

Winter 2023

AA Service News

From the General Service Office of Great Britain



**Questions for Conference 2024 and
much, much more inside...**

12 Traditions Checklist

“6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.”



- 1. Is it good for a group to lease a small building?**
- 2. Is my group aware that all money collected in the pot is AA money and should not be used for social activities, birthday cakes, etc**
- 3. Should members of my group sit on alcohol advisory committees or other committees concerned with alcohol problems/alcoholism?**

From the 'Twelve Traditions Checklist'

AA Service News

Welcome to the Winter Edition of AA Service News

We are really pleased to remind you that **AA Service News is now available in print.** 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 YOURS!**

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

We look forward to hearing from you!



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

Email: editor.aasn@aamail.org

GSO Website: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

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@gsogb.org.uk

Thank you to the following for this quarters pictures:

- Tim B
- Glenn B

Tech Talk 5

AAGB Website Update

The AA website renewal is nearing completion, and there has been time to build additional features into the site, using the flexibility of the WordPress content management system that underpins it.

Castlegate IT, our web development agency, is working on Alpha testing of the website. This phase of testing is designed to ensure that the specified functionality is available and works as expected. There has been a delay in starting Alpha testing as some database gremlins needed to be sorted out. Now that these issues have been resolved, this phase of testing is expected to progress swiftly. Testing is often where bugs and other issues are discovered, so it's to be expected that issues are found and fixed accordingly. It is much better to find as many bugs as possible during testing and before the website is made public.

Once Alpha testing is completed, we can move on to the second Beta phase. Planning for this phase is well underway, and will include members of the Fellowship as part of our testing teams.

Testing web technology is generally somewhat unpredictable and open ended. You never know what you'll find until testing starts! As a result, we don't have a Go Live date confirmed as yet. The project is progressing well though, and we expect to be in a position to announce a 'Live' date in the next edition of AA Service News, or sooner if we can.

Tim B Tom F
PI & E Comms Trustees



Leeds Market Event

I'm Ashley and I'm the current Public Information Liaison Officer (PILO) for West Riding.

It's with great pleasure that I'm sending you this article on behalf of all those involved in getting an AA stall up and running at Leeds Market in the highlight of Recovery Month September.

With the schools all closed for summer break and a somewhat reduced interest from local recovery hubs, public information has been really quiet in the West Riding area.

Having always visited Leeds Market to indulge in the various food outlets, it came to mind that this would be a great venue to have a stall where we could openly share our leaflets and posters and help IF requested. I spoke with the manager at Leeds market and a price was negotiated for the whole of September.

We are currently in the second week and it has been received really well by the general public. The requests we've had from members has been overwhelmingly positive to help out on a shift rota basis. Our WhatsApp group has tripled with those interested in doing service!!

But the most amazing story and possibly a world record within AA was that of a lady who clearly had a drink issue, turned up at the stall wanting information on how to stop. She shared her life was totally unmanageable and drink was starting to cost her not just financially but in other ways too. An experienced member in our group who was on shift that day spoke with her and within 15 minutes she was in a meeting of

AA which just so happened to be located in the Leeds Market.

We hope that this could be more than just a yearly September Event but for now it's clearly working.

I can't thank those involved enough who have given their time free of charge to help guide potential customers to AA but also inform those members of the public who in some cases didn't even know we existed!!

**Regards
Ashley W
PILO West Riding**



Reaching out to national employers...

My name is Mary and I am an alcoholic. I am currently a member of the Employment Sub Committee, which acts as a conduit between the General Service Board (GSB) and the Fellowship in relation to employment liaison work.

As part of my role, I reach out to large national employers with a view to raising awareness of Alcoholics Anonymous, and how the Fellowship can help employees with a drinking problem, what AA can offer, and what it can't.

Having chatted with a family member who worked in the Civil Service, I thought it would be useful to contact various Civil Service Trade Union organisations and called the First Division Association (FDA), a union for civil and public servants. My higher power intervened that day as the person I spoke to was familiar with us as their brother-in-law had got sober in AA and so I was referred to the health and wellness lead. After having spoken to them, a lunchtime online presentation was arranged for members and employees to voluntarily attend.

I asked a fellow subcommittee member to assist and we put together a slideshow using an existing format which explains what AA is and how it works, with one of the key benefits being that there is no cost to the employer. We agreed that one of us would briefly share our experience of getting and staying sober in AA, as this can be very powerful as a testament to our Fellowship for those who have no experience of AA. We request that no recordings are made to protect our anonymity in line with Tradition 11.

The day arrived and we presented to the group. I am pleased to say we had lots of questions following the session and were happy to respond to those to provide more of an understanding of our fellowship. While there's no telling whether anyone will get sober as a result of our presentation, it certainly raised awareness and hopefully will filter out through the organisation. We also provided follow-up with e-literature and an invitation to the upcoming Parliamentary event.

It felt good to be able to pass on the AA message with the hope of helping another suffering alcoholic.

Mary
Employment Sub Committee

First Response Online Service Sub Committee (FROSC)

Holly (South West Trustee) and Steph (Volunteer of the Chat Now Service) undertook an excellent workshop on the newly formed FROSC for us at the South Midlands Region in September 2023. It was explained at the start that this is was all about recovering alcoholics being able to access help through different forms of technology.

Steph, a recent volunteer on the Chat Now Service gave a touching and informative account of how she engaged with the service when she first contacted AA and how she has been able to give back to the service what she received. Her passion and enthusiasm for the service was evident for all to see.

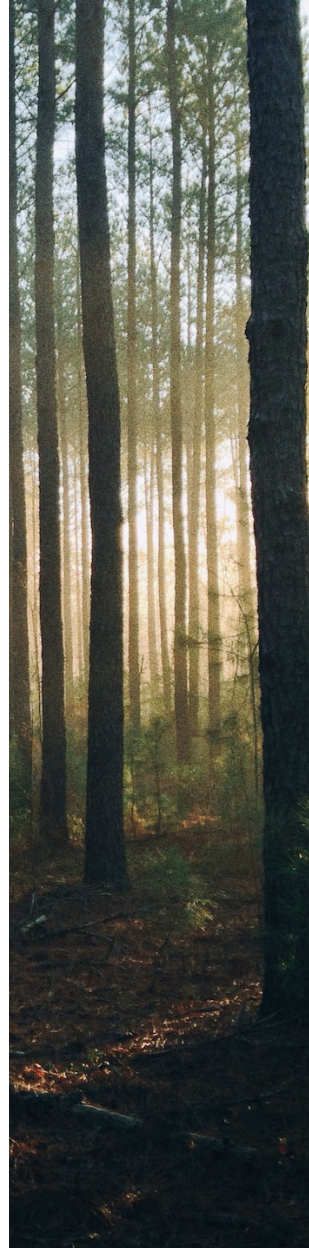
Holly described how newcomers seeking help from the Alcoholics Anonymous GB and English Speaking Continental Europe website find out on the home page to make contact with a 'helping hand' - a recovering alcoholic in AA - either by picking up the phone and dialling the 0800 number to talk to someone, by sending an email to help@aamail.org (ORS) or by clicking on the red 'live chat' button at the bottom right hand side of the home page and having a live chat with a Chat Now responder. She went on to say that more and more newcomers were using the email and live chat service as an alternative way of chatting with a recovering alcoholic for the first time about their drinking problem.

Holly also explained that the General service Board (GSB) have a responsibility for the administration of the Chat Now Service (CNS) and the Online Response Service (ORS) and how these services differ from the telephone service in that the latter is administered by the Fellowship.

FROSC are looking for volunteers for both services. This is a new kind of service position that many of you may be interested. A minimum of two years continuous sobriety, with a good knowledge of steps and traditions are key requirements. Training is provided.

For further information please contact Holly at trustee.
southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk.

South Midlands Region would like to thank Holly and Steph for a wonderful workshop, informative, insightful and full of passion and enthusiasm.



‘My Experience at Conference 2023’

This is my final report to North Eastern Regional Assembly (NERA) because 2023 was my third year of three at Conference. Writing this reflection has been cathartic and I hope it might be helpful to someone? My happiness and enjoyment grew over the three years. Year one was on Zoom, and it was awful; I said very little, listened a lot and felt apart from the whole experience. My second year was good, but I had to repeatedly answer the same question; ‘What have you done to your leg?’ (I had ruptured my Achilles a few weeks prior). My hobbling around certainly made me memorable! Year three was by far the best.

Thank you, NERA, for the opportunity to serve. I feel like I have grown, and I have learned many valuable tools which I can carry forward to other life ventures. There were tests which caused me to break my sugar abstinence. I now know that I struggle with stress but surrendering to my higher powers gets me through. Some of the differing personalities on Committee 2 made chairing it challenging, however I/we persisted and completed our task. Four hours sleep made concentration on Sunday tricky. Being around sooooo many people was paradoxical – it was awesome interacting with like-minded folk but said challenges drained my energy reserves.

Why am I sharing this? I am hoping to illustrate a contrast in my behaviour when challenged by adversity. Pre AA - I would have fought, swore, blamed and/or ran away. This year, I had different skills, skills I have learned over 18 years of service in AA. I worked collaboratively with the other

Committee Chairs, Conference Chair, General Secretary, Board Members and Sharon. The secretary for committee 2, Michelle, also deserves a mention. She was my rock. She helped to keep me on track according to time and agenda. She stood in for me at 0100 Sunday morning when I needed to speak to my sponsor because some members were insistent on getting their own way and seemed unable to compromise. Michelle also read out our proposals to Conference for me because I felt my dyslexia brain fog would prevent an accurate message from being carried. This was my first real experience of team working and it was a pleasure. Shirley, the Conference Chair, was fantastic too, she was fundamental at keeping the show on the road and someone I went to for advice on numerous occasions.

Thankfully I found I was not the only person who experienced challenging situations. Being part of something where most people were pulling in the same direction to achieve a goal was amazing. The only negative that despite all of this extra effort we put in, our proposal for question 3 was rejected by Conference.

This has been an opportunity for spiritual growth for me too. The perfectionist part of my brain/illness wanted everything to go well and Adam to appear perfect (it is what my surname means after all!!). My higher powers had a different idea. My ego was bruised, and I felt hurt. Added to this, I was nominated for but not elected as the Conference Chair for 2024. Thankfully, there were plenty of like-minded folk available for me to talk it through with including the 6 members from NERA. Because of

talking it through with them I quickly concluded that Sean would be a much better option. Congratulations buddy.

Something that made this Conference even more interesting to me was that I had submitted a question. Having a horse in the race made me feel like I had some ownership on the event. It got through the 'filtering' process by the steering committee. I declared that it was 'my question' and abstained from the discussion so as not to biased things. I was particularly happy when the Fellowship and Conference discussed and approved it too.

In conclusion, I would highly recommend Conference participation experience to everyone. On the whole it showed me democracy in action. The team working aspect was unparalleled. It also gave me an opportunity to behave differently, some might say like a civilised human! I loved it, so once again, thank you NERA for the gift!

Adam P
North East Region



Conference 2024 Alternate Chair's Report

In October 2009, after many attempts at getting dry and returning to drink again, I woke up in a Bedford City police cell with a deep down, inside decision that I could not do this any more. I had decided to quit.

On October 24th 2009, having admitted I was powerless over alcohol, I went back to Alcoholics Anonymous for the 4th time in my life with a willingness to do whatever was asked of me, and with absolutely no belief in the programme of recovery.

I walked into a meeting I had attended a number of years prior and immediately saw some familiar faces. The man who was to become my sponsor asked me where I had been. I responded that I had been out drinking. He asked 'How was it?' I said, 'it was absolutely horrible, worse than ever before.' He said, 'Thank God for that'. I asked why he said that and he responded, 'I've been sitting in these meetings for a number of years thinking you found the answer, I am really glad it was horrible for you'. Thus started my journey of recovery.

I worked the steps to the best of my ability and still do every day. With guidance from my sponsor, I found the way this programme works for me. There were no demands, just suggestions. I could do them or not. When it came to making amends, it was suggested to me that the phrase 'except when to do so would injure them or others', included me. That

I was also ‘them.’

14 years ago, I had no idea what AAGB was or that Conference existed. If anyone has suggested in those early days that I would be involved with or associated with Conference I would have laughed at them. Yet here I am, having practiced these principles each day in all my affairs. One Day At A Time, volunteering for service.

My first service at intergroup was telephone responder. I volunteered for the Friday night 22:30 to Saturday morning 08:00 shift. I was 1 year sober and had a home group. I remember my first night. I had my book out and was ready for any suffering alcoholic to call. I was surprised that not one person called. When I spoke to my sponsor about being ready for any suffering alcoholic and no-one called, he told me ‘God looks after the suffering alcoholic as well.’ I have continued that service to this day, and now fully understand exactly what my sponsor meant.

I attended intergroup as a visitor just to see and hear what was accomplished and ended up volunteering for service which led to service at region where I was elected to be an alternate conference delegate. Three years later I attended my first conference as a delegate. I have also served on the Armed Services Sub Committee, and am presently Chair of Committee 3 as the result of volunteering to do service whenever the opportunity arose.

I was told early on “Service Keeps You Sober” and I can tell you for me that is absolutely true.

.We have to give it away to keep it as I have experienced most recently. There has been a bit of emotional turmoil in my family this year to say the least. When in emotional turmoil if I turn my thoughts to others, I am able to move forward maintaining sobriety which is my primary purpose. Giving time and effort to the

organisation of AA at all levels from group to GSO keeps the Fellowship alive for those who come after us.

Our Conference Steering Committee (CSC) met for the first time on 19th May online. It comprised, Sean (Conference Chair), the chairs of the various committees for Conference 2024 were all members: Peter N (committee 1) Alan F (committee 2), myself Jim M (committee 3), Jane C (committee 4), Jeremy M (committee 5) and Vikki C (committee 6), Hamish McS and Tim B (Trustees) Ranjan B (general secretary) and Sharon Smyth (conference organiser) were present to assist us. Our first order of business was to consider the option of having one or two Trustees on the committee. After a bit of discussion, we voted to keep two Trustees on the committee and to give them voting rights; Ranjan and Sharon were non-voting members. I was elected as alternate conference chair, and Vikki C as minute taker.

Ranjan briefed us on the history of the CSC and talked us through the guidance notes which place emphasis on the need for clarity and accuracy of the questions, and the factual nature of the background material. We were reminded by Sean of the Conference Charter, and Sections 8, 9 and 10 were reviewed. It was stressed that the proceedings of the CSC had to be confidential to ensure that undue pressure was placed on its members during proceedings. It also meant that all members of the Fellowship get access to the Conference Questions at the same time in December. We reviewed the Terms of Reference which govern the proceedings of the CSC, and the matrix for Conference 2023 which sets out the recommendations of Conference 2024. We noted that all the tasks arising had been assigned. We also reviewed feedback from Conference 2023 and discussed how best to address those concerns.

Our second meeting spanned two days in September and took place at GSO in York. The main business of this meeting was to consider the 50 questions which had been

submitted by members of the Fellowship by the stated deadline of August 31. All of the questions were anonymised for obvious reasons. We reviewed them all, applying the Terms of Reference which are circulated to the whole Fellowship along with AA Service News. Anyone on the CSC who had prior involvement in a question, declared their interest and opted out of discussion of that question. Some of the questions covered similar topics and where this was the case, we either selected the one which encapsulated the topic best, or combined two or more. By the end of that meeting we had three piles: 'Yes', 'No' and 'Maybe'.

The CSC met again in York over two days in October where the questions for Conference 2024 were selected. We made the decision that each committee would be given two questions and a literature question to discuss. This decision is a direct response to the experience at Conference 2023 when three questions and a literature question took discussion in to very early hours of Sunday morning. We ensured that sufficient and accurate background was provided, which did not tell people how they must decide the question. The chosen questions were then allocated to the six committees - two per committee. To these were added literature items for amendment arising from previous Conference decisions. We also considered the Conference matrix, which sets out the action taken by the General Service Board in relation to recommendations of the previous Conference. We concluded that each of the decisions had either been implemented, or that progress was being made towards implementation. Finally, rejected questions were allocated to pairs of members of the committee to provide reasons for the decision to those who had submitted questions.

It will then be up to groups, intergroups and regions to discuss the allocated questions, ensuring delegates will be able to carry the views of the fellowship forward to Conference 2024.

In February, the CSC will meet again to deal with any final decisions as to the running of Conference. We will also review our own work, including the application of the Terms of Reference and any recommendations to be conveyed to our successors.

I am honoured to have been elected Chair of Committee 3, and therefore a member of the CSC as well as Alternate Conference Chair. I am grateful for this opportunity of service and in so doing, achieving my primary purpose of staying sober and helping others to achieve sobriety

Chair, Committee 6
Jim M



Questions for Conference 2024

Introduction

Every year, AA Service News presents Questions for Conference. These questions have been raised by the Fellowship and selected by the Fellowship for discussion and resolution by the Fellowship at the annual AA Great Britain (AAGB) Conference. Conference is due to be held in York on April 12-14th 2024. This is your opportunity to read the questions and voice your opinions to your conference delegates, group, intergroup and region over how AA works.

Conference questions and background information is available from the AA Great Britain website 'Document Library'. <https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Document-Library>

Committee No. 1

1. **Conference is asked to consider, and make recommendations, for a comprehensive overhaul of the service structure.**

Members' availability for service is challenged by unprecedented demands in the workplace - greater job insecurities and pressures on time.

A streamlining of disciplines could reduce persistent vacancies and make carrying the message more effective in changing times.

There are 12 service disciplines at Intergroups and Regions, in addition to the positions of Chair and Secretary. Many vacancies exist also within Board subcommittees.

Could Employment, Health and Public Information be unified within Public Affairs? Could Electronic Communications and Telephones become Responding? Is Young People's Liaison essential as a separate discipline?

Carrying the message with greater effectiveness ought to take priority over the protection of existing individual disciplines.

There are enormous changes in society - AA is part of society, not removed from it.

Background

Service and Structure Handbooks
Vacancies in AA Service News
Vacancies in the Confidential Directory
12 Traditions
12 Concepts

Any comprehensive review of the service structure should be based on the Fellowship's experiences.

2. **Would Conference investigate the viability in terms of security, cost and anonymity, of opening Conference to online observers?**

Background

Currently, the fellowship allows observers to participate in different tiers of the service structure. Any member of the fellowship has the opportunity to attend a groups business meeting, irrespective of their membership in that particular group. Additionally, members are afforded the chance to attend and observe Intergroup and Region meetings. This provides invaluable opportunities for many members to learn more about the service structure and can be an important step for individuals growing in service in AA. However, the option to observe the Conference is presently unavailable. This lack of accessibility gives Conference an air of exclusivity, leaving many members of Alcoholics Anonymous unaware of its existence and not exerting their right to participation.

Since 2020, Conference delegates have had the option to attend online. Utilising existing technology, could Conference not be made more inclusive by extending this online access to the entire Fellowship? Such a move would allow members to observe proceedings, granting them the same behind-the-scenes view that is presently available at Intergroup and Region meetings, providing greater transparency. This opportunity to see conference and their trusted servants in action may also help members to become better informed and could encourage some to consider becoming Conference Delegates themselves in the future.

As Conference is already being conducted in a hybrid format, the platform's settings could be adjusted to ensure that observers cannot participate in proceedings, for example by ensuring that they cannot activate their cameras, remain muted throughout, and display only their names rather than any profile pictures.

Committee No. 2

1. **Could the conference please give more clarification and detail on situations in which making direct amends is against the spirit of the steps if it is likely to cause harm?**

Context: locally there are various traditions of sponsorship in which sponsees have been told to make these amends e.g. victims of sexual assault have been told to get in touch with their assailants to make amends for harbouring resentment against them (this has included a situation where the sexual assault in question was incestuous); people who have been subject to restraining orders or threatened with restraining orders have been told to make direct contact with those requesting restraining orders to apologise for causing them fear and distress.

The concern is that commands to make these kinds of "amends" bring the Fellowship as a whole and our 12 Step programme into disrepute (particularly in the eyes of other organisations such as Rape Crisis) and has constituted a perceived barrier to being accepted as a member of our Fellowship.

Would Conference consider if the suggestion in step 9 “unless to do so would injure them or others,” applies to the sponsee as well?

Background

See Context above

See three-fold pamphlet, ‘Questions and Answers on Sponsorship’

2. Would Conference share experience on how AA members may communicate with each other on matters affecting AA as a whole, as well as their specific roles?

Good communication between members should be encouraged without promoting specific platforms.

Background

Ways Intergroup & Region members can communicate to exchange ideas or updates on service:

- PI Service news, compiled by the PI Sub Committee, and mailed from GSO to any AA member who signed up. This has been discontinued. Last issue Sept 2021.
- AA Service news – quarterly, sent to GSR’s and service holders, plus a mailing list if requested from Sharon at GSO, and generally includes a few pages on Service reports, (8 / 52 pages in Summer 2023 edition, 5/26 Spring 2023).
- Email to AAs in service, with contact via the Confidential Directory. The Directory is only accessible to those with aamail.org e-mail addresses with a password issued by GSO. The GSB set strict rules about what can be shared and regulate who may have access.
- Intergroup and Region reports – can be shared via their respective meetings & officers. This is potentially patchy due to the inconsistency of roles being filled and the vacancies throughout the structure. In practice, GSR’s share back the minimum of information to groups, so many members will be unaware of what is going on.

There is a wealth of experience and enthusiasm around GB, yet much of this does not get shared.

3. Review amended Introduction in the Structure Handbook for Great Britain.

Background

Amended Introduction

[Document available in the Document Library under Conference Reports & Background / Conference 2024](#)

Committee No. 3

1. **Would Conference consider how online meetings are best represented and sharing information with each other? Would it be prudent to have an Online Intergroup for each region or nationally where online meetings talk to each regarding online matters and carrying the message online.**

Background

Our intergroup has a couple of groups that are based online only, they have no physical meeting. Over time, their homegroup members have changed from local participants to people all over the UK and in fact the world. One of our meetings, the GSR is based 300 miles away and cannot attend our intergroup, and that group also had questions that would be better for other online based groups to discuss. There are specific topics of discussion that physical meetings might not have.

2. **Would Conference share its experience on the importance of rotation at all levels of service within the AA structure? (The impact of having vacant positions and why members should not repeatedly occupy the same service position).**

Background

Tradition 9
Concepts

3. **Review Service Handbook page 90 (2023 edition), Section 9.4 The General Service Board's Probation/CJSWS Sub Committee, first paragraph. Please replace 'up to four other members' with 'up to seven other members' as approved by the General Service Board.**

Background

Revised section 9.4 The General Service Board's Probation/CJSWS Sub Committee, first paragraph.

[Document available in the Document Library under Conference Reports & Background / Conference 2024](#)

Committee No. 4

1. **Would the Fellowship consider the following questions concerning Chapter 4 of the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain, "For AA Members Employed in the Alcoholism Field" and make recommendations to Conference.**

a. **Is the chapter about AA service?**
If not, then

b. **Should it be removed from the handbook?**
If so, then

c. Should the material be presented in a different format, such as a pamphlet?

Background

Reading: the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain Service chapters 1 and 4.

- 2. Will Conference review “LGBT Voices’ pamphlet with reference to Tradition 1. Our common welfare should come first: Personal recovery depends on AA unity.**
- a. Consider a complete and more permanent title change for a constantly evolving community.**
 - b. Consider an Update to the Stories to include a wider and more up to date range of experience (LGBTQIA+)**
 - c. Consider removal or change the paragraph in the Title heading which reads “As a gay man in a very heterosexual AA it’s a bit like being an alcoholic in a sober world” this is not inclusive to all in the fellowship only Gay men.**

Background

LGBT acronym has not been updated since the 1990s.

The pamphlet was approved by Conference in 2016 and it has been in production without any amendments since then.

Committee No. 5

- 1. Could Conference discuss how the Fellowship’s understanding of the principles of anonymity may guide those Groups requiring AA members and visitors to put their names in a signing-in book/attendance book at meetings.**

Background

Tradition 12 - Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions p187-191
Pamphlet ‘Understanding Anonymity’

- 2. Would Conference discuss and consider the viability of creating an additional version of the Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous) incorporating stories from AAGB (including CER).**

Background

- AA USA/Canada have said they will not be inviting stories from members other than in the USA/Canada. Therefore, it seems, for identification purposes, appropriate to have stories from GB members. There would be no changes to the first 164 pages in this version.
- Conference 2019 (Committee 5, Q.1) declined to pursue a proposal to create a special edition with British stories.
- This proposal would not seek to replace the 4th or 5th editions, rather to create a ‘local’ version that would be available alongside them.

- A parallel version of the Big Book exists in Australia, now in its second edition, retaining 8 stories from the US/Canada 4th Edition, but with 35 added stories from Australians, including those from the indigenous community. (Please note: Should this question be chosen, AA Australia have indicated that they would be able to share extracts from that edition so members can assess the added relevance of such shares).
- “The story section of the Big Book is far more important than most of us think. It is our principal means of identifying with the reader outside of AA: it is the written equivalent of hearing speakers at an AA meeting; it is our show window of results.” Bill W, letter 1953
- Consider the impact on Arena, Roundabout and Share magazines.

Committee No. 6

1. **Would Conference share experience on how an AAGB App would help carry the message in addition to the AAGB website and existing apps?**

Background

AAGB Website.

2. **Would Conference discuss the merits of creating a user friendly information pack about how to be involved in the service structure, with each discipline running an online workshop, at the 3 yearly seminar, on how to get involved?**

Background

Pamphlets “Sponsorship into Service” and “Growing into Service”.

The Home Group – Heartbeat of AA.

AAGB Website – Members / Service Disciplines.

3. **Review New Chapter on AA Publications for the AA Service Handbook for Great Britain.**

Background

New Chapter on AA Publications

[Document available in the Document Library under Conference Reports & Background / Conference 2024](#)

Please consider the contribution to the carrying of the message, financial and practical implications when deliberating each question

Westminster Alcoholics Anonymous Awareness Event for Professionals

21 May 2024 - afternoon 15:00 – 17:00 at
Portcullis House Westminster London

Please help us publicise this event among professionals who would benefit from learning about Alcoholics Anonymous, and how to signpost people to AA.

The 2-hour event is open to all those working in the health and well-being fields, social care, and criminal justice system.

Please speak with your local professional contacts about the event and let us know contact details of those interested in receiving an invitation. Ideally, we will invite professionals in positions of influence in their fields. There may well be other potential invitees, all health and well-being workers, social & criminal justice system professionals and students are good to be invited.

Also, if you are holding a PI activity of any kind, could you make sure to get contact details of all participants, so that we may invite them and ask them to pass the invitation on to their colleagues.

Please help us compile a list of invitees, with the

- professional's name,
- job title
- organisation /place of work
- email address.

Invites will be sent out via e-mail in due course.

Please send contact details of potential invitees to:

sophie.perring@gsogb.org.uk



As you know, places are limited, costs are kept to a minimum, and budgeted to cover as many external professionals as possible, so this is not a general event for AA members. If you are both an AA member and a professional in the field, please free up places by encouraging your colleagues who are not already very familiar with AA to come along.

Many thanks for your help

Westminster Parliamentary Event Committee

Board Bullet Points Sept 2023

Chair

Justin welcomed all to the 250th meeting of the General Service Board (GSB).

Whilst Summer is the time for holidays, the board and General Service Office (GSO) have still been diligently carrying out our various tasks.

Hon. Treasurers Report

Clive reported that following Conference recommendations, the Finance Committee has been working on new Finance Policy for the board.

This year the Finance Committee has been proactive and our 3rd Quarter finance report to the regions has been issued. The 4th Quarter finance report will be sent out to the regions in November.

Nominations Committee Report

Barbara reported that we had a total of 17 members applying to join GSB Sub-Committees.

Employment.

Rob R. From eastern region will be joining our Employment Sub Committee.

Fist Response Online (FROSC)

Lesley B. From north-east region will be joining our FRO Sub Committee.

Health

Robin H. From south-east region will be joining our Health Sub Committee.

Literature

Andy D. From Wales and borders region will be joining our Literature Sub Committee

Frank C. From London region south will also be joining our Literature Sub Committee.

Prisons

Leonard C. (Lenny) From south-west Scotland region will be joining our Prison Sub Committee.

David Mc. From Glasgow region will be joining our Prison Sub Committee.

Bruce B. from CER (Continental European Region) will be joining our Prison Sub Committee.

Probation

Adam G. From London region north will be joining our Probation Sub Committee.

Roundabout

Jan O. From Highlands and Islands Region will be joining our Roundabout Sub Committee.

Telephones

Caroline S. From north-east region will be joining our Telephones Sub Committee.

All Trustees please note - seven-day embargo rule in place for Nominations. Jenny has sent out letters.

Barbara together with the board would like to thank all who applied together with the Nominations Committee for their dedication in carrying out all the service required to complete the interviews.

Chairs Report

Justin was invited to attend the Regional Chairs meeting which went well.

There have been reported instances of bullying at Service meetings over the past year and this was discussed. It is important that we all recognise this as a Safeguarding concern. Respect for all members Sobriety and their Service should be fundamental at all service meetings.

Please note this also applies to written communication to the GSB members and GSO staff. When letters are sent from Groups, Intergroups and Regions always ask yourself 'would those that I am representing be happy with what is being communicated in their name?'

North- west region - invited the board to attend their last assembly meeting. So, we asked two of our Trustees, Jo from eastern region, and John from north-east region together with our General Secretary, Ranjan, to attend.

All found it worthwhile, and we hope that the north-west region will have their own Trustee in the not-too-distant future.

Please note: Any region that does not currently have a Trustee and would like a Trustee to attend their Region please get in touch.

Structure and Service Handbook Project

Justin advised the new layout for our Handbooks is complete and awaits printing.

Whilst there are no changes to any of the text, the project is to make the layout more appealing to the Fellowship whilst embracing our new AA family look as you will have seen with Financial Reports, Share, Roundabout, AA Service News, together with the new pamphlets for Young People and Sponsorship into Service.

Four Film Projects (Blue light, Women, LGBTQIA+ Ethnic Minority)

The filming for this project will take place during Summer 2024. Location tba, but soundproofing is essential. We are exploring use of university studios. Films will be presented to Conference 2025.

Justin has asked that all Trustees highlight the need for all regions to be represented at the board. An underrepresented board leads to additional work for the existing Trustees and importantly regions without a Trustee are less informed and may feel cut adrift from the Fellowship.

We discussed this at length, and have decided that a soft approach for the selection of Trustees will be implemented. Justin will write to all regions advising them of the change.

Exec Report

Tom Reported that Our GSO Open Day held at the Northern Service Office in Glasgow was well attended. Since moving to a larger premises in Glasgow we have been able to incorporate an excellent archives display, whilst making our offices more available to the Fellowship and any visitors. This has been part of an ongoing project covering our GSO in York and our NSO in Glasgow.

During 2024 we hope to have a new SSO in London where we envisage the same approach, something that we all look forward too. Our thanks go to GSO and NSO staff together with our Fellowship Archivist Martin, and the need to have our historical records more readily available to the Fellowship.

Parliamentary Events

- **Westminster** - Gretchen reported that a sponsor for the event is still required. An event together with an exhibition is scheduled for 14th May 2024. There is a possibility that there could be a General Election in May 2024 so... all the good planning by the Committee could be put on hold...
- **Scottish Parliament** - Hamish reported that this event will now take place on the 4th of October 2023 with Fergus Ewing as our sponsoring MP- all coming together. Andrina has offered to assist Hamish should he need it
- **Welsh Assembly** - Zelma reports that this will take place on 14th November and the Committee have been working well.

General Secretary Report

Ranjan advised the following:

AA Service News Deadlines

Winter - Oct 25th, Articles for AASN can be sent in at any time. Please write to the editor.aasn@aamail.org

Seminars and Forums 2023

Forums: 3 per year with GSB/GSO presentations, and not more than once every 5 years per region.

South-East Region	3rd Dec. 2023
South-West Region	2nd June 2024
North-East Region	28th June 2024
Scotia Region	19th Oct. 2024

Seminars: 4 per year, no more than once every 3 years per discipline.

ESM – 20-22nd October 2023

Jul -22-23rd ESM steering committee held Online
£7,208 paid 2021/2

Sub Saharan African Meeting 2023 - TBC Development Fund

£ 19404.16 paid

World Service Meeting (WSM)

£9127.00 contributed to fund.

Will be held OCT 2024 - Holly will be our first term delegate and Justin will attend for 2nd term.

Note for any of our members visiting York: we now have a weekly meeting held at GSO which has become a popular meeting for both local members and visitors

Service Highlights

Young People Sub-Committee.

Holly reported that there will be a YP workshop to be held in Glasgow during 2024. Location and

date to be advised.

Share and Roundabout Sub-Committees

Charon and Andrina advised that after much discussion the cost for both magazines will increase to £2.00. We have held the price of both at £1.00 for over 20 years and have to take account of publication and shipping costs. The change will happen in 2024.

Comms and Public Information (PI) Sub-Committee

Tom and Tim reported that AA World Service have stopped using Google ads. A change in policy from Google regarding self-help groups is the reasoning. A search will no longer feature AA. We will investigate how this affects AAGB and let you know.

Probation Sub-Committee

Hamish reported that all is going well. He requests that any member that has come to AA through the Probation Service get in touch. This will allow us to run some articles in AA Service News.

Telephones Sub-Committee

Levey reported that training guides have been sent to all Telephone reps.

National Conventions:

- Southern National Convention. Tim reported that no Convention in 2023 and the Committee is searching for a suitable venue for 2024.
- Northern National Convention. Barbara advised all going well
- Welsh National Convention. Zelma reported that this is still at the planning stage
- Scottish National Convention. Hamish advised all going well

We discussed the attendance of Sub-Committees attending our National Conventions and agreed that a maximum of 4 would be sensible.

Health Sub-Committee

Barbara and Keiran reported that all is going well though we do need additional members for the Sub-Committee.

Keiran advised the board about the guidance recently released by National Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) of which some of you may be aware. The guidance it offers, and its view of AA is incredibly positive and could be a good aid in helping us to carry the message to the still suffering Alcoholic. The Health Sub-Committee will work with our Comms and PI Sub-Committee to consider the best way that this can be used.

FROSC Sub-Committee

Holly reported that the first FROSC roadshow will take place in Glasgow on the 23rd of Sept. John from the Scottish Telephone Service will be in attendance to give a presentation.

Employment Sub-Committee

Charles reported that opportunities are on the increase with companies aware that what we offer can be of great benefit to their organisations.

Many thanks

Stevie S, Vice Chair

Dear Fellowship...

Autumn greetings to all. I hope this finds you well.

In September the Race 2Day Convention discussed the lengths many have gone to for their sobriety, and how to use new media: audio, video and print to aid inclusivity aka Tradition 3 and Tradition 12. Who do we see when the newcomer walks in? An Alcoholic or a Black person? When the latter, we strip them of anonymity. A newcomer need not feel conscious of their race or ethnicity when crossing the threshold into a new life.

Our third tradition effects our collective consciousness expressed in Tradition 2. Without inclusivity our 2nd Tradition is null and void. Inclusivity is about personality as well as characteristics of gender, race, sexuality disability and identity. Inclusivity holds the quiet, the soft spoken, the shy, the newcomer. Inclusivity is getting up to offer their seat and encouraging everyone to speak, sharing their story in the meeting and their experience at a Group Conscience. Exclusivity keeps their own seat, their mug, their clique.

For groups to function well, they must be a safe haven, and members only feel safe if their voices are heard. When members are fearful, the group conscience is weakened by their exclusion, physical or vocal, which arrests the group's primary purpose in carrying the message of recovery to all alcoholics.

Oct 20-22nd saw the European Service Meeting in York with 42 fellows from 25 countries sharing their structures developments and recoveries.

As with person-to-person sponsorship in 'country-to-country' sponsorship, the 'elder' structures learnt as much from the fledgling Fellowships as the other way round through their courage, humility and perseverance, in being willing to go to any lengths to carry our message to the still suffering alcoholic. What we saw at this meeting, was the spiritual labour required, in countries where groups are few and each meeting is precious, was to make the meeting safe for all who attend. They showed that recovery cannot be taken for granted but must be 'fought' for in hearts and groups.

Ranjan B
General Secretary

The Race2Day

‘People of Colour Working Group’

The editor has asked that I write a bit of what the ‘People of colour Working Group’ aka The ‘Race2Day’ Group means to me.

For background and context, I grew up in an Afro-Caribbean home in South-West London. Both my parents were sent here as young teens, and went to school in Wimbledon. I started Secondary School in 1979. My primary school was multi-cultural, and I lived on multi-cultural council estate on the Fulham Palace Road. At the time, my best friend was white.

Let’s time warp forward to 2016. My younger sister dies at 40. The authorities ran out of space writing the main causes and arbitrary reasons for her death, and right at the end, barely fitting on her death certificate, was the word alcoholism. About a year later, 2 weeks before my mother died, she reeled off what she drank on her last bender to the doctor. She thought she had found a magic weight loss, tea, and was losing weight fast. Turns out it was stomach cancer.

I was in AA for around 7 years before they both died. I tried to give them both what was freely given to me. Funny how cultural barriers for some can be a chasm - that even a bridge of a close family member to the Fellowship wasn’t enough for them to cross.

I’m not saying that if they found AA they would of lived, I’m asking what would their lives been

like ‘IF’ they found AA. I’m not on a crusade, I just want... No, I would like every alcoholic to have a chance to change.

I went to a meeting a few years back. There were only 2 people of colour in it, and I know that in the area where the meeting was held, there are many people of colour that have an issue with the drink. I know from personal experience that none of my mothers or sister’s friends were there. I know, their stories, mental institutions, hospitals, broken families, and associated dramas, homelessness, begging for money to buy the next can and none of them are at the local AA meeting.

Why?

I truly believe in our primary purpose of putting out the hand of the Fellowship to help the still suffering alcoholic is something I can do. Helping and doing service in this way, is taking a small slow step in reaching communities that haven’t yet tapped into the Fellowship in this country. With the aid of regions, intergroups & individual members we will, I hope, give all alcoholics a chance to embark on a new way of living.

No one looks like me

Colour has never been a thing for me, I’ve always been happy to be me. I’m an inquisitive person by nature. My wife would say I’m nosey,

I see myself as a sort of Indiana Jones kind of guy. The 1st time I contacted AA, I remember going through the Thomson Local (a paper telephone directory) and phoning a few of the helplines that were in alphabetical order... The person on the helpline put me in touch with an Irish 12th Stepper. That guy didn't meet me, but I got to the meeting just at the start, and around 30 people were in the room. There was another brother like me there - sitting, speaking in the middle, talking to another member, he looked back and noticed me, I nodded at him, he nodded back. The rest is history.

Race2Day Online Convention 30th September 2023

The most recent Race2Day Convention provided a collection of ideas on how individual members, groups, intergroups and the General Service Office (GSO) can better carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic to our nation's diverse communities.

It consisted of three workshops; participants chose the one they wanted to attend. The workshops were audio, video & literature, literature had the most attendees.

What I found interesting was that there were a lot of members from North America who were attending, either extremely early in the morning, or in the middle of the night for them. One even said they don't talk about 'Race' in the US. We even had English speaking people of colour from Continental Europe in attendance as well.

All contributed to the discussions, and I felt that we in the UK are better placed to facilitate the conversation on race and AA in the UK. I do believe in the power of the group conscience. I felt that the input of all the members that attended helped shape the answers that are positive, and can be done by any AA member or any group. Our mission is to help other alcoholics to recover from alcoholism.

Below are some of the highlights from each of the Workshops, to get the full copy please

contact GSO.

Audio workshop

- Have a dedicated Diversity page on the new AAGB website which includes 'Gateway meetings' with different languages. We all have unconscious or conscious biases
- Put out a call for people who may be interested in doing podcasts through Roundabout Share, AASN, IGs, regions – topics including but not exclusive – gender, age, language, culture, ESH, confidentiality issues, service involvement.
- Create a story or mini play as a podcast as a creative, ancestral way of communication. FAQs could include storytelling or mini plays.
- Get in touch with your stories or publish them locally, for example, on local AA websites
- Succession issues, monitoring and uploading, so make Diversity into a new subcommittee at GSB, encapsulating issues of invisible disabilities and language/name barriers

Video workshop

Note: There is a Video which GSO has already greenlit and is in pre-production. The producers have 4 participants from South Asian, African and Caribbean backgrounds.

R2Day network guidance for producer

- Participants to identify their ethnic origin and cultural background.
- The video to be 4D – background more than office, with indicators of ethnicity / some extra information about the person e.g., Jamaican flag colours, clothing, local city / town identification
- Participants will be encouraged to speak in their dialect/accents. Subtitles can be used. Aim to tease out their truth, not put words in their mouths
- It is not about tackling racism it is about inclusion not exclusion. It is not a targeted

video it will be a generic one.

Literature Workshop

The participants felt that AA already had a lot of literature in different languages. People felt that the key point was getting literature to different communities, cultures and audiences.

Problem complex, there is no one comprehensive solution. Anything we do is good. Perhaps we just don't do enough. We need AA's to do local service.

Simple language used in Literature.

- Illiteracy of English / and or education - people may not be able to read
- Plain language Big Book in US' based on literacy.

Inclusivity the problem

- What obstacles exist? Exclusions exist to colour. Maybe review history of black people in AA. Racism in AA still goes on in the US
- Members of certain communities do not like to talk about their experiences in AA, so how do we get those voices heard?
- **Transitional communities** - don't have easy access to resources or meeting such as Romany communities and people who are homeless.
-

When I get to AA then I have choices. Once I have got the tools, I can go anywhere in AA that I chose. I can start a meeting!

Distribution - how can we carry the message?

- Use the AA structure e.g. intergroups, region and PI.
- It is a pressing issue getting information to individuals. Put it in people's hands.
- Take to churches, mosques, prisons, different places of worship. Face to face distribution works well. Go to homeless, transition housing, prisons, senior housing, social services, hospitals, universities and

colleges, young persons. Go to where different cultures meet – local people carry the message.

- Remember how AA started - one man talking to another – word of mouth, trust develops
- Location of meetings matters
- If literature isn't demographic, then they are on the outside looking in.
- **Targeted message** – look outside of the rooms to offer AA as a resource. AA can be seen as a self-contained entity
- **Race today workshops** – attracts others to deliver messages

Finally, I want to say **thank you** to the GSO staff, trustees, non-alcoholic trustees, and members who attended, and those that took the time to read this.

I always find that what I think an outcome will be, is never the outcome it turns out to be. Sharing our stories and finding identification in our journeys is a step, an aid in helping us to stop drinking and staying sober. This in turn, stops the cycle of our own destruction be it figuratively or literally.

Want more information, what to help out? Contact GSO and they will forward you all the contact details you need

Tony S
Member, Race2Day



Race2Day

A Diversity Practitioners Point of View!

The Race Today Convention gave us all food for thought.

There was plenty to discuss from the feedback we have received from people about their experiences when attending a Fellowship meeting on which language should we use to describe people of colour that would not offend?

If we judge someone else's experience by our own, we are in danger of negating the other's experience. It is important to actively listen and ask how best we can support each other.

We discussed the impact of 'culture' and how we can be inclusive in a way that does not make someone feel alienated. It is easy to think that everything is fine and everyone feels welcome but that can only truly be tested if the person of colour is asked.

In reality, we are all diverse and unique. Making everyone feel included and part of any group, requires being open to challenge and a willingness to change.

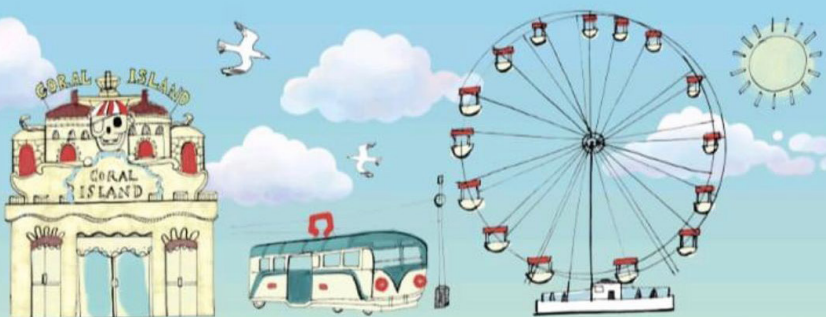
For me, I do not believe anyone in AA sets out to offend or exclude. We all have a primary purpose and that is at the heart of everything. All that is needed is a willingness to change practices, and acknowledge that not everyone's experience will be the same as yours.

Some tips...

1. Don't avoid people for fear of saying something that will offend. Just be yourself and welcoming as with anyone else.
2. If someone brings a language interpreter or signer with them, be patient and accept that the meeting may take a little longer.
3. Familiarise yourself with some cultural practices, such as why Muslim women do not shake hands and / or why some may wish to only attend meetings where everyone speaks the same language or are from the same communities. This is not to exclude others but to feel able to fully participate.
4. If providing food, try to ensure it meets the diverse needs of everyone.
5. In any advertising, make sure the images are diverse.

Ranjana Bell
Non-Alcoholic Trustee





48th NORTHERN NATIONAL CONVENTION
 FRIDAY 15th - SUNDAY 17th MARCH 2024, WITH
 EARLY BIRDS MEETING ON THURSDAY 14TH AT 8PM



Pre-pay cost £12 at
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ANY ENQUIRIES - TELEPHONE CONTACTS

Midlands: Lyn 07415 333 066
 North West: Pete N 07857 860 036
 North East: Peter G 07428 255 733
 Al-Anon: Fin 07812 829 258



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£139 per Adult per 2 nights' Dinner, Bed & Breakfast
 Double Room for Sole Occupancy

All of the service articles in AA Service News are written by members of the Fellowship. Your experience is welcomed, please do share it with others

All you need to do is email the editor with your articles at:

editor.aasn@aamail.org

Please note that the opinions expressed in AA Service News may not necessarily represent the views of the General Service Board

The Editor, AA Service News, GSO, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York YO1 7NJ. Website: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

For updating existing meeting details and registering new groups, you can find the registration or 'Pink Form' available from www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk Once completed and submitted, you will automatically receive a printed copy of AA Service News.

Would you like your pictures in future editions of AA Service News? If yes, great!

We would need 2MB in size for printing. QUIRKY is good, and pictures that will grab the attention of an alcoholic!

Please send them to the editor at:
editor.aasn@aamail.org

Thank you!

General Service Board Vacancies

What is a Sub Committee and what does it do?

A sub-committee is made up of alcoholics with usually five years sobriety and service experience down the AA structure. It is a committee that delivers Conference recommendations, and is chaired by a Trustee of the General Service Board

All sub-committee members go through an application and interview process. There are usually vacancies listed quarterly in AASN, together with a deadline for submission for application and criteria which you will need to meet as part of your application.

It's a rewarding job being on a sub-committee, by both carrying the message and the conscience of the Fellowship.

Interested? Please read on...



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 or from the Document Library ("Forms") of the AAGB website www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

The chair, vice chair, secretary or a currently serving liaison officer of the sponsoring region or intergroup **must** endorse the application by way of a covering letter.

For any of the vacancies, you will need:

- Five years continuous sobriety
- A good understanding and use of the Steps and Traditions, the AA Service and Structure Handbooks for Great Britain, and other Conference approved AA literature
- Good experience in carrying out service at different levels of the AA service structure
- An understanding and appreciation of the relationship between the General Service Board (GSB) and sub-committees

Sub-committee applicants will be interviewed by two GSB members of the Nominations Committee in a single interview through an online platform, at a time agreed by the applicants.

Successful candidates will be expected to attend four meetings a year; two of these will normally be in York, but the other two may be held via an online platform. The term of service is 4 years.

It is advisable to talk to the relevant Trustee before you apply or upon submitting your application. If you have any questions about specific responsibilities of service on a sub-committee, then please contact the relevant Trustee by using the details found below each vacancy notice.

The deadline for ALL applications is *Friday 15th December 2023*



Archives

There are vacancies on the Archives Sub Committee of the General Service Board (GSB).

The Archives Sub Committee advises the GSB on issues concerning the care and management of AAGB's Archives and reports to the Board through the Trustee responsible for Archives. The main AA Archive is now located at the Borthwick Institute for Archives of the University of York. The Archives Sub Committee works with archivists at the Borthwick Institute to develop and enhance AA archive, while managing access to it for the purpose of research. Other AA archives are held by regions and intergroups, and are looked after by local archivists. The Archives Sub Committee liaises with these archivists through the Archive Network of regional and intergroup archivists.

In addition to the standard requirements, some experience of archival work is desirable - especially experience as an intergroup or regional archivist within AA. Some knowledge of AA history is also advantageous, as are good communication and IT skills.

For more information about the vacancy, please contact John C Trustee for Archives trustee.northeastregion@gsogb.org.uk

Armed Services

The Armed Services Sub Committee is looking for new members to join a committed team who are passionate about finding innovative ways of passing the message of recovery to past and present members of Armed Services.

Experience

Experience in intergroup and/or regional Armed Service Liaison or other relative experience would be advantageous, and good organisation and communication skills are desirable. The ability to produce written and verbal reports would be an advantage, as well as relevant IT skills. Service within the Armed Service is desirable but not essential.

Aim

The principal aim of the Sub Committee is to raise awareness throughout the Fellowship and to Armed Service communities and their supported community groups.

Its objects are to:

- Raise awareness of Alcoholics Anonymous within all areas of the Armed Services community, including serving persons, veterans, and their families
- Establish and maintain good relations with professionals and professional bodies connected with the Tri-services
- Offer support and advice to regional Armed Services Liaison Officers
- Be responsible for the Armed Services 12 Stepper list
- Assist in the implementation of Conference recommendations

For more information about the vacancy please contact John C, GSB Trustee for Armed Services, trustee.northeastregion@gsogb.org.uk

Employment

There are vacancies on the Employment Sub Committee of the General Service Board (GSB) of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Our primary functions are to:

- Create a consistent message externally that differentiates AA from other bodies
- Establish and maintain good relations with professionals and professional bodies at national level
- Establish and maintain good relations with employers and companies at national level
- Increase public and professional knowledge of the AA programme
- Offer support to Regional and Intergroup Liaison Officers
- Create and maintain an accurate system of record keeping for future officers and events
- Communicate effectively with the Fellowship.
- Comply with the principles and guidelines of AA.

For more information about these vacancies, please contact Charles R, GSB Trustee for Employment trustee.southeastregion@gsogb.org.uk

First Response Online Sub Committee

There are vacancies on the newly formed First Response Online Sub Committee of the General Service Board.

The new sub-committee comprises a group of people organising the initial contact, the first response, to the still suffering alcoholic via email or instant chat channels.

Chat Now:

The main purpose of the Chat Now Help Desk is to answer live, real-time queries from the still suffering alcoholic and to direct them to the telephone helpline and/or to a meeting.

Responders working from their home computers have live 1-on-1 conversations with people who are often just starting their journey or maybe questioning if they should do so. For more information on the service and an application, please email us at: chatadmin@aamail.org or Holly A at trustee.southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk

Online Response Service:

The main purpose of the Online Response Service (ORS) is to help the still suffering alcoholic who writes an email to help@aamail.org and is looking for fellowship and answers to their recovery.

For more information on the service please email Holly A trustee.southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk Please specify whether you are applying for Chat Now or ORS on the application form.

Health

Rotation has created the opportunity for new members to join this dedicated team.

If you have experience at intergroup and / or region preferably as a Health Liaison Officer (HLO) or in a complementary discipline, we would welcome your application. You will need to understand the relationship between the General Service Board (GSB) and the Health Sub Committee.

The primary role of the Health Sub Committee is to:

- Carry the message and increase the awareness of Alcoholics Anonymous and the 12 Step programme at all health-related establishments as appropriate
- Implement health initiatives as directed by the GSB on the recommendation of Conference Provide support to Regional and Intergroup HLOs by providing information and advice
- Create and encourage open communication channels with regional and intergroup HLOs
- Establish relationships with health professionals and professional bodies at regional and national levels

For more information about these vacancies, please contact Barbara O
trustee.midlandsregion@gsogb.org.uk

Prisons

The Prison Sub Committee is looking for new members to join a committed team who are passionate about finding innovative ways of passing the message of recovery within the prison walls.

The principal aim of the Sub Committee is to raise awareness throughout the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain of service to the Prison community.

Its objectives are to:

- Offer support and advice to regional Prison Liaison Officers (PLOs)
- Help promote and encourage the appointment of Liaison Officers
- Provide a more coordinated approach to Prison work throughout GB
- Carry out a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) to help identify both successful and problem areas
- Assist in the implementation of Conference recommendations
- Hold a regional Prison Liaison Officer's meeting annually in York

For more information about these vacancies, please contact Zelma K, trustee.w.bregion@gsogb.org.uk

Probation / Criminal Justice Services

We are looking for members who:

- Meet sub-committee criteria and are enthusiastic about probation / criminal justice service, preferably from different geographical areas
- Are willing to serve in the role, raising awareness of AA among professionals and professional bodies connected with the criminal justice systems of Great Britain
- Enjoys passing information on probation / criminal justice services matters throughout the Fellowship
- Can offer advice, support and encouragement to liaison officers by assisting the structure to function effectively, and encourage new appointments to criminal justice liaison posts
- Can assist with developing and maintaining appropriate resources for liaison officers.
- Have good organisational and communication skills along with the ability to produce written and verbal reports
- Have the willingness to work as part of a team who are directly responsible to the General Service Board, and comply with the principles and guidelines of AA.

For more information about these Probation and Criminal Justice vacancies, please contact Hamish McS, trustee.eastscotlandregion@gsogb.org.uk

Survey

Rare Service Opportunity to Take the Pulse of AA

Summary

The General Service Board (GSB) Survey Sub Committee (SSC) seeks new members to assist in executing the next membership-wide survey. Strategic planning sessions were launched summer 2022. Minimum 5 years sobriety. Details and application info below.

What is the Pulse of AA Post-Pandemic?

Every five years the GSB, as mandated by Conference, conducts a membership-wide survey to keep abreast of trends in our Fellowship's characteristics. The survey provides factual numbers for the professional community and public as prescribed by our primary purpose, to carry the message to those suffering from alcoholism.

The pandemic and its subsequent restrictions, however, upended 'business as usual'. In particular, a groups' reliance on 'snail mail' to receive important communications.

Consequently, the SSC, responsible for planning, execution and managing the 2020 survey, had to pivot at the 11th hour, and deploy an online-only survey model. Despite reaching only groups with an email contact on record with York, the survey produced critical key insights gathered from over 3000 Groups in Great Britain and the Continental Europe Region (CER).

Rare Opportunity

Valuable lessons were learned by the SSC from its first digital survey undertaking. Lessons it seeks to leverage, ensuring that the next survey measures what is most important to members, the public and the professional community in these fast-changing times.

But currently, the SSC is disadvantaged with too few committee members. The SSC's problem, therefore, offers you a rare opportunity to join its existing core team as they begin strategic planning for the 2025 Survey

Apply Now

Send your application (or questions) to Gretchen S. GSB Trustee for the Survey at trustee.LRS@gsogb.org.uk

Telephones (NTL)

The Telephones Sub Committee comprises of a group of people organising the initial contact or first response, to the still suffering alcoholic via the telephone.

Experience of the telephone service at regional or intergroup level and a willingness to use and be informed about current communication systems would be an advantage. The role may require frequent contact with members involved in the telephone service at all levels of the Fellowship.

Requirements for the telephones sub- committee are to:

- maintain the existing telephone system to enable the suffering alcoholic access to a local contact through a single national telephone number, in a manner which is efficient, effective and economic.
- Keep the use and cost of the system under constant review.
- Be involved in all changes to the system and to liaise with the system provider following consultation with regions.
- Investigate any new technology which may be beneficial to the Fellowship's telephone service
- Maintain a constant review of the facilities offered by other service providers.

Please specify you are applying for NTL sub-committee. **For additional information please contact the NTL Trustee: Levey Patocs, trustee.cer@gsogb.org.uk**

Young Persons

We invite you to join the Young Person's Sub Committee!

Are you ready to make a real difference in AA? Join the Young Person's Sub Committee and be a part of a team that is committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment that meets the unique needs of young people in AA.

By joining our sub-committee, you'll participate in impactful initiatives such as hosting roadshows, circulating helpful resources and supporting the creation of young person's meetings.

As a member of the team, you'll work alongside like-minded individuals who share a passion for developing AA.

Main aims:

To assist in the recruitment and support of YPLO's at Intergroup and Region levels

To support the development of good practice and review/update literature, media resources and guidelines (subject to approval)

To establish and maintain good relationships with professionals and professional bodies

Requirements:

Experience of working as a Young Person's Liaison Officer (YPLO) at either intergroup or region level would be an advantage but is not essential. Good organisational and communication skills will be required, along with a strong grasp of AA service structure, guidelines and traditions.

If you have any questions contact Holly A (Young People's Sub Committee Trustee) before or upon submitting your application trustee.southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk



Tradition 7

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

GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE (GSO)

“All groups, intergroups and regions should accept responsibility for the funding of the General Service Office. The financial operations at GSO, the methods of accountability to Conference through the Board, and the broad financial strategies adopted on behalf of the Fellowship, are all subject to continuous review.”

Taken from AA GB Conference approved pamphlet “The Pot”

“Services can require committees, Delegates, Trustees and Conferences. They include small voluntary money contributions so that the group, the area, and AA as a whole can function. They range all the way from the cup of coffee to AA’s General Service Headquarters for national and international action. The sum of all these services is AA’s Third Legacy”

AA Comes of Age, page 140

The Role of GSO

With just under five thousand groups to service, GSO is the vital administrative centre of our Fellowship, supported by Northern and Southern Service Offices. It produces and distributes AA literature and publications and is responsible for service meetings of Liaison Officers, for Conference and for meetings of the General Service Board (GSB). GSO liaises with and supports European and World Services. It is also responsible for Fellowship Archives. Staff also deal with all telephone calls from members, the media and outside organisations.

Regional Contributions July - Sept 2023	£
East of Scotland Region	9,940
Eastern Region	31,501
Glasgow Region	20,477
Highlands and Islands Region	5,663
London Region North	10,032
London Region South	924
Midlands Region	623
North East Region	10,938
North West Region	2,299
Scotia Region	17,717
South East Region	1,612
South Midlands Region	2,433
South West Region	3,601
South West Scotland Region	6,705
Wales & Borders Region	9,639
Continental European Region	833
Sundry & Unidentifiable Receipts	1,969
Total	136,905

In Memoriam

July - September 2023

In memory of Carole P	Eastern Region	187.90
In memory of Matt R	Yeoville Mon Group	250.00
In memory of Warren J	Swindon, Wiltshire	182.00
In memory of Lucia R	Donation	25.00
In memory of Vaughan	Shaftesbury Thurs	43.00



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Printed AA Service News is mailed in a plain envelope.



SEND TO (BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)

Group Name/Day:

Group No:*

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Address:

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