

**MINUTES OF NORTH WEST INTERGROUP MEETING HELD AT
CATTERALL VILLAGE HALL, GARSTANG ROAD, CATTERALL, PR3 1XN
ON SUNDAY 10th May 2026 at 12:30 am**

THE NWIG BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS ARE: -

Name of Bank	Unity Trust Bank
Name of Account	North West Intergroup
Sort Code	60 – 83 - 01
Account Number	20464532

OFFICERS PRESENT in the room:

Chair	Phil H	1
Secretary	Chris D	2
Vice-Chair (and Region Rep 2)	Catherine C	3
ECLO	Neil D	4
HLO	Nigel C	5
Public Information Liaison Officer	Adam D	6

GSRs PRESENT in the room:

Adam D	Tarleton Friday	PILO
Cal C	Carnforth Tuesday	7
Chris D	Settle	Secretary
Chrissy S	Arch to Freedom - Lancaster	8
Gemma E	Barrow Road to Recovery	9
James F	Lindale Sunday	10
Jo W	Kendal Monday	11
John M	Lancaster Wednesday	12
John M	Levland	13
Lindsay A	Bartle Beginners	14
Neil D	Morecambe Wednesday St Marys Reflection	ECLO
Nick S	Lancaster Monday	15
Nigel	Fleetwood	HLO
Paul C	Morecambe, St Marys Sunday	16
Phil H	Garstang Friday	Chair
Steve W	Bamber Bridge Fri	17
Terry W	St Chads Chorley	18
Tom W	Leyland Young Persons meeting	19

VISITORS PRESENT in the room: -

Bobby	Carnforth	20
Derek H	Leyland	21
Kate A	-	22
Louisa B	-	23
Mike D	kendal	24
Nickie B	Lancaster Arch to Freedom	25
Phil A	Lancaster Arch to Freedom	26
Tom B	Chair Liverpool City IG / NW REGION PROBATION LIAISON OFFICER.	27
Tony H	Ashton	28
Tracy C	Carnforth Tuesday	29

ATTENDING REMOTELY: -

	GSR/OFFICER = VOTING RIGHTS	Visitor From	
Duncan	REGION REP 1	-	30
Wendy W	Penrith	-	31

1) **INTRODUCTION: -**

Welcome	By Phil.
Thanks to the provider of technical support	FCl O Neil.
Thanks to the refreshment helper	Nigel and Suzie
Preamble	Read by Phil.
Traditions	Read by Nigel.
Declaration of Unity	Read by Kate.
Aims of Intergroup	Read by Adam.
Responsibility Statement	Read by Catherine C.
Number of members present	29 in the room + 2 joined remotely. Grand Total 31 Of which 10 were visitors.
Number of members with voting rights	18 raised hands in the room + 2 online = 20. 20 x 2/3 = 14. (According to signing in sheet, this should have been 19 in the room + 2 online = 21: 21 x 2/3 = 14)
Signing in sheet	Phil reminded all to sign in please.

2) Clarification of who can vote at NWIG and count of those present with voting rights – including those zooming in. **Voting rights: Hands up = 20.**

THE MOT WAS PASSED AT THE BRFK: Thank you, Neil, for standing in for led our treasurer today and dealing with this.

3) To receive apologies. Apologies have been received from: -

1. Liz, Windermere.
2. Elaine, Lancaster Women's.
3. Margaret H, Lancaster St Chads.
4. Michael A, Chorley Monday St Barnabas.
5. Kath, Shap.
6. Jum F, Region Rep.
7. Charlie, Archivist.
8. Jenny D.
9. Debs, TLO.
10. Jed, Treasurer.
11. Tom, Garstang.
12. Suzie, Conference delegate.
13. Paul, Carlisle.

4) To agree the minutes of the NWIG meeting of 8th February 2026. (Paper 2026/19)

Proposed by: John.

Seconded by: Nigel.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of 8th February 2026 are accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting

5) **Chair's Report:** To receive the chairs report. (Paper 2026/20)

Not a lot to report as most of the information will be covered by other officer's reports.

There has been some positive AA activity going on within our intergroup in helping the still suffering alcoholic and also in creating unity between the groups, this is always great to hear and share about, long may it continue.

However, the ongoing issues around finance and transparency etc, and the serious incident report where the Board reported NWIG to the charity commission for Bullying and Harassment, are still not resolved. Since the first serious incident report came out hours after the Intergroup meeting, and despite the General Secretary being forwarded a true account of the minutes plus a recording of the day, although it may have been a little heated, it proved there was certainly no Bullying or Harassment of the Trustees.

Despite this, on the 8th April just before Conference the General Secretary still sent another email to all Regions and Intergroups (except NWIG) to further vilify NWIG.

Fortunately, Chris (NWIG Secretary) saw it and responded back to all recipients with the true facts as it could have had consequences for our NWIG members who are conference delegates this year. I certainly hope this was not the case.

The Board do seem to have closed down all correspondence with NWIG; despite emails to them I have received nothing about the minutes/recording of the alleged serious incident or any other matter.

Intergroup may wish to comment on a way forward.

There will also have to be the decision on withholding or sending fellowship money to the Charity.

Since day one of these concerns NWIG have appealed for a solution and transparency on finances. Despite these appeals, NWIG or any of the fellowship, have never been offered any straight answers to remedy this long overdue problem. Other Intergroups and Regions are now asking the same or similar questions - we are not alone with this.

Concept 5 "Right of Appeal"

"Throughout our world service structure, a traditional Right of Appeal ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be considered".

The Board have never considered offering any transparency, nor any solution, and any promises made never materialize. The minority feelings about this lack of transparency are certainly growing. Please consider this when making decisions on Fellowship money. It is our money and we have a right to know where it is going. Concludes my report.

LIF. Phil H. Chair NWIG.

6) **Secretary's Report** and any matters arising.

- a) To receive the Secretary's report: (Paper 2026/21)

Received. No matters arising.

- b) To consider uploading NWIG minutes to the microsite as other IG's already do

VOTE:

For: 20.

Against: 0.

Abstained: 0.

RESOLVED: To upload the minutes from 2025 onwards to the microsite.

7) **Report on the Service Workshop:** (Paper 2026/22)

The Service Workshop was held on 21st March 2026.

I want to start by saying a huge thank you to everyone involved in this day, it really was a superb committee. It was a pleasure to do service with you all.

It took place at the Friends Meeting House in Lancaster from 12pm to 4pm, and the first half of the meeting could be accessed via Zoom.

The first half of the workshop included three speakers. The first speaker shared on their experience of doing service and the 12 Concepts. The second spoke about their experience and the service structure. The third spoke about their experience and the three legacies. They all did a great job.

The second half of the day was a 12-traditions speed dating style workshop. This involved splitting attendees into small groups and they spent 3 minutes listening to someone pitch a tradition. It was good fun. There were about 40 people in attendance. There were members from Preston, Cumbria, Lytham, Morecambe, Lancaster and Garstang. Only one person attended via Zoom.

There was interest in people getting involved in telephone service, prison service, intergroup service and hospital service.

We made people aware of the vacancies at our intergroup, I'm hoping we will get at least some of our vacant positions filled today.

If we hold an event like this in the future, I suggest we combine the event with a one-day mini convention. I suspect the title of mini convention may entice more members to attend.

Any other suggestions about how we can encourage more to attend would be appreciated.

Thank you Catherine and all the team from NWIG for organising this event.

8) **Liaison Officer Reports** and matters arising: -

- a) Archivist (Charlie).
 - **No report received.**
- b) Electronic Communication LO (Neil). (Paper 2026/23)
 - **Report received. As read.**
- c) Health LO (Nigel). (Paper 2026/24)
 - **Report received. As read.**
 - **Nigel needs to step down today.**
 - **He will do a proper hand over to any replacement voted in today.**
 - **Please take away the posters that he has brought today.**
- d) Prison LO (VACANT: Phil covering).
 - i) **Prison Report.** (Paper 2026/25)

I have sent out a suggestion to all members who may wish to get involved with the Prison service within NWIG hope you have all seen it.

Prison service is an ideal opportunity to carry the message and to enhance your own recovery.

This is just an update: -

There are 5 prisons in NWIG – Lancaster Farms, Wymott, Garth, Preston and Haverigg. All these Prisons are willing to facilitate AA meetings.

- 1) Lancaster Farms has been running successfully for the past few years. There are three members with full security clearance, who take other members in to share up to three times a year without clearance. It's a well-attended meeting, held fortnightly. There have been Big Books and 12x12 books taken in; there are the scrolls, and 12 steps and 12 Traditions been supplied. They also hold their own meetings and use the AA literature provided. NA go in the alternate week. Jasmine M from Lancaster Cathedral meeting is just going through the vetting process, so will be another regular attendee taking other members in.
- 2) Preston prison: no known AA activity.
- 3) Haverigg: No known AA Activity. (but see below re activity by prisoners)
- 4) Garth No known AA activity.
- 5) Wymott AA activity: A member of AA (Henry O) from another area has set up a meeting in Wymott and it's been running for a while. Whilst it is great that an AA meeting has been set up, and that service needs encouraging, it's also important to adhere to the structure handbook, so that the local intergroup can assist and help facilitate the meeting with books and literature etc. I contacted the prison who gave me Henry's details. He has sent me a brief report of what he is doing in there which will be attached with the normal reports. Henry has been told the next date of intergroup so hopefully he will attend and he can explain what it is he's doing. I for one will be interested on the process of taking someone from the DARS recovery team (staff) through the 12 steps. I am sure other members will have similar questions. (Discussed further below).

There have been Big Books and other AA literature donated by individual members and Groups. Some are donated from groups from other areas, some are new, some are third edition Big Books which are

ideal as they all contain the first 164 pages. There are now 17 Big Books, 14 12x12, 4 as Bill sees it, 4 daily reflections, plus some more coming from a meeting that unfortunately has had to close. These are all available to existing Prison Groups or to help establish new meetings.

So many thanks to Tony H, Blackpool Tues Big Book, Blackpool Hope Faith and gratitude Monday Lunch members, also Richard Garstang Monday night meeting. You are helping alcoholics you may never get to meet but will have been part of their journey.

Concludes my prison Report.

YIF. Phil H.

Gemma from Barrow reported further on developments at Haverigg Priso.

Since this is an open prison, they trialled allowing prisoners out to attend the AA local AA meeting. Those that attended went back and replicated the meeting inside the prison. Members from Barrow have been in to the meeting, and have also left books and literature for the group. The position now is that a meeting is being run by the prisoners themselves.

ii) Prison Liaison Service Role. (Paper 2026/26)

Responsibilities for sponsorship of Prison Groups have been placed by Conference with the intergroups and is exercised by the Prison Liaison officer (PLO).

Prison Liaison Officers organize schedules for prison visits as well as facilitating communication with the relevant prison; that communication is reported back to the intergroup and Region.

Where no AA group exists at a prison the local Intergroup is encouraged to make every attempt to form one. (Info from service handbook AA in Prisons page 79-82 2025-26)

Suggestion to Intergroup:

Since Cumbria has joined NWIG it has become one of the largest Intergroups in the country, consisting of five Prisons; they are Garth, Wymott, Haverigg, Lancaster Farms and Preston; a huge area to cover for any Liaison officer's role.

This suggestion is for the NWIG Prison Liaison Officer to form a NWIG Prison Sub-committee, which will hopefully include a member local to one/each of the prisons to help them with the clearance procedures. That member will then facilitate the meeting within the prison and will send a brief report to the NWIG PLO; there will be no need for them to attend intergroup (unless they wish to). Ideally the Intergroup PLO should actually be a Chair within one of the Prisons.

Prison Sub-Committee Members Role: -

- To have a minimum of three years sobriety.
- To have a working knowledge of the steps and traditions.
- To chair the meeting within the Prison.
- To send updates and reports to the allocated NWIG PLO on a regular basis.
- To arrange for AA members to attend to share. (Members attending to share only have to have a minimum of 12 months sobriety and can go in to share three times a year)

This service position will be for a length of time decided by intergroup, on a rotation basis.

It would also help with the workload if the members on the sub-committee encourage other members who meet the criteria to get full prison clearance.

For example, the Lancaster Farms meeting has been successfully running for the past few years and consists of three members with clearance, who take other members in on a fortnightly rota basis (NA goes in the other week). This means that each of the AA members with clearance go in approx 8 times a year, which is not a great deal of commitment but a great way to do service.

If this suggestion can help get AA into all the prisons within intergroup, without one individual PLO trying to cover every prison, it can only help the still suffering alcoholic.

Please consider asking the members/groups that are interested in Prison service. Phil H.

Take this back to your groups please.

Nick expressed an interest in being involved, and will speak to Phil about it.

iii) **Situation at Wymott prison. (Paper 2026/27)**

Wymott Prisoen report from Henry O.

There are 3 wings that I visit A, C, and K. Therefore we are effectively only there every 3 weeks for each wing. Attendance varies; A wing can be 7 to 10; C wing 3 to 4; and K Wing, 4 to 5.

As K Wing is classed as the therapeutic wing, where prisoners have expressed a desire to seek help with their substance abuse, K wing also runs an NA meeting every Tues at the same time as our AA meeting.

On the two weeks that I am not on K Wing one of the Prisoners runs a meeting himself. Upon recently attending, I found that as such it is not being run as per a proper AA meeting as such. I have now arranged some time to speak to him about it.

The DARS Recovery Team (PPG) have a very enthusiastic approach to AA, and I am currently, through Facetime Calls taking one of the Girls through the 12 Steps.

All of the literature required for a meeting is there, as in K Wing has its own and the A and C wing literature is kept on C Wing. Upon each visit I always report firstly to C wing and obtain the list of attendees.

When requested by a prisoner a Big Book is supplied, however, this needs to be dropped off to the security team to be checked first, which can take some time to be approved and needs to be chased if its not released. The girls would normally chase for me.

There are 2 Books in the library, however I do hear prisoners state they are always out; therefore I intend to take some more in, including the Plain Language version as well as the CD version of the book.

As September (Recovery Month) approaches there will be events that will take place that are usually full day presentations with different providers able to have a stand there, which I have done in the past and I am more than happy to assist or attend in the future, considering I have been fully vetted and now have my own Security Pass and Key Training.

As there was an interim period whilst there was no AA presence, I feel that there is certainly room for improvement, that will require meaningful discussions going forward. However, I wanted to get a foot in there first, and build up their trust before I make any suggestions as to how we may be of further assistance.

I thoroughly enjoy being of Service there, and I sincerely apologise if I have crossed a boundary that upsets others.

Yours in Fellowship. Henry O.

Tom our Region Probation Liaison Officer explained that: -

- We deal with different service providers in different prisons, which can complicate things.
- Henry was originally involved with the prison meeting at Risley.
- He later became involved with running a meeting in Wymott; this was a direct result of the good work done in Risley.
- M&SWLIG folded not long ago. Risley would have been in their area.

Another speaker reported that the meeting rotate between A, C and K wings at the request of the prison.

It is thought that it might be worth having a chat with the governor about concentrating the meetings in the therapeutic wing.

Concerns re the situation in Wymott: -

- It is not clear whether Henry is sponsoring some of the men in K wing.
- It looks as though Henry is taking staff through the 12 steps.
- Taking CD's in is not normally allowed as they can be used as a weapon.
- AA only goes into a prison to facilitate a meeting, NOT to take people through the steps. This is important.
- NWIG has previously agreed to a member facilitating a 12-step meeting/programme in Lancaster Farms, and this had to be stopped when the prison contacted Phil to report that it was leaving vulnerable prisoners distressed. NWIG are only interested in avoiding such a situation again.

RESOLVED: That Phil (NWIG acting PLO) and Tom (NWR Probation LO) will have a chat with Henry.

RESOLVED: That Tom will take the matter to Region, and report further there.

e) Public Information LO (Adam). (Paper 2026/14)

This is my second report to NWIG as PILO.

A Visit to Kirkham Police Station

On Tuesday 24th March, myself and Tim W from Preston attended an informal event at Kirkham police station as part of their "People's Voice" initiative.

This is not the first time that NWIG have been involved in such a talk. A communication from the constabulary relating to a previous one gives a good mission statement for its purpose.

Through developing and maintaining relationships with all of our communities, People's Voice aims to encourage our staff to progress a deeper cultural understanding and awareness through the sharing of lived experiences. This will build trust and confidence between the Constabulary and our communities as well as ensure we deal with people with respect and without bias. Your personal and insightful input supports these aims entirely and has been really well received by all of our staff. With your support, we will continually put victims and our communities at the heart of everything we do.

Upon arriving, we went into the "refs room" of the station where we met around 10 members of the police force with different roles. Most were officers, but there was also a community support officer and (I assume) a welfare officer.

The atmosphere was relaxed and jovial. After introducing ourselves, we started by declaring ourselves to be recovered alcoholics, giving credit to AA. Then followed with a brief AA history and relayed our general experience, strength and hope, bearing in mind that our audience were non-alcoholic.

In all, we both shared for 10 minutes each and then invited questions. Many related their experience of dealing with practising alcoholics and, in some cases, friends and family members. The talk lasted around 50 minutes in total.

We provided a handful of AA posters and those AA "poker chips" which have the website and helpline number on.

We were well received and our contact, Penny, informed us that she would be happy to network us with other stations in Lancashire. In an email, she said that the talk was really helpful and insightful.

The Half-Yearly Public Information & Electronic Communications Meeting

The half-yearly Public Information & Electronic Communications meeting took place over Zoom on 7th February. As this was one day before the previous assembly of NWIG, I was not able to provide minutes in my report. Please find separately provided the minutes as officially captured; but I also provide my own minutes below. (Note that, as I was not officially recording the minutes, I left out details that were of less interest to me.)

- There is an AA Instagram profile [@alcoholicsanonymousgb](#) that users can follow and 'like' the posts. Comments are disabled (presumably for anonymity purposes).
- Share magazines are always looking for stories of AA members to publish. The appropriate contacts were to be put in the official minutes.
- I asked if and how other members have produced business cards for their roles as IG/R officers. Attendees pointed me to the "style guide" and "family look guide" on the document library. It was suggested that a business card should feature: name with initial, the AA logo, phone number, email and a short slogan.
- ECLOs had a long conversation about what can and cannot be changed on the intergroup and region microsites on the AAGB website.
 - Some ECLOs were manually using hyperlinks at the top of their microsite pages to help users navigate them. This was to compensate for the way that, on phone screens, links on the side/top would apparently not be visible.
 - Some ECLOs commented that they were not able to edit certain parts of their microsites.
- Alex H (CER ECLO) was asking for expertise in digitising archives.
- Paraphrased remark from someone regarding talks in schools: "schools are important, but they are a slow burn - just plant the seed!"
- On the topic of radio ads, the question of what advertising actually means for AA was raised. Answer (paraphrased): "Not advertising, awareness! The individual is anonymous. AA is not invisible."

- The difficulty of tracking the effectiveness of radio ads was raised, seemingly without a good resolution. Tracking works with links, but an advert which just has the national helpline number is untrackable without surveying members.

After the meeting, Angela S (NWR Trustee) provided useful PILO onboarding resources, and Leigh-Ann (NWR PILO) reached out to offer help. Their contributions, as well as those of other attendees, are very much appreciated.

Other

I've been liaising with Nigel, our HLO, regarding upcoming health-related PI events. There was an event on 16th April at Glenridding Village Hall which I was not able to attend. Nothing specific to report yet. NWIG PILO report for 10th May 2026. Adam D.

Public information Initiative: Books to Libraries: -

It was suggested that NWIG should earmark a sum of money for proving two Big Books to those local libraries without copies.

The distribution of the books can be organised by the Stock Team at Lancashire County Council Libraries department, if we donate them.

It's hard to estimate the cost. There are thought to be 111 libraries in Lancashire and Cumbria.

Some of the libraries in Lancashire are outside the NWIG area, but this was thought to be irrelevant, because the books will still end up in the hands of the still suffering.

The proposal is for members to take this back to groups, check out all your local libraries and come back to the next NWIG meeting in August with a list of those that are without Big Books. It will then be possible to arrange for the Big Books to be delivered before alcohol awareness month in November.

VOTE:

For: 16.

Against: 3.

Abstained: 1.

RESOLVED: To earmark £4K for Big Books for libraries.

RESOLVED: To ask the libraries if they can supply us with details of usage of the Big Books.

f) Telephone LO (Debs). (Paper 2026/15)

- Report Received. As read.
- **Nine responder vacancies – take it back to groups please.**

1	Monday	4 - 7
2	Tuesday	12 - 4
3	Wednesday	8 - 12
4	Thursday	12 - 4
5	Thursday	4 - 7
6	Friday	12 - 4
7	Saturday	12 - 4
8	Saturday	4 - 8
9	Sunday	4 - 8

- **Nobody has asked to go on the 12-step list for three years. Take this back to your groups please.**
- Although the report states that Debs wishes to nominate Jenny D and Danny O to join the NWR Telephone Committee, unfortunately Jenny and Danny were not able to attend today and cannot therefore be voted in to a position. Also, NWIG has not yet received a copy of the Terms of Reference for the NWR Telephone Committee. They have been requested. Secretary to remind TLO that NWIG need a copy of the Terms of Reference for the NWR Telephone Committee before anybody can be voted on to it.
- It was reported that when it was proposed and/or decided to merge the three telephone services (Manchester, Liverpool, and North West Lancs and Cumbria), the RTLO at the time (Mike W) failed to contact NWIG about it, but reported to Region that all IG's had agreed to the proposal. We would

like to be kept in the loop about the development of the combined service in future. This includes receiving a copy of the Terms of Reference.

- A member asked if the merger of the three telephone services will affect responders. No, we believe not. The changes usually occur in the background.
- The report states that there are "no issues" re safeguarding. However, issues have now arisen. This is dealt with at item 10b.
- For many years a PDF list of local meetings has been produced for the benefit of newcomers, it is printed off and handed out to newcomers at meetings. It lists local meetings regardless of which IG they are in. Debs reports that she will not be updating this document going forward and Nigel agreed to do so.

g) Young Persons LO (Ed). (Paper 2026/16)

- No report because Ed has moved and has had to stand down. Please take this vacancy back to your groups.

9) **GSR Reports: -**

Received. As read. No matters arising and no questions.

10) **Conference 2026: To receive reports on Conference 2026.**

- a) Report from Kevin of North Thames IG who was a Delegate at Conference 2026 circulated. NB this report contains various concerns about the financial problems and lack of transparency.

Kevin has requested sight of the NWIG complaint to the Charity commission and the CC response. It was proposed to send both.

VOTE:

For: 15.

Against: 0.

Abstained: 2.

(NB: when the voting does not total 20 it is because members are out of the room, or have left).

RESOLVED: To send copies of the complaint by NWIG to the Charity Commission, and their response to Kevin.

b) **Conference 2026: From Catherine C.**

Report and Concerns about the use of the word 'Safeguarding' in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I attended conference as a first-year delegate this year. I was on committee no.3.

Q1. Pretty smooth running, although I heard some concerning comments from members regarding 'safeguarding'. Some were worried about giving older people lifts in case someone fell and they were held responsible etc. Thankfully comments like this were not included in the response.

The views from other regions were fairly consistent with our Region.

Q2. This was more challenging. I took forward views from intergroup and region. The views were fairly consistent across regions, apart from a minority opinion I and another delegate had.

I managed to get a comment in about the General Service Board should lead by example in the application of the 12 Concepts. Some tried to get this taken out on the Sunday morning. This resulted in a re-vote within our committee. It ended up being passed by conference.

I put forward a minority opinion 'there was a minority view that perceived a professionalisation of the fellowship which is inconsistent with the 12 Concepts' This was taken out by the Board; their reason for removal was that the vote for the main body of the question was unanimous. I should have voted against the main body of the response, then my minority opinion would have been included. I won't make that mistake next year.

I aired concerns from NW Intergroup regarding actions of the board and the GS regarding the Hints and Tips for 12 steppers, the safeguarding agenda, lack of transparency with money, the letter from the GS discouraging intergroups from talking to each other.

Some delegates and board members seemed to believe that NW Intergroup was not Region. There seems to be some misunderstanding about a conference delegate and who they represent. In line with the Concepts the conference delegate represents the whole region, mainly the groups. Not just the few that sit on the regional assembly. This highlighted my concerns about the gap in the UK between the groups and conference. In the US the delegates are directly accountable to the GSRs and not just the regional assembly. The GSRs vote in the conference delegates in the Concepts. Few people understood or agreed with me.

One Trustee said to me "this is the General Secretary's Charity" I said "it is not his charity, it is our fellowship" The Trustee then shouted at me "HE IS THE GODDAM CEO OF THE CHARITY, WHO ARE YOU".

The GS is the CEO of the charity but in name only and not in responsibility. Another delegate spoke up for me, and I got an apology from the Trustee. This confirmed my fears that the Board is being led by the General Secretary and not being led by the fellowship as detailed in Concept 1 (The final responsibility and ultimate authority for British AA Services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship in Great Britain). I found it all quite concerning.

Literature

New literature such as the 'Hints and Tips for 12 Steppers' is sent to delegates before conference. I was under the impression that this literature would be discussed at conference. That's not the case; you have to send responses to literature before the end of March. I was not advised about this. I was told it was in the email I was sent, but it wasn't. I asked for a re-vote and discussion on the 'Hints and Tips for 12 Steppers', this was denied.

I don't feel comfortable with this process. I know now it's the responsibility of the delegates to be informed and read the guidelines but I also think major changes such as 'do not visit alcoholics in their home' should be highlighted; so people are fully aware of what they are voting on.

Open Forum Sessions

In the open forum on the Friday night, I asked the following questions –

1. When can we have the 8 amended quarterly financial statements, in the new format; for the two years to 30/09/25.

Finance Board Trustee response – I work full-time and do this unpaid, I haven't got time to go back and change the reports.

2. Why did the Trustees break Concept 10, warranty II and take the prudent reserve into deficit.

Finance Board Trustee – she actually avoided the question, blamed COVID and contributions etc....same as they did when they attended our intergroup.

Another region raised a concern regarding an AA Service News article written by the GS calling AA members 'service users' and it referred to people who talk too much about the big book have some kind of fetish.

Concerns about the use of the word 'Safeguarding'

This is the most concerning thing from my perspective.

The word 'safeguarding' is an ambiguous word that can hold legal responsibility. Some are arguing that it doesn't. I am not sure.

The Board have pushed the safeguarding agenda for a number of years now through various channels, board sub committees, board literature committees and the board telephone sub committee.

Safeguarding is now mentioned throughout our literature, but it is impossible to follow statutory guidance for safeguarding; I fear that using the word puts ALL of us at risk of litigation and prosecution. I fear that it is causing more harm to the fellowship to use the word.

The Department for Health advised that peer to peer support groups such as alcoholics anonymous are not bound by safeguarding legislation.

The members of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) support each other in self-regulating groups (the AA Fellowship) which are autonomous from the GSB.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Scottish Government have confirmed that AA members do not require DBS or Disclosure Scotland checks for 12th Stepping or Sponsoring, as they are members of self-regulating groups. As individuals, however, AA members should be aware of their duty of care to others and hence follow the law and best practice. (Safeguarding guidance for groups)

It's important to note here, that telephone responding is 12 step work, therefore we should not be asking our members for DBS checks in the telephone responder application. This just causes confusion in the fellowship.

I am concerned that if an organisation, a professional, or a family member decide to take AA or an individual AA member to court for failing to safeguard for whatever reason, because we now use the word safeguarding, we are responsible and could be prosecuted.

I am concerned the word 'safeguarding' comes with responsibility, and by the board pushing this agenda, they have put all of us as individuals at risk.

If the word was to be changed to safety in line with the US it may take away the legal responsibility, while still keeping the conversation of our common welfare going. We should always be having conversations about keeping each other safe.

No-one is above the law. We have personal responsibility to report to the police if a person is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed by someone. We have a personal responsibility to contact a hospital or a GP if a member states they are planning on taking their own life etc. We can never have legal responsibility, and safeguarding alludes to legal responsibility. It's ambiguous and could be used against us in a civil court or criminal court.

I am bound by safeguarding legislation in my professional life. This involves DBS check, keeping accurate and up to date records, full risk assessment of my clients, level 3 minimum safeguarding training for vulnerable adults and children, clinical supervision, writing letters to GP's, social care or contacting the police if someone is at risk. I must be registered with the ICO and follow data protection laws.

It is not possible to do this in AA without fundamentally changing AA and professionalising AA. This cannot happen; it goes totally against tradition 8.

We would have to re-write the traditions to make it fit. This would mean a major change to the literature of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I am personally very concerned about the future of AA in the UK. Money, property and prestige will divert us from our primary purpose.

I could be wrong; I could be overreacting. I am only going from my limited knowledge. I would like to make the following proposals –

1. We write to the Board airing our concerns, this is if Intergroup agree with me and have concerns. We can ask for them to change the word safeguarding to something that does not allude to legal responsibility. At conference it only got a simple majority and not a two third majority, meaning the Board now make the final decision. The GS spoke in the open forum (I think) and said that lawyers had told him to advise the fellowship to have their own safeguarding policies. **I would be interested to see the correspondence that the GS has had with solicitors, and what they actually said.** I am interested to know what he has been asking solicitors. **Is this where a big chunk of the prudent reserve has gone?**

There was a lengthy discussion about this problem and this proposal. The main points were: -

- Committee six at Conference 2026 were tasked with reviewing a revised Chapter 8 of the Service Handbook for Great Britain and Continental Europe – Probation/Criminal Justice Social Work Services. The NWR Delegate on this committee was Tom B who kindly attended this NWIG meeting as a visitor and reported that: -
- **There was a safeguarding expert on committee six and he stressed that "safeguarding" cannot be implemented by the fellowship and is only applicable to the Charity.**
- **He went on to confirm that using the term "safeguarding" in fellowship literature potentially leaves members and/or groups open to legal action, and is a dangerous and wholly unnecessary practice.**
- **Committee 6 recommended that the term "Safeguarding" is entirely removed from the Chapter on Probation/Criminal Justice Social Work. This was passed with a 2/3 majority by Conference.**

- The Charity/GSB as a charity and as an employer are subject to the safeguarding legislation.
- The fellowship is classed as a peer-to-peer, self-regulating, support group, and as such is not subject to safeguarding legislation. This has been confirmed by the Board through their lawyers.
- It has also been confirmed that members do not need DBS checks for 12th Stepping or Sponsoring.
- "Personal Conduct Matters", pages 115 to 123 of the Structure Handbook 2025/26 deals with how to keep ourselves and others safe.
- Conference 2025 tasked the Board with reviewing the Policy document that relates to the Charity but not the fellowship, with a view to making that distinction absolutely clear. Sadly the Board decided that it did not need to be updated, despite Conference having pointed out that it did.
- **The only responsible option, to make the distinction clear, and to address the remaining confusion is to remove the term "safeguarding" from all fellowship literature.**

VOTE:

For: 19.

RESOLVED: That NWIG will write to GSB explaining our concerns and requesting that the word "safeguarding" is removed from all fellowship literature.

2. We seek legal advice, and ask them to explain legal responsibility if we use the word 'safeguarding' versus another word. What word could they suggest, so we can look after each other as best we can without being held legally responsible.

There was a discussion about whether this should be done before or after writing to GSB airing the concerns and asking them to remove the word "safeguarding" from all literature. There were a variety of opinions, mainly: _

- That if the board remove the word "safeguarding" when requested to do so, it will not be necessary to seek legal advice.
- That NWIG should be armed with the facts via legal advice anyway.
- That the GSB should at least be given the opportunity to withdraw the references to "safeguarding" before legal advice is sought.
- That there may be members among us who are qualified to provide this advice. Do we have, or know, any members who are solicitor's that could be asked for an opinion on this matter?

As there was no agreement on the best way forward and the discussion began to go around in circles it was agreed to take this question back to groups and carry it forward to the next meeting.

3. We write a letter to all the intergroups, advising them of our concerns and what we are doing.

There was a discussion about the purpose of this and it was reported that the purpose is to raise awareness of the significant problems that arise as a result of including the word "safeguarding" in fellowship literature.

VOTE:

For: 19.

RESOLVED: That NWIG will write to all the intergroups, advising them of our concerns and that the GSB has been asked to remove the word "safeguarding" from all fellowship literature.

4. We continue to withhold money.

This proposal will be voted on at item 19 of this agenda.

We may want to seek legal advice before we write to the Board and Intergroups.
11/05/2026. Catherine C.

11) Region Reports: -

- a) To receive the minutes of the Region meeting of 1st March 2026. (Paper 2026/33)
RECEIVED.
- b) To receive reports from the NWIG Reps to Region and to deal with any matters arising (if any).
As per the Region Minutes. No matters arising.

12) Complaints by NWIG and associated matters: -

- a) Update regarding the complaint to the Charity Commission.
An action from the last NWIG meeting was for the secretary to write the Charity Commission and ask where a complaint about mismanagement of funds should be directed, since they declined to look into it. Chris has not had time to do this, and apologised to the assembly for the delay. She will follow up on this asap and report back.
- b) Update regarding the "serious incident report" made by GSB to the Charity Commission about NWIG.
 - On 07/12/25 the NWR Trustee agreed at a NWR meeting to supply a copy of the Serious Incident Report on Monday 08/12/25, but did not do so.
 - Subsequently GSB refused to share a copy of the Serious Incident Report with NWR.
 - At the NWR meeting on 01/03/26 it was agreed that the Chair of NWR would send a written objection to this refusal to GSB and ask what "category" the serious incident report is. Hopefully the response to this will be supplied at the next Region meeting on 07/06/26. It was also agreed that the refusal email would be circulated to all IG's for information, but this has not been received.
 - The Charity Commission refused to say whether they had received a serious incident report from GSB about the NWIG meeting on 09/11/25 or not; they used the extremely unhelpful expression "we can neither confirm nor deny".
 - The secretary asked them to review that decision, which they have now done, and they have upheld the original decision not to confirm or deny.
 - It was proposed to ask the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to review the decision.

VOTE:

For: 19.

RESOLVED: That the secretary will write to ICO asking for the Charity Commissioners decision not to disclose whether they received a serious incident report from GSB about the NWIG meeting on 09/11/25 or not, to be reviewed by ICO.

- It was proposed to share details of the FOI request and any outcomes with Kevin the 2026 Conference Delegate from North Thames IG.

VOTE:

For: 18

RESOLVED: That the secretary will share details of the FOI request and any outcomes with Kevin.

c) Update regarding the treatment of NWIG by GSO/GSB.

It was reported that although routine post is being received from GSO (flyers etc), that emails from both NWIG Chair and NWIG Secretary are being ignored and are going unanswered. There was a discussion about this entirely unacceptable situation. The main points were: -

- Although the meeting at NWIG on 09/11/25 was heated, largely as a direct result of the trustees extremely late appearance and failure to explain or apologise for that, the Trustees were not bullied and/or intimidated.
- Many members thought that the meeting was no more heated than many (if not most) Region meetings.
- Members who zoomed in are known to have reported back to their own Regions that they did not witness any bullying or intimidation at the meeting on 09/11/25, although it was heated.
- One member strongly disagreed and thought that the trustees were badly treated. He reported that he personally apologised to them at the end of the meeting.
- It should be noted that at least one member believes that the lengths that GSB are going to, to avoid answering the financial questions is a clear indication of fraud, and that his preferred way forward would be for NWIG to make a report to the police.
- There was a suggestion that NWIG should apologise to the trustees.

- However, many members pointed that there is nothing to apologise for. It should be entirely acceptable to ask for financial openness and transparency.
- It was suggested that "offence is taken, not given".
- Nevertheless, a number of members thought that NWIG should offer an apology, despite not having done anything wrong, purely in the interest of reopening communications with GSO.
- The secretary reported that: -
 - I cannot write the sort of "none-apology" apology that is often used to avoid a real apology.
 - For example, writing "I'm sorry if you were upset", is just a cop out.
 - To be able to write an apology on behalf of NWIG I need to know exactly what NWIG is saying it is sorry for. ie what did we do that we should not have done, specifically.
- Nobody thought that NWIG should not have asked GSB to explain why the accounts don't add up, why GSB broke Warranty Two without any explanation, why the Chair of the Board told NWIG that "there is no such thing as a Prudent Reserve policy", or any of the other financial questions that were raised.
- For the members with concerns about the meeting on 09/11/25, those concerns seemed to centre on the tone of the meeting, rather than the content.
- It was proposed that in order to reopen communications with GSO that NWIG sends a very brief, very straightforward letter of regret. Not an apology. Merely a couple of lines expressing regret that the meeting was difficult, and expressing the hope that it can be resolved.

VOTE:

For: 13.

Against: 1.

Abstained: 4.

RESOLVED: To send a very brief letter of regret that the meeting was difficult. Final wording to be agreed between NWIG Chair and NWIG Secretary.

d) Any other matters arising.

None.

13) To consider proposals from groups for expenditure on projects to reach the still suffering alcoholics.
Books for libraries; dealt with at item 8e.

14) NWIG 2026 Convention update – is this now shelved?
Take it back to groups.

15) Nominations for vacant service positions: - (See the Service Handbook for details of the roles and requirements).

a)	Armed Service Liaison Officer.	None.
b)	Employment Liaison Officer.	None.
c)	Health Liaison Officer.	Louisa.
d)	Prison Liaison Officer.	None.
e)	Probation Liaison Officer.	None.
f)	Share Liaison Officer.	None.
g)	Young Persons Liaison Officer.	None.
h)	North West Lancs & Cumbria Telephone Service (NWL&CTS) committee members.	None.

Please take details of all vacant roles back to groups.

16) Election of Officers: -

- **Louisa was elected as Health Liaison Officer.**

Thank you, Louisa, for stepping forward and taking this service position on.

17) Plain Language Big Book, update from GSB (if any).
No update received.

- 18) Any Other Business: -
Production of the local meetings list to hand out to newcomers: Nigel will take this over from Debs.
Duncan requested a receipt for his group contribution please. Secretary will pass this on to the Treasurer.
- 19) Finance: -
- a) To receive the Treasurer's Report. (Paper 2026/34)
- The Treasurer's report was circulated on 08/05/2026. Full copy at the end of the minutes.
 - The bank balance is £23,437.05.
 - The Prudent Reserve is £2,000.00 (rounded)
 - Earmarked for books for libraries, £4,000.00.
 - If £1,000.00 to NWR the surplus is therefore £16,437.
- b) To consider making a contribution of £1,000 to NWR to cover the insurance and conference delegate costs.
The proposal was to make a contribution of £1,000 to NWR.
VOTE:
For: 16.
Against and/or abstain: 2.
Total: 18.
RESOLVED: Treasurer to make a contribution of £1,000 to NWR.
- c) To consider sending the excess of surplus funds over £1,000 to Region, or to continue to withhold.
The proposal was to continue to *withhold* the excess of surplus funds over £1,000.
VOTE:
For: 13.
Against: 1.
Abstention: 4.
Total: 18.
RESOLVED: To withhold the surplus funds over £1,000 at this time.
- 20) **Dates and times of next meetings:**
- a) 10/05/2026.
b) 09/08/2026.
c) 08/11/2026.

Notes for GSRs to take back to groups:

- **ALL THE USUAL POINTS: -**
 - Submit your group report at least TWO WEEKS BEFORE the next IG meeting.
 - Broadcast that NWIG would be delighted to hear from the remaining groups for which we don't have contacts at the moment.
 - Think about visiting Region – especially if you are considering becoming a Region Rep.
 - Please put your group number on contribution's to NWIG so that they can be identified.
 - Bring specific proposals to NWIG on how to use the surplus funds to reach the still suffering, along with details of exactly how you and your group will actively participate in doing so. Include costings for the proposal.
 - If you have items to be added to the micro site, send them to the ECLC at ecomm.nwest@aamail.org
 - Everybody interested in establishing a hospital 12-step list in their own area contact Louisa the HLO at health.nwest@aamail.org
 - Consider visiting a prison meeting to share. (Contact Chairman Phil)
 - Consider becoming a telephone responder. (Contact TLO Debs)
 - Consider adding your name to the 12-step list. (TLO Debs)
 - Ask everybody to speak a little about their own service work and the way in which this has contributed to their sobriety when sharing in meetings.
 - Announce all the vacant service positions at NWIG at your groups. Current vacancies are: -
Armed Service LO: Employment LO: Prison LO: Prison Sub-committee members: Probation LO: Share LO: Young Persons LO.

- **PARTICULAR TO THIS MEETING: -**
 - Ask the members/groups that are interested in Prison service if they will be a Prison Sub-committee member.
 - **Check out all your local libraries and come back to the next NWIG meeting in August with a list of those that are without Big Books.**
 - **Take this question back to groups and bring group response to next NWIG meeting: Should NWIG take legal advice on the implications of using the word "Safeguarding" in fellowship literature? Specifically, to find out what the legal position is if a peer-to-peer support group says they safeguard but they don't follow legal safeguarding requirements.**
 - NWIG Convention 2026: If you want one come forward to organise and run it please.
-

Actions to be added to the list of ongoing actions from this meeting: -

- Treasurer: To make a contribution of £1000.00 to NWR.
 - Treasurer: To earmark £4K for Big Books for libraries.
 - ECLO: To upload the minutes from 2025 onwards to the microsite
 - CARRY FORWARD TO NEXT AGENDA.
 - Closure of neighbouring IG's – to discuss the impact on NWIG and how to deal with.
 - NWIG Convention – who will form a committee?
 - Should NWIG take legal advice on the implications of using the word "Safeguarding" in fellowship literature? Specifically, to find out what the legal position is if a peer-to-peer support group says they safeguard but they don't follow legal safeguarding requirements.
 - Secretary: Ask Treasurer to send Duncan a receipt for recent group contribution.
 - Secretary: Write to CC about where complaint of mismanagement of funds should be directed.
 - Secretary: Write asking ICO to review Charity Commissions refusal to disclose whether it received a serious incident report about NWIG from GSB following the 09/11/25 meeting, or not.
 - Secretary: To send copies of the complaint by NWIG to the Charity Commission, and their response to Kevin at North Thames IG.
 - Secretary: To share details of the FOI request and any outcomes with Kevin.
 - Secretary: To remind TLO that NWIG need a copy of the Terms of Reference for the NWR Telephone Committee before anybody can be voted on to it
 - Secretary: Sign Louisa up as new HLO. (Register with GSO; provide official email).
 - Secretary: To send a very brief letter of regret that the November 2025 meeting was difficult to Ranjan – because he requested the apology. Agree final wording with Chair first.
 - Secretary: Write to GSB explaining our concerns and requesting that the word "safeguarding" is removed from all fellowship literature. (They will probably say that it needs to be a QFC, so we should be drafting that for 2027).
 - Secretary: To write to all the intergroups, advising them of our concerns and that the GSB has been asked to remove the word "safeguarding" from all fellowship literature.
 - Nigel: To produce the local Where to Find list.
 - Phil (NWIG acting PLO) and Tom (NWR Probation LO: Will have a chat with Henry about matters at Wymott.
 - Tom (NWR Probation L): Will take the concerns re matters at Wymott to Region, and report further there.
 - Chair: To ask the libraries if they can supply us with details of usage of the Big Books, in due course.
-

Treasurer report for North West Intergroup May 2026 Intergroup

1. General

The bank balance has increased during quarter

From 22,394

To 23,437

to be expected when we are not contributing to Region, apart from 4,000 for insurance.

Please put your Group Id in the first four characters of the payment reference when paying over Group Contributions:

- please remind me who paid the large amount of cash in?
- **Duncan, Carlisle** – your group number is wrong, numbers swapped
- **B2B Southport Friday** your group is 5074 – I have asked this for the last 4 quarters

All statements and the detailed accounts are available from me on request, by emailing treasurer.nwest@aamail.org

2. Sections and Breakdowns below

- Income and Expense for the quarter
- Officer Budget breakdown for this quarter
- Group Contribution breakdown

3. Income and Expense for the Quarter

Income and Expenditure reconciled to statements Feb26 - end Apr '26		
Start Date	01-Feb-26	
End Date	30-Apr-26	
Period Statement opening balance	22,112.29	
Period Statement closing balance	<u>23,437.05</u>	
Statement Difference	<u>1,324.76</u>	Check Sum
Income (from transactions)	2,857.31	0.00
Expense (from transactions)	<u>- 1,532.55</u>	
Transactions Difference	<u>1,324.76</u>	
Income		
Group Contributions	2,742.31	See breakdown B
Personal Donations	90.00	
Gratitude Week	-	
Telephone Income	25.00	
	<u>2,857.31</u>	
Expense		
Officer Budgeted Expenditure	- 445.50	See breakdown A
Region Contribution	- 1,000.00	
Telephones	- 57.05	
Bank Charges	- 20.00	
Travel	-	
Venue Hire	<u>- 10.00</u>	
	<u>- 1,532.55</u>	
Cash held	89.77	

4. Budget: Officer Budgets, and Prudent reserve

Proposed budgets 25-26				Expenditure				Summary		
	Annual		Quarterly	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Spent	Left
Chair	100.00	Phil	25.00					Chair	-	100.00
Convention	-		-					Convention	-	-
ECLO (inc Zoom)	300.00	Neil	75.00					ECLO (inc Zoom)	-	300.00
Health	300.00	Nigel	75.00					Health	-	300.00
Inspiring Service	-		-					PI	-	-
Service Workshops	300.00	Catherine	75.00		445.50			Service Workshops	445.50	- 145.50
PI	300.00	Adam	75.00					PI	-	300.00
Prisons inc. Wymott	300.00	Phil etc	75.00					Prisons inc. Wymott	-	300.00
Probation	-		-					Probation	-	-
Secretary	100.00	Chris	25.00					Secretary	-	100.00
Telephones	300.00	Debs	75.00					Telephones	-	300.00
YPLO	300.00	Ed	75.00	46.80				YPLO	46.80	253.20
				2,300.00	575.00	46.80	445.50		492.30	1,807.70

Other committed expenditure

Region Quarterly	4,000.00		1,000.00
Telephones	250.00		62.50
Bank Charges	100.00		25.00
Travel to IG	500.00		125.00
Venue etc for IG	300.00		75.00
	5,150.00		1,287.50

Total Quarterly expenditure 1,862.50

Prudent Reserve (each Qtr) 1,862.50

5. Group Contributions breakdown this quarter

NWIG contributions by Group

Group Name	Group ID	Total
Name	ID	Amt
Unknown Cash pls remind me	0	272.31
Carlisle Monday Duncan? s/b 3764	3764	200.00
Southport B2B Friday? please put group on	5074	50.00
Preston Fulwood: Primary Purpose	5084	150.00
Lindale	5738	250.00
Chorley St Chads	6494	200.00
Southport Alive and Sober	6663	100.00
Preston Just for Today	6918	500.00
Preston Bamber Bridge One Day At A Time	7038	200.00
Chorley URC Friday	7492	200.00
Parbold Themed Meeting	8315	170.00
Chorley / Heapey Sunday	8353	150.00
Chorley St Marys	9346	300.00
		2,742.31