

Winter 2022/23

# AA Service News

From the General Service Office of Great Britain  
Digital only edition



## Questions for Conference

# AA Service News

AA Service News Winter 2022 Edition is digital only – with no Calendar of Events

There is no reliable way to determine which events are planned, and no efficient means of verifying all the necessary information.

## Share Your Service Experience!

Contributions regarding service in the Fellowship are welcomed from all areas – individuals, groups, intergroups, regions, Sub Committees, GSB.

AA Service News is published in March, June, September and December each year, with deadline dates of the last Friday of January, the last Friday of April, the last Friday of July and the last Friday of 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)

## What's Happening in Your Intergroup and Region?



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# AA Service News

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Front and back cover photo: Shutterstock



# 12 Traditions Checklist

2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

- Do I criticise or do I trust and support my group officers, AA committees and office workers?
- Newcomers? Old-timers?
- Am I absolutely trustworthy, even in secret, with AA Twelfth Step jobs or other AA responsibility?
- Do I look for credit in my AA jobs? Praise for my AA ideas?
- Do I have to save face in group discussion, or can I yield in good spirit to the group consensus and work cheerfully along with it?
- Although I have been sober for a few years, am I still willing to serve my turn at AA chores?
- In group discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience and little knowledge?

These questions were originally published in AA Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 through to September 1971. Following the General Service Conference recommendation in 2007, these discussion points have been adapted to reflect the structure of our Fellowship in Great Britain and Continental Europe. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.

# Note from the Editor



## Conference 2019, Committee 2 recommended:

'That the General Service Board should undertake a project to establish a better understanding of how our Fellowship is perceived by both the general public and the professional community...we are producing a clear, cohesive and attractive visual identity that professional advice produced is sought to bring our literature and other communications materials in line with the following objectives:

- clear, cohesive and attractive visual identity
- to enhance the positive image and benefits of Alcoholics Anonymous as a free resource (mutual help and recovery)
- to support the efforts of AA's public information service disciplines to connect with the professional community and the public at large
- to consider the appropriate presence of AA in all forms of digital media
- to ensure that our literature and other communications materials are suitable for use in Continental European Region e.g. telephone helpline number and website information'

**Following a presentation of the new identity to Conference 2022, the Fellowship gave us the mandate to bring you a new look AA Service News.**

**We hope you like it!**



# Westminster Alcoholics Anonymous Awareness Event for Professionals

**16 May 2023 - 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.

Sponsored by Steve Brine, Conservative MP for Winchester and Chandler's Ford. The 2-hour event is open to all those working in the health and well-being fields, social sphere, 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 invite. 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.

Please help us compile a list of invitees, with the

- professionals 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](mailto: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**

# Conference 2023

## Alternate Chair Report

In September 1980, after years of drinking to oblivion, drunk driving, physical incontinence and spiritual bankruptcy, I finally reached the tipping point and received the gift of desperation. On September 9, I went to the addiction unit of the Maudsley Hospital in south-east London. Hands shaking, vision blurred, I was ushered in to see a young doctor. I explained to him that I had decided to stop drinking and asked for the pill or the injection which would cure me. He smiled and told me there was no such thing. "But," he said, "I would recommend that you attend Alcoholics Anonymous. You are in luck. There's a meeting here tonight. And I would also recommend that you don't take a drink between now and then."

I said "But I've got a full bottle of Scotch at home" "Pour it down the sink," he said.

I went back, and I did pour it down the sink. As I did so, I was thinking "This is a really bad idea. I'm going to regret this" But I did, and that was a miracle. A day at a time, the miracle continued to happen for me, and I managed to remain dry and then achieve sobriety.

Fast forward to 42 years later and here I am, involved in the Conference of our amazing Fellowship. It is the culmination of a path of service which began with being the ashtray-cleaner for my home group - those being the days when smoking in meetings was not just permitted, but virtually compulsory. Either you smoked yourself, or you inhaled everyone else's smoke. In due course I moved along to become group tea-maker and then treasurer. When I become group treasurer the outgoing treasurer passed me the accounts book. She had written in the front "Service keeps me sober. Thank you for making me your treasurer and keeping me sober". And that

has been something of a mantra for me, ever since as I became involved in intergroup and region and then Conference, first as alternate, then delegate, then committee chair. It all underlines the theme for this year, selected by Shirley: "I am responsible" - crucial both for the Fellowship as a whole and for those of us who keep sober by accepting a measure of responsibility, and doing service.

So, on to the report of the Conference Steering Committee (CSC). We met for the first time on zoom on 27 May. Shirley (as Conference Chair) took the chair. The chairs of the various Committees for Conference 2023 were all members: Andre M (Committee 1), Adam P (Committee 2), James K (Committee 3), Elaine C (Committee 4), Sean M (Committee 5) and myself, John S (Committee 6). Two trustees had been appointed by the General Service Board (GSB), Tim B and Jo F. Ranjan B (General Secretary) and Sharon Smyth (Conference Organiser) were present to assist us. We decided that the two trustees should be voting members; Ranjan and Sharon were non-voting members. I was elected as alternate Conference chair, and Andre 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 Shirley of the Conference Charter. It was stressed that the proceedings of the CSC had to be confidential to ensure that undue pressure was not placed on its members during proceedings. This also means that all members of the Fellowship get access to the Conference Questions at the same time in December. We reviewed the Terms of Reference (ToR) which govern the proceedings

of the CSC, making one minor revision to ToR 3. We considered a matrix which sets out the recommendations of Conference 2022, and noted that all the tasks arising had been assigned.

We then looked at the agenda for Conference 2023. The question of whether laptops and tablets should be permitted in the committee rooms was discussed and it was decided that they should not. It was agreed that delegates would be informed of this well in advance, and that boxes would be provided for recycling paper. We discussed the possibility of displaying the committee reports on the screen during the presentation by committee chairs in the final session of conference. It was agreed to investigate and decide at a future CSC meeting. It was agreed that, in order to make background material more accessible, there should be a link to the Document Library on the AAGB website, in the material distributed to delegates, and in AA Service News.

Our second meeting spanned two days in September, and took place at the General Service Office (GSO) in York. Hamish McS replaced Jo F as one of the trustees, Tim B who had Covid attended by zoom and Jim K presented his apologies.

The main business of this meeting was to consider the 66 questions which had been submitted by members of the Fellowship by the stated deadline of August 31. All of the questions were anonymised so we could concentrate on their substance rather than any personalities involved. We reviewed them all, applying the ToR which are circulated at the same time as AA Service News. Anyone 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'. We agreed that we would carry out a full review of the ToR at our February meeting, and report on our

conclusions to Conference.

We met again in York over two days in October, Elaine and Hamish attending online. We now decided on the final selection of the questions to be discussed at Conference. We tried to ensure that each question was clear and unambiguous, and that sufficient background was provided which was accurate and did not tell people how they must decide the question. The chosen questions were then allocated to the six committees - three per committee. Added to these, were items of literature for Conference approval arising from previous Conference decisions. We also considered the Conference matrix, which sets out the action taken by the General Service Board (GSB) in relation to recommendations of the previous year's Conference. We concluded that each of the decisions had either been completed, or that progress was being made in implementation. Finally, rejected questions were allocated to pairs of members of the CSC to provide valid reasons for that decision.

Groups, intergroups and regions will now move over the next few months to discussion. The aim is to ensure that delegates and the committees are fully informed of the experience and views of the Fellowship, so that this can be properly reflected in the decisions of Conference.

In February, the CSC will meet again to deal with any decisions regarding the running of Conference. We will also review our own work, including the application of the ToR, and any recommendations for our successors.

I have felt privileged to have been able to do the service involved in membership of the CSC, and have enjoyed the experience of being Alternate Conference Chair. My thanks to you all for helping to keep me sober.

**John S**  
**Alternate Chair & Committee 6**



# Questions for Conference 2023

## 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, if applicable, by the Fellowship at the annual AA Great Britain (AAGB) Conference. Conference is due to be held in York on April 14-16th 2023. 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. In the interests of transparency and consistency, could Conference discuss how open GSB expenditure and investment accounts are, and whether they are presented in a way that is useful and easy to understand for the wider Fellowship, thus giving members an insight of how funds are spent?**

### Background

Some members and groups have found the GSB accounts to be unclear with no detailed breakdown compared to the accounts produced by their groups, intergroups, or regions.

As an example, the quarterly accounts sent out to Regional Treasurers appear in a wide variety of formats from one quarter to another. The level of detail in these reports is different to that presented to the Fellowship (e.g. via the final Conference report). This inconsistency makes it difficult for members to see, in a simple format, how money is being spent on an ongoing basis, or to make meaningful comparisons with previous accounting periods. If a standard format were to be used, with detail particularly around areas funded by Tradition 7, it would make it easier for the members of the Fellowship to understand what the figures indicate, thus making the accounts more useful.

This question is not asked out of concern that bad practices are in place, but out of a desire to understand the practices themselves.

**2. Would Conference discuss and make suggestions as to how the Question for Conference selection and process could be made more open and democratic?**

### Background

- Conference Steering Committee Terms of Reference
- Structure Handbook for AAGB
- AAGB Conference Charter
- 12 Concepts

**3. Considering the Board's "surplus funds" (Conference 2022 Report, P14), can the Fellowship discuss and recommend how the Fellowship may better spend money locally and the Board nationally, to carry the message using these funds?**

The prudent reserve has regularly been exceeded for several years now – see annual reports 2018/9/20/21 - with Groups sending surplus pot money to Intergroup, Intergroup to Region, and Region to GSO. These surpluses are opportunities for primary purpose work both locally and nationally, so would the Fellowship discuss and propose guidance on how the money might be spent both locally by Region/Intergroup and nationally by the Board to keep surpluses as low as possible?

It is acknowledged and understood that income streams are difficult to predict but in the past, whenever financial pressure has been foreseen, the members have responded positively to a request for increased donations via the Pot and there is no reason to suggest this would not be repeated, even in the difficult economic climates. Budgets could always be reviewed if needs be.

**4. Review revision of 'Location of the Conference', AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain, page 104, (Conference 2022, Committee 6, Question 2).**

### Background

Revision of 'Location of the Conference'.

<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/download/1/Documents/Background-Committee-1-Question-4-Location-of-Conference.pdf>

# Committee No. 2

## 1. Would the fellowship review the practice of singing religious songs/Christian Hymns at AA meetings, particularly at National Conventions and Special Events and Conference make recommendations for guidance on this subject.

### Background

Currently, there is no guidance in The AA Handbooks of GB concerning the practice of using motivational or praise songs/Hymns at AA meetings, particularly at National Conventions and Special Events, such as AA 75th Anniversary Celebration.

Over the last twenty years or so, the singing of songs has been incorporated into meetings at conventions and special events. Many of these meetings are entitled 'spiritual meeting'; this is so that it is recognised as specially connected to our spiritual way of life, however, all AA meetings are spiritual in nature.

The AA fellowship is a society based on a spiritual way of life. Many members of the fellowship are not part of a religious faith and some may find singing of this type of song at AA meetings unnecessary and perhaps offensive.

At conventions in America, it is traditional to sing songs before the AA meeting, hence, preserving the meeting for sharing our Experience, Strength and Hope.

### References:

- AA preamble: indicates that we are non-denominational.
- Tradition One: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on AA unity.
- Conference 2022, Committee 3, Question 1: re Language or material offensive to minority groups.
- Revised Safeguarding and Personal Conduct Section of The AA Structure Handbook of GB, Chapter 'The Group, Section 5.2 and the Conclusion by Bill W.

## 2. Would Groups discuss, and through Conference recommend, a way to engage the Fellowship's involvement in Conference Questions, considering particularly that modern technology is available to gauge reactions to proposed Questions, or topics for Questions.

### Background

AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain  
Conference Charter

## 3. Would the Fellowship discuss, share experience and make recommendations on the following matters concerning service with limited or no internet access?:

a. How to accommodate a willing member with no access to a computer or smart device hold a service post in this technological age.

b. How to accommodate a willing member with no technical abilities carry out service in this technological age.

c. Also, how can a willing member living in an area with patchy or limited internet connectivity carry out effective AA service.

d. At times of crisis what can the Fellowship put in place to ensure members without technology gain access to help and information.

### References:

- The AA Service Handbook for Great Britain 2019 Chapter 1 (Growing into Service)
- Quote:- "Service is at the centre of every AA Concept and activity."
- The AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain 2020 Third Legacy of Service by Bill W (1951) Page 11 paragraph 1.
- Quote:- "Carrying the message- is the basic service that the AA Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence."
- Pass it on (Page 347)
- Preamble and Tradition 3 Quote:- The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking
- Concept IV The Right of Participation

### Background / Personal Experience

The AA logo incorporates a triangle within a circle with the words, Unity Service Recovery (Our 3 Legacies).

If we stop / restrict any AA member from carrying out service due to lack of access to modern technology or personal inability to operate the said same technology, are we as an organisation denying a full interaction and inclusion within the AA Fellowship family.

Are we becoming a two-tier service? Shouldn't our communication system be broader and encompass all forms of communication

The traditional method of passing telephone numbers still works.

## 4. Review revised section 'Regional Assembly', AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain, page 96.

### Background

Revised section 'Regional Assembly'.

<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/download/1/Documents/Background-Committee-2-Question-4-Regional-Assembly.pdf>

# Committee No. 3

**1. In recent times, with the exponential growth of social media platforms there are more opportunities and media than ever before for well-meaning AA members to break their Anonymity at the public level. While there is ample AA literature available on how to respect/protect anonymity at the public level and on social media platforms (e.g., 'Hints and Suggestions on Internet Safety' card and ongoing work by the board) it seems to be occurring more and more regularly.**

**Could Conference discuss and make recommendation on what can be done by the fellowship (i.e., AA GB, Regions, intergroups, groups and individual members) to encourage well-meaning AA members to stop this harmful trend.**

For example, the USA and Canada GSO send a regular letter to newspapers reminding them about the importance of tradition 11 (see link <https://www.aa.org/anonymity-letter-to-media> and AAGB anonymity letter from 2015 <see Anonymity Letter | Alcoholics Anonymous - Great Britain [alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

## Background

### Language of the Heart pg. 391

"Let's now examine that vital Tradition Eleven. It deals with our public relations. Here is our greatest channel of communication to the alcoholic who still suffers. Tradition Eleven reads: "Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films." Since this great Tradition describes the most important application of AA's principle of anonymity, and because it sets the pitch and tone of our entire public relations policy, nothing can be more critically important. If personal ambitions ever invade our public relations we shall be badly crippled, perhaps lost altogether.

The danger, of course, is the possibility that we may one day recklessly abandon the principle of personal anonymity at the top public level. This possibility arises from the fact that many of us AA's have been, and sometimes still are, possessed by enormous power drives. These are frequently fuelled by an almost irresistible craving for money, approval, and public acclaim. My own past history is outstanding in this respect. I can well understand the constant temptation to turn oneself into a public figure. Therefore I have urged, in season and out, that we AA's maintain our personal anonymity at the top level, no matter what the personal sacrifices may be.

Our chief hope for the future is that these appalling urges of ours will be held in restraint by self-discipline, by love of AA, and by firm group and public opinion. These powerful constructive forces, all working together, have thus far been enough. We pray that they may always prevail.

Let's look once more at how immense this temptation really is. A vast communications net now covers the earth, even to its remotest reaches. Granting all its huge public benefits, this limitless world forum is nevertheless a hunting ground for all those who would seek money, acclaim, and power at the expense of society in general. Here the forces of good and evil are locked in struggle. All that is shoddy and destructive contests all that is best.

Therefore nothing can matter more to the future welfare of AA than the manner in which we use this colossus of communication. Used unselfishly and well, the results can surpass our present imagination. Should we handle this great instrument badly, we shall be shattered by the ego demands of our own people—often with the best of intention on their part. Against all this, the sacrificial spirit of AA's anonymity at the top public level is literally our shield and our buckler. Here again we must be confident that love of AA, and of God, will always carry the day."

Tradition 11

Tradition 12

See 'The Language of the Heart'. Page 91-92 for Editorial by Bill W. A.A. Grapevine, October, 1948

"Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never a need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us"

Tradition 11 (long form).

**2. Would conference consider changing the imagery used in the illustrated Traditions pamphlet Product code: 3290. Should the Fellowship decide to update this to a more inclusive format?**

## Background

The images are dated for example men with short hair, dressed only in suits and women with longer hair wearing dresses and heels.

One image depicts a meeting in Africa, set in a jungle, with African members barefoot and a Western male explorer in footwear, with no chairs, furniture or buildings. The pamphlet illustrations show no evidence of advanced society in its African image.

The imagery could also be seen as heteronormative.

**3. Would Conference discuss and make suggestions as to how links between AA groups and the General Service Board (GSB) can be strengthened, to encourage members to take an interest and participate in the projects undertaken by the GSB.**

**In particular:**

**a) Should there be reports from the GSB in AA Service News, and, if so, how frequent should they be?**

**b) Should the first names of GSB members be publicised more prominently within the Fellowship, together with their regions?**

**c) Should the identity and role of the Non-Alcoholic Trustees (NATs) be more widely publicised within the Fellowship?**

**d) Should the Structure Handbook of AAGB contain details of the purpose and work of the Sub-Committees of the GSB, and a clear statement of the role and responsibility of Sub-Committee members?**

### Background

Concepts IX, X and XI  
Structure Handbook (2022 edition) pages 112-116  
Successive editions of AA Service News, containing details of recruitment to Sub-Committees of the GSB.

**4. Review Health Sub Committee revision of Chapter 6, AA Service Handbook for Great Britain, p51-54.**

### Background

Revised Chapter 6, Service Handbook for Great Britain.  
<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/download/1/Documents/Background-Committee-3-Question-4-Chapter-6-Health.pdf>

## Committee No. 4

**1a. Would the fellowship share its experience of appointing Safeguarding Liaison Officers at group level outlining the responsibilities of the role and explore the potential benefit of creating Safeguarding Liaison Officers at all levels of the service structure of AAGB.**

**1b. Discuss the need for the creation of a Safeguarding Sub-Committee of the General Service Board and make recommendations.**

### Background

Safeguarding and Personal Conduct (Document Library) 6.0

Safeguarding is a huge topic and covers all aspects of our disciplines. It is becoming more common to hear safeguarding statements read out at meetings thus demystifying common misconceptions about what safeguarding means. No Service member will have all the answers to safeguarding questions, but by integrating Safeguarding roles into our structure, the Fellowship will be able to draw on its strength of shared experience and with time build up a repository of tools and advice that future members will come to rely upon.

**2. Would Conference consider whether having an AA stall at events whose aims are unrelated to those of AA is incompatible with AA Traditions and carries with it the risk of drawing AA into controversies associated with issues outside the Fellowship?**

Does attendance at such events undermine or facilitate the unequivocal inclusivity of Tradition Three, either diverting us from or promoting our primary purpose?

Is attendance at events such as those described below consistent with our Traditions Six, Ten and

Eleven, and the stated aims of PI work?

### Background

Our local intergroup PI attended two events with pamphlets, volunteers and funds to pay for a stall at least one of the events. The first event was a stall at local Pride March. The second event hosted by a local organisation which holds an annual festival whose theme this year was “environmental justice”.

The group conscience unanimously supported both events but some members felt this was promoting the fellowship or that attending events, loosely termed as social justice, amounted to AA involving itself in outside issues which could be considered controversial. A hypothetical scenario envisaged why attendance at Pride was considered consistent with our Traditions but attendance at an English Defence League rally would not be? If the nature of the causes to attend is based on personal beliefs does this not undermine AA traditions?

### Tradition Three (long form)

“Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.”

### Tradition Six (long form, in part):

“While an A.A. group may cooperate with anyone, such cooperation ought never go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied. An A.A. group can bind itself to no one.”

### Tradition Ten (long form)

“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.”

### Tradition Eleven (long form)

“Our relations with the general public should be characterised by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast, filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.”

The aims of fellowship PI work are expressed on the AA Great Britain website as:

“The aim of PI is to improve communications with professionals and the public sector and show how we can cooperate with your organisations in providing a free service to help with the growing problem of alcoholism.”

**3. Would the fellowship consider doing an audio version like a podcast of the Daily Reflection reading so that they can hear it on a morning please?**

## Background

We already have the following books as audio versions:

- An Inside View of AA for Professionals (DVD)
- Road to Sobriety (DVD)
- Who Me? (DVD)
- Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions Audio (5 CD Set)
- Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions British Sign Language (3 DVD Set)
- Living Sober Audio Edition (4 CD Set)
- Audio 12th Step Starter Pack

Would it be possible to create an audio recording of the Daily Reflections representing a variety of regional accents in AAGB please? I have Dyslexia and audio versions are sooooo much simpler than reading text. Based on what we have so far so there is definitely a gap in our productions.

### 4. Review revised Chapter 'Conventions', AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain, page 126.

#### Background

Revised Chapter 'Conventions'.

<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/download/1/Documents/Background-Committee-4-Question-4-Conventions.pdf>

## Committee No. 5

**1. Following on from Conference 2018 and noting the recent increase in groups continuing to meet online due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, would the Fellowship please discuss, share its experience and make recommendations about Tradition 7 contributions being collected electronically and digitally by means of card readers and other digital payment technology?**

#### Background

The Background for this question is: 53rd General Service Conference 2018 Final Report, Committee 2, Question 1:

"Further research on the subject is needed. Groups are encouraged to share their experience via the service structure. If this method of collection becomes more widespread, the Fellowship may need to consider potential changes to existing AA literature."

Tradition 4 "Each Group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other Groups or AA as a whole".

This question recognises that this was touched upon in the answer to Conference 2021 Committee 6, Question 3, but a more focussed discussion is appropriate.

**2. Would conference share experience regarding members wishing to take up service positions at Intergroups and Regions which require attendance a minimum number of meetings before being voted into office?**

## Background

Whilst it is recognised that each Intergroup and Region are autonomous, concerns have been raised by members wishing to take up service roles regarding the time it can take for them to be voted into the role and begin to carry out service.

It is recognised that a member may put themselves forward for a role, be elected and then never attend again and so a degree of commitment should be demonstrated.

However, it is also the case that where an Intergroup/Region require a member to attend three meetings before being elected then this can mean that this can disillusion service being actioned, potentially disillusioning the prospective servant.

**3. Would the Fellowship discuss, share experience and make recommendations on holding 'hybrid' Intergroup Meetings or Regional Assemblies. In particular, would the Fellowship consider the potential benefits and disadvantages, as well as the practical considerations of holding such meetings both online and in-person at the same time.**

#### Background

Our Intergroup is eager to ensure that all members are able to get involved in service, regardless of their location or personal circumstances, and the matter of holding 'hybrid' meetings has been discussed. The geography of our area is such that many people have to travel significant distances to attend in-person meetings. In addition, those with young children, transport problems or health issues can find it difficult to attend. However, discussion on the matter has highlighted a number of difficulties, and shown that a hybrid Intergroup is a very different undertaking to a hybrid AA Meeting. For example, how would the meeting be chaired, to ensure that everyone attending could participate equally, and what technology would be required to hold the meeting.

**4. Review replacement text to AA Structure Handbook for Great Britain 'GSB operates through Committees' p.113**

#### Background

Replacement text 'GSB and Committees'.

<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/download/1/Documents/Background-Committee-5-Question-4-GSB-and-Committees.pdf>

## Committee No. 6

**1. Would Conference share experience of the awareness and observance of Concept V and Warranty Four at all levels of the Fellowship, and consider whether any recommendations for improvement can be made?**

#### Background

Minority Opinion (Concept V)

In the pamphlet Twelve Concepts for Service in Great Britain Illustrated, the section on

Concept V opens with the words, “Newcomers to AA’s General Service Conference are often surprised at the pains taken by the Chair of Conference to make sure the minority has a second opportunity to present its views. Even after extensive debate on an issue, followed by a vote in which a substantial unanimity is reached, those opposed are polled individually to see if they wish to speak further to their minority view”

From the questioners’ experience and anecdotally from others, this approach, and particularly the procedure described in the second sentence isn’t always followed.

The pamphlet goes on to say, “This is AA’s Right of Appeal in action and Bill said the same principle should apply to meetings of our groups, intergroups, regions and boards. On an issue of grave importance, the minority has the actual duty of presenting its views.”

#### Grievances (Concept V)

From the same pamphlet, “The Right of Appeal also permits any person in the service structure, whether paid or volunteer, to petition for redress of a personal grievance. He or she can complain directly to the General Service Board, without prejudice or fear of reprisal.”

#### Substantial Unanimity (Warranty Four)

“That all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity”

While this principle may be observed at the annual meeting of Conference, it can be used, as Bill says, in the Introduction to the Twelve Concepts, “... [it] can of course be used to good effect throughout our entire structure”.

### **2. Would the General Service Conference please consider the possibility of AA GB sourcing and selling “Sobriety Medallions/ chips” through the AA website shop?**

#### **Background**

A number of groups celebrating sobriety birthdays by the presentation of a medallion to a member who is celebrating a Sobriety anniversary.

These medallions are sourced through a non-AA supplier (hopefully funded from a separate pot).

Given the merchandise that has been made available for the 75th this year, is it not a plausible idea?

If there were a positive decision on this matter then it would follow that all funds raised through the sale and availability of said medallions would remain in AA.

### **3. Would the Fellowship share experience about the challenges faced in managing finances at group, intergroup, region and other service levels in recent years, and make recommendations to Conference for improvement?**

**In particular, what is the experience about the problems facing new treasurers in obtaining access to a bank account when taking over from a treasurer who has left or rotated out?**

### **How can they deal with the process of changing signatories and obtaining identification requirements?**

### **What role might internet and telephone banking play in managing the finances of the group, intergroup or region?**

### **How should dormant or inactive accounts be dealt with where a group has closed, signatories have passed away, or the account has been inactive for a period of years?**

#### **Background**

In times past a group treasurer might commonly bank cash using a paying in book and write cheques to intergroup and for rent, literature, gratitude week, and perhaps the tea and biscuits. The bank account would usually have the group’s name on it. When the treasurer rotated out, the outgoing and incoming treasurers might commonly go along to the bank to formally hand over the new signatory information for the cheque book. It was all fairly straightforward.

Things seemed to have changed though.

Over the last few years, some groups trying to make alterations, change signatories, or set up new community accounts for new groups, have run into myriad problems.

For example, the banks have been (perhaps understandably) unwilling to open community accounts unless a named person already has a personal account with them, compromising both anonymity and ease of service rotation.

A member’s proof of ID has also proved to be much more intrusive in such situations.

Various recent legal changes have not helped the situation. From money laundering and GDPR issues to corporate bureaucracy and remote working staff, it has become increasingly difficult to navigate the banking system in a way that is conducive to the status of AA groups and members’ anonymity. It has become a less attractive proposition for a prospective treasurer rotating in. Another problem for the Fellowship is that groups are reluctant to stick to the usual period of rotation and most treasurers stay in post for much longer, making the transition harder for groups when, eventually, they do leave.

Although the points made above refer to groups, similar problems confront intergroups and regions.

Tradition Seven

Tradition Twelve

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

# Ever Evolving Chat Now

My name is Wullie, and I am an alcoholic.

In 2016, I was coming to the end of an AA service position that took up a fair part of my time and had no idea how to fill the service void.

I had been involved with the Electronic Communications area of AA for some time and saw that this new service was starting. I was very sceptical on if or how this would work, contempt prior to investigation on my part!

I enquired about trying it and the then administrator on Chat Now Service (CNS), Jim F, sent me an invite to join the team and the login details.

Early days, it was mostly members of the Online Responders Service (ORS) team that were chatting. No rota, no guidelines, just login and take chats.

Overtime, learning on the job, mistakes were made and learned from, guidelines were formulated, changed and changed again. As the team grew, most of the ORS team went back to what they do very well.

A rota was created, and guidelines on how many chats we could take at the one-time were put in place. Response times for answering chats were set, reduced and reduced again. We now expect all incoming chats to be answered in less than 10 seconds. As I write, we have taken over 76,000 chats with an average response rate of 5 seconds. The average length of a chat is just over 13 minutes.

The main purpose of this service is to get the still suffering alcoholic to call the Helpline (National or Local). Failing that, giving them details of meetings they could attend, face

to face or online. During the height of the pandemic, we were handing up to 2,000 chats a month. People looking for help, family and friends wanting help for some loved ones, from all parts of the globe. Others wanting to know when they were getting delivery of that Big Book they ordered last week!

We have constantly evolved how and when we deliver this service. In the beginning, it was only a few hours a day with the hope of building it to be open 8:00am to 8:00pm daily. Now we try to have it available 7:00am to Midnight, every day of the year.

The main administrator on the CNS is member of a General Service Board (GSB) sub-committee. Up until now, that has been the Electronic Communication Sub Committee (ECSC), but that is now changing. About 8 years ago, it was suggested that ORS should be part of the National Telephone Sub Committee (NTSC), but nothing was taken forward at that time.

I am now coming to the end of my tenure on the CNS and I am amazed how this service has grown and changed for the better, delivering a constant and strong message to people looking for a way out of the misery of active alcoholism.

Now for the CNS advert, Conference 2016, the conscience of the Fellowship, asked for this service. Currently we have about 26 active responders doing a fantastic job on this. If you think you can do this, if you want to put something back into this wonderful Fellowship that saved our lives, have a look. Full training is done before setting you loose on the still suffering alcoholic!

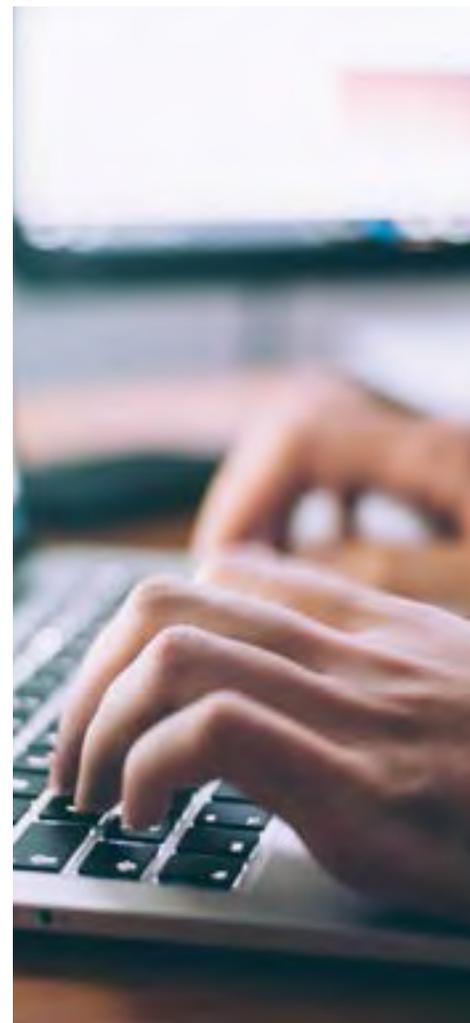
I have loved doing this service, it has given me so much more than I have given it. But now time for me to go and give others the same

opportunity afforded me.

**Yours in the Fellowship of the Spirit  
Wullie I**

Full details, job description, CNS Flyer and application form can be found here:

<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Service/Disciplines/Electronic-Communications/Chat-Now-Service>



# Tech Talk

At Conference 2022, the Fellowship asked, through Committee 2, Question 2:

*“Would the fellowship consider how post lockdown the website can evolve to meet its requirements?”*

The Fellowship listed the general requirements as:

- making the website easier to use and navigate
- making it easier to find general information and meeting information
- improving accessibility
- adding some new functionality such as better use of webforms

The General Service Board has asked the Public Information and EComms Sub-Committee (PI & EComms) to review the existing website against this list of requirements and this process is underway.

A requirements specification is being prepared and more updates will be provided in future editions of AA Service News as and when they are available.

**To be continued...**



## AA for Alcoholics with Mental Health Issues - and their sponsors

AA World Services publishes an excellent pamphlet concentrating upon the role of alcoholics with mental health problems.\*

The main portion of the pamphlet consists of a dozen stories recounting the journey of AA members who have mental health issues. It has the feel of a special version of the second half of the Big Book. Each of the writers tells of their experience, strength and hope. Many of them have been diagnosed as bipolar, but there are also those who have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), are schizophrenic or deal with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).

A central feature of their stories is that their alcoholism and their mental illness fed each other. Carlee was diagnosed with rapid-cycle bipolar disorder. She says that psychiatric help and the right medication, 'has helped my life exponentially. I can answer the phone, speak in front of strangers make friends; my moods

are more stable and I now have the life skills to manage mania and depression when they come. I no longer have to reach for the bottle.' The psychiatric treatment enabled Carlee to focus on her alcoholism.

Lucinda, diagnosed with schizophrenia, says that she had not been ready to give up alcohol because she thought that 'mental illness was my main problem and if I could get a handle on that, then I could control my drinking. I didn't know that I had it backwards - as long as I drank, it would be difficult to treat my mental illness'.

Sheri has post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and dissociative identity disorder (DID). She compares the latter condition to having blackouts without drinking. Laura's condition she describes as acute depression, coupled with virtually no memory. 'There are many things my brain can do, but remembering is not one of them.' That made it hard for her to do

her Fourth Step and Fifth Steps, 'since I literally cannot remember most of what happened in my life'. But, she says, 'Tenth Step to the rescue! When I do a written inventory and keep my slate clean on a daily basis, it does not matter whether I remember or not. I am okay, one day at a time, when I tell the truth today and make any amends I need to make without delay'.

Several of the stories deal with the central principle that advice on medication is a matter for medical professionals, and is outside the boundaries of AA expertise. This was emphasised by our own Conference this year (2022) when it made clear that, 'we are not qualified to offer medical advice' and stated that: 'If the subject of medication is raised, individuals are advised to have a discussion with their doctor or medical professional.' (Committee 1, Question 1)

Robert speaks of the disaster which he faced when he went off the medication prescribed for his bipolar condition, and 'crashed very hard into the worst depression since my drinking years.' Now, he says, 'I no longer listen to well-meaning alcoholics who play doctor.'

Jon puts it like this: 'I have to stay sober to not go into active bipolar disorder, and I have to stay out of active bipolar disorder in order to stay sober. It's all one package that needs to be worked as one.' He suggests to those in a similar position to, 'do everything your doctor and this program tell you to do. You can recover. I did.'

There is also an interesting group of stories from those who sponsor alcoholics with mental illness. They also make it clear that it is not their role to diagnose or suggest medication (or the absence of it) for their sponsees. Their role is that of sponsors in any other context. As Joelle puts it, 'it was very much like my sponsorship of any other alcoholic.' But there is a particular American perspective to the strategy adopted by Paul who says, 'When new men in AA ask me to sponsor them, if they talk about suicide or seem despondent, I ask if they

have access to firearms. If the answer is yes, I suggest that they give their guns to me for a minimum of 90 days, and I strongly advise them to get a psychiatric evaluation.'

The final section of the pamphlet consists of suggestions developed by AA members who are doctors. They include:

- No AA member should 'play doctor'
- Be completely honest with your doctor about the way you take medicine, informing them of any skipped doses or if you exceed prescriptions
- Explain that you no longer drink alcohol and are trying a new way of life in recovery
- Inform your doctor of any desire to take more medicine, or if there have been side effects

Taken as a whole, the pamphlet provides a valuable insight for the large proportion of AA members who have some form of mental illness. It also promotes understanding and tolerance on the part of those alcoholics who do not.

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*The Literature Sub-Committee is actively seeking the experience of AAGB members for a future publication. If you are an alcoholic coping with mental health issues, or sponsoring someone who is, we would like to receive your story. A representative sample of submissions (guide length 750 words) will be selected for our proposed publication. The sub-committee may make editing changes prior to publication; any such changes will be agreed with the author. Deadline for submissions is February 28th 2023.*

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Articles may be sent to Literature SC, c/o GSO, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York, YO1 7NJ, UK or by email to [trustee\\_southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee_southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk) or [literature1.sc@aamail.org](mailto:literature1.sc@aamail.org)

\*This pamphlet, published by AA World Services, is available from GSO via the AA shop on the website [https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Shop/](https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Shop/Categories) Categories



## General Service Board Sub Committee Vacancies

Application forms are regularly updated and it is essential to use the most recent form, so please get your form from either GSO or the Document Library.

### How to Apply

When applying for any of the vacancies below please note that up-to-date forms are available from Jenny Pryke at GSO, PO Box 1, 10 Toft Green, York, YO1 7NJ; 01904 644026; [jennypryke@gso.org.uk](mailto:jennypryke@gso.org.uk) or in the Document Library ("Forms") of the AAGB website [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://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.

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

If you have questions about the specific responsibilities of service on a GSB Sub Committee, please email the relevant GSB Trustee below each notice BEFORE or UPON SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION.

**The deadline for ALL applications is Friday 16th December 2022.**

Thank you!

## Archives Sub Committee Vacancies

There are two 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.

Applicants for the sub-committee should have a minimum of five years sobriety, will normally serve for a period of four years and should be familiar with the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, the AA Service and Structure Handbooks for Great Britain, and other Conference approved AA literature. 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.

The successful candidates would normally be expected to attend four meetings a year; two of these will normally be in York, but the other two may be held online.

**For more information about the vacancy, please contact Thomas B, GSB Trustee for Archives [trustee.nat3@gso.org.uk](mailto:trustee.nat3@gso.org.uk)**

## Armed Services Sub Committee Vacancies

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

A minimum of five years continuous sobriety at the time of application, and experience in intergroup and/or regional Armed Service Liaison or other relative experience. 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

#### Role requirements

- The position is rotational after four years and requires a minimum of five years sobriety at the time of applying
- A sound knowledge of the service structure and Traditions of the Fellowship of work within the Armed Services Sub Committee terms of reference

There is an expectation the Armed Services Sub Committee members normally attend three meetings in York a year one of which is the Regional Liaison Officers meeting, and participate in 2 online meetings

**For more information about the vacancy please contact John C, GSB Trustee for Armed Services, [trustee.northeastregion@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.northeastregion@gsogb.org.uk)**

## Employment Sub Committee Vacancies

The Employment Sub Committee is a 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.

The successful candidates would normally be expected to attend four meetings a year; two of these will normally be in York, but the other two may be held online. Much of the work is done in the interim, generally in partnership with the other members of the committee.

The post is subject to rotation after four years.

It is suggested that we follow the following criteria of experience:

- A minimum of five years' continuous sobriety
- A sound knowledge of the AA Structure, Steps, Traditions and Concepts
- Sub Committee applicants should be endorsed by the AA structure, i.e., the chair, vice chair, secretary, or a current liaison officer in their intergroup or region. The serving officer's endorsement should be in the form of a letter attached to the completed nomination form.

**For more information about these vacancies, please contact Charles R, GSB Trustee for Employment [trustee.southeastregion@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.southeastregion@gsogb.org.uk)**

## First Response Sub Committee Vacancies

**(Formerly National Telephones, Online Response and Chat Now)**

There is a vacancy on the newly formed First Response Sub Committee (FRSC) of the General Service Board (GSB)

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.

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

Job description for the Sub Committee vacancy:

- 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

The team meets four times a year twice by an internet forum and twice in person in York. It also stays in touch by using various technologies, i.e., email and internet forums. The appointment is for four years and requires a minimum of five years sobriety with a sound knowledge of AA Traditions and Concepts.

**For more information about these vacancies, please contact the FRSC Trustee: Levey P, [trustee.cer@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.cer@gsogb.org.uk)**

# Health Sub Committee Vacancies

Rotation has created the opportunity for new members to join this dedicated team. If you fulfil the qualifying criteria and are enthusiastic and experienced in health or a complimentary discipline, we would love to hear from you, so please apply.

It is suggested that you meet the following criteria:

- A minimum of five years continuous sobriety at the date of application
- A working knowledge of the 12 Steps, Traditions & Concepts and the Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain (AAGB) service structure together with guidelines and Conference approved material
- Proven experience at intergroup and / or region preferably as a Health Liaison Officer or a complimentary discipline. Or working experience in the health service together with Intergroup /

Region experience:

- The availability to serve on the Subcommittee for four years
- The availability to attend four meetings each year including attendance at York and on virtual meetings

The primary role of the Health Sub Committee is to:

- Implement health initiatives as directed by the General Service Board (GSB) on the recommendation of Conference, and to understand the relationship between the GSB and the Health Sub Committee
- Provide support to Regional and Intergroup Health Liaison Officers by providing information, advice and resources
- Create and encourage open communication channels with regional and intergroup Health Liaison Officers, including virtual and live meetings and seminars if appropriate
- Establish and maintain relationships at national level with health professionals and professional bodies
- Carry the message and increase awareness of Alcoholics Anonymous and the 12 Step programme to all health-related environments as appropriate

**For more information about these vacancies, please contact Barbara O [trustee.midlandsregion@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.midlandsregion@gsogb.org.uk)**

# Literature Sub Committee Vacancies

To enable the Literature Sub Committee of the General Service Board (GSB) to fulfil its role of:

- Considering needs for new literature
- Undertaking selective review of the content and appearance of the entire range of the literature published by the Fellowship in Great Britain
- Assessing literature for its suitability for revision or discontinuance
- Work on material as requested by Conference

Its members meet the following criteria:

- Have a minimum of five years' continuous sobriety
- Have a sound understanding of the Twelve Steps together with a working knowledge of the AA structure, the Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts, obtained through service at various levels
- Show a commitment to service through personal experience at their home group, intergroup and/ or region
- Have a sound understanding of the Conference process (Conference experience is highly desirable, but an understanding of the process does not need to come solely from having attended Conference)
- They are endorsed by the AA structure, i.e., a serving officer of their intergroup or region (The serving officer's endorsement letter is to be attached to the completed nomination form).

Essential requirements:

- Be able to travel to York, UK, up to four times a year (Fridays and Saturdays), although of late, half of the meetings are conducted online
- Have time between committee meetings to work on assigned projects, liaise with other committee members, provide feedback on projects other members are working on, and prepare for committee meetings by reading all relevant materials
- Be able to serve a four-year term.
- Be familiar with the wide range of AA literature
- Have a sound command of English written grammar and style
- Be familiar with word processing and email programmes, as well as file-sharing
- The ability to work collaboratively as a contributing member of the Sub Committee. Most projects require members to work together in close collaboration, including in pairs or small groups, in the production of multiple drafts, with detailed editing, towards a final version
- The ability to work towards set deadlines

Desirable requirements:

- Have some experience in copy-editing, document drafting or similar work
- Be familiar with social media and other communications platforms

For more information about these vacancies, please contact Justin T, GSB Trustee for Literature [trustee.southwestregion@gso gb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.southwestregion@gso gb.org.uk) and Jo F, GSB Trustee [trustee.easternregion@gso gb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.easternregion@gso gb.org.uk)

## Prison Sub Committee Vacancies

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

Role requirements are:

- The position is rotational after four years and requires a minimum of five years' sobriety at the time of applying.
- A sound knowledge of the service structure & Traditions of the Fellowship
- To work within Prison Sub Committee Terms of Reference.
- To attend two Prison Sub Committee meetings and 'teleconference' meetings.

For more information about these vacancies, please contact Zelma K, [trustee.w.bregion@gso gb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.w.bregion@gso gb.org.uk) or Hamish McS, [trustee.eastscotlandregion@gso gb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.eastscotlandregion@gso gb.org.uk) GSB Trustees for Prisons and Probation

## Probation Sub Committee Vacancies

The post requires five years' continuous sobriety and experience at intergroup and region as a minimum. The post is four years in duration and the applicant should be enthusiastic about probation / criminal justice service.

Basic Role Requirements:

- A working knowledge of the Traditions, Concepts and the AA GB service structure are essential
- Willing to work within our Terms of Reference as presented on the AA GB website
- Prepared to attend up to four meetings per year held at GSO York
- Good organisational and communication skills along with the ability to produce written and verbal reports
- The willingness to work as part of a team who are directly responsible to the General Service Board of AA.

For more information about these vacancies, please contact For more information about these vacancies, please contact Zelma K, [trustee.w.bregion@gso gb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.w.bregion@gso gb.org.uk) or Hamish McS, [trustee.eastscotlandregion@gso gb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.eastscotlandregion@gso gb.org.uk) GSB Trustees for Prisons and Probation



# Share Sub Committee Vacancies

## Editorial Reader

Our Readers are part of a team. The job involves reading and scoring all articles and letters submitted, to provide a guide for suitability to publish, checking quotations, suggesting titles and supporting the team to develop SHARE magazine. Most of the work is done electronically and requires working to deadlines.

Readers should have a good standard of English language and be able to work to deadlines. The monthly production of SHARE magazine is a Team effort. It is essential for a Reader to be an experienced team player with good experience of service within AA including service at Intergroup and preferably service at Region. Computer and email competence is indispensable. Full training will be given.

This is a four-year unpaid commitment, although expenses may be claimed. Applicants must have a minimum of five years continuous sobriety at the time of application. They should be familiar with Conference-approved literature, Alcoholics Anonymous, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, AA Comes of Age, Twelve Concepts and the AA Structure and Service Handbooks for Great Britain. The Share Sub Committee holds up to 4 meetings per year, either in person at York GSO, or online. These meetings are an integral part of this role and attendance is a requirement. The day-to-day business of the Team is carried out electronically.

For further information about the positions, please contact Charon B, [trustee.LRN@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.LRN@gsogb.org.uk) GSB Trustee for SHARE

# Survey Sub Committee Vacancies

## 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 are launching 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

### IF YOU JOIN THE SSC TEAM

You will be expected to attend four SSC meetings per year in York - or online video link if you prefer - and will normally serve for a period of not more than four years. The Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary or a currently serving Officer of your region or intergroup must endorse your application by way of a covering letter.

### APPLY NOW

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



# Young Peoples Sub Committee Vacancies

Experience of working as a Young People's Liaison Officer (YPLO) at either intergroup or region level would be an advantage, but is not essential.

The Young People's Sub Committee is looking for new members who are enthusiastic about helping and encouraging young people into service within AA. The Sub Committee meets up to four times a year in York (where accommodation is provided and expenses paid), and also stays in touch by using various forms of technology. The position is for four years.

Main aims are to:

- Assist in the recruitment and support of YPLOs at intergroup and region levels
- Support the development and sharing of good practice and review/update literature, media resources and Guidelines (subject to approval)
- Establish and maintain good relationships with professionals and professional bodies

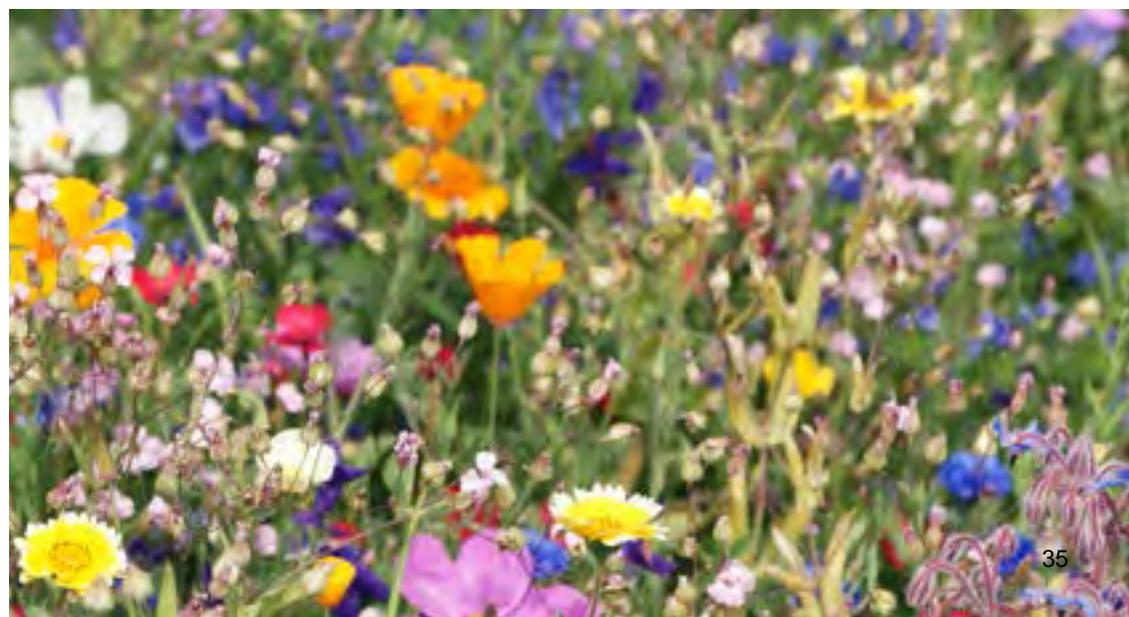
It is suggested that applicants would fulfil the following criteria:

1. A minimum of five years' continuous sobriety, having come to AA aged 30 or under
2. A strong grasp of AA service structure, guidelines and Traditions
3. Good organisational and communication skills

**If you have any questions contact Gretchen (Young People's Sub Committee Trustee) before or upon submitting your application [trustee.LRS@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:trustee.LRS@gsogb.org.uk)**

## In Memoriam

Midlands Intergroup	Phil H	£130.00
Lincolnshire Intergroup	Ann D	£100.00
West Riding Intergroup	Don - Headingley	£250.00
West Riding Intergroup	Gabriel of Leeds Sat	£300.00
Dewsbury Saturday	Gabrielle	£85.50
Headingley Leeds	Gabrielle	£20.00
Leeds Keep it Simple	Gabrielle	£200.00
North Thames Intergroup	Robyn W	£100.00



# Tradition 7

Regional Contributions July to September 2022	£
East of Scotland Region	2,650
Eastern Region	29,219
Glasgow Region	13,600
Highlands and Islands Region	661
London Region North	6,048
London Region South	48,885
Midlands Region	2,095
North East Region	3,448
North West Region	1,194
Scotia Region	19,309
South East Region	51,564
South Midlands Region	9,417
South West Region	41,516
South West Scotland Region	14,728
Wales & Borders Region	9,020
Continental European Region	7,459
Sundry & Unidentifiable Receipts	1,563
<b>Total</b>	<b>262,375</b>

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

### GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE

“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 four 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.



We would love to print your pictures in future editions of AA Service News.

Please ensure they are of good resolution. We are unable to print full face pictures of people.

Please send your pictures to the editor.

[editor.aasn@aamail.org](mailto:editor.aasn@aamail.org)

We love to receive articles on your AA service. Please email them to the

[editor.aasn@aamail.org](mailto:editor.aasn@aamail.org)

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

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

GSO Website: [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

# AA Conference Approved Books, New Items & Revised Prices

## AA Comes of Age Soft Back

### Alcoholics Anonymous Comes Of Age - a brief history of AA

Written when nearly half a century had gone by since AA's historic 1955 Convention in St. Louis, when the founding members passed on to the entire Fellowship the responsibility for the Three Legacies.

Item code 2121 Price £7.00

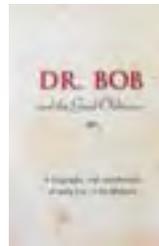


## Dr Bob and the Good Oldtimers Soft Back

### Dr Bob and the Good Oldtimers

A biography, with recollections of early AA in the Midwest.

Item code 2181 Price £7.00



## Our Great Responsibility Soft Back

### Our Great Responsibility

A selection of Bill W's General Service Conference talks 1951-1970. 270 pages, soft cover, with over 60 black and white and colour images. Derived from original audio recordings.

Item code 6070 Price £7.00



## As Bill Sees It Soft Back

### As Bill Sees It

The AA way of life. (selected writings of AA's Co-founder)

Item code 2100 Price £6.00



## Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions Pocket Size

### Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions

How members of Alcoholics Anonymous recover, and how the society functions

Item code 2250 Price £6.00



## The Home Group: Heartbeat of AA

### The Home Group: Heartbeat of AA

Selected Stories from the AA Grapevine

Item code 2230 Price £6.00



## Alcoholics Anonymous (4th Edition) Hard Back

### The Big Book!

Rumour has it that at Bill's suggestion the first edition was printed on very heavy paper to make it look bigger, thicker and therefore seem to be better value for money! Hence the 'Big Book' name.

Often described as the basic textbook of our Fellowship, the first 164 pages describe our recovery programme and has hardly changed since that first edition. The personal stories contained at the back of the book are changed from one edition to the next to reflect changing social situations

Item code 2020 Price £9.00



## Alcoholics Anonymous Soft Back

### Alcoholics Anonymous (4th Edition)

Item Code 2040 Price £8.00



## The Language of the Heart

### The Language of the Heart

From Bill W, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, a collection of inspiring and illuminating articles written for Grapevine magazine. In more than 150 articles, written over a span of 26 years, Bill Wilson documented the painstaking process of trial and error that resulted in AA's spiritual principles of recovery, unity and service, articulating along the way, his vision of what the Fellowship could become.



Item code 2220 Price £8.00

## Experience, Strength and Hope

### Experience, Strength and Hope

Stories from the first three editions of the Big Book



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## Pass It On

### Pass It On

The story of Bill Wilson and how the AA message reached the world.



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## Daily Reflections

### Daily Reflections

This is a book of reflections by AA members for AA members



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# 47th NORTHERN NATIONAL CONVENTION

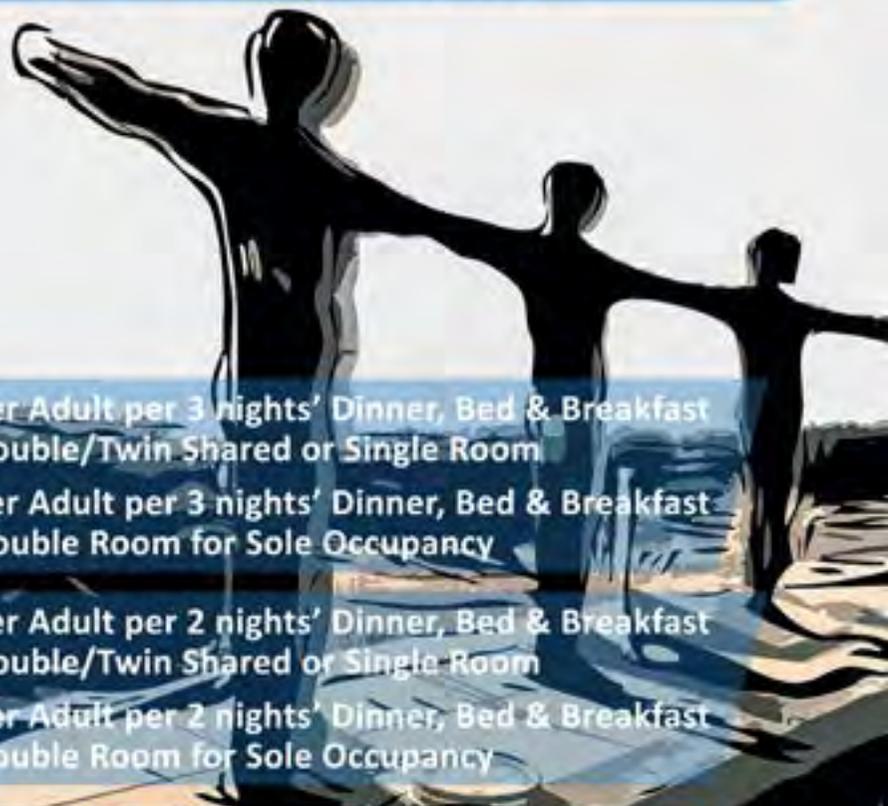
Thursday 16th March to Sunday 19th March 2023

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## ANY ENQUIRIES - TELEPHONE CONTACTS

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North West  
Pete N 07857 860 036

North East  
Mark T 07802 815 147

Al-Anon  
Debbie 07788 504 436

## AA Service News is for you!

AA Service News is available in digital format. It is only sent to groups with generic, not personal email addresses

If your group would like to receive a digital copy of AA Service News, then please contact GSO and provide your group's email address as your contact on the **PINK FORM** (Registration Form)

Any member can contact Sharon Smyth at GSO at [sharon.smyth@gsogb.org.uk](mailto:sharon.smyth@gsogb.org.uk) for a copy of AASN

AA Service News can also be found on the AAGB website under 'Document Library' [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Document-Library](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/Members/Document-Library)

We look forward to receiving your articles on service, and your comments on the new look!



## Thank you!

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