

Board  
Reports

to

Conference  
2020

## **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention**

In the 2016 Conference there was a decision to hold a 75<sup>th</sup> celebratory convention in 2022.

Board Trustees are charged with this organisational and financial responsibility.

A committee was formed of Board Trustees and members of the Fellowship with relevant experience were invited to assist the committee.

The financial aim was to be self supporting so particular attention has been paid to budgeting and learning as much as possible from the information and records from the 50<sup>th</sup> Convention.

The venue will be Leeds Arena.

A working group was formed to produce a special edition of Share magazine for the event. The working group comprise of representatives of Roundabout, Share, Archives and a member of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. All Regions have been contacted so that they can participate by including their histories in the publication.

Your Committee wish everyone, Groups, Intergroups, Regions and all the different disciplines in the Fellowship to be actively involved in this event. The Logo was chosen from over 100 entries and Surveys have been distributed at Regions and Conventions so that members of the Fellowship can give the maximum input.

This will be an unforgettable celebration.

### **Over to you – Early Bird Tickets have been available since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020**

Roger E  
GSB Trustee, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention

## **AA Service News**

The email address for *AA Service News* has changed. The correct address is now:

editor.aasn@aamail.org

*AA Service News* (AASN) is the General Service Board's principal medium for communication of service events and developments throughout all regions of AA Great Britain. It is published quarterly, with articles that emphasise in particular matters affecting our Primary Purpose: to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

The annual Winter edition contains the Conference Questions and the Summer edition the recommendations from the General Service Conference in response to those questions.

Additionally, news and details about Parliamentary events in England, Scotland and Wales and other notable service events are published throughout the year in articles written for and by the Fellowship. These include General Service Board Sub-Committees vacancy notices (and information on how eligible AA members may apply), regional Seventh Tradition and In Memoriam contributions, as well as a Concept or Tradition and a Calendar of AA events in Great Britain and overseas.

Copies are posted to the mailing contacts for all Groups registered in the Great Britain Service Structure, to intergroup and regional officers, and to the General Service Board. If your group is not receiving AASN, please check that your Group Registration details are up-to-date with the General Service Office (or just fill out a new registration form – also called the 'Pink Form'). If in doubt, please contact the office.

After the hard copies are sent, a downloadable PDF of each edition is posted in the Document Library section of the Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain (AA GB) website.

The Autumn 2019 edition featured a special section on AA service in prisons. From time to time, other service disciplines may be featured in special sections – but news and articles about AA service and AA service events at every level of our structure are always welcome.

Many thanks to the staff at GSO for their work to collate and pass along information for each issue, and especially to Sharon who maintains the database and is invaluable in helping me keep to deadlines.

Thank you also to the volunteers – the AA members who gather from the greater York area (and in some cases much farther) at GSO four times a year to stuff the envelopes (and any additional notices) so that AASN can be posted on time.

And finally, a big thanks to all contributors without whose articles and notices AASN could not be published. Your willingness to share your service related experience, strength and hope informs the Fellowship and encourages all of us – and our groups, intergroups and regions – to keep AA's Legacy of Service alive and thriving.

Erik A  
GSB Trustee, AASN

## ARCHIVES

The Archives Subcommittee met four times during the past year. It also hosted the first ever Archives Seminar in the Park Inn Hotel in September. It has been a busy year for the Archives Sub Committee and some of the main topics of discussion are described below.

**The Borthwick Institute Cataloguing and Digitisation Project:** Work is continuing apace on this project. James Neill the Archivist at the Borthwick Institute has been keeping us fully updated on progress. He is nearly halfway through the cataloguing process and plans to finish this part of the project during this year. He also plans to complete repackaging of the Archives currently stored at the Borthwick. This will ensure that they are all stored in optimum archival conditions.

James will continue to keep us fully updated on progress.

**The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Publication Working Group:** The Working Group met four times during the last year. About half of the 16 Regions have produced material for the group to look at. It is hoped that the remaining Regions will send in their contributions by the end of June this year (2020) so that the group has an idea of what the Publication will look like. It is also hoped that Trustees will have produced a short history of their Disciplines by the same date.

**The Archivist Network:** The first ever Archives Seminar took place in September at the Park Inn Hotel. It was well attended and the discussions were lively and informative. Presentations were given on the following: Preservation and Conservation, The Borthwick Cataloguing Project, The Kelvingrove Event, The Magical History Tour and the Anniversary Publication Working Group. This was followed by a session on improving support to the Archivist Network. Everyone was split into smaller groups to discuss this and then everyone reconvened to list the findings of each group. The subcommittee came away with much food for thought and have started to implement ways in which to enhance and improve communication with the Network. These include circulating reports received from Archivists to the whole network and sending out bullet point summaries of subcommittee meetings. The subcommittee are also in the process of discussing the suggestion of a Starter Pack for new Archivists. It is also hoped that the policy for access to the Archives will be revised in light of the Borthwick Project progress and the Data Protection Legislation.

**The Archives Subcommittee:** This report would not be complete without expressing my sincerest gratitude to this hardworking and extremely supportive subcommittee. Harry R has settled into his role as Fellowship Archivist and will be taking a greater role as time progresses. Martin B and John C are continuing to play an active role and we welcomed back Nick H and Joe H to the Sub Committee this year. Joanna B and Jim S will be leaving us during the coming year and I express my gratitude to them for all their support and hard work for the subcommittee.

I must also express my sincere debt of gratitude to Jenny, Ranjan, Emma and all the Staff at GSO for all their invaluable support and help during this past year.

Archives is an extremely interesting and rewarding discipline which continues to go from strength to strength thanks to the unwavering commitment, hard work and support of the Archivist Network throughout our Fellowship, the Subcommittee and the GSO staff.

Clive K

GSB Trustee, Archives and Chair of the Anniversary Publication Working Group

## **Armed Services**

My thanks to the Armed Services Sub Committee for all their sterling work, we have had a busy year and continue to let the upper ranks know we are available.

We were invited to the Defence Medical Service Whittington Barracks Health Fair. Over 500 staff and trainees attended the event.

Attendance at the Fit4Life health fair at RAF Cosford with the ASLOs from 2 Intergroups. We set up our stand and popup banners, and spent the day speaking to staff, trainees and other stand holders and handed out many leaflets and pamphlets. There were over 2000 visitors on the day.

We were invited to the Health Fair at RAF Cosford 15th. We were also invited by The Forces Deputy Practice Manager at the Birmingham Medical Facility at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to give a talk to his staff. After a short talk about there was a question and answering session where about 20 staff including the camp Doctor enthusiastically asked questions.

Meetings with the area manager at the Royal British Legion, contact has been made with the Birmingham Council. Councils have a designated person looking after ex-military personal these are being sought all over GB.

There is regular attendance at the Tri Service Facility in Stoke on Trent making more contacts there.

Royal Forces Employment Agency (RFEA)

The RFEA is a nationwide government supported agency, helping veterans and their families in their transition to civilian life. They have lots of different initiatives and have cooperation with many other services and agencies – e.g. NHS England, Help for Hero's etc.

One particular project they run is "Project Nova" (National Organisation of Veterans Advocates). This has been especially set up to help veterans, or their family members, that are (or may become) subject to the criminal justice system, something for Criminal Justice and Probation to look at as well. Their experience has shown that most of those involved have problems with either alcohol or drugs – or both. Following an approach to their coordinator in Nottingham, they have made some referrals to AA with a limited amount of success.

There is also a new NHS service - NHS Transition, Intervention and Liaison (TIL) – a mental health service starting up in our area, I'll try to get in touch. They focus on people finding themselves with mental health issues upon leaving the forces.

One exciting outcome of opening up dialogue with RFEA, NOVA and SAFFA is Armed Services working with Employment as part of the Blue Light initiative as highlighted in the Annual Armed Services Liaison Meeting in February and the Employment Sub-committee meeting in March. The blue light initiative can be adopted by other disciplines for example a new pamphlet could be designed with the emphasis on the suffering Alcoholic with military background now in employment in the blue light services.

Mike P

GSB Trustee, Armed Services

## **Electronic Communications**

Our updated website, as briefly previewed at last year's Conference, was launched in May 2019 and is proving very popular.

Help requests to our email-based Online Response Service and our one-to-one live ChatNow Service showed a sharp increase following the launch of the new site. Each of these services is in contact with more than 10,000 people each year to encourage them to call our Telephone Helpline and start the journey into recovery.

Many existing members access the website for many different reasons. The Meeting Finder has been improved to include local Helpline numbers and to allow a convenient shortcut to be added to mobile phone home screens so that meetings close-by can be found with a single tap. Meeting information is of course only as accurate as the details maintained by GSO, so please make use of the Group Registration forms available on the website.

To preserve anonymity and to comply with GDPR, we continue to offer generic email addresses for all posts at Intergroup and Region levels. To avoid delays with their issue, please ensure that the Confidential Directory is kept up to date.

Norman B  
GSB Trustee, Electronic Communications

## **Employment**

I would like to thank the members of the Sub Committee (SC) for all their hard work and we have new members for the SC.

It has been a busy year; with a dearth of SC members they have taken on much such as putting up stands at National Conventions and informing members of the working of and what we do, handing out starter packs.

The presentations given in North East Region and North West Region also at Intergroups to inform the Intergroups of the necessity of an Employment Liaison Officer. We have also been liaising with Public Information for Public Health England.

We are continuing to put out our newsletter Hello ELO it is on the website under Employment.

Our Terms of Reference (TOR) have been updated and are on the website.

Professional Awareness Day was attended, liaison with GCHQ again and several other contacts which includes the Samaritans and the Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner.

Intergroup ELOs are making successful contacts with large employers in their areas Devon Central, West Dorset and Poole & District Intergroups and have visited an Employment event organized by Poole & District, Bournemouth and West Dorset and gave an address on the ELO role.

Scotland still contacting the Regional Chairs in the 4 regions that have no ELO in post. Highlands & Islands really struggling to fill vacant posts. East of Scotland, Scotia and Glasgow still no interest shown in the post.

London Region North has a committee encompassing Regional ELO, HLO and PI officers which the SC member for Employment sits in and they develop big ticket items such as underground posters campaign, radio advert campaigns etc.

The turnout for the Seminar was good there were 37 people who turned up introductions around the room.

We had a seminar which was quite well attended, Sean N (Sub Committee member) gave a PowerPoint presentation which included some helpful points regarding PI committees and the walkabout of members and the

small chips that were handed out to the public, as well as Q & A workshops and the videos that are available on the website.

Our guest speaker was Ian L, he owned his own business and has employed many people over the years and he is also a member of our Fellowship. He gave us many insights and told of the approach that could be and told us of the many Health and Safety Policies he had to adhere to, he told us of the men he has had to fire also of the ones he has helped.

There was a Q & A and it was suggested to maybe look at Health and Safety regulations.

It is available on the website at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/>

He suggested to add the 20 questions to the Employment Pack, also the consequential cost of drinking to the employer, he talked of having a toolbox to take to the employers.

I would just like to mention the Blue Light which spans two disciplines Armed Services and Employment which involves contact with the members of the Armed Forces who have finished their time and go into the Police, Ambulance And Fire Brigade, we have been in communication with them to let them know we are here and there has been a good response. Letters from Police and Ambulance, as yet no Fire Brigade communication, we hope for further communication.

Mike P  
GSB Trustee, Employment

## **Fellowship Survey**

The Subcommittee met 3 times during the past year and also held a Skype meeting. The questionnaires have been completed and were approved by the Board at its November meeting. The Subcommittee feel that there are some great questions and hope that the Fellowship will fully participate in this Survey.

As in previous years the first set of questionnaires will go to all Groups in May this year. Once they have been returned, a second questionnaire will go out to 250 groups randomly picked by Marketing Means from the responses to the first.

The Subcommittee produced articles for Share, Roundabout and a flier which was circulated with the Winter 2019 edition of AA Service News with a view to publicising the survey as widely as possible.

Our sincere thanks go to Lindsay K, Tillmann S and John W for their invaluable supportive and enthusiastic contributions to the subcommittee. We have also been joined by Kevin Mcl, Janet S and have great support from Trustees Peter F and Terri S. We are greatly indebted to them all. Our gratitude also goes to Emma, Jenny, Ranjan and all the Staff at GSO for their unwavering support and commitment.

Mani Mehdikhani, Chair of Survey Subcommittee and Non-Alcoholic Trustee  
Clive K, GSB Trustee

## **Health**

The Health Discipline of Alcoholics Anonymous, through its members of the Health Sub-Committee (HSC), continue to work closely with Intergroup and Regional Health Liaison Officers (I/RHLO`s) to carry the message at every opportunity to Healthcare and other Professional front line staff working with the still suffering alcoholic.

These include frontline staff within the NHS England & Wales, NHS Scotland, emergency "blue light" services, the judiciary, education, treatment centres alcohol forums, Parliamentarians, and the Clergy, and many relevant others.

## OPEN MEETING WORKSHOPS

The Open Meeting Workshops (OMW) are a vitally important conduit through which we continue to carry the message to the widest audience of front-line staff. Numerous Universities now participate and value these meetings, including London St Georges, Surrey, Sussex, Brighton, Chester, Edinburgh and the University of the Highlands & Islands.

The OMW is adaptable and transferable. All that's required is a small space and a listening audience. Recently an OMW was presented in Highlands & Islands Region to a cluster of five health practices sharing their Practise Learning Time. The Health & PI awareness team facilitated the OMW and the multi-disciplined health professionals who attended represented a combined patient total in excess of 50,000 patients. One fifth of the population of the H & I's.

## NHS ENGLAND, WALES & SCOTLAND

The HSC members are working at all levels from Policy development to implementation, working within local communities and within the respective NHS structures to carry the message wherever and whenever appropriate.

A member of the HSC, employed at a senior level within NHS England, identified an opportunity that would allow AAGB to co-operate with NHS England. Working closely and in conjunction with the General Secretary, they negotiated and implemented a Social Prescribing guiding strategy. This permits a local NHS community liaison nurse, who has identified an alcoholic patient who is seeking help, to contact a named person in GSO, who will in turn contact the relevant R/IHLO who will then reach out to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. At all times adhering to AA recommended Guidelines and Traditions.

When the lead doctor of addiction services in Glasgow Region tragically died last year, the I/RHLO's were concerned that the Hospital Responders Scheme (HRS) initiated and developed in co-operation would collapse. However, the addiction nursing team who were an integral part of the HRS immediately stepped in to reassure the I/RHLO's and hospital responders that they would continue to work together. This simple scheme commences with the addiction Nurse identifying a patient on the ward, who is willing to accept a visit from two AA's carrying the message. The nurse then telephones the Northern Service Office, whereby a member of staff consults the hospital responders list and within as short a period as possible two members of AA are sitting with the man/woman in the bed. In excess of two hundred and twenty visits have been made to date, contact is maintained and whenever possible, a patient is taken to an AA meeting within the hospital and on release.

A similar bedside visit scheme is in operation in Kings College Hospital, London. This scheme, which has been operating for six months is proving to be very successful. AA members are trained by the Hospital staff to meet the Kings College Hospital volunteering scheme requirements. The AA members then report to the Alcohol Liaison Team who will have identified male/s or female/s patient who have agreed to be visited by two AA members. One male and female member report every Tuesday, confirming to the Kings College Hospital Alcohol Liaison staff team Alcoholics Anonymous's continued commitment and dependability to carry the message to the man or woman in the bed.

Ysbyty Gwynedd Hospital in Bangor Wales Bangor opened a meeting mid 2019 and the meeting is going from strength to strength. A core group of 30 members attend and patients and family members come down from the wards to the meeting. The family members are given Literature and directed to the appropriate Fellowship whilst members are welcomed to the meeting.

A presentation delivered at the Matrons' meeting, built relationships with staff. The members now visit the wards and are trusted and appreciated by the staff. A monthly information table has proved very successful and this is rotated around different locations within the hospital. The Group are developing a small collection of personal stories from members who began their recovery journey, occasionally in the very same bed. Use of the Hospital radio to announce the meeting has also proved successful.

## Conferences & Events

AA is invited to many Conferences and events across GB and GSO staff, HSC members, I/RHLO's etc attended 22 health related events this past year including:

The Nursing in Practice and Pulse (for GPS).  
The very prestigious MIMS Learning Live Expo in London]  
The NICE Annual Convention in Manchester  
The Annual MCA Symposium in London  
The Annual International Mental Health Conference.

Along with two HSC members I travelled to Belfast, to attend and support two members from CER Region, to carry the message to the Delegates of The Annual International Conference on Mental Health. This was an excellent opportunity to represent AA within the various workshops etc. A well-stocked AA Literature table attracted many multi National Professionals, who were very interested in AA, its history and efficacy. It was also an excellent opportunity to enhance our Fellowship and friendship with the Belfast Region members of AA Ireland.

The Health discipline will continue to represent AAGB at these events whenever appropriate. Dr Eric Carlin, Non Alcoholic Trustee (NAT) on the General Service Board of AAGB will deliver a presentation at The MCA Symposium in London in November 2020.

Dr Mani Mendikhani who for some time was our lone NAT Trustee on the GSO AAGB is co-chair of the HSC. Mani is frequently called upon to represents the Fellowship at numerous events. He is the knowledgeable, supportive and steady voice of Alcoholics Anonymous and the Health Sub Committee at the public level.

Both Eric and Mani were an integral part of the Health Seminar held in March 2020. This positive event was well attended and if you are interested in carrying the message to Healthcare or other professionals. Please contact your I/RHLO. YOUR FELLOWSHIP NEEDS YOU!

Terri S  
GSB Trustee, Health

## **Literature**

I have the privilege in presenting this report on behalf of the Literature Sub Committee. It has been a pleasure serving Alcoholics Anonymous and I am now presenting my final report to the Fellowship, as I rotate out of this position. The following pieces of literature are for consideration by Conference 2020. Some background information has been provided to give an indication how the new and revised literature came about.

### **Revised Literature**

#### **1. Carrying the AA Message to the Hard of Hearing pamphlet**

A new logo replaces the existing one on the original pamphlet and the text has been slightly revised. These changes came as the result of feedback from a member of the deaf and hard of hearing community.

### **New Literature**

#### **2. Growing in Service**

##### **Background Information – Growing in Service Pamphlet for Submission to Conference 2020**

The Literature Sub Committee produced the proposed new pamphlet, entitled "Growing into Service" which came as the result of reviewing the existing 'red' pamphlet of the same name.

**The Literature Sub Committee proposes that this new pamphlet replaces the current Growing into Service pamphlet for the following reason:**

- ❖ The proposed pamphlet provides a good reflection of the various opportunities that service bring throughout the AA Service Structure, in a way that is interesting and visually attractive

We feel that the new proposed piece of literature could more effectively encourage more members to get involved in service, which assists them with practical advice, and offers inspiration, thus making the current pamphlet redundant.

### **Item from Conference 2019**

#### **3. 15 Points Pamphlet – from the 12th Step Starter Pack**

At Conference 2019, Committee Two recommended that the pamphlet be revised to emphasise our Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service. In line with the committee recommendations the Literature Sub Committee has revised the pamphlet whilst considering the following points:

- a. The focus of the pamphlet is for the newcomer. Its purpose is to share some coping methods for staying away from the first drink in early recovery
- b. The revisions ensure that the message is consistent with the principles of our recovery programme as set out in the Big Book “Alcoholics Anonymous”

#### **The following items will be going to Committee to approve the proposed revisions to:**

- ❖ AA Structure Handbook 2018 - The General Service Conference, Section 1.5 Delegates, Page 102
- ❖ AA Service Handbook 2018 – The AA GB Website, Section 3:6, Page 37

#### **Summary:**

Any member of the Fellowship who has comments, questions or suggestions about these pieces of literature should contact the Literature Committee before the 31st March 2020.

This will give us time to make a considered and appropriate response to ensure the best possible outcome for the Fellowship. The Literature Committee can be contacted through GSO.

The Literature is being distributed electronically. However, hard copies will be sent to those without email addresses, and to those Delegates who request printed versions.

Denise H  
GSB Trustee, Literature

## **PRISONS**

There were various actions happening in the Prisons discipline not least the state of the Prison System.

Staff got so sick of understaffing and underfunding that they'd had enough and were leaving the service, it didn't help that they had a change of Minister so often, so it's no wonder AA was getting problems with meetings running and clearance etc.

Over the year Maxine and myself attended inside government meetings getting updated and making contacts for future reference. It would be a good place for AA to give a presentation as there are many delegates representing PHE and the Ministry of Justice as well as other agencies like ourselves i.e. Mutual Aid.

The problems with vetting and clearance seem to be petering out although you still get the odd one now and again and it seems to be inexperienced staff or forms not being filled in right, which is when we say you should use standard plus forms.

The Sub-Committees would like a National Chit for meetings and we are engaging in talks just now to see if this feasible.

As you all know we had a Seminar in June 2019 and it was very well attended and very informative, all be it was mostly Scottish orientated, it went down well with Liaison Officers and Visitors. We did ask representatives from England and Wales but most were too busy or on holidays.

Liaison officers will be glad to know that the Board have agreed to re-instate Zonal Meetings this year and they are as follows:

Warrington 31<sup>st</sup> May, Cambridge 26<sup>th</sup> July, Stirling 27<sup>th</sup> September and Bristol 25<sup>th</sup> October.

Hoping to see you all there at one or the other area meetings, old friends and new friends.

Maxine and myself attended the Bulgarian 2<sup>nd</sup> Seminar who kindly invited us as CJS Representatives for AA GB. We were very surprised by the amount of visitors that were let into the prison meeting we visited, there was about 30 to 50, and there was strong unity and good shares.

We then went on to the Seminar where there were presentations from psychiatrists and therapists, as well as prison authorities. We were asked many questions about prison and guidelines in GB which was very uplifting and would thank Bulgaria AA for asking us and their hospitality.

The Probation Service is now back into 11 areas with 11 CEOs in charge of each area, with shorter sentences being given for less misdemeanours means there will be more people coming to AA for repeat alcohol induced crime and that is why we are talking about having a National Chit and we need more people doing service in Probation so, if you can help, please talk to your intergroup or region rep.

As you know most companies are being told to review their Safeguarding Policies and AA is no different and I am glad to say that AA is well ahead in that we set up a committee to look at setting up a Safeguarding Policy and this includes Prisons & Probation.

Lastly, but not forgotten, is the Website and Manual which the Sub-Committee has been discussing for ages but it is all technical stuff and in saying that, not everyone is tech minded, so we have to strike a balance and don't forget we include everybody in AA, us as well, but it is time to see action in this and try to make an EASE OF ACCESS for all which includes New Officers so they don't feel alone or lost when they take up a new position.

Pat McG  
GSB Trustee, Prisons

## **PROBATION**

There have been huge changes in the organisation of the probation service it will take considerable time to settle into its new format.

Our message to the alcoholics within the system is the same however. AA is the stable force which is not affected by governments and outside agencies. We may face new challenges in our service but will acclimatise to whatever the circumstances require.

We have welcomed new members to the subcommittee and are in the process of updating and improving our web presence. We are encouraging groups to implement the chit system and we have just had a National chit approved which will be available from GSO.

We have a good relationship with National Health England who work in similar fields. We had a well attended Seminar last year at York and have zonal meetings planned for this year.

I was invited alongside Pat, our Trustee for prisons, to attend a prison meeting and weekend seminar in Bulgaria last November. Although their service structure is not fully operational they have great enthusiasm for prison service and we exchanged many ideas.

We are fortunate that one of our newest NATS has extensive experience in the penal system and has expressed a willingness to use his contacts to benefit our cause. We hope to continue to expand our knowledge and increase our list of contacts in 2020.

Maxine W  
GSB Trustee, Probation

## **Public Information**

Public Information (PI) operates through AA members, Groups, Intergroup, Regions and the General Service Board and its Public Information Sub Committee. Our Non Alcoholic Trustees assist with carrying the message to every area of the wider Community. PI is often the first contact the public have with the fellowship.

### **Media Events**

During the year we have released eight articles for the press on our Public Information section of the website including "Dying for a Drink ", The 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AA, Accrington Stanley under 18 squad and events at the Parliaments of Holyrood, Westminster and the Welsh Assembly in Cardiff. We continue to subscribe to a media response organisation and also follow up on many media requests forwarded to us by the General Service Office.

During Alcohol Awareness month our East Lancashire Intergroup PI team were very successful on November 13<sup>th</sup> in organising with Garry Scott of BBC Radio Lancaster a three hour "phone in". This was with our Non Alcoholic Trustee Mani and seven members of the fellowship, all telling their real life stories on air and choosing their favourite music. This must have been a first for a PI Intergroup PI team.

We encourage all our PI groups to adhere to our AA traditions asking the Media to respect individual member's anonymity especially when dealing with the press, radio and TV.

### **Advertising Campaigns**

London's West End intergroup ran a London bus poster campaign in November as did West Dorset Intergroup.

Newcastle Intergroup likewise ran a Poster Campaign on their Public Transport System in November.

### **P.I. Video for Professionals**

The new AA videos were approved by Conference in April of 2018 and these have been made available to members and professionals throughout 2019. The P.I. video has been well received and is available with videos of the other AA disciplines for Health, Employment, Armed Services, Employment, Prison and Probation on the Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain website under latest news – click on videos for Professionals.

### **P.I.Sub Committee**

We met four times during 2019. We continue to encourage Intergroup P.I. Initiatives with events for professionals working with both their local press and regional television. We were delighted to welcome Eric Carlin our Non Alcoholic Board to the subcommittee in November and he has already made a valuable contribution on our discussion with the Public Health England substance use committee.

We held a Regional PI Officers' Meeting in York in September which was well attended. In addition to the annual Regional PILO meeting we held the third P.I. Awareness Event in Glasgow in March for the six Scottish Regions. This was well attended by both regional and intergroup PI liaison Officers There were three of these events over twelve months which serve to motivate our P.I. teams and giving them a wealth of information and experience. A new challenge for 2020 and to 2021 is to prepare a PI display at the 75<sup>th</sup> 2022 Anniversary Convention and to assist with media events and information for the 75<sup>th</sup> Convention

### **Continental European Forum December 2019**

There was a PI presentation at this Regional forum last December which was well received at their Assembly in Brussels. Encouragement was given to the region to support Intergroup activities; thinking about the geographical challenges that the many PI groups have. The presentation encompassed much of the material given at the UK Regional Awareness Events and our P.I. resources memory sticks were in great demand. A most interesting and enthusiastic weekend for the PI trustee.

### **P.I. Service News**

This publication is circulated throughout the fellowship at the beginning of each month. Any member can request a copy of the P.I. Service news from his P.I. team or intergroup secretary and by requesting to be added to GSO's circulation list. PISN shares current PI experiences, and acts as an archive for reference; It is distributed by email. We are most grateful to our editor who continues to produce this excellent publication on a monthly basis. Please keep your local P.I. news flowing and good luck with all your primary purpose work in 2019.

This is my last report as PI Trustee. I have been privileged and fortunate to be a trustee for four years all that time with Public Information Sub Committee. I remain passionate about the duty of all members to pass on the message that Bill W gave us 80 years ago. I will continue to do Prison service at HMP Winchester, not far from the famous Tombstone of which Bill W wrote his story!

Peter F  
GSB Trustee, Public Information

### **Telephones**

*Terms of Reference for the National Telephone Sub-committee (NTSC)*

*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.*

*To keep the use and cost of the system under constant review.*

*To be responsible for all changes to the system and to liaise with the system providers following consultation with Regions.*

*To investigate any new technology which may be beneficial to the Fellowship's telephone service.*

*To keep constant review of the facilities offered by other service providers.*

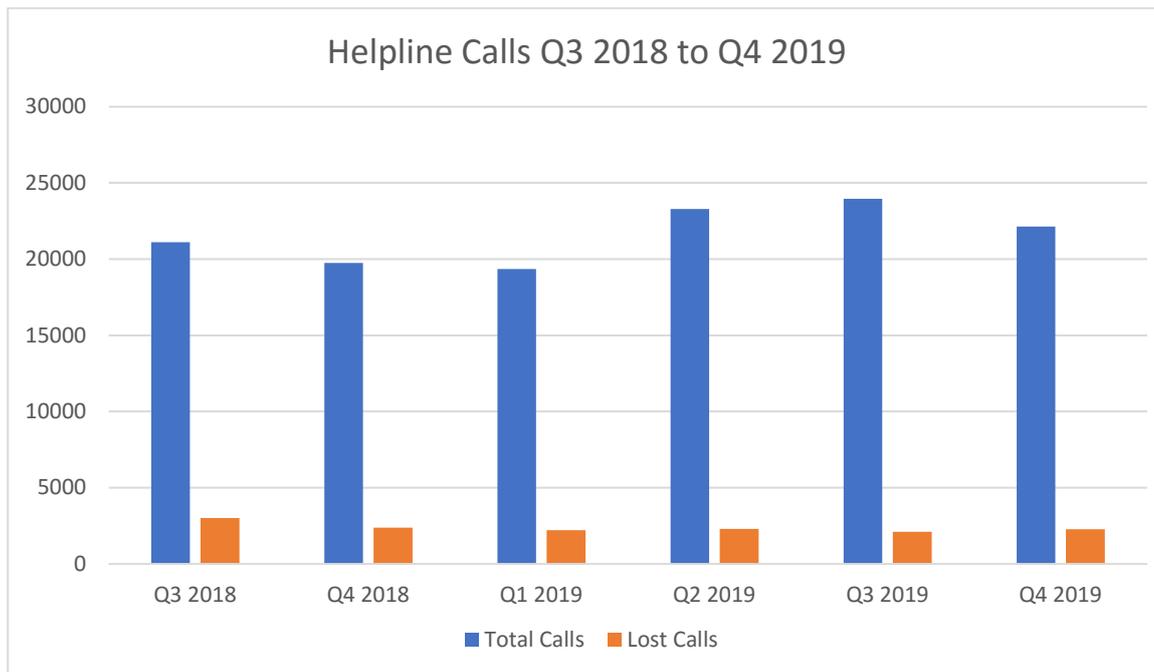
*The committee is a sub-committee of the Board and will be chaired by the Trustee with responsibility for the telephone service. Membership will normally consist of a minimum of four and a maximum of eight members drawn from participating Regions, who are suitably experienced to participate in committee functions. Where possible this will recognise geographical spread.*

*Membership of the Committee will be for a period of four years, allowing one year for sponsorship, thus the committee will be increased during sponsorship periods.*

The subcommittee has continued in its work, supporting Regional Telephone Liaison Officers (RTLOs) and TLOs, especially in the time of transition from analogue to digital service. Most local Helplines are now fully digital, and the consensus is that it makes life easier for RTLOs to manage. A major restructuring of the Scottish helplines has now completed, and the new system successfully went live in November.

Telephone administrators (i.e. RTLOs) and responders can now make good use of the various features of the new AA website. In addition, the 'where to find' now has details of local telephone numbers which should make it more likely that anyone ringing will be put through to a responder in their locality.

In the final quarter of 2019, there were according to BT statistics 22,134 calls – over 1,700 a week. These figures are in line with Q1 and Q2 of 2019 and at the same time lost calls, including Ring Tone No Reply calls (a caller phoning and no one picking up the phone) have also plateaued.



There are no accurate figures for how many of these calls are from the still suffering alcoholic. However, looking at those areas that log different types of calls, a reasonable estimate would be 600 still suffering alcoholics are phoning the helpline each week. It is worth pointing out that the majority of the RTNR calls were under 10 seconds giving little time for the responder to pick up.

The Helpline depends on the tens of RTLOs, the scores of TLOs, the hundreds of Telephone Responders, and the thousands of Twelve Steppers. The Service they all provide is essential, valuable, rewarding and is always in need of more people coming forward to be involved at all levels.

In August this year we have a Telephone seminar, to which all RTLOs and TLOs are invited and this during this event we will be looking at what we do and how we can do it better.

We are all responsible for passing the message to the suffering alcoholic.

Jonathan P  
GSB Trustee, NTSC

## Young People

It has been a busy year for the Young People's Sub-committee. Following the recommendation at last year's Conference for YP roadshows to go out across the country to encourage young people into the service, and to support those already in the role, we had our first roadshow in Winchester in November for the following regions - South West, South East, London Region South, London Region North, Eastern and South Midlands. It was well attended and received very well and we plan to hold another roadshow later this year in Manchester.

We also produced new posters using Conference approved wording so these posters didn't need to come to Conference for approval and the liaison officers were able to use them immediately.

We have produced a new video aimed at young people which will be shown at Conference and voted on which we hope will be used widely once approved.

We also have had two new posters with new wording created and these have gone out to the Fellowship and will be voted on at Conference.

We also welcomed a new Sub-committee member Craig B in November and we sadly reach the end of our first term by saying goodbye to our founding YP SC members - Gemma B, Dave M and Andrew J - who are rotating out - thank you for all your hard work and commitment.

I would like to thank the rest of the SC members Helen Y, Marc D and Craig B for their work also. We are currently advertising for new members of the SC.

I would like to thank my fellow trustee, Sandi A, who has worked alongside me, coming into AA many years ago as a young person Sandi's experience has been invaluable. I too am rotating off this SC to work in other areas for the General Service Board and chairing the YP SC has been a real honour - I hand over the chair of this SC to Sandi who will do a great job.

Amanda S  
GSB Trustee, Young People

## **Roundabout**

Roundabout has been developing well in the past year.

Our Editor is now up and running after a full year in post and has brought some refreshing changes to the magazine that seem to have been appreciated by the Fellowship. Whilst we gained two new members of the sub-committee sadly, we lost a great member of the committee who passed away.

During March the Editorial sub-committee held our annual workshop in Glasgow. The event was well attended from across Scotland and beyond with many Roundabout liaison officers from Intergroups and Regions. I believe that all who attended enjoyed the Fellowship on offer, making new friendships through the day, and left upbeat with hopefully a better understanding of Roundabout.

Due to the success of our March event we decided to have a workshop in November, held in Edinburgh, and run by the liaison officers from both Intergroups and Regions.

Whilst this event was not well attended the belief was that it was worthwhile and should be allowed to grow offering support to our liaison officers who can feel isolated from one year to the next.

The magazine will continue to carry the message to the still suffering Alcoholic and be an enhancement to many members sobriety.

Stevie S  
GSB Trustee, Roundabout

## **Share**

Share magazine has enjoyed another successful year carrying the message to those who may be unable to attend meetings.

We have implemented The Interview, a new feature which has been well received. The innovation of digital payment is a requested change in progress.

We say farewell to some of our time served members and welcome new committee members including an assistant editor.

The calendar and diary sold out in record time and a reprint of the calendar is under way. The office has received several favourable comments for the magazine, calendar and diaries which are well deserved by all involved with the production of our fellowship magazine.

We are dependent on articles submitted by the Fellowship and I would urge anyone to take part by sharing your experience in writing.

Although Share is basically traditional it embraces changes which enable it to carry out its primary purpose. We look forward to a new year and a continued usefulness to those we serve.

Maxine W  
GSB Trustee, Share

## **National Conventions**

### **Northern**

I attended the 45<sup>th</sup> Northern National Convention which took place on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at the Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool. It was another fantastic convention with a great turnout, as usual, with 983 people in attendance, (1056 last year) including 71 from Al-Anon (63 last year). The 3 main meetings were chaired by the Chairs from each of the sponsoring regions, North West; North East, and Midlands. Again, I had the great privilege of chairing the Final Gathering on a Sunday morning which was such a humbling experience for which I am truly grateful.

There was a varied programme with a full schedule of AA meetings, which included young people's and old timers' meetings, as well as a service seminar on sponsorship, marathon meetings and a full programme of Al-Anon meetings. Entertainment was provided, on the Friday and Saturday evenings with a series of open mic sessions. The cinema again was very popular with a good selection of AA-related films being shown continuously during Friday and Saturday. The Road to Recovery Banner where AA members put their sobriety dates on had over 7,835 years of sobriety. Again Charlie, the Archivist produced a magnificent display to showcase the wonderful memoirs of years past.

Overall it was a wonderful convention, with a great variety of speakers in all the main meetings. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all and I am already looking forward to the 46<sup>th</sup> in 2020, which will be my last convention I attend in my capacity of Trustee.

I am sad to say that this is my last report, as Trustee on the National Northern Convention. I will really miss being involved in this Convention as I have thoroughly enjoyed my time on this committee. I will remain forever grateful for this opportunity to serve on this Committee as Trustee which has been a humbling and rewarding experience, one that I shall miss very much.

Denise Hartley  
GSB Trustee, Northern National Convention

### **Southern**

A very successful Southern National Convention took place over the weekend of 30<sup>th</sup> August to 1<sup>st</sup> September at Mill Rytte on Hayling Island. The attendance was 875 up on 2018. The event was self-supporting and a much appreciated contribution was sent to GSO.

There was excellent comradery amongst all who attended with many shares from members of the six supporting Regions. A Dance, disco and raffle were held on the Saturday evening. Al-Anon fully supported the event as in previous years. The organising committee was again a first class group of dedicated members who ran this excellent weekend. There are two members from each supporting Region and a small but effective Executive.

The 2020 Convention is again at Hayling Island from 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> September

This is my last year as Trustee for the SNC Committee and I have much enjoyed this opportunity to serve the Fellowship.

Peter F  
GSB Trustee, Southern National Convention

## **Scottish**

The new Scottish Convention had its second outing in Stirling during May 2019.

The lessons learned from the previous year, for both the Committee and the venue, were taken on board and led to a better convention for all who attended.

Our new Chair has now settled into the post, has great support from all the Committee, and it's a pleasure to be involved, making the tea, and doing as I'm told.

All Scottish Regions are now actively participating in the convention which will certainly help with the Unity for future years.

For anyone who has not attended the Convention I would recommend it, great location and a worthwhile event.

Many thanks to the Committee for all their hard work and Service throughout the year.

Stevie S  
GSB Trustee, Scottish National Convention

## **Welsh**

Once again Wales and Borders Region offered a very warm welcome to all those who attended the convention. The theme was 'Sobrydd - tiath gyffrous' 'Sobriety – an exciting journey'. The venue as usual, The Metropole Hotel, Temple Street, Llandrindod Wells, Powys which is in the beautiful heart of Wales.

We didn't have quite the same number of people attending compared with last year but those who did come were treated to a well organised and much appreciated convention. People came from all parts of the UK and Ireland and we welcomed old friends and new visitors alike.

The meetings were very well attended, and the speakers were, as always, lively, eloquent and entertaining, in carrying the message. A Welsh Language meeting, also well attended, was held and was well received by both Welsh and English (there was simultaneous translation) listeners. Come and Go meetings ran throughout Saturday.

A workshop on Archives run by John M. was a success and builds on the excellent work done by him and other Archivists in Wales to not only retain our history but have it so well displayed.

Although we didn't have a quiz this year and the dance and disco held on both nights went well.

The planning for the 29<sup>th</sup> Convention in 2020, is well in hand, and the theme will be "Sobrydd – Cryfder gyda'n gilydd" "Sobriety – Together stronger". Speakers have been confirmed and the entertainment organised. The dates are the 5 – 7 June 2020 and we look forward to seeing you there.

The Committee has, once again, worked extremely hard to create an interesting and enjoyable Convention. They are to be congratulated and the feedback from all who attended was positive and encouraging.

Jonathan P.  
GSB Trustee, Welsh National Convention

## **Parliamentary Events**

### **House of Commons**

This successful event took place on Tuesday October 22nd at 6-30 pm at Portcullis House Westminster. Dr Lisa Cameron M.P. and a leader on the Mental Health Committee was our sponsor and spoke eloquently of her family's involvement with alcoholism.

Stephen S was chair of the event, which he conducted in a professional way despite a voting division at the start!

Our Main speaker was Nick Holroyd who previously was a NAT and very constructive member of the PISC. He spoke of his professional experience with AA.

Our two main speakers with 6 to 40 years sobriety stole the night with their stories.

There were no Q&A after their stories so we finished with what I felt was a really poignant highlight to the evening. For a change this year, we served refreshments afterwards so more of our guests stayed afterwards to chat. We had over seventy guests on the night which include the organising group as well as Nigel, Ranjan and Sophie from GSB /GSO . This attendance was despite a lot of uncertainty caused by Brexit which preceded this year's event.

The PI HOC team are grateful for the efforts of Sophie at GSO, J-Pierre at the Southern Service office for their support in getting acceptances, many at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour!

Peter F  
GSB Trustee, Westminster HOC Parliamentary P.I. Committee

### **Scottish Parliament**

Our 2019 Scottish Parliament Event was held during October and our Sponsoring MSP was John Mason.

Our event, which was run by some of our younger members from across the five Regions in Scotland, turned out to be a terrific evening.

Throughout the year the working group gave freely of their time and experience, no doubt with the help of their Regions, in pulling together the guest list of professionals from their Regions together with the format and presentation for the evening.

Just last week I happened to be chatting with one of the guests who had attended who said that " In all my years that it was one of the best events I had been to, the whole evening flowed, and if you did not know better you would have thought it was stage managed. All of the speakers shared in their experience in their own way."

The Scottish Parliament event gives Alcoholics Anonymous GB the chance to develop the friendships that allow our friends to recommend us and this year our young members showed both recovery in action and what AA can offer.

Our thanks go to all involved.

Stevie S  
GSB Trustee Scottish Parliament Event

### **Welsh Assembly**

The event took place at the "The Pierhead", Welsh Assembly Campus Cardiff. Tuesday 12th November 2019.

The event opened with the Chair of the Board, Nigel P., making a short speech followed by Caroline Jones AM for her opening remarks. Caroline had done her research and knew the history of AA which she was happy to share with all. She was then followed by the Trustee for Wales and Borders, Jonathan P. who gave a talk about what AA is and does.

The P.I. and Health videos were shown and Andrew, one of our new NAT's, gave a talk on what it is like for a non-alcoholic to be part of Alcoholics Anonymous.

We then had two AA speakers who shared their "experience, strength and hope" "Bethan W" and "Joanna W". They did a wonderful job – the honesty of their experience, the braveness of their strength and the trust in their hope. They really had the audience listening.

The presentation ended with a Q&A session that took us just past the official finish time. A buffet lunch was provided and AA members mingled with the guests. Yet again the event was appreciated by all who took part.

Jonathan P  
GSB Trustee, Welsh Assembly

## **Irish General Service Conference 2019**

The General Service Conference of AA in Ireland was held over the weekend of 1 to 3 March in the Tullamore Court Hotel. Norman B and I attended as the invited GB Observers. We were met at Dublin airport by one of the Leinster Delegates, John S who didn't mind waiting until we had both arrived at the airport. John then drove us to Tullamore which is about an hour and a half from the airport.

The weekend started with cordial introductions and dinner in the hotel at 6. The opening meeting followed at 8pm which dealt with the AGM business. Outgoing Directors and Trustees were thanked for their service and the new Directors and Trustees were introduced and welcomed.

The main business of Conference commenced with the formal opening of proceedings by the Chair. There was plenty of time given to discuss motions which had been submitted by members through the Service Structure (Groups, Areas and Intergroups). Some of these were carried while others were either withdrawn following discussion or not carried.

Every Delegate had the opportunity to present their report. There were also service reports given by Public Information and the World Service Meeting delegates.

It was a productive and extremely informative weekend. The hospitality shown to us by all the delegates was second to none. The food and accommodation were first class.

I very much look forward to attending the reconvened Conference on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 11 May which will focus on service.

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to be of service.

GSB Trustees, Norman B and Clive K

## **Reconvened General Service Conference of AA in Ireland 2019**

The reconvened Irish General Service Conference was held on Friday 10 and Saturday 11 May 2019 in Tullamore, County Offaly. The proceedings began with dinner at 6 pm on the Friday. Violence & Personal Conduct and Safeguarding featured in the discussions on Friday evening. This was an extremely healthy debate with some Delegates remarking that it was the best debate they had been involved in. The Board Trustees were asked look at our literature on violence and personal conduct and produce a version suitable for Ireland so that it can be brought back to Conference next year.

We were split up into four groups on Saturday morning to discuss one question related to service per table. The questions were:

- 1 How can we improve Service?
- 2 How can conference members lead by example?
- 3 What action can we a conference take to encourage Service?
- 4 How can we implement changes and in what timeline?

I was asked to sit on table 4 which came up with the following points:

How can we help you?

Gentle encouragement

Unity of purpose e.g. all Delegates singing from the same hymn sheet

What do you need? e.g. utilise resources

Article on AA Website

Regular Service article in "The Road Back" magazine

Regular Inventories

Improve our image

The whole Conference assembled after lunch to discuss the findings of each group.

All in all, it was a wonderful experience and the conference voted that in future all GB and other Observers will be given the opportunity to participate more fully except for voting as is the case in our own Conference. The hospitality afforded to me was second to none and I'm grateful to John S and Brian in particular, who picked me up and dropped me back at Dublin Airport.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to be of service.

Clive K

GSB Trustee