

The Regional Secretary is responsible for securing the venue, setting dates for, and ensuring the smooth running of Regional Assemblies, including the AGM.

The Regional Secretary is responsible for working with all Regional Liaison Officers, aiding them by passing on enquiries and communications such as AA Service News and notification of Regional LO meetings, and encouraging timely submission of reports reflecting the action points from the most recent Regional Assembly.

The Regional Secretary is responsible for maintaining accurate and contemporary records, observing GDPR requirements. Such documents may include;

- Regional Assembly Agenda
- Regional Assembly Minutes
- Regional Assembly Summary for Intergroups and Groups
- Register of Regional Officers
- Register of Contact Details
- Digest of Decisions
- Register of members who have served at Region
- Register of members who have served a full term at Conference.
- The Regional Secretary is responsible for encouraging completion of the following forms and providing letters of support where required:
 - Regional Officer Registration forms (also required for registration for aamail.org email addresses and access to the Confidential Directory)
 - Conference Delegate and Alternate Registration Forms

- Board Trustee Nomination forms

Letters to, and responses to enquiries from outside organisations are usually composed in collaboration with the Regional Chair and other members.

The Regional Secretary is responsible for calculating the quorum required for decision making at the Regional Assembly, ensuring voting eligibility and conducting ballots appropriately.

The Regional Secretary is responsible for encouraging attendance at Regional Assemblies and acting as a service sponsor by demonstrating the value of service.

Proposed Text for The AA Service Handbook

for Great Britain and English Speaking Continental Europe 2023

****Proposed text pending Conference approval.****

Committee 2 Question 4

Review revision to the *Structure Handbook*, p.96

Background

Request from regional secretaries for more information in handbook on their role and the structure of assemblies.

2. The Regional Assembly

It is suggested that a regional assembly should comprise up to three regional representatives from each participating intergroup, who should be prepared to serve for a term of three years. Provision should be made for rotation to preserve continuity. It is recommended that regional representatives should have at least three years' continuous sobriety and sufficient intergroup experience. An important factor is the availability of elected members to devote time to the work without adversely affecting their family or careers.

Regional representatives should elect their officers from members of the Assembly. These should consist of:

- The Chair, who takes the meeting
- The Vice Chair deputizes for the chair and often takes responsibility for workshops and forums.
- The Treasurer, who attends to finance matters, more information on which is given in section (renumbered) 5, Region Money.
- The Regional Secretary is the channel of communication for their region. Suggested duties may be found in (new) section 3, Administrative Responsibilities

These officers, and others, if decided by a region, may form an Executive or Steering Committee that meets as required between assemblies to deal with urgent matters and to prepare for the assembly. Any one or more of these members may be a co-signatory for region funds.

The agenda for the regional assembly, the minutes, and other pertinent documents are reviewed collectively by this group. Executive committee members are jointly responsible for securing the venue, setting dates for, and ensuring the smooth running of regional assemblies, including the AGM, although this may be undertaken primarily by the regional secretary. They should participate

in encouraging attendance at assemblies and act as service sponsors, by demonstrating the value of service.

In addition, members should be elected, taking into consideration their experience or interest, to the following positions:

- Archivist
- Armed Services Liaison Officer
- Electronic Communications Liaison Officer
- Employment Liaison Officer
- Health Liaison Officer
- Prison Liaison Officer
- Probation/Criminal Justice Liaison Officer (Scotland)
- Public Information Liaison Officer
- SHARE/Roundabout Liaison Officer
- Telephone Liaison Officer
- Young People's Liaison Officer

It is recommended that these officers should serve a maximum of three years and be confirmed annually.

The regional assembly may also co-opt a member of the region, not necessarily a regional representative, to carry out a specific task as a non-voting member of the assembly for the duration of the work involved (e.g., convention convenor, archivist).

Having served three years a regional representative should retire by rotation, thus providing a place for another to gain regional experience and so enrich experience of service in the Fellowship. He or she could then be eligible for re-election after a minimum period of one year. When the regional representatives of an intergroup are depleted because one of their number has been elected to serve as an officer, then another suitable member may be elected by the intergroup concerned to take their place.

It is suggested that a regional assembly should comprise two or three regional representatives from each of its constituent intergroups, together with its elected officers and General Service Board (GSB) member. These are the sole holders of voting rights. Observers and visitors are welcome but may not participate unless invited by the chair.

It is suggested that the assembly should meet 4 times annually. The meeting should be called in a proper manner with a settled agenda, and minutes should be circulated after the meeting with copies to interested persons such as General Service Office (GSO), the GSB and neighbouring regions for information as an additional means of sharing experience.

New section 3 below will precede current 3 (Conference Delegates/ Alternates), 4 (Region Money) and 5 (Regional Forums) to be renumbered 4, 5 and 6:

3. Administrative Responsibilities

A regional secretary is the channel of communication for the region, with its intergroups, with GSO, members of the regional assembly, or other regions. They also support the passage of relevant information between members and outside bodies with whom AA deals. The regional secretary should be approachable, use clear language, and keep within our Traditions.

They work with all regional liaison officers (LOs), passing on enquiries and communications such as AA Service News and notifications of regional LO meetings, and encourage timely reports for the regional assembly.

They maintain accurate records, observing GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations). These may include:

- Regional assembly agenda and minutes (and forwarding copies to GSO)
- Summary from the regional assembly for intergroups and groups
- Register of regional officers and contact details
- Digest of decisions
- Register of members who have served at region, and of members who have served a full term at Conference.

The regional secretary is also responsible for:

- Regional officer registration with GSO (required for aamail.org email addresses and access to the Confidential Directory)
- Conference delegate and alternate delegate registration with GSO
- AAGB Sub Committee applications, GSB nominations, and letters of support

Any correspondence with outside organisations is usually in collaboration with the regional chair and other appropriate members – specific liaison officers or members of the executive committee.

The regional secretary establishes eligibility to vote and the quorum at the assembly and conducts ballots appropriately.

It is suggested that when time permits and business is completed a sharing session on some specific subject is held in which observers may participate, the object being to forward our primary purpose and improve services in the region.

It is suggested that:

1. Each region holds a regular inventory.
2. The regional inventory generates a list of ideas and actions to be used as a yardstick.
3. The region considers using the inventory list as a regular item on their agendas.
4. The inventory questions and answers of that region be shared with other regions and the GSO / GSB for wider distribution to the Fellowship, e.g., through AA Service News and the Regional Chairs' Meetings.

Service structure

Committees may be formed to support region officers in their roles, allowing for shadowing and sponsorship into service positions.

The formation of committees may be along the lines adopted by the GSB as listed in The General Service Board, section 1, or to address the region's requirements. Here are some examples:

- Finance
- External Communications
- Executive

There should be named liaison or contact officers for specific areas of service at all levels to enable contact with neighboring regions, as well as intergroups and GSO.

PART SEVEN: Glossary and Index

Glossary of Terms

Abstain	Are you in the right place?
Agenda	Items for discussion, and the running order for the Assembly
AGM	Annual General Meeting
Assembly	Members have assembled for a purpose ie more than a “Meeting”
BCC	“Blind Carbon Copy”
Bookmarking	Navigation aid in electronic documents
CC	“Carbon Copy”
Decision	A binding decision taken by Region as a whole
Executive	Chair / Vice-Chair / Secretary / Treasurer
FileStore	File Storage offered on the AA website. Requires application for a password, which is periodically changed.
GSO	General Service Office
Informed conscience	Indicates that the Assembly have been briefed appropriately
LSC	Literature Sub Committee
Minority opinion	The opinion of those who have been outvoted. Make sure that they have had the opportunity to record a minority opinion, and that an attempt has been made to change the precise wording of the motion proposed. The person with a minority point of view should have the opportunity to either express their opinion or to abstain.
Quorate	The Assembly has appropriate representation to be able to make decisions on behalf of affiliated groups.
Quorum	The proportion of members / intergroups represented, that region has determined as a definition of adequate representation.
RCJLO	Regional Criminal Justice Liaison Officer
RECLO	Regional Electronic Communications Liaison Officer
RELO	Regional Employment Liaison Officer
RHLO	Regional Health Liaison Officer
RPILO	Regional Public Information Liaison Officer
RPLO	Regional Prison Liaison Officer
RTLO	Regional Telephone Liaison Officer
RYPLO	Regional Young Persons Liaison Officer
Substantial unanimity	More than 2/3
Terms of Reference	Definitions as to how Region functions
Unanimous	Without any objection or dissent

Where to find

A

AA Email address	10
AA Service News	27
AAGB Website.....	11
After the Assembly	24
Agenda.....	16, 19
Anonymity	9
Apologies	23
Assembly Dates.....	16
Attendance Register	22, 26

B

BCC Fields	10
Before the Assembly.....	16
Bookmarking.....	24

C

Clearing up.....	23
Conference	28
Confidential Directory.....	11
Contact Details and Distribution Lists.....	27
Contents	2
Conventions.....	27
Correspondence.....	27
Counter-signing cheques	23

D

Date and Author	10
Decision Digest	26
Description and Boundaries.....	7
Distribution Lists.....	10
Document Formats and Distribution	9
During the Assembly.....	22

E

Equipment required.....	12
-------------------------	----

F

File Naming	12
File Organisation	11
FileStore.....	10, 24
Fonts	14
Frequency of Regional Assemblies	16

G

Getting yourself organised.....	23
Glossary of Terms	38

H

Helping others	23
Historical Roll of Officers	26

I

Inventory of Items to Take to The Regional Assembly.....	22
IT Skills	11
IT Skills and File Organisation	11

L

Language	
Gender-neutral	9
of the heart	9
Letters and Signatures	14
Liaison Officers Reports	19
Links	24
Logo	14

M

Minute	24
Minute Approval	24
Minute Distribution	24
Minute Writing	24

N

Notification	16
Now that I am Secretary . . \	6

O

Other responsibilities.....	23
-----------------------------	----

P

Page Size	14
Personal Stories	31
<i>Pink Form</i>	27
Previous documents and email	11
Previous Minutes	26

Q

Qualifications for Role as Secretary	7
Quorum.....	23, 26

R

Record Keeping.....	26
Recording decisions, including minority views	23
Recording The Minute for the Assembly	22
Region Executive.....	13
Region Members.....	13
Regional Assembly.....	16
Regional Bulletin	24, 26
Regional Forum.....	29
Regional Inventory.....	29
Regional Officers and Service Opportunities	26
Regional Reports for Intergroups.....	24
Regional Secretaries	13, 29
Regional Secretaries Meeting	6
Regional Workshop.....	29
Reimbursement of Expenses	27
Relationships and Responsibilities.....	7
Reports	13, 22
Resources.....	11

S

Service Meetings.....	27
Setting up.....	23
Steering Committee Reports	19
Structure and Service Handbooks.....	13

T

Telephone and conversation	9
Terms of Reference.....	26
The Annual General Meeting	24
The Extraordinary Regional Assembly	25
Time Keeping.....	23
Time, time, time.....	14

U

Updating AA Meeting Details.....	27
----------------------------------	----

V

Venue.....	16
Voting and ballots	23

W

Welcome.....	6
--------------	---

Use <<go to page>> for now please
Reformat and insert links

Congratulations!

You have reached the end!