

Summer 2026

# AA Service News

*From the General Service Office of Great Britain*



## Conference Recommendations

# 12 Traditions Checklist

## 4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

1. Do I insist that there are only a few right ways of doing things in AA?
2. Does my group always consider the welfare of the rest of AA? Of nearby groups? Of Loners in Alaska? Of Internationalists miles from port? Of a group in Rome or El Salvador?
3. Do I put down other members' behaviour when it is different to mine, or do I learn from it?
4. Do I always bear in mind that, to those outsiders who know I am in AA, I may to some extent represent our entire beloved Fellowship?
5. Am I willing to help a newcomer go to any lengths - their lengths, not mine - to stay sober?
6. Do I share my knowledge of AA tools with other members who may not have heard of them?

..... *From the AAGB "Traditions Checklist"*



# AA Service News

Welcome to the Summer Edition of AA Service News.

We are really pleased to remind you that **AA Service News is now available in print and digitally**. Please find space for it on your AA literature table, and please hand out copies to group members and newcomers. You can find the Calendar of Events on the **AAGB website**.

## Share Your Service Experience!

Contributions on your service experience in the Fellowship are welcomed from all areas – individuals, groups, intergroups, regions, sub-committees, GSB. Please send in your articles, **AA Service News is about YOUR service!**

AA Service News is published in early March, June, September and December each year with deadline dates of the last Friday of January, April, July and October. The General Service Conference report is published each year in the summer issue and Questions and Topics for the following year's Conference in the winter edition.

Please send your service-related articles to: [editor.aasn@aamail.org](mailto:editor.aasn@aamail.org)

We look forward to hearing from you!



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# AA Service News

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## What's happening in your intergroup and region?

Don't forget to send in your region and intergroup Minutes and Agendas to:

[aainformation@gsoqb.org.uk](mailto:aainformation@gsoqb.org.uk)

*Any pictures contained within this edition are stock images. They are not of alcoholics. No one's anonymity has been broken.*

# The Greeter

**Going to an AA meeting for the first time is a daunting prospect. It is particularly so if, like me, you do so alone.**

I was advised by my caseworker that I might try going to AA as it might help me recover from alcohol addiction. She promptly gave me a printout of local groups I might try and told me to get on with it! At this point I was still drinking and total abstinence was unimaginable and seemed impossible for me. However, I had made some small steps in reducing my intake.

I had a vague idea about AA, gleaned mostly from the media, but it was not on my radar. Nevertheless, I was desperate and had vowed to try anything. So, picking one geographically, I went.

What I was faced with was a group of people, mostly men, mostly smoking, loitering outside a door, talking amongst themselves. I felt very intimidated and afraid. I snuck past them and found myself a seat at the back.

Throughout the meeting I felt completely lost. There were people reading out statements I could barely hear or take in. There were phrases and themes I didn't recognise or understand. I was consumed by fear and left as soon as I could. No one spoke to me and I was too afraid to speak to anyone, they all seemed so busy.

I tried other meetings and had the same or similar experiences. After three or four different meetings I had decided AA was not for me. My case worker suggested I try one more and signposted me to a particular meeting, a more "sharing type of meeting". I agreed to give AA one last try. The same vision met me: an intimidating crowd of people.

As I approached, one person recognised me and came out of the crowd and welcomed me, "It's so nice to see you, come in!" They found me a place to sit, and introduced me to my neighbour. I was given a drink. I had always been too afraid to get myself one before. I still felt out of place and confused by the proceedings but afterwards I managed to talk to a few people and gain some reassurance as I left the meeting. Someone said, "See you next week!" and I said to myself, "Yes, you probably will." That group is now my home group and I serve as a greeter.

Being a greeter is an important role that all groups should have. In the corporate world professional greeters are employed, and the concept of customer care is well understood. Can we not learn from the world outside the need for welcoming people? The value of customer retention? Are not struggling alcoholics our most welcome customers?

To the newcomer the greeter can be their first point of contact, they are the welcoming face of AA and the group. They can help to nullify the fear the newcomer may feel.

The greeter can introduce them to experienced people who can further reassure and guide them through the meeting.

The greeter is there at the end of the meeting to answer any questions and further reassure the newcomer, to encourage them to keep coming back; to protect them from being overwhelmed.

The greeter is proactive, active, not only on the lookout for new faces, but also for people returning for the second or third time, or after a period of absence. The greeter is that friendly face, the “go to guy” ready to answer questions, to provide reassurance and support, to introduce them to others as they take their first hesitant steps to freedom. The greeter is happy when the “newcomer” doesn’t need them anymore.

I began this article by describing my experience of finding AA. I did this as a reminder of how AA may appear to the outsider and in particular, the struggling alcoholic. How many alcoholics have we failed, by failing to welcome them to our meetings? How many lack the courage to walk past the crowd at the door? Or to face a closed door, to enter an alien world? How many have we failed when they feel so confused and threatened that they do not return?

I have heard many shares where people describe their first time entering an AA Meeting, a common theme is, “It was really odd, it was not for me and I left, only returning after many years.”

When I went to my last, first meeting, as described above, I was 62 years old and in poor health, I did not have the luxury of time. If I hadn’t been welcomed at that meeting I would probably be dead now. I ask you to recall your own experiences. How could they have been better? Consider how welcoming and supportive your meeting is to the newcomer. Consider the role of the greeter for your meeting and, perhaps, try the role yourself.

## ***Mike, Alcoholic***





# Welcome to the Brighton Workshops

***As well as being responsible for supporting our existing GSRs, and supplying new GSRs with the appropriate literature, our Vice-Chair runs workshops on behalf of Brighton Area intergroup.***

Her brief is to run four workshops each year. She also ran four additional workshops at the Brighton Convention in January. Our Treasurer co-facilitates the workshops with her.

We have run the following face-to-face workshops:

- How the 12 Concepts for World Service apply to you and to your meetings
- Sponsorship
- Being an effective telephone responder
- Writing Step 4
- Running healthy meetings

We've also run online workshops on the 12 Concepts, and we run our telephone responder training/induction sessions online. Our 6 June workshop 'Wellbeing in recovery' explores how we practice the principles of honesty, courage, humility, and love in all our affairs. We have a fairly standard approach to our 2-hour workshops:

- Coffee followed by the Pre-amble
- An outline of what we're going to cover during the workshop
- An interactive session where we divide participants into groups and invite them to share their experience of the topic.

Each group appoints a spokesperson who shares a summary of their thoughts with the other groups one, two, three or four 'chairs' who share their experience, strength, and hope on the topic a question-and-answer session feedback forms and the serenity prayer.

For each workshop we create a session plan like this one. It helps us to understand who is doing what, what we need to bring, and how much time we have for each part of the workshop.

We believe that using a session plan makes the whole process easier, and it removes some of the pressure. We both think it is much more fun to work together. We occasionally meet for coffee or lunch to plan our sessions and discuss possible future workshops.

We are running an online workshop on 'Being an effective GSR' at 18:30 on 6 October 2026. We'll also have a Q&A to answer any questions about running workshops. Here's a link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2886365963> . The Meeting ID is 2886 365 5963. There is no password.

*Everybody is welcome to attend.*

We both get so much out of running workshops. The participants are universally enthusiastic and they like the opportunities to share their own experience as well as learning from the experience of others. There's more information about the content of our workshops on our website:

<https://aabrightonarea.com/workshops/> .

We are happy to share our experience with anybody who's planning workshops, or who's already running them, and who would like to hear more about what we've learned from this very rewarding area of service in AA. Get in touch!

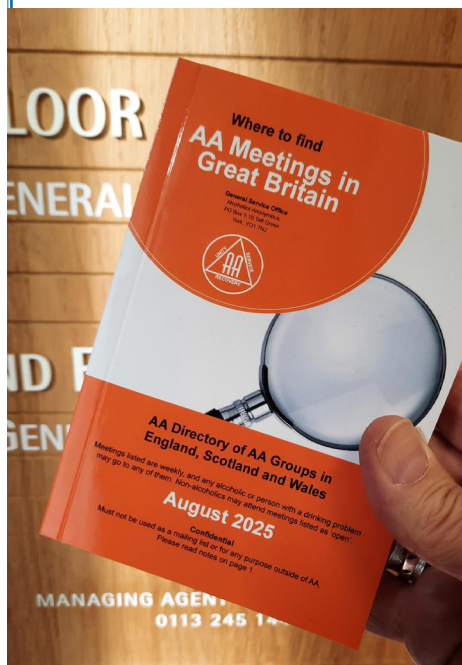
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**Alan M:**

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## AA GB Where to Find directory £8.00 post free

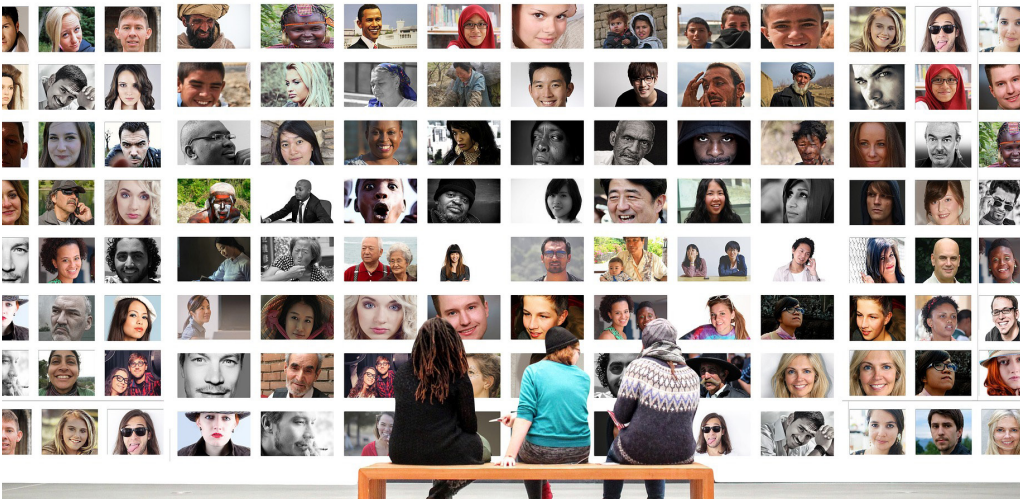


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## **LGBTQIA+ VOICES :** *Behind the scenes of a new leaflet*

**At Conference 2024**, Committee 4, question 2 asked that the leaflet “LGBT VOICES” be revised. It suggested that it was time to update it to be more inclusive in an ever-growing community. The committee recommended that a Working Group, under the Inclusivity Group umbrella, should be set up to do this and it was passed by Conference.

As a disabled, gay woman I had expressed an interest in the Inclusivity Group at Conference and was privileged to be asked to Chair the new LGBTQIA+ Working Group that was set up to update the existing leaflet. I cannot adequately express how excited I was!

The Group set up was to include as wide a selection from the communities as possible, to give a wide range of experiences and age, and its primary purpose was to carry the message to both new and existing members of AA. The Group was to include six members, all identifying as LGBTQIA+ and a Non-alcoholic Trustee. Our first meeting felt like a blank sheet for us to work out how the new leaflet would look.

Although Tradition Three states: “The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking,” some members from minority communities have a different experience of feeling part of the Fellowship. As such, it was important to show, especially newcomers, that AA is all inclusive irrespective of how one identifies.

I couldn't wait to start working with such an amazing group of people on such, in my view, an important project. It meant something different to each of us, but we all wanted to produce a diverse leaflet of the highest quality.

As Chair I was full of nerves, but my sponsor reminded me that I'd felt that way before whenever I took on a different service role and to trust myself, the group, and my Higher Power.

The most important thing we wanted was that the process was going to be all inclusive and that everyone was equal. That is something we hope we achieved. Service is sometimes a solo event but having the chance to work in a group was fantastic, being able to bounce off each other with ideas and support really brought the unity and feeling of fellowship to the fore.

We put an advert out for stories and waited. It was a tense time but eventually the stories came in. It was such honour to read the authors' experience, strength, and hope because it took a lot of courage to send in their - sometimes traumatic - stories. We all read the stories using a matrix as a guide to help us decide if a story should be considered for inclusion. We decided that we would include 12 new stories in the leaflet, and although we didn't always agree on a story, every decision was democratic and fair.

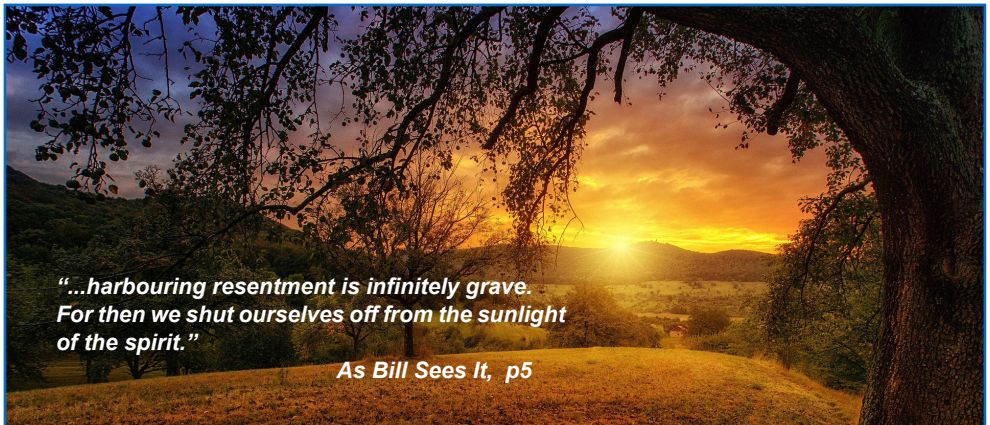
When the closing date passed at the end of June 2025, we reread all the stories and went through them with a fine toothcomb. The group took their time choosing them, there was and not one story that didn't deserve to be included but eventually the final 12 were chosen. It was important to all of us to "get it right" and we took it very seriously.

The final edited draft of the new leaflet "LGBTQIA+ VOICES IN AA" was sent on time to the Literature Sub-committee at the start of September 2025. It was a lot of hard work but I for one enjoyed every single minute of the process and was sad when it was done. It's the most enjoyable form of service I have done. Having the joint responsibilities of increasing the accessibility of the LGBTQIA+ communities, their experiences, and love for AA was such a privilege and a pleasure.

The final draft will be shown to Conference in April this year and I hope that Conference sees the importance of it and that we are not trying to be exclusive but inclusive. I've tried show how enjoyable and important this process has been, and I can't recommend enough how great it was to work with the rest of the group. There are some spaces on the Working Group for new members as they go onto their next project. I would recommend it for anyone who has a passion for service and carrying the message, and who's part of the communities. I've learned to work as part of a team and that I'm capable of more than I thought.

***If you think you are ready, willing, and able to be part of the group on their next adventure please contact the Non-alcoholic Trustee of the group Jill T on [trustee.nat3@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.nat3@gsogb.org.uk)***

**Jane C, Trustee [trustee.northeastregion@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.northeastregion@gsogb.org.uk)**





## *Reflections on European Service*

**As a first-year delegate, I recently had the privilege of taking part in discussions around European Service, and I wanted to share some reflections from that experience.**

### **Learning About the European Service Meeting**

One of the first things I came to understand was the significance of the European Service Meeting, which takes place every two years, with the next one scheduled for 2027. There is already a sense of preparation and anticipation, and I've found it inspiring to see how much care goes into shaping the agenda.

### **Seeing the Differences Across Europe**

A key learning for me has been recognising how different AA can look depending on where we are. In Great Britain, many members stay in one place for years, while in Central Europe there is often a more transient Fellowship, creating different service challenges.

### **Understanding the Practical Challenges**

The discussion highlighted the complexity of providing literature across Europe. While printing in one country may be economical, transporting it across borders can significantly increase costs, affecting how we carry the message.

### **New Ideas and Possibilities**

There was discussion about the possibility of a European Service Office in central Europe. This could support distribution, provide a meeting base, and strengthen cooperation across the region.

### **The Importance of Listening**

I have learned the importance of listening to those who live and serve within Central Europe, recognising the value of their experience and insight.

### **Looking Ahead**

As we move towards the European Service Meeting in 2027, I feel grateful to be part of the process. This experience has deepened my understanding of service and reinforced the importance of unity in diversity.

***In service, Jim M. First-Year Delegate***



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# Conference 2026 Committee Recommendations

## Committee No. 1

- 1. Would Conference consider the adoption of inclusive wording in the AA GB Preamble - specifically replacing “a fellowship of men and women” with “a fellowship of people” - in light of AA’s Responsibility Pledge and the Third Tradition.**

We vote to change the ‘official’ preamble to a fellowship of people – this directly answers the question. As per Tradition 4 each group is autonomous however the board members, trustees, sub committees and literature do not have autonomy, and are required to use the Conference approved version of the preamble (including national conventions and the website). Our preamble is the public facing statement of what and who we are.

Votes 12 for, 5 against, 3 abstentions

To address the following concerns raised in our committee of wider implications of this change.

1. Changing the literature

Alcoholics Anonymous GB conference does not have the authority to change the Big Book, Steps, Traditions and Concepts as this requires a 2/3 majority of worldwide groups.

2. Cost implications

The recommended change will be rolled out as literature is reprinted therefore there are no additional cost implications for the Fellowship.

***This recommendation was passed with a simple majority***

- 2. Would Conference discuss and recommend suggestions as to how our AA Groups could increase their 7th Tradition contributions so that our Fellowship is as financially robust as it can be for the future in terms of carrying its message to the still suffering alcoholic?**

Group Meetings

Suggested statement for Groups

Contributions cover our local running costs. Any surplus is forwarded to our local intergroup to support the wider AA service structure to reach the alcoholic who still suffers. We suggest a donation similar to the price of a cup of coffee – whatever that means to you. Please do not worry if you cannot give today, we are simply glad that you are here.

1. Making announcement about increased costs from chair/secretary/treasurer
2. Use of different payment options, PayPal, QR codes, bank transfer and card readers
3. How Tradition 7 surplus is spent needs to be explained as it goes down the structure
4. Passing the pot twice if it hasn’t made the rent
5. Putting more than a ‘pound in the pot’ – what’s the price of a pint/coffee today?
6. Not hanging on to money, passing it down the structure, what does the money buy? Helpline and PI work, special workers to help AA’s primary purpose. Responsibility of GSR’s to communicate where the money goes

7. Reading out full Tradition 7 long form at business meetings
8. Remember that cash is still an option, so passing the pot still works
9. Display material for the groups that explain Tradition 7
10. Changes in reporting at all levels, groups not holding onto cash, moving money on when prudent reserve reached
11. Contributions from online meetings down the structure
12. Treasurers to speak up at meetings putting a face to the 'pot'! All group treasurers refer to the leaflet 'The Pot' and 'The Group Treasurer's Cashbook'
13. As a group remember we are not just supporting our group but we are supporting AA as a whole
14. Consideration to setting up new meetings, is it required? How does it impact other local groups
15. Communication needed for groups that pay direct to GSO – missing out on intergroup information and using funds locally for our primary purpose
16. Contribution is an expression of gratitude, very often we have become more financially viable due to recovery
17. Look at where Tradition 7 money being spent ensuring it is for AA's primary purpose.
18. Set up a regular giving system for home group members to pay monthly by standing order or envelopes, as is done in churches

#### Intergroup/Region

1. How Tradition 7 surplus is spent needs to be explained as it goes down the structure
2. To create display material for the groups that explains Tradition 7
3. Region to provide practical advice and information for groups on how to set up alternative digital forms of payment. (Opening a bank account, how to do it, list which payment channels are available to groups)
4. Intergroup and Regions to run online workshops on treasury and finances including digital payments.
5. Receipts given when money sent to I/G or Region.

The Committee also recommends the following to GSB:

1. How Tradition 7 surplus is spent needs to be explained as it goes up the structure, continue to work on clarity and transparency in financial reports
2. A revised section in the Structure Handbook (page 109) to explain how to be treasurer – setting a prudent reserve, moving money down the structure on a regular basis. Section 4 on Group Money to also be revised (p 113)
3. Review contributions page on the website with information on Gift Aid and Legacies
4. Create display material for the groups that explain Tradition 7.
5. Continue investigating that GSO start charging for postage on free literature
6. GSB to continue reviewing our expenditure and addressing the Warranty 2 deficit
7. GSO to look at tax implications of running any payment system and provide relevant info to Regional Treasurers

***This recommendation was passed with a two-thirds plus majority***

### 3. Review revised Chapter 7 of the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain & Continental Europe – AA in Prisons

Revised amendments.... From Committee One and agreed by Zelma. Trustee for Prisons

#### 1. 7.2

Prison Groups

It is recommended that they have a minimum of 3 years **continuous** sobriety **and have a working knowledge of AA's 12 step programme of recovery and traditions.**

#### 2. 7.3

3. Prison Postal Service

To become a prison postal sponsor you need 2 years **continuous** sobriety **and have a working knowledge of AA's 12 step programme of recovery and traditions.** Also, a support letter from either your home group, intergroup or Region.

7.2 revert to original as it was felt the new version weakens the message of AA  
The paragraph should now read...

**As with all meetings, it is desirable that prison groups share their experience, strength and hope making reference to the AA programme of recovery using every opportunity to include the steps, traditions and the Big Book.**

This was unanimously agreed by Committee One.

***This recommendation was passed with a two-thirds plus majority***

## **Committee No. 2**

1. **Would Conference share their experience, and consider the need to expand on the guidance provided in the Structure Handbook (page 119) with specific reference to children, minors and juveniles attending AA meetings?**

#### ***What Issue Does This Proposal Address?***

Whilst the Fellowship has general safeguarding guidelines referencing this matter, it is felt that the Fellowship would benefit from sharing its experience on this subject given the increasing needs of parents/guardians to bring their children to the meetings they attend, as well as children, minors and juveniles attending meetings in their own right.

#### ***Background Material***

AA Structure Handbook for GB 2025/26 - page 119

#### ***How Will the Alcoholic Who Still Suffers Benefit .....***

Although groups are autonomous, by sharing their experience how we might accommodate parents/guardians and their children in meetings we will make our meetings more accessible to those with parental demands.

By making it clearer how best the Fellowship can support children, minors and juveniles who may suffer from alcoholism we will be helping our members to be of maximum service to those so affected.

This Committee acknowledges that there are two distinct circumstances in which children, minors and juveniles may attend AA meetings, and recognises that each calls for consideration.

6.6 Safeguarding Children and Juveniles i.e. an alcoholic parent or guardian accompanied by a child.

There is the potential for tension between:

- a) The parent or guardian needs to access recovery.
- b) Other members' freedom to participate or share openly e.g. anonymity.

Groups may wish to reflect on this through their group conscience process. Specifically have a plan in advance.

6.7 Minors Attending AA i.e. young people attending in their own right.

The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking. A young person who meets this requirement is welcome in AA. Groups are encouraged to hold a group conscience to consider how best to create an environment in which a young person can feel safe and supported.

The committee recommends that the existing guidance be reviewed by the GSB and take into consideration the expressed experience of the Fellowship regarding children, minors and juveniles including:

- 1. Group conscience
- 2. Plan to be prepared
- 3. Insurance
- 4. Safeguarding concerns
- 5. Venue safety
- 6. Anonymity

Relevant Traditions - Four (group autonomy), Five (primary purpose) and Three (the only requirement for membership). Any supplementary guidance produced should take care to respect group autonomy, offering experience rather than direction, while being clear that safeguarding obligations exist independently of AA's principles.

Vote: Unanimous.

***This recommendation was passed with a two-thirds plus majority***

**2. Would Conference discuss how the Conference process could be made more attractive, inclusive, and engaging for the Fellowship, so that all members and groups feel connected to, and part of, the way AA's collective conscience is expressed?**

***Background***

The General Service Conference is where AA's collective conscience is expressed for our Fellowship as a whole. Concept One tells us that the **final authority and responsibility rests with the groups**. But some members/groups feel distant from the process, unsure how to connect with it.

The aim is to help all members feel connected to our collective conscience.

AA GB Structure Handbook 2025/26:

Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain & Continental Europe – Section 6. The Twelve Concepts

The General Service Conference

General Service Conference Pamphlet

The committee discussed at length and identified a number of opportunities throughout the service structure by which the Conference process could be made more attractive, inclusive, and engaging for the Fellowship, including:

- a) Encouraging the Fellowship to engage with delegates to understand the Conference Process including at Conventions e.g. share, stand and/or workshop.
- b) Delegates sharing Conference experience enthusiastically in meetings, conventions and writing articles for AASN, Roundabout, Share and Arena.
- c) Supporting the submission of clear and concisely worded topics, motions or questions.
- d) Consider new ways of communicating questions and responses e.g. website content and links.
- e) Explaining, with examples, positive impacts of Conference e.g. ChatNow
- f) Continued Conference Steering Committee transparency.

“Alcoholics Anonymous is more than a set of principles; it is a Fellowship of alcoholics in action. Service is at the centre of every AA concept and activity. It is as fundamental to AA as abstinence is to sobriety. Without this giving of oneself to another, there would be no Fellowship.”

*The AA Service Handbook for Great Britain & Continental Europe Pg 17*

Concept One places ultimate authority with the groups, but that authority is only meaningful if members and groups actually feel connected to the process.

Concept Two (delegation) and the principle that leadership in AA is one of service, not authority.

Specifically, Groups having a GSR is key to the whole service structure, and without a GSR most members of a Group will feel disconnected through a lack of information and guidance. Equally if intergroups do not have Region Representatives and regions don't have a full quota of Conference delegates, the communication flow in both directions is diluted.

The committee recommends that GSB review the information provided to Conference Delegates including General Service Conference Pamphlet e.g. consider adding a dedicated section on the role of the conference delegate including the important contribution that conference delegates can play both before and after Conference.

“While remembering that the best person for the job should be elected for the sake of AA as a whole, consideration should be given to ensuring that intergroups have easy access to a Conference delegate.”

*The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain & Continental Europe Pg 138*

Vote: Unanimous.

***This recommendation was passed with a two-thirds plus majority***

### **Committee No. 3**

**1. Does Conference believe the Fellowship is doing enough to help and support older alcoholics in finding our Fellowship and finding recovery? Would Conference consider what more could be done to make our Fellowship more accessible to older people with serious alcohol related issues?**

The conscience of committee 3 recognises that while some fellows felt supported there is an understanding that we can always do more.

We discussed at length what more could be done and there were many repeated themes which included but were not limited to:

- a) Sponsorship
- b) Accessibility & Practical support e.g. technical
- c) PI & Health liaison officers
- d) Services for older people e.g. age concern
- e) Isolation
- f) Health & Well Being

We would make the following recommendations as to what more could be done to make our fellowship more accessible to older people:

1. Distributing existing literature and establishing relationships with relevant organisations e.g. Age UK, Befrienders, lunch clubs, bowls clubs, care homes etc.
2. Groups should ensure their accessibility information is kept up to date and correct via the 'group registration form' i.e. transport links, parking, hearing loops.
3. Assisting older members to attend in-person meetings and online meetings.

4. Groups, intergroup and regions might consider older person liaison officer / representative.
5. Encourage older members to write stories and read Roundabout & Share magazines.
6. Ensure older people are represented in AA posters and other communications.
7. Groups are encouraged to be mindful that age does not indicate length of sobriety and to welcome each person without preconceived expectations.
8. Instruct that the Accessibility Working group explore access for older people including filters on the website.

The Committee would suggest groups bear in mind that not all older people are computer literate and may find online meetings and the 'Where to Find' difficult. They may also find online meetings hard to access, and they may prefer daytime meetings especially during the winter when getting to a meeting is more difficult. Ensure assistance is available at the meetings making sure the older person feels comfortable.

As part of our discussion our committee acknowledged the importance of National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (N.I.C.E) CG115, (see 1.3.1.7) & Cochrane Report: Alcohol and Older People - A Silent Epidemic - AA Service News (Winter 2024) - Dr Kieran Moriarty (NA Trustee).

#### Foot note:

Some groups questioned why we were looking at this topic and suggested that we should be looking for the similarities not the differences.

The vote was unanimous.

For: 17

Against: 0

Abstained: 0

### ***This recommendation was passed with a two-thirds plus majority***

## **2. Would Conference consider and share their experience of how the Fellowship can improve its understanding and application of the 12 Concepts within Service?**

Committee 3 shared their experience, and it was felt the concepts are often overlooked due to a perception that they are irrelevant within some service levels. We would like to make the following recommendations as to how the Fellowship can improve its understanding and application of the 12 Concepts within Service.

a. The committee has reviewed existing resources and found them to be fit for purpose e.g. video, 12 Concepts checklist & the Twelve Concepts for Service in Great Britain (illustrated) [https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/about-aa/what-is-aa/12\\_concepts/](https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/about-aa/what-is-aa/12_concepts/) & page 30 of AA Structure Handbook 2025/26

b. Request that the web master make the video as linked above easier to find on the website and GSB share this with the wider Fellowship

- c. Hold workshops and encourage these to be promoted within the Fellowship.
- d. Concept scrolls to be made available to purchase individually.
- e. Groups could consider including Concepts at their meetings.
- f. We encourage those members that have a working knowledge of the Concepts to share their experience with other members.
- g. Request the webmaster to investigate the viability of meetings being filtered by a specific theme such as 'Concepts'.
- h. We considered it worthwhile to conduct regular inventories at all service levels.

The committee had an extensive discussion that the GSB should lead by example in the application of the 12 Concepts.

The vote was unanimous

***This recommendation was passed with a two-thirds plus majority***

## **Committee No. 4**

1. **Would the Fellowship discuss and share experience regarding how we might strengthen our practical application of Tradition One — “Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity” — so that we maintain safety and unity within AA, and avoid the need to use the term “safeguarding” in our literature?**

When applied practically, Tradition One leads us to create safe, welcoming environments, in which the still-suffering alcoholic can recover.

In recent years, Conference discussion has given rise to literature being created by the General Service Board and subsequently approved by conference it can be found in the Structure Handbook page 115 – 123.

The General Service Board (as a charity) is required by law to hold a Safeguarding Policy. Some members believe that the Fellowship itself should not be seen to adopt external policy, frameworks, or use terms like safeguarding as they may compromise AA traditions.

If groups use this question to discuss their practise of common welfare and share with conference their conclusions and suggestions, then we will strengthen the daily practical application of Tradition 1, and meetings service structures sponsorship and fellowship life, so AA continues to offer a safe and unified environment in which our primary purpose Tradition 5 can be fulfilled.

Tradition 1 (Short Form and Long Form)

**It is the conscience of Committee 4 that we might strengthen our practical application of Tradition One through the following recommendations:**

Establishing a Working Group to:

- Create a Pamphlet for individual members & groups (a condensed version of Chapter "The Group", Sections 5-8 in the Structure Handbook)

Promoting and encouraging the following activities:

1. Groups take regular step 10 inventories
2. Run workshops at Intergroup level
3. Run Tradition workshops at Intergroup level

#### **In relation to the use of the term Safeguarding:**

Our committee does not support the avoidance of the term "safeguarding" within our literature as agreed by a majority, however, Committee 4 recommends through the Working Group:

\*Correcting the current *Safeguarding / Medical Advice card* (on the website shop) with reference to safeguarding policy / use the correct image of the card on the website

Vote: 14 For, 2 Against

A minority opinion from the floor that safeguarding legislation does not apply to Alcoholics Anonymous, and we fear that the committee recommendation is not only uninformed, misinformed and hasty, but that any pamphlet will only erode and undermine our three legacies and damage Alcoholics Anonymous for future generations.

#### ***This recommendation was passed with a simple majority***

2. **Would Conference share members experience of the safeguarding role at all levels of the service structure to inform a role description and sobriety length for the Service Handbook.**

**Guidance would ensure those in safeguarding roles are of maximum benefit/ service in supporting the groups to adhere to healthy safeguarding practises in their meetings. This in turn would enable the group to better carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic, protect the newcomer, members and the fellowship as a whole  
AA structure Handbook. Chapter 5 - The Group - Safeguarding and Personal Conduct**

As a committee we agreed that we did not have enough experience through our regions to create a definitive role description.

However, we recommend that a role/function description is fully developed by the "Working Group" (refer to Q1 suggestion).

We ask the working group to consider the following Principles:

- Listening and supporting, not Investigating
- Signposting not solving
- Guiding not governing
- Collective responsibility, not an individual role.

Vote: Unanimous

A minority opinion from the floor that safeguarding legislation does not apply to Alcoholics Anonymous, and we fear that the committee recommendation is not only uninformed, misinformed and hasty, but that any defined role will only erode and undermine our three legacies and damage Alcoholics Anonymous for future generations.

In addition, in our literature. Bill says that service is anything that enables the message to be carried, and that if it is not needed, we should discard it. Such a role does nothing to enable the message to be carried. So, we don't need it and we don't want it, and it must be rejected, as it's been outlined by conference and our group's responses to previous questions, the group conscience is the most effective way of dealing with problems.

***This recommendation was passed with a two-thirds plus majority***

## **Committee No. 5**

1. **Would Conference consider the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Alcoholics Anonymous, and more specifically:**
  - i. **How AI might assist the Fellowship in carrying out its primary purpose**
  - ii. **What risks AI may pose to AA, especially regarding anonymity, data privacy and automation**
  - iii. **Whether shared experience and/or guidance is needed to help ensure any use of AI remains in line with AA's Traditions and spiritual principles**

The conscience of Committee 5 is:

AA will always be based on personal experience, **ONE ALCOHOLIC TALKING TO ANOTHER**. However, AI is happening now. Although our Fellowship has survived previous technological change over its 91 years, this challenge appears to be significant. It is therefore necessary that the Fellowship starts to address this.

- a. **How AI might assist the Fellowship in carrying out its primary purpose:**

AI can, and is, being used to assist in serving our primary purpose, but ought **NEVER** replace one alcoholic talking to another.

**b. What risks AI may pose to AA, especially regarding anonymity, data privacy and automation:**

1. Dilution of the message e.g. sponsorship and literature
2. Anonymity
3. Use of data (privacy)
4. Risk of misrepresentation (deliberate/accidental)
5. Lack of understanding in the Fellowship
6. Lack of personal responsibility
7. Lack of accountability / control over AI

**c. Whether shared experience and/or guidance is needed to help ensure any use of AI remains in line with AA's Traditions and spiritual principles.**

The Committee has very mixed experience of AI, and there is an urgent need for guidelines and guardrails. We suggest that these are brought back to Conference 2027.

The provision of guidelines and guardrails should be incorporated into the service structure of AAGB, and it is suggested that this be led by the PI and EComms Sub-committee. It is also strongly suggested that they draw on the expertise and experience of the wider Fellowship, wherever possible, in order to support this.

Through its shared experience the Committee recognises that AI has the potential to help further improve the effectiveness of our service administration.

Other considerations:

1. Cost and our current financial position
2. Speed of our actions given technological advances
3. Technical capability
4. Environmental changes

*Voting: Substantial unanimity (14 for 2 against)*

***This recommendation was passed with a two-thirds plus majority***

**2. Would Conference share its experience on the importance of the Greeter role at our meetings, and make recommendations for inclusion in the Structure Handbook.**

The conscience of Committee 5 is:

It is the experience of the Committee that the role of the greeter is vital and should be included in the Structure Handbook.

The following points are recommended as part of the description:

1. First point of welcome to the group and potentially AA
2. Make introductions
3. If possible two people as greeters

In making this recommendation we fully recognise the 4th Tradition, the autonomy of each group, its resources, its conscience and its responsibilities to keep all attendees safe. We rely on the Literature sub-committee to determine the final wording.

Voting: Unanimously passed

***This recommendation was passed with a two-thirds plus majority***

## **Committee No. 6**

1. **Could Conference explore and recommend safe ways for AA members in early sobriety to re-engage socially in light of the increasing presence of alcohol-free beers, wines, and spirits on the market?**

Committee 6 strongly concludes that Conference cannot explore and recommend safe ways for AA members in early sobriety to re-engage socially in light of the increasing presence of alcohol-free beers, wines, and spirits on the market.

It also concluded that The Big Book, The Doctor's Opinion, the chapter Working with Others and Living Sober already offer guidance relating to how members in recovery may engage socially within wider society.

This committee concluded that it would be a hazardous deviation from AA Tradition for Conference to give any view on alcohol free beers, wines and spirits. Respecting Traditions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 10 and in accordance with Article 3 of the Conference Charter of Great Britain. Tradition Ten is clear that Alcoholics Anonymous expresses no opinion on outside issues,

*"No A.A. group or member should ever, in such a way as to implicate A.A., express any opinion on outside controversial issues—particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whatever".*

The protection offered by this Tradition lies not only in our intent, but in how our actions and discussions may be perceived.

Unanimously agreed.

***This recommendation was passed with a two-thirds plus majority***

## 2. Review revised Chapter 8 of the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain & Continental Europe – Probation/Criminal Justice Social Work Services (CJSWS)

AA Service Handbook

Chapter Eight: Probation/ Community Justice ~~Social Work~~ Services (CJS)

(All page tabs delete Criminal and insert Community and delete CJSWS and insert CJS)

1. Introduction
2. Groups
3. Probation/CJS Liaison officers (& Chit System)
  - 3.1 General points
  - 3.2 Setting up a Confirmation of Attendance or 'Chit' system
  - 3.3 Intergroup Probation/CJS Liaison Officers
  - 3.4 Regional Probation/CJS Liaison Officers
4. The General Service Board's Probation/CJS Sub-Committee

Co-operation with the probation service, social work services, approved premises, courts, police ~~forces~~ services and legal professionals are included in the remit of probation/community justice services liaison officers. **It is recognised that there are variations in geographical areas in how different agencies operate.**

### 8:1 Introduction

Experience has shown that positive results can follow when groups, intergroups and regions co-operate with the community justice services with a view to helping the still suffering alcoholic.

In our pamphlet 'AA as a resource for Criminal Justice Professionals' the following appears:

***'Where links between an individual's offending, and/or reoffending and drinking have been identified, case officers can ensure that these people are made aware that AA exists and that we might be able to help them. This starts the ~~offender's~~ potential newcomer's recovery journey. Some do not engage with our solution immediately, but many eventually return after that first contact.'***

A good working relationship between AA and community justice services often takes many months and sometimes years to build. Experience shows that, as in many areas of service, setting up a system of co-operation is most likely to prove successful if patience and perseverance are practised.

## 8:2 Groups

(Refer to section ‘The Group’ of ‘The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain & Continental Europe’.)

Tradition Five tells us that “Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”

Sometimes the way in which a person enters AA may seem unorthodox, controversial or even in breach of our Traditions. However, a closer look will show us that AA is not interested in how a person comes to us but simply in how we can help in that person’s recovery from alcoholism. Each group is autonomous and how it chooses to co-operate (if at all) with community justice services is for the group conscience to decide. One method could be the participation of the group in the confirmation of attendance or ‘chit’ system, the details of which may be found in Section 8:3.2 below.

## 8:3 Probation/CJS Liaison Officers

### 8:3.1 General points

#### Resources

It is hoped that each liaison officer will be sponsored into service and passed relevant information by the person who is rotating out of office. To support liaison officers AA has prepared a liaison officers pack: Probation/CJS available from GSO and in the AAGB website’s Documents Library.

All liaison officers should familiarise themselves with:

- The Twelve Traditions
- ‘The AA Service Handbook for Great Britain C Continental Europe’ and ‘The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain & Continental Europe’.
- ‘Liaison officers Pack: Probation/CJS’
- The leaflet ‘AA as a resource for Criminal Justice Professionals’. This leaflet is included in the ‘website Documents Library and can be purchased as AA literature.
- AA website and what it has to offer those involved in this area of service.

The AAGB website [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk) has a section to assist liaison officers, in the Members’ Area//Service/Disciplines. The section ‘Probation/Community Justice Services’ carries background information, news about recent and forthcoming events, and links to resources such as the liaison officers pack and stories from members, the website will be updated in the event of significant changes within the probation/criminal justice systems. The website also has a section carrying information for professionals in the Legal/ Community Justice area.

#### Co-operation across AA

It is suggested that the liaison officers work closely with their AA colleagues in other service areas, particularly those in Prison Liaison and Public Information. They may also need to co-operate across intergroup and regional boundaries, as a community justice service may cover an area which includes more than one AA intergroup, or region.

A number of intergroups and regions have found it valuable to encourage the setting up of small teams to assist liaison officers and to provide local contacts across the larger community justice services areas.

### **Budgets and expenses**

(Refer to section 'AA Money' in 'The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain & Continental Europe.)

It is suggested that liaison officers should prepare annual budgets for their service activities. These should be prepared according to the established procedures of each individual intergroup or region. They might include sums for travel to regional assemblies, the purchase of AA literature for placing in community justice services premises and courts' offices and other places, travel to national events like the regional officers meeting or a Probation/CJS Seminar, and any projects planned for the following year.

The payment of expenses depends upon the group conscience of the region or intergroup, always bearing in mind our Tradition of self-support.

- Service is defined as that which makes the Twelfth Step possible
- It is agreed that no expenses should be claimed for individual 'face-to-face' Twelfth Step work

In principle, any member who is qualified to carry out a particular task in our service should not be prevented from doing so for financial reasons and should be offered expenses.

When carrying out an intergroup or region function, duly authorised members should be offered expenses. For a variety of reasons regions and intergroups will probably differ in their approach to this question, and there may be no uniformity, but there need be no controversy if decisions are taken in the spirit of AA and with common sense.

### **8:3.2 Setting up a Confirmation of Attendance or 'Chit' System**

The confirmation of attendance system, often called 'the chit system' is simply a scheme to let people have a document to show that they have attended a particular meeting. That person can then give the confirmation to community justice managers, social services, an employer, or any other body. Groups and their members do not need to know why a person is requesting a chit.

The system was endorsed by Conference 1987 as being within the Traditions and operates without compromising anyone's anonymity. It is up to the person requesting the chits to report on themselves to whoever is supervising them.

In other words, the use of 'chits' is AA's well-established system of self-reporting. Chits do not guarantee sobriety, they just confirm attendance at an AA meeting, and no one is forced to attend an AA meeting either.

The intergroup probation/CJ Liaison Officer can be invited to attend any meeting to explain the chit system. Each group that agrees to participate tells their Intergroup so, and the P/CJ Liaison Officer would add that group's details to the list of participating groups prepared for the local Community Justice service. It is recommended that the Intergroup secretary also keeps a record of the groups participating to ensure continuity of service.

Any **safeguarding** concerns are best addressed through the Group Conscience and guidance sought from the AAGB website and current Structure Handbook. Where there is a **Safeguarding representative appointed and/or** Probation/CJS **Liaison** officer they can be consulted.

Some intergroups now choose to keep supplies of blank chits for groups.

Blank chits are available free of charge from GSO and can be requested by any group, intergroup or regional officer. They are printed with anti-counterfeit ink and use the group's number as a 'signature' thereby ensuring the anonymity of the member filling them out. They will only be posted out to a group, intergroup or regional officer's address already registered with GSO, so before requesting any please ensure that your contact and the group's registration details are up to date. via 'The Group Information Registration and Update Meeting Form'.

Details of setting up and running a confirmation of attendance/chit system are given in AA's 'Liaison officers Pack: Probation/CJS' available from GSO and on the AAGB website's Probation / Community justice section and the Documents Library.

### **8:3.3 Intergroup Probation/CJS Liaison Officer**

(Refer to section 'The Intergroup' of 'The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain & Continental Europe'.) It is through the intergroup that the liaison officer is elected.

It is recommended that **the** intergroup **Probation/CJS** liaison officers should have ideally at least two years' continuous sobriety when elected and should serve for a maximum of three years.

The main tasks of the intergroup **Probation/CJS** liaison officer are:

- Asking their intergroup to register their appointment with GSO and use their allocated aamail account.
- Obtaining and reading the 'Liaison officers Pack: Probation/CJS' and using it as the liaison officer feels appropriate, and using the AA website's section on Probation/ CJS Liaison for information and resource material
- to establish/maintain links in the intergroup area with:
  - Community justice services dealing with non-custodial sentences
  - Approved premises (APs) and probation delivery units (PDUs)
  - Magistrates, local courts and court officers
  - Police **forees services**
  - Solicitors' organisations
  - Other professionals having regular contact with **potential newcomers**
- Report to each intergroup meeting by the **Probation/ CJS** liaison officer to keep intergroup informed on a regular basis. A copy of each intergroup report should be sent to the regional Probation/CJS liaison officer, who should be kept informed of developments in the intergroup.
- Maintaining records of local service initiatives & professional & fellowship contacts, to ensure continuity of service at rotation.
- Attending regional workshops when available, and keeping in contact with the regional liaison officer
- Attending AA's national probation/ community justice seminars when these are arranged.

Some intergroups have a flourishing relationship with their local community justice service departments. In others there will have been little contact. It is for each Probation/ CJS liaison officer to decide the best way of taking the role forward. Some suggested methods are as follows:

- Setting up a committee or team to assist in the work and to twelfth step any people who are on probation in England or Wales or involved with community justice services in Scotland.
- Establishing a named contact in each local community justice service office in the area, and with the courts service, police and other organisations
- Distributing approved AA literature and posters for display in community justice service offices, approved premises, court offices and police stations, and to be given by them to potential newcomers. Material given to potential newcomer's might include stories from AA members who have encountered similar problems, which are available from the AA website and AA members involved in prisons service.
- Attending meetings with individuals and teams in the community justice services to inform them of how AA works and what it does and does not do.
- Attending similar meetings with courts staff, solicitors, the police etc.
- Arranging to provide speakers for information sessions, perhaps with the help of members who have experienced aspects of the community justice system. The message from previous offenders who have changed the direction of their lives after finding AA and stopping drinking is a very powerful one. (Note: some sites have enhanced security restrictions that may prevent members with certain or recent offences from visiting)
- Asking the subcommittee for help when there is no regional liaison officer in place.

### **8:3.4 Regional Probation/CJS Liaison Officer**

**(Refer to section 'The Region' in 'The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain & Continental Europe'.)**

It is through the regional assembly that the regional **Probation/CJS** Liaison Officer is elected, ideally though not essentially being a member with some experience at intergroup level.

It is recommended that **Probation/CJS** Liaison officer should have at least three years' continuous sobriety at the time of election, that the officer should serve for a maximum of three years and be confirmed in post annually. Consideration should be given to their personal experience.

The main tasks of the regional Probation/CJS liaison officer are to:

- Attend regional assembly meetings with report
- Attend the annual regional Probation/CJS liaison officers meeting in York
- Obtain and read the 'Liaison officers Pack: Probation/CJS' and use the AA website section on Probation/CJS Liaison for information and resource material
- Communicate with intergroup liaison officers within the region and to collate information from them into a report to be given at each regional assembly
- Send a copy of each such report to [aainformation@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:aainformation@gsogb.org.uk)
- Encourage intergroups where liaison activity is slow or non-existent to seek members to undertake service in this area
- Offer support and encouragement to intergroup Probation/CJS liaison officers especially those new to the role and those taking up previously vacant positions
- Communicate with the designated member of the Board's Probation/CJS Sub-Committee

- Liaise with community justice services at a senior level, as frequently the services will have responsibility for an area which will include several intergroups
- Liaise with other regions in co-ordinating approaches to community justice services whose areas extend across regional boundaries
- Attend AA's national Probation/CJS Seminars when these occur

Experience has shown the following activities to be helpful:

- Holding Probation/CJS workshops at regional level, where all the liaison officers and those with an interest are invited to share their experience, and to encourage others into service
- Visiting intergroups and groups when requested for help, assistance or guidance
- Supporting intergroups in attempts to set up contact and co-operation with their local **potential newcomer's management community justice** service
- Setting up effective links between intergroup and regional liaison officers to share experience and offer mutual encouragement and support between regional assemblies and workshops and also establishing links with the designated member of the Board's Probation/CJS Sub-Committee.

#### **8:4 The General Service Board's Probation/CJS Sub-Committee**

The Probation/CJS Sub-Committee is chaired by the Trustee for Probation/ CJS and has up to seven other members.

The main purpose of the Probation / CJS subcommittee is to assist the GSB in supporting the fellowships structure in its service work. This includes raising awareness of Alcoholics Anonymous and its services through cooperation with Probation/ CJS agencies at a national level.

Its objectives include:

- Developing and maintaining resources for liaison officers
- Disseminating information on Probation/CJS through the Fellowship
- Offering advice, support and encouragement to regional liaison officers; organising such meetings of regional and intergroup liaison officers as may be necessary.
- Developing and maintaining appropriate resources for liaison officers, including those contained in the Probation/Community Justice Services sections of the AAGB website.
- Working with the prison sub-committee to ensure that the message of AA is available across the entire community justice system and where possible meet in person at the same time as the Prison sub-committee.
- Assist in the implementation of Conference recommendations.
- Each member has been asked to work closely with a particular group of regions, and contact details are sent out to regions. Regional liaison officers are encouraged to contact members of the Sub-Committee for suggestions, advice, support and guidance, and intergroups in regions without a regional liaison officer should not hesitate to make direct contact with members.

The Sub-Committee's email address is: [infoprobation.sc@aamail.org](mailto:infoprobation.sc@aamail.org)

~~Revised Oct-2025~~ **Revised April 2026**

**Unanimously agreed**

***This recommendation was passed with a two-thirds plus majority***

# GSB Vacancies

## GSB Vacancies - Service on a Sub Committee

Rotation creates the opportunity for new members to join a General Service Board (GSB) Sub Committee (SC). The primary purpose of a SC is to deliver Conference recommendations.

If you have experience at intergroup and region and are 5 years+ sober, then we would welcome your application.

All sub committee members go through an application and interview process. Current vacancies are listed quarterly here in AA Service News, together with a deadline for submission for application, and the criteria which you will need to meet as part of your application.

Successful candidates would be expected to attend four meetings a year; usually two in York and two online. The term of service is usually 4 years.

## General requirements

- Understand the relationship between the GSB and a SC
- 5 years+ continuous sobriety
- Good knowledge and application of the 12 Steps / 12 Traditions
- An understanding of the AA structure
- Ability to 'carry the message' to audiences outside of AA
- Work with outside organisations
- Create and encourage open communication channels at intergroup and regional levels
- Work collectively as a team
- Ability to assist in delivering relevant Conference recommendations

## Additional requirements

- Have worked in a complimentary discipline to the one being applied for
- Understanding / application of the 12 Concepts for service
- A degree of confidence in establishing relationships to local, regional or national bodies outside of the Fellowship
- Conference experience

## How to apply

When applying for any of the sub committee vacancies below, please obtain an up-to-date application form from either **Jenny Pryke** at GSO, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ: 01904 644026; [jennypryke@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:jennypryke@gsogb.org.uk) or from the Document Library (select 'Forms') at the AAGB website [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk).

Your application must be endorsed with a covering letter from a currently serving officer of your intergroup or region. Your application and covering letter will need to be sent to Jenny Pryke at GSO by the application deadline.

Applicants will be interviewed online by two GSB members of the Nominations Committee. The next deadline for applications to join a sub committee is **7th August 2026**

For any application, we would suggest you contact the Trustee responsible for the SC you are interested in working for. All vacancies are listed below together with relevant Trustee contact details.

***We look forward to hearing from you soon!***

## **Current Sub Committee Vacancies**

- **Archives**  
Email Jim M at: [trustee.easternregion@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.easternregion@gsogb.org.uk)
- **Armed Services**  
Email Jim M at: [trustee.easternregion@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.easternregion@gsogb.org.uk)
- **First Response Online**  
Email Holly A on: [trustee.southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk)
- **Literature**  
Email Max J on: [trustee.midlandsregion@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.midlandsregion@gsogb.org.uk)
- **National Telephones**  
Email Graham D on: [trustee.nat8@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.nat8@gsogb.org.uk)
- **Public Information & EComms**  
Email Matt S on: [trustee.cer@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.cer@gsogb.org.uk)
- **Probation/Community Justice**  
Email Carmel G on: [trustee.southeastregion@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.southeastregion@gsogb.org.uk)
- **Roundabout - vacancy for Proof Reader**  
Email Cath, the Editor of Roundabout, on: [roundabout@aamail.org](mailto:roundabout@aamail.org)
- **Young People**  
Email Holly A on: [trustee.southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk)



# Dear Fellows,



## **MAKE THIS FREEDOM WORK**

**I hope you enjoy reading the Conference Report.**

The 60th General Service Conference was a congregation of great fervour and insight, which reminded me of how our humility illuminates our Traditions, as exemplified by the work of the Committees and Chairs with their devotion to making AA better one day at a time.

Much of any General Service Conference is necessarily about use of language, whether the language of new pamphlets, Service Handbooks, and the Questions to Conference themselves; separating language that educates from language that obfuscates, and language that could be misconstrued to imply breaking Traditions, Concepts and Steps, when none was achieved or intended.

So, the 2nd Concept is our collective manifestation of the 2nd Tradition in relation to service, the group conscience determining how the other Traditions are realised in service. Like the Steps, the Traditions are a We Program. We practice them as a collective, and as a collective, their particular meaning, in any given situation is assessed via the freedom we have enshrined for all members and all groups. We are not a society of governance but a society of suggestion.

To make this freedom work, to maintain unity through the Traditions and provide service to the still suffering alcoholic, we as individuals need recovery one day at a time. Each Legacy can only work through the others.

So, as you will see, one of the first and fundamental but hitherto unheralded service positions in our fellowship, the Greeter has come in, metaphorically if not literally, as it's quite warm today, from the cold! to the warmth of our Service Handbooks as well as tea urn. An inestimable service to the newcomer and the newish fellow doing their first service.

The Greeter role now inscribed and enshrined in our Service Handbook further shows that all who come to AA are of value from the very first day they arrive at Alcoholics Anonymous.

*In fellowship, Ranjan B, General Secretary*



## Navigating culture, identity and recovery...

**My name is Corrina**, I'm an alcoholic and a member of the Race2Day Working Group.

I have had the great honour of getting sober one day at a time in the vibrant city of Birmingham. Only through sobriety did I come to see that this city is truly filled with love. Not only was I able to get sober here, but I was also invited to join the committee for the 36th Annual Heart of England AA Convention. I was shown immense kindness by fellows who encouraged me to grow into service, and being part of the convention has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my recovery so far.

I was further privileged to be invited to host the first **Diversity Workshop** at the convention — an opportunity which I gladly jumped at.

I am Punjabi British and attend a Punjabi/English-speaking AA meeting in the heart of one of Birmingham's most diverse communities, Handsworth. That experience has shown me how vital it is to ensure the hand of AA is always there for the newcomer, regardless of background. It is living proof that AA is inclusive and that recovery is possible for everyone. Across the UK, dedicated fellows are working tirelessly to reach newcomers who face cultural, language-based, faith-related, accessibility-related, LGBTQ+-related, and stigma-based barriers to accessing recovery.

For this convention, I invited fellows from Punjabi and Islamic backgrounds to participate in a Race2Day workshop and share their experiences, strength, and hope. They spoke openly about getting sober in AA while navigating culture and identity. They shared how they came to understand a God of their own understanding, how they learned to love themselves, and how concepts such as vulnerability — often discouraged or unfamiliar — became essential to their recovery. They touched on the courage it took to break free from cultural expectations and the shame attached to simply wanting healing and freedom.

The Heart of England Convention also takes great pride in its collaboration with Al-Anon, so I was especially grateful to include a Punjabi British Al-Anon fellow on the panel. She shared her life-changing experience of working with a sponsor and learning that it is not normal to live as an adult child, managing emotionally stunted parents and protecting siblings at the expense of oneself. Through recovery, she learned that boundaries are allowed, that she deserves her own life, and that she has the right to her own identity. AA and Al-Anon fellows joining together in shared understanding, connection, and hope was a highlight for me.

## Navigating recovery and cultural diversity *cont. from p33*

Together, the panel clearly demonstrated the power of AA and Al-Anon coming together in unity. It highlighted both the opportunities that already exist — and those that remain — to reach the newcomer and help them see that recovery is for them too.

This work is something I feel deeply passionate about. I have lost many family members to this disease, and I very nearly lost myself. Shame kept me drinking for far too long — fear of what I might bring upon my family stopped me from reaching out for help. I did not realise that the more I drank, the more shame kept me away from AA — and away from the solution.

AA's primary purpose is to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Through the AA's Inclusivity Committee, AA helps identify and reduce barriers that may prevent people from accessing recovery — whether those barriers are cultural, racial, language-based, faith-related, accessibility-related, LGBTQ+-related, or rooted in fear and stigma, underpinned by the AA traditions, specifically one, three and five.

### ***So, what next?***

For the 37th Annual Heart of England Convention, I see the importance of continuing to reach out and ensuring we have greater representation on the main stage — reflecting the diversity of our communities. By sharing experience, strength, and hope, we can show how AA helps people overcome barriers, find freedom, and begin to love themselves again.

I can't wait to see you there! I'll be sure to greet you with love and a smile!

We believe AA's Service Structure offers a powerful opportunity to further strengthen a culture in which every group is open, welcoming, and accessible to anyone with a desire to stop drinking. When we do this, newcomers from all backgrounds can recognise that AA is for them — and that they truly belong."



# Conference 2026/27 Tracker

Committee	Question	Recommendation	Responsibility	Action/Status
C1 Q1	Preamble change	Change to 'people'	GSO/GSB	Change with each new pamphlet printing
Q2	Group Meetings increasing tradition 7 suggestions	Revise Structure HB p. 109 & 113 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review contributions on website</li> <li>• Create display material for groups</li> <li>• GSB continue expenditure review &amp; W2</li> <li>• GSO: tax implications of payment systems</li> </ul>	Fellowship GSB GSO	Change to website and new edition
Q3	Service Handbook – AA in Prisons	Amend as per Conference	GSO	Change to website and new edition
C2 Q1	Structure Handbook Pg 119 - Children, minors and juveniles	Review current guidance - Group Conscience Plan to be prepared Insurance Safeguarding concerns Venue safety Anonymity	GSB - Fellowship	Change to website and new edition
Q2	Conference process being more attractive, inclusive for Fellowship	GSB review current Conference Delegate information: SH & GSC Pamphlet	GSB / CSC	
C3 Q1	Supporting older alcoholics	Recommendations that groups bear in mind (See report)	Fellowship	
Q2	Improve the understanding of the 12 Concepts	GSO Shop	GSB/Fellowship	
C4 Q1	Strengthen practical application of Tradition 1	Lit SC	GSB / Fellowship	
Q2	Safe-guarding role within the service structure	Role & function description is developed by a 'Working Group'	Fellowship/GSB: Safeguarding Group	
C5 Q1	Artificial Intelligence (AI) use / impact	(see report)	Fellowship/GSB	<del>5comm</del> /PI review Conference 2027

# Conference 2026/27 Tracker *cont*

Q2	Structure Handbook – role of Greeter	Literature SC	Literature SC/GSO	Change to website and new edition
C6 Q1	Early sobriety alcohol free presence	<b>No action</b> <b>No opinion</b>		
Q2	Service Handbook Chapter eight Probation/Criminal Justice Services ((CJS)	Amend to final report wording	GSO	Change to website and new edition

Men's Video (2025 C5 Q1) Board reported Conference 2026 on viability and cost. Decision back to Board.	GSB	Board to decide simple majority vote 2026
British Big Book (2024)	GSB	Ready for Conference 2027

## Literature

The following literature was approved by Conference with the amendments made:

- CSC template for insertion to pamphlet 'General Service Conference'
- New pamphlet 'Membership Survey 2025'
- New pamphlet custody leaflet 'It Beats Sitting in a Cell'
- New pamphlet 'More Than Money'
- Revised pamphlet '12 Stepping: Carrying the Message'
- Revised pamphlet 'A Message for Professionals'
- Revised pamphlet 'LGBTQIA+ Voices in AA'
- Revised pamphlet 'Sponsorship: Your Questions Answered'
- Revised pamphlet 'The AA Archives'

*'The Pot' was withdrawn and will go to Conference next year.*

# Board Bullet Points May 2026

- GSO** Sharon S to leave 30 September 2026 after 38 Years.  
Emma W to be Conference Coordinator,  
Anne-Marie S Confidential Directory/ aamail, Survey and Internal Telephones  
Andrew B– new part time literature member of staff
- NSO** Glasgow Region Sec, Sharon W, appointed key holder for out of hours service meetings
- SSO** Office available and now being used for service committee meetings  
Health & Safety / Fire and office training, both in office and via video link  
Selected literature and merchandise available for purchase: £4K since December 2023

## Calendar

AA Service News Deadlines:

- Autumn – 25 July 2026
- Winter – 25 October 2026
- Spring – 25 January 2026
- Summer – 25 April 2026

Regional Forums – 3 per year. GSO/GSB presentation, no more than every 3 years per Region

- Northwest Region – 17 May 2026
- Highlands and Islands - 15 August 2026
- South Midlands - 18 October 2026

**European Service Meeting (ESM)** - 13 – 20 October 2027

**ESM Fund** - £25k paid into WSM Nov 2025 - £40k balance

**World Service Meeting (WSM):** Portugal to Host in 2026 – Reserve Host India

**Sub Saharan Africa Service Meeting (SSASM):** Cancelled. We have now had several workshops with the Kenya Intergroup helping them develop their ideas on how they can grow. East Africa Service Workshop to be held online on 25 November with AAWS in attendance to assess potential for a face to face East African Service meeting in November 2026

**Development fund:** £25,659.44 paid in; £50k paid out of WSM October 2024. £81k balance

- Welsh Parliamentary Event – 5 November 2026
- Scottish Parliamentary Event – TBC Autumn 2026
- Westminster Parliamentary Event –TBC Spring 2027

# Board Bullet Points May 2026 *(cont.)*

## Subcommittee Appointments

- **Stephen E** SE Region: **Literature Subcommittee**
- **David S** Scotia Region: **Probation and Community Justice Subcommittee**

GSB/Subcommittee applications deadline: 7 August 2026

## Conference Questions to be actioned by the Board, 2026/27: Update on completed items

**C1Q1** The Preamble change has been approved by the Board. Changes will be applied with literature reprints and publications going forward.

**C1Q3** Service Handbook – AA in Prison – changes done on website and new edition of the handbook

**C4Q1** The suggestion to have the Working Group find ways to strengthen practical application of Tradition 1 with regards to Safeguarding has been accepted by the Board and will be taken forward.

**C6Q2** – The requested changes to wording in the final report regarding Service Handbook Chapter 8 Probation/Community Justice Services have been done

**(2025 C5Q1)** - The Board has approved the motion to go ahead with the Men's Video

**(2024)** British Big Book will be presented at Conference 2027.



# Tradition 7

*“Every AA group ought to be fully self supporting, declining outside contributions”*

Tradition 7 Regional Contributions January - March 2026	Contributions £
Some of these contributions come from regional assemblies, whilst others may come from individual members or groups	
Eastern Region	42,035
London Region North	45,708
London Region South	11,164
Midlands Region	19,584
North East Region	36,462
North West Region	19,898
South East Region	1,849
South Midlands Region	2,815
South West Region	20,091
Wales & Borders Region	1,415
East of Scotland Region	1,450
GLasgow Region	17,254
Highlands & Islands Region	13,059
Scotia Region	24,520
South West Scotland Region	5,835
Continental European	10,354
Sundry - Unidentifiable receipts	2,502
<b>Total</b>	<b>275,994</b>

## ***IN MEMORIAM*** January - March 2026

Eref in memory of David B	30.00
Hull 12x12 group in memory of Phil M	60.00
Stow online in memory of Monica D	170.00
Keith Moray in memory of Roger H	500.00

# Subscribe to AA Service News

For your printed copy, update the group 'Pink Form' or contact Sharon at GSO [sharon.smyth@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:sharon.smyth@gsogb.org.uk) Alternatively, complete the form below and send to the address provided.

*Printed AA Service News is mailed in a plain envelope.*

SEND TO (BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)

Group Name/Day: .....

Group No:\*

Name: .....

Address: .....

Postcode: .....

Email to .....

**AA Service News, GSO, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ**

\*GSO reference for each AA group - register with GSO by filling in the group registration, or 'pink' form