

Spring 2026

AA Service News

From the General Service Office of Great Britain



Our Primary Purpose

12 Traditions Checklist

3. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.



1. In my mind, do I prejudge some new AA members as losers?
2. Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my AA group?
3. Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phoney?
4. Do I let language, religion (or lack of it); race, education, age, or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?
5. Am I over impressed by a celebrity? By a doctor, a clergyman, an ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?
6. When someone turns up at AA needing information or help (even if they can't ask for it aloud), does it really matter to me what that person does for a living? Where they live? What their domestic arrangements are? Whether they have been to AA before? What their other problems are?

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

These questions were originally published in the AA Grapevine in conjunction with a series on the Twelve Traditions that began in November 1969 and ran through 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.

While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.

AA Service News

Welcome to the Spring Edition of AA Service News.

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

Share Your Service Experience!

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

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

Please send your service-related articles to:
editor.aasn@aamail.org

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



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

AA Service News

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What's happening in your intergroup and region?

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

aainformation@gsoqb.org.uk

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

What happened when AA decided to 'adopt a GP'... and what the health professionals thought

My name is David F and I am an alcoholic. I am also the current Health Liaison Officer (HLO) for Severn Intergroup.

This evening, I have been catching up with my AA work. I have spoken to another HLO and chatted with someone from the local ambulance service who works on the 'mental health ambulance' amongst other things. I've also messaged someone from the AA Polish Health group and offered to help him with a little project he is working on. That wasn't how my Saturdays used to be.

It was a Saturday morning in July 2017 when the gorilla kicked me out of the cage the last time and I was left not knowing what to do, but knowing that my way hadn't worked. If it was going to work, it would have done by now - I had tried everything else.

I rang the AA helpline and the next thing I did was to ring my GP. She 'prescribed' a very small amount of alcohol for the next two nights until she could see me on the Monday morning and then I was detoxed at home and we made a plan that I would carry on with following the suggestions of AA. I haven't had a drink since - one day at a time.

I will be forever grateful to my sponsor who looked after me, and to that GP and her colleagues who helped me on a Saturday and first thing on the Monday. One of the GPs at that practice also happened to be a sober member of AA.

So now I am giving back what was freely given to me by trying to carry the message of AA to healthcare professionals in Gloucestershire. Many professionals come across drunks like me, and they don't know what to do with us. We can help - so I tell them my story and let them know that they can send them to AA.

Referring patients to AA need not be elaborate or time consuming. As has been said - "connection of the patient to an experienced member of AA who can accompany them to their first meeting dramatically increases the likelihood that a referral will be followed."

So, with that in mind we have started an initiative along the lines of 'Adopt a GP'. There are around 65 face-to-face AA meetings in Gloucestershire and around the same number of GP practices. It's as if God wanted us to be friends...

For example, at my own GP surgery we have made friends with the receptionists, nurses and GPs and we are on their website, notice board, we have leaflets and posters in the waiting room and are even included on the 'laser display screen' for people to see while they are waiting! Myself and another member of the fellowship are their named contacts, and the hope is that we will be able to accompany someone to their first meeting and more.

We have tried to encourage other groups/meetings to 'Adopt a GP' and have provided some information leaflets for healthcare professionals about how they can refer patients to AA as

well as some customisable posters and some 'prescription' pads. "Take one meeting a day and come back and see me in three months....."

At nearly all my own medical appointments with doctors, dentists and podiatrists, and when I take my mother along to her appointments, I often spend more time talking about AA than I do what I went there for in the first place. I am just so pleased to be able to share the solution that has worked for me, and it doesn't have to involve organising an international conference! "Keep it simple..." said one doctor, I think!



When my time as Health Liaison Officer comes to an end in 2027 I will, God willing, be 10 years sober, one day at a time. I knew that I needed some service for this period of my sobriety and that if I am working on helping others I am not working on my next drink. After that, I plan to concentrate on my home group, sponsoring other alcoholics and working with members of the AA Loners-Internationalists Meeting and as a port contact for sailors who need AA. I am sure God and my sponsor will have more ideas for me too. There is plenty to keep me busy just in AA for the rest of my life but my primary purpose is to be part of the chain. One alcoholic talking to another to help reduce their feelings of difference long enough for him to start to take actions he does not yet believe in, that will help him stay alive and not die from alcoholism.

There is a quote from Bill - the man in the bed and AA number 3. He said something along the lines of "and then these two fellers came to my bed. I thought they were going to talk to me about my drinking - everybody else had. And they never talked to me about my drinking once. They talked to me about their drinking and how they felt. And I just couldn't believe it. They sounded just like me. And I decided to stick with them fellers."

This morning, I went to a meeting and did the usual recruitment drive for hospital 12th step call volunteers, and two new people came forward and offered to help. The chain is strong and if someone needs us on Christmas Day then we can go and sit by their bedside and offer them the hand of AA and a big book wrapped up. God willing, we never need to drink again, and we never need to feel alone again.

David F – Health Liaison Officer, Severn Intergroup



INCLUSIVITY

INCLUSIVITY WORKSHOP: *a report from the Southern National Convention*

We were honoured to host an Inclusivity Workshop at the Southern National Convention in September 2025. Following introductions, the session opened with Zelma K, Trustee for Wales and Borders, who shared news of the newly established Inclusivity Committee at Board level. Chaired by Tony S, Trustee for London Region South, the committee comprises three working groups:

- **Race2Day**
- **LGBTQIA+**
- **Accessibility**

Each group is chaired by a member of the Fellowship and has a trustee assigned to it. Zelma read a moving report from Jane C, Chair of the LGBTQIA+ working group, detailing the development of a new pamphlet titled LGBTQIA+ Voices in AA, which is intended to replace the existing literature. The pamphlet has been reviewed by the Literature Sub Committee and will be presented at the 2026 General Service Conference.

Zelma, representing the Accessibility Working Group, underscored the critical importance of fostering inclusive environments for neurodivergent individuals, as well as for those who are hard of hearing, blind or partially sighted, and for wheelchair users. She advocated for practical measures to eliminate physical barriers, including the provision of appropriate lighting, accessible toilet facilities, and comprehensive venue descriptions within 'where-to-find' resources. In particular, she recommended that venues be identified if they are wheelchair friendly and that the availability of accessible toilets is also explicitly indicated, thereby illustrating how clear and accurate information can significantly enhance accessibility and user experience.

Pragnya G, Chair of the Race2Day working group, talked about developing a new pamphlet: Inclusivity: The AAGB Service Structure. This publication aims to reflect the voices of People of Colour, white ethnic minorities, dual heritage individuals, and members of the UK travelling community.

Contributors are invited to submit personal stories (max 250 words) by April 2026 to chair. race2day.wg@aamail.org

Pragnya also acknowledged the display of AA literature in multiple languages and expressed gratitude to the Board for providing an excellent banner and tablecloth.

The workshop continued with heartfelt shares from Bhav, Dee, Beatriz, and Samira. Their stories—rooted in diverse cultural backgrounds and personal journeys—spoke of isolation, resilience, and transformation. Each speaker illustrated how, despite feeling ‘different’, they found hope and healing through the 12 Steps of AA. Their experiences underscored a shared message: love, tolerance, respect, and recognition are vital to recovery.

All speakers emphasised the importance of welcoming and safe meetings, access to literature in various languages, and the desire to be fully ‘seen’—culturally and spiritually, without needing to explain oneself - chiming with the essence of Tradition One, namely our common welfare and unity.

“Let us instead accord each other the respect and love that is due to every human being as he tries to make his way towards the light. Let us always try to be inclusive rather than exclusive; let us remember that each alcoholic among us is a member of AA, so long as he or she declares.”

Bill W (Toronto International Convention, 1965)

Pragnya G – Race2Day Working Group



Have you a drinking problem?
Contact Alcoholics Anonymous

0800 9177 650



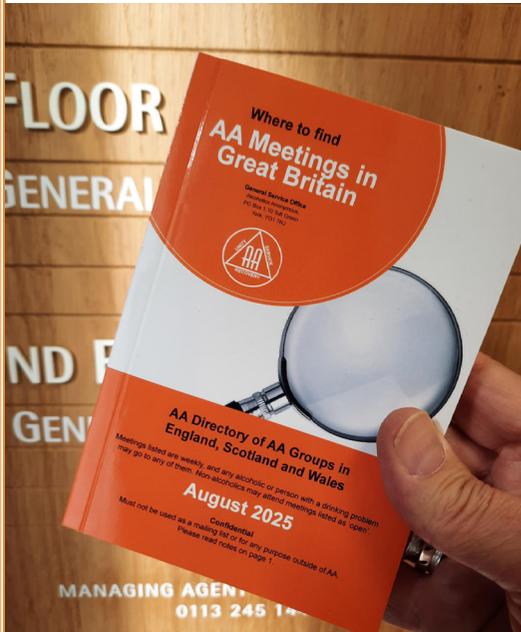
क्या आपको शराब पीने की समस्या है? शराबियों से संपर्क करें
ਕੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਰਾਬ ਪੀਣ ਦੀ ਸਮੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ? ਅਲਕੋਹਲਿਕਸ ਅਨੌਨੀਮਸ ਨੂੰ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ
શું તમને દારૂ પીવાની સમસ્યા છે? Alcoholics Anonymous ને કોલ કરો
உங்களுக்கு மது அருந்துவதில் சிக்கல் உள்ளதா?
மது அருந்துபவர்கள் பெயர் தெரியாதவர்களை
அழைக்கவும்.

Masz problem z picciem? Zadzwoń do Anonimowych Alkoholików

Oes gennyh chi problem yfed? Ffoniwch Alcoholics Anonymous

Above: The 'Contact AA (Ethnic) with 0800 number' A4 poster, free of charge order, item code 4018

New and in stock now! AA GB Where to Find directory



- Lists all meetings in England, Scotland and Wales
- Meeting contact telephone numbers
- Index of Towns
- Telephone Service Offices & Helplines numbers

Revised August 2025
NOT available from the online shop.

Order by post enclosing cheque / PO or email
carolinedavy@gso.gb.org.uk and send an online
bank transfer to the GSO account:

Account name: General Service Board
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Account number: 63930408

£8 inc. p&p

Coming next issue:

Look out for the **Summer 2026** edition of your AA Service News, published early June, containing a full report of this years Conference recommendations as well as the usual mix of service articles and information.

Printed copies of AASN are sent free of charge to all UK groups, so make sure we have your details up to date and use the online form to make any changes:

<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/members/pink-form/>



Introducing the Google Workspace Handbook

In today's world, using digital tools is often involved in carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. To support this vital service work, the General Service Office (GSO) moved our email services to Google (GMail) in 2022. This step enhanced our email capabilities but also offered all service officers access to the full suite of Google Workspace tools.

Google Workspace is a collection of online tools designed to help us communicate, collaborate, and manage our work from almost anywhere, simply by using a web browser. We can use it to produce documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and enable collaborative online working, all in real-time. For example, by using tools like Google Docs and Sheets, we can significantly reduce the need to send multiple files back and forth; everyone working on an agenda, minutes, or report can access the very latest version online.

To ensure all service officers can effectively, securely, and responsibly use this expanded digital toolkit, a comprehensive Google Workspace Handbook has been created by the Wales & Borders Region. This resource is designed to provide guidance for both the seasoned user and those who are yet to start using their AA Google Workspace account and mail.

Your Comprehensive Guide to Service Technology

The Google Workspace Handbook is a single, detailed document aimed at making your service work more efficient, collaborative, and secure. It covers the majority of the suite of applications, providing essential context and best practices for their use within the AA service structure.

The Handbook is available for immediate download on the resources webpage below, providing a single go-to reference point for all your digital service questions. The guide is easy to search, or you can navigate it from easily from the contents page, or search the live Google Document.

Learning the Tools: A Step-by-Step Article Series

For service officers who prefer to learn one tool at a time, or who are looking for a more gradual, focused introduction, a complementary series of nine short articles is also available. These articles break down the features of Google Workspace into manageable lessons, designed to help you master one application before moving to the next.

The series covers core topics essential for service continuity and secure communication:

- **Communication Mastery:** Tips for your AA Inbox (Gmail), including the crucial role of Blind Carbon Copy (BCC) to protect anonymity and privacy.
- **Organising Your Work:** How to use Google Drive as a secure digital filing cabinet for easy handover to your successor.
- **Collaboration:** Practical guides to using Google Docs and Google Sheets for real-time teamwork on minutes, reports, and data management.
- **Connecting Virtually:** Guidance on using Google Meet for online committee meetings and Google Calendar for streamlined scheduling.
- **Gathering Information:** Instructions for using Google Forms for collecting essential feedback and registrations.
- **Security & Best Practice:** Essential reminders on data minimisation, access control, and upholding the security and Traditions of our Fellowship.

Access the Full Guidance Series Now

To download the handbook and read the entire series of articles, please visit the dedicated online resource page or scan the QR code with this article:

www.aawalesandborders.org/guidance-resources/google-workspace

By exploring and utilising these tools responsibly, we can enhance our collaboration and sustain the vital service work that helps keep Alcoholics Anonymous thriving.



Scan the QR code for the full series of articles
and the Google Workspace Handbook.



www.aawalesandborders.org

Disclaimer and Service Responsibility: No Endorsement Implied

This article, provided by the Wales & Borders Region of Alcoholics Anonymous (Great Britain), offers guidance on using Google Workspace services for AA service work. In alignment with AA's Tradition Six, which advises against endorsing or affiliating with any outside enterprise, this guide and the provision of Google Workspace tools should not be viewed as an endorsement, affiliation, or promotion of Google, Google Workspace, or any other commercial entity. These tools are available solely to practically facilitate AA's primary purpose without diverting us from it.

**The spiritual life
is not a theory.**

We have to live it.

-Alcoholics Anonymous, p83



Armed Forces Day 2026

Your handy guide by Armed Service Liaison Officer Anthony B



Armed Forces Day takes place on the last Saturday each June, falling this year on 27th June 2026.

It is a chance to show support for the men and women who make up the Armed Forces community, from currently serving personnel to Service families, veterans and cadets.

Showing support for the Armed Forces provides a much-valued morale boost for serving personnel, veterans and their families.

Armed Forces Day 2024/25

There was lots of successful AA participation in armed forced events across the country in 2024 and 2025. These events are a great opportunity to pass the AA message not just to people with an interest in the Armed Forces, but also to the general public.

What can Groups, Intergroups and Regions do to participate In 2026?

Armed Forces Day 2026 is 27th June, but events are spread around this time. The events are generally one- or two-day public community events in local parks or centres with displays from the military, food outlets, entertainment, and stalls from other voluntary organisations.

The events are generally free to attend and are a great opportunity for AA members to carry the message of recovery. The event will need a PI stand with literature to give out and sufficient volunteers to take care of the stand, and set up and break down the display.

You can find details of local events in your area by searching 'Armed Forces Day.'

How to approach the planning

It's suggested that RASLOs (Regional Armed Services Liaison officers) take a wider communication role across their regions and ASLOs (Armed Services Liaison officers) take responsibility to initiate events in conjunction with their Intergroup PI committee.

The ASLO is encouraged to liaise with a local AA group close to the event to secure an AA volunteer for each AFD venue to be the contact point for organisational purposes. The local group would then, with support from the ASLO/RASLO organise the AA registration for the event and coordinate the volunteers on the day. This also has the added value of introducing new people to PI and AA service.

It should be clearly stated that you don't have to have been a member of the armed forces to participate in this activity, you just need to be an alcoholic in recovery. We are passing a message of hope and recovery and many visitors to these events are not armed forces members. The intergroup PI committee, together with the ASLO, could review preparations and present their local engagement strategy to the intergroup in a way that it feels is appropriate to the local area.

What needs to be done?

- **Appropriate PI group agree concept and rollout**
- **Announcement to intergroup and identify local event coordinators and volunteers**
- **Secure events that can be attended and register to attend. This will generally be through local councils**
- **Secure PI kits for events**
- **Secure sufficient literature top ups and meeting lists**
- **Record on the day interactions and what literature is given out**
- **PI group evaluate activity when it is finished**

Any questions?

Please contact: Anthony B at: aservices.east@aamail.org

BOARD BULLET POINTS NOVEMBER

The following members are joining sub committees:

- Jonathan P, London Region North - Employment
- Gordon M, South East Region - National Telephones

The following members are joining the General Service Board as Trustees:

- Vikki C – Wales & Borders Region
- Cath W – Highlands & Islands Region
- Jane C – North East Region
- Phil Egert – Scotia Region
- James Killen – Glasgow Region
- Reverend Caroline Morrison – NAT
- Gillian Edwards – NAT

The board have elected Holly A from South West Region to be the next Chair, and Max J from Midlands Region to be the next Vice-Chair of the GSB. Holly and Max will be shadowing the existing Chair and Vice-Chair until they take on the positions after Conference 2027.

AA Service News Deadlines:

- Summer 2026 25 April 2026
- Autumn 2026 25 July 2026
- Winter 2026 25 October 2026

Please send service-related articles to editor.aasn@aamail.org

Regional Forums:

- North West Region 17 May 2026
- South Midlands Region 18 October 2026

National Conventions:

- Northern National Convention 26–29 March 2026 Blackpool
- Scottish National Convention 24–26 April 2026 Dunoon
- Welsh National Convention 29–31 May 2026 Llandrindod Wells
- Southern National Convention 18–20 Sept 2026 Weston-Super-Mare

Parliamentary Events

- Westminster Parliamentary Event 12 May 2026
- Welsh Parliamentary Event 2026 TBC
- Scottish Parliamentary Event 2026 TBC

MBER 2025 & JANUARY 2026

The European Service Meeting took place on 13 – 30 October 2025

European Service Meeting Fund: £25k paid into WSM Nov 2025 - £40k balance

World Service Meeting: Portugal to host in 2026 – Reserve Host: India

Development Fund: £25,659 paid in; £50K paid out to WSM October 2024. £80k balance.

Conference 2026: The questions and supporting information as well as the literature to be presented at the plenary session has been published in AA Service News Winter 2025 Edition and can be found on the website here: <https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/conference2026/>

The unaccepted questions will be on the website in the Document library under Conference 2026 in February along with any Board proposals to come to Conference.

PI Newsletter: We welcome articles about all PI initiatives. Please send via Steve at GSO by emailing aainformation@gsogb.org.uk

PI & EComms/Social Media: The sub committee has set up a test site on Instagram using images from the 2025 Anonymous Ad Campaign. Please search [alcoholicsanonymousgb](https://www.instagram.com/alcoholicsanonymousgb) or click the link: <https://www.instagram.com/alcoholicsanonymousgb?igsh=MWNvdzVmMTIlaHUwaQ==> and follow!

Archives Committee call out to Regional Archivists or past National Convention Committee Members - please send any committee minutes of National Conventions to GSO, and old National Convention flyers be sent to: Archives, GSO, PO Box 1, Toft Green, York, YO1 7NJ

Young People's Podcast: The podcast is now available on the usual streaming platforms

Share and Roundabout: Please spread the word in intergroups and groups that stories and articles are always welcome, especially from people that haven't written before. Let members know that the editorial readers will take care of grammar and spelling if that feels like a barrier to submitting something. Contact Share Magazine aashare@gsogb.org.uk or for Roundabout contact aainformation@gsogb.org.uk

Gretchen S – Vice-Chair, General Service Board

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for the next **AA Southern
National Convention**



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Contact SNCC - convener.southernnc@aamail.org
Or chair.southernnc@aamail.org

VACANCY for General Secretary

The General Secretary is preparing to leave, and a replacement is sought to take up post on 4th January 2027.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities include being Chief Executive of the Charity, Company Secretary and General Secretary to the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in Great Britain. The job is based at the General Service Office (GSO) in York.

You will be responsible to the General Service Board (GSB) and through the GSB to the General Service Conference for the management and administration of the 3 Service Offices in Great Britain. There will be a handover period of approximately 3 months.

Attributes

You must be an enthusiastic member of AA with at least 10 years continuous sobriety, a home group and service experience at Intergroup and Region plus have served a full term as Conference delegate. Desirable but not essential is to have served on a Board Subcommittee.

You will have demonstrated leadership ability in AA including knowledge of the General Service Structure and AA principles, recognising the unique nature of AA including the checks and balances of authority and an ability to help resolve conflicting views. A sound knowledge of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts for World Service and Service in Great Britain is also essential for this post.

You must show leadership in a business / professional career - including well developed staff management skills, staff training, recruitment, appraisal and motivation, financial management and reporting and use of information technology.

High quality communication skills and sound and reliable judgment will be an essential part of your résumé. You will be a leader with education to degree level or equivalent, with an ability to manage change and initiate improvements in service delivery.

How to apply

If you are interested, please contact the General Secretary in the first instance for a full job description and person specification at: **GeneralSecretary@gsogb.org.uk** or telephone 01904 644026.

Please send your curriculum vitae and a covering letter explaining why you think you are suitable to: The General Secretary, GSO, 10 Toft Green, York, YO1 6TJ, marked CONFIDENTIAL.

Deadline for applications is 9.00 am, Tuesday 7th April 2026

Shortlisted candidates will be notified on or around 15th April 2026, and it is anticipated that interviews will take place on 08th- 09th May 2026.

“You’re through to Alcoholics Anonymous, how can we help you...?”

My name is Graham, I’m an alcoholic.

I’ve just completed my service on the National Telephones Sub Committee. (NTSC) After a very busy four years I actually feel at a bit of a loose end, so I thought I’d share my amazing experience.

This service has been like none I’ve participated in before. Being trusted with the responsibility of working on behalf of the General Service Board (GSB), attempting to implement Conference recommendations, and yet still be a member of a local home group often seems a world apart and - on occasions - a challenge, but at the same time immensely rewarding!

I joined the NTSC after completing my third year at Conference in 2021. I was on Committee One, the very committee that recommended reviewing the telephone service as a whole, so I’m partly to blame for what came next!

Prior to that I’d been the Regional Telephone Liaison Officer (RTLLO) for Wales and Borders Region, done telephone service at intergroup (IG) level and as a telephone responder. So I had what I thought was a good working knowledge of the national telephone number (0800 9177 650). I had a lot to learn!

After completing the application process, I attended my first Sub Committee (SC) meeting where I was warmly welcomed. I was allocated the role of statistician, ironic as I had very little knowledge of spreadsheets and data collection! When I was at school, slide rules were still in use, with calculators being the preserve of the very rich and computers a distant dream! However, I had done a course on Excel about 15 years previously so at least knew what a spreadsheet was!

I had nothing to fear. The outgoing statistician patiently spent hours over numerous online meetings, bringing me up to speed, and because I had made contacts during my time as RTLLO, I was able to reach out for help when my Excel skills fell short!

The Conference recommendation from 2021 asked the NTSC to look at modernising the whole of the telephone service so I started with the statistics. With the help of a trusted servant and very dear friend outside the sub committee, we set about designing a new semi-automated system that meant that the quarterly and annual statistics could be produced in about an hour instead of a couple of weeks. This left more time to concentrate on the rest of the Conference recommendations.



The task unfolds...

We had been asked to review the 0800 operating system, and I was co-opted onto a working party within the SC to look at new technologies. It should be remembered that the current system is over 20 years old and is only just about coping with the change to mobile phones! For context and scale, 70,310 calls were answered in 2024 via the 0800 number from 29,540 individual callers, so there are a significant number of people seeking our help. We also had to deal with the scourge of extremely persistent nuisance callers, and trying to find a way to divert them away from our hardworking telephone response volunteers.

We researched and reached out to various telecom companies and found that things weren’t going to be as straightforward as we thought. The 0800 number is often referred to as the AA helpline, but this is not actually the case.

The 0800 number is in fact only a call dispersal system that diverts calls to the 39 regional and local Helplines that operate across the country. All operate differently, with a variety of technologies and varying hours of operation. We had many demands for the new system and it soon became apparent that there was no 'off the shelf' solution to meet our needs.

Anyone who has been involved with the telephone service at any level over the last three years will be aware of the numerous false starts we have encountered, sometimes whole ideas, with months of work, had to be abandoned as they simply didn't work. However, we have still persisted. 'Progress not perfection' certainly held true and hopefully we will see some success soon. It is now in the very capable hands of the new working party on the NTSC.



Legal guidance sought

While this was going on, other members of the sub committee were working extremely hard on new Training and Safeguarding Guidance for both telephone volunteers and 12 Steppers. Also, we looked at General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and how they fit in with our operations, which is vital when you consider the amount of personal information that is processed. Legal advice was sought and we finally came up with the current extensive guidance that is available on the website.

AA can stick its head in the sand sometimes but like it or not we are part of the real world and must abide by the law. This work helps to protect the individual AA member, the Fellowship as a whole, and the service user.

At the same time, all of us on the sub committee were working on the day-to-day matters of keeping the existing 0800 number system working, producing newsletters, arranging Seminars and answering queries and problems from the marvellous group of unsung Telephone Liaison Officers (TLO's) that work to keep the local helplines staffed and functioning. Also, there was the small matter of re-writing Chapter 10 of the Service Handbook as asked for by Conference, so never a dull moment!

The personal touch

One of the highlights of being on the NTSC were the twice-yearly face to face meetings at the General Service Office (GSO) in York, one of the those including the annual RTLO meeting. You can't beat meeting in person; we got to know each other and that helped immensely in getting things done.

It was an honour and a privilege serving on the NTSC, I have met a wonderful group of trusted servants in fellow sub committee members and our trustees who always supported us.

During my time, sub committee members rotated out, new members arrived and sadly one died after a short illness and is greatly missed. I have also had the privilege of working with and being supported by the wonderful staff and volunteers at GSO, they are amazing! I have learned a great deal, not least from dealing with the occasional disagreements and difficulties that arose.

We are asked to reach out to highlight the work of the sub committees, which is often not visible at local level. Hopefully this article will do that and if you feel inspired, like to be challenged or are looking for a unique way of serving the Fellowship why not give it a try? There are normally vacancies on all the sub committees across all disciplines which are advertised on the website and in this issue of AA Service news. AA doesn't function without service from members.

LIF

Graham S
National Telephones Sub Committee,
2021 - 2025

How do I get an AA mail address?
Can I personalise it?
What happens if I'm locked out?

How do I access my account?
Can I forward emails?
What about mis-use?



Your AA email questions answered!

► How do I get an aamail.org email address?

Register with GSO and request access to the email account associated with the role you are doing within the AA structure. You will find the form on the AAGB Website, members section, in the helpdesk files.

► Can any AA member get an email address?

No, aamail.org addresses are for trusted members that do service within and outwith AA. These include all members registered in the Confidential Directory. Conference Delegates, Helplines and Conventions.

► Why is it important to register with GSO and stop using my personal email for AA business?

It looks more professional to use aamail.org email address. When you rotate out, the new liaison officer will still have access to archives, important contacts and continued relationships built with outside agencies.

► Why shouldn't I personalise the account?

You should sign off your email with just your first name and position held. Please have a look at Tradition Twelve on why this is important.

► Can I set up a forwarder so that all my aamail.org emails go to my personal account?

We advise that you don't do this, as AA business shouldn't be in your personal account.

► I'm locked out of my account. Who do I contact?

Admin@aamail.org or **admin.northernserviceoffice@gsogb.org.uk**

► Can I just hand over the log in details to the new incoming liaison officer?

Please don't do this. Each individual needs to be registered with GSO before accessing an aamail.org email account.

► I'm the secretary at my intergroup. Can I fill out the registration forms for the other members?

No, please be aware of GDPR; each individual is required to complete the form and send it to **groupinformation@gsogb.org.uk** from their own personal email account. We will use your personal email account details in the security settings. You will need this information if you get locked out of the aamail.org email account.

► Our treasurer has resigned; we need access to the email account for the bank details.

Contact **groupinformation@gsogb.org.uk** to ask for their personal details to be removed from the Confidential Directory. Contact **admin@aamail.org** to request temporary access to the account until someone else rotates in. You must already have an aamail.org email address at your intergroup/region for this request to be actioned.

► Someone in our Intergroup/Region is using the aamail.org account to bully and harass members of the Fellowship. What can we do?

Let us know if your liaison officer trusted with an aamail.org email address is breaking our traditions; we will put a block on the account until you inform us otherwise.

► A former liaison officer still has access to an aamail.org email address, filestore and microsite. They have threatened to erase all the work they have done, including all contacts in the email account, microsite and filestore.

Let **ecsc@aamail.org** and **admin@aamail.org** know as soon as possible. Access to all accounts will be blocked.

*Anne-Marie,
Northern Service Office*





THE CHIT SYSTEM:

WHAT IT IS, WHAT IT DOES, HOW IT WORKS - & WHY SHOULD MY GROUP HAVE IT?

The confirmation of attendance system, often called 'the chit system' is simply a scheme to let people have a document to show that they have attended a particular meeting. That person can then give the confirmation to Community Justice managers*, Social Services, an employer, or any other body.

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

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

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

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

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

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

(<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/members/aa-meetings/pink-form/>)

* The term 'Community Justice managers' is used to encompass different terms used in different areas of Great Britain and in different organisations. Other terms which you may be aware of include, Probation officer, Supervising Social Worker, Offender manager, Criminal Justice manager and Community Payback Officer.

SETTING UP THE 'CHIT' SYSTEM FOR YOUR GROUP

1. **Agree via Group Conscience.** Decide who will ensure proof of attendance chits are available (e.g. Secretary, GSR, or another Officer), where they will be securely kept between meetings and how you wish to announce to members that you operate the chit system.
2. **Email GSO** (AAInformation@gsogb.org.uk) to notify. Please copy in your local Intergroup Probation / CJS Liaison Officer and Secretary.
3. **Order a small number of attendance chits** from GSO (standardised and printed with anti-counterfeit ink).
4. **Give Group UID number when ordering chits** (Use the UID instead of a signature when you issue a chit to protect anonymity.)
5. **Please update the Group Information** – Registration and Update Meeting Form (Pink Form) as soon as possible (tick – chit system available). If you do not have internet access, you can send a paper copy of the pink form to our York address.
6. **The AA-GB Find a Meeting webpage** will then show an envelope icon against your group's listing, meaning attendance chits are available.

Note: *Please direct anyone wanting to find chit meetings to the AA GB homepage, which has a link to the Find a Meeting page at the top. The 'chit system' can be selected in 'additional requirements'. This is the best way to check the information is up to date.*

7. **Please ensure** that it is announced at your Group that Chits are available for anyone wishing to self-report and to see an identified Group officer after the meeting. Experience suggests this is best done at the start of each Group meeting.
8. **The Group officer fills in the chit** at end of meeting. Use the group's UID as the 'signature' to protect anonymity.
9. **Keep your GSR & Intergroup LO informed** about using the chit system, whilst preserving anonymity.

Chits - a tool which every group can have ... we never know when it will be needed.

Further information is given in AA's 'Liaison Officers Pack: Probation/CJS' available from GSO and in the AA-GB website Document Library.

It is, of course, entirely up to each group and intergroup whether and how they choose to introduce the confirmation system. (The AA Service Handbook for Great Britain 2025, p87)

Please discuss any Safeguarding concerns in your Group Conscience with local Intergroup Probation Liaison Officers and Safeguarding representative.

'None of us is above the law. If an issue is within the law, our Traditions apply; if outside the law, then contact outside agencies.' P123 Structure Handbook 2025

GSB Vacancies

GSB Vacancies - Service on a Sub Committee

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

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

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

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

General requirements

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

Additional requirements

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

How to apply

When applying for any of the sub committee vacancies listed in this issue of AA Service News, please use the application form found on the AAGB website www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk in Members//Service//Disciplines//Service Vacancies. You can also obtain a form by contacting Jenny Pryke at the General Service Office at: jennypryke@gsgob.org.uk or 01904 644026

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

Applicants will be interviewed online by two GSB members of the Nominations Committee. The next deadline for applications to join a sub committee is **10th April 2026**.

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

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Current Sub Committee Vacancies

- **Archives**
Email John C on: trustee.northeastregion@gsogb.org.uk
- **Armed Services**
Email John C on trustee.northeastregion@gsogb.org.uk
- **First Response Online**
Email Holly A on: trustee.southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk
- **Literature**
Email Max J on: trustee.midlandsregion@gsogb.org.uk
- **National Telephones**
Email Levey P on: trustee.cer@gsogb.org.uk
- **Public Information & EComms**
Email Tim B on: trustee.southmidlandsregion@gsogb.org.uk
- **Probation/Community Justice**
Email Hamish McS on: trustee.eastscotlandregion@gsogb.org.uk
- **Roundabout - vacancy for Assistant Editor**
Email Cath, the Editor of Roundabout, on: roundabout@aamail.org
- **Young People**
Email Holly A on: trustee.southwestregion@gsogb.org.uk



Dear Fellowship

Why first impressions aren't always right...

When I first came to AA, I went to the pub immediately afterwards, satisfied that the 12 steps were for nutters. That I returned was in no small way because of the welcome I had received, the openness, genuine concern for my welfare and the non-judgementalism of fellows. AA was a safe space. And on return, no one was judging, no one was cajoling or bullying. Attraction not Promotion. If they were I would not have stayed.

I mention this as it is all our responsibility to make meetings safe, welcoming and non-judgemental spaces, that don't exclude by clique, banter performative demonstrations of faith or strident shares invoking a one and only one way to do the 12 steps.



Whilst the erratic behaviour of a newcomer is to be expected, it is our responsibility to offer the hand of AA, freely, so that others may find their own path. We guide, and do not govern. Bad behaviour and bad culture stops people, both newcomers and oldies alike, coming back and gives AA a bad reputation, and we are all responsible – aren't we?

The use of the phrase “are you really willing to go to any lengths” maybe used improperly influence or blackmail very vulnerable people into accepting the unacceptable. To assert you would go to any lengths for a drink is a false equivalence, for are we not trying to move away from ultimatums and extremes. It gains us nothing.

Again, the idea that a group of individuals with no other connection apart from a desire to stop drinking should require any ‘governance’ or guidance on how they should behave with one another from a kind of unitary non-authority can be, in itself, disconcerting. The newcomer may require help to adjust to our society, but once part of this society for a few months, acceptable social behaviour should not need stating. Civility, we hold to be a self-evident truth. Love and tolerance is our code. In our places of work the incivility of some is paid with disciplinary procedures, so should we allow it in our meetings? Unfortunately cultures in some groups necessitated the creation of a Safeguarding guidance at the behest of the fellowship, because to some civility was not self-evident.

We are sick people getting well, and once on the path of recovery we will exhibit the magnificent reality of our programme, and gain in our family and work life, but complacency in our recovery, twinned with judgementalism about others’ can generate a sense of entitlement that the meetings are for our benefit. Our programme is often cited as selfish but as the long form of our 1st Tradition shows: I came for me, we stayed for us.

*In fellowship,
Ranjan B, General Secretary*



69th Scottish National Convention

'A NEW BEGINNING'
24 – 26th April 2026

**Queens Hall, 9 Argyle Street,
DUNOON PA23 7HH**
(Travel by road or ferry)

Weekend Registration £20 (including dance ticket)
Saturday Day Ticket £15 (with dance ticket, £18)

**To register and find out more information about
the weekend programme, hotels and ferries:**

www.scottishnationalconvention.co.uk

Any questions, email:
convention.snc@aamail.org

Full Al-Anon programme throughout the weekend

**Sponsored by all 5 Scottish Regions
Alcoholics Anonymous GB**



AA in the Digital Age:

how we are helping the still-suffering alcoholic

Alcoholics Anonymous GB operates two online services running alongside the AA Telephone Service, which are known as First Response Online.

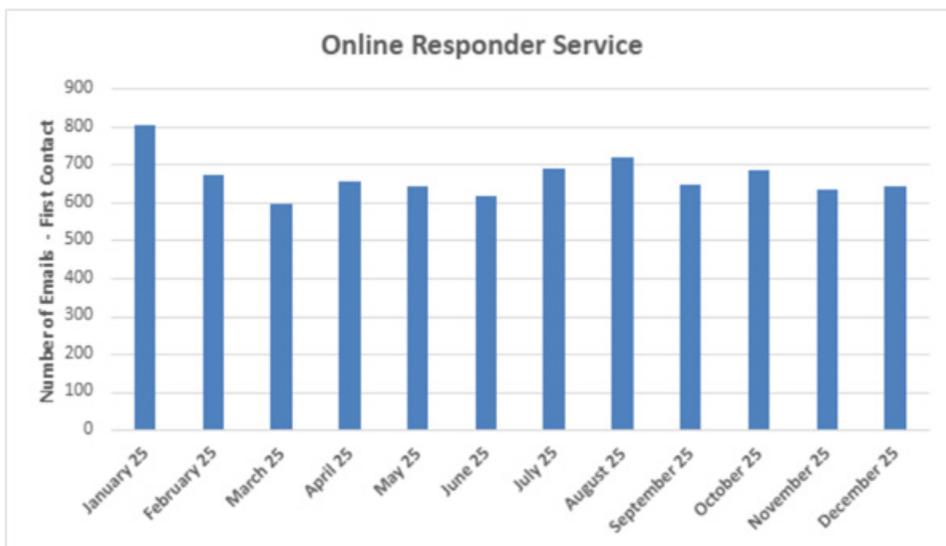
The main purpose of the First Response Online service is for responders to use their experience to help encourage the still suffering alcoholic to make contact with a 12 stepper via the Telephone Service, or to get to a meeting of AA.

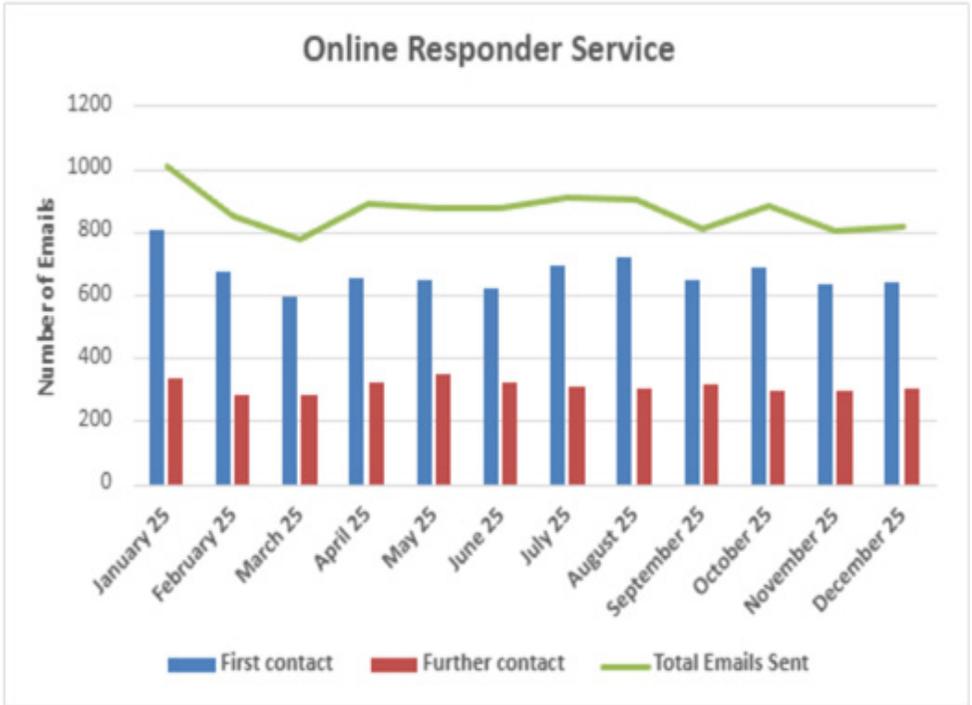
There are two strands to this service – **Chat Now** and the **Online Responder Service**.

- **Chat Now** provides live chat via an instant messaging service and can be accessed via the home or newcomers' pages on the AA website. It is operated in real time.
- **The Online Response Service (ORS)** responds to emails received at help@aamail.org which can also be found on the AA website. There is more time to consider a response than with Chat Now as people don't expect an immediate response, although we try to respond as quickly as possible.

The statistics for ORS and Chat Now show how many people are reaching out for help online and illustrate how vital both services are in helping the still-suffering alcoholic. Between the two services we receive in excess of 1200 first contacts per month.

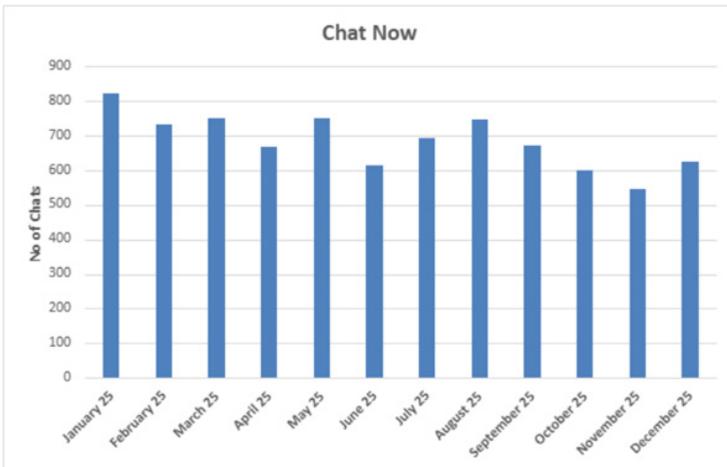
▼ **Graph 1 – initial contact emails received:**





▲ **Graph 2 – initial emails received, further emails received, and emails sent**

In 2025 the Online Response Service (ORS) received a total of 11,705 emails. Of these, 8,002 were initial contact (Graph 1) and the remaining 3,703 were additional emails replying to responders (Graph 2). The online responders sent a total of 10,435 emails over the year. (Graph 2).



◀ Over the course of 2025, the Chat Now responders dealt with a total of 8220 live chats, with an average of 685 chats per month (Graph 3).

In 2025, there were a total of 16,222 initial contacts from someone reaching out for help: either for themselves, a friend or family member, or in a professional capacity.

Although both services are aimed at the suffering alcoholic, we do get enquiries from family and friends, existing members of AA, professionals such as medical practitioners or counsellors and other miscellaneous queries.

On average, 50 – 55 % of contacts are from newcomers or people returning to AA. (Pie chart 1 & pie chart 2).

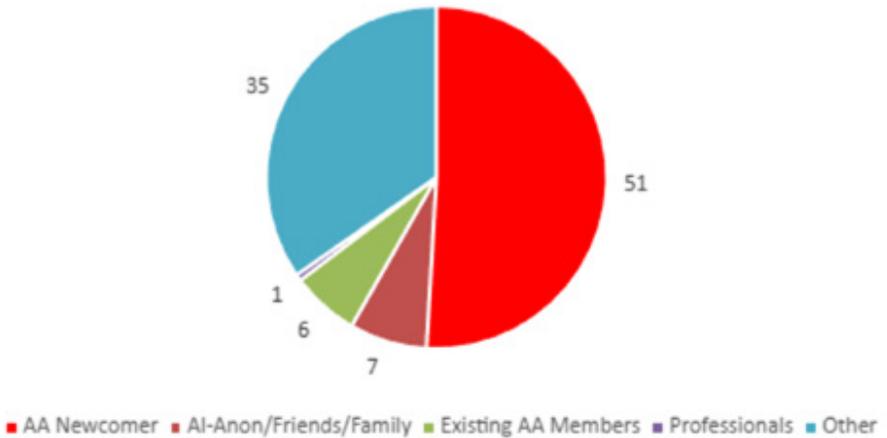
▼ **Pie chart 1 – types of enquiry on email service** (*figures rounded up*)



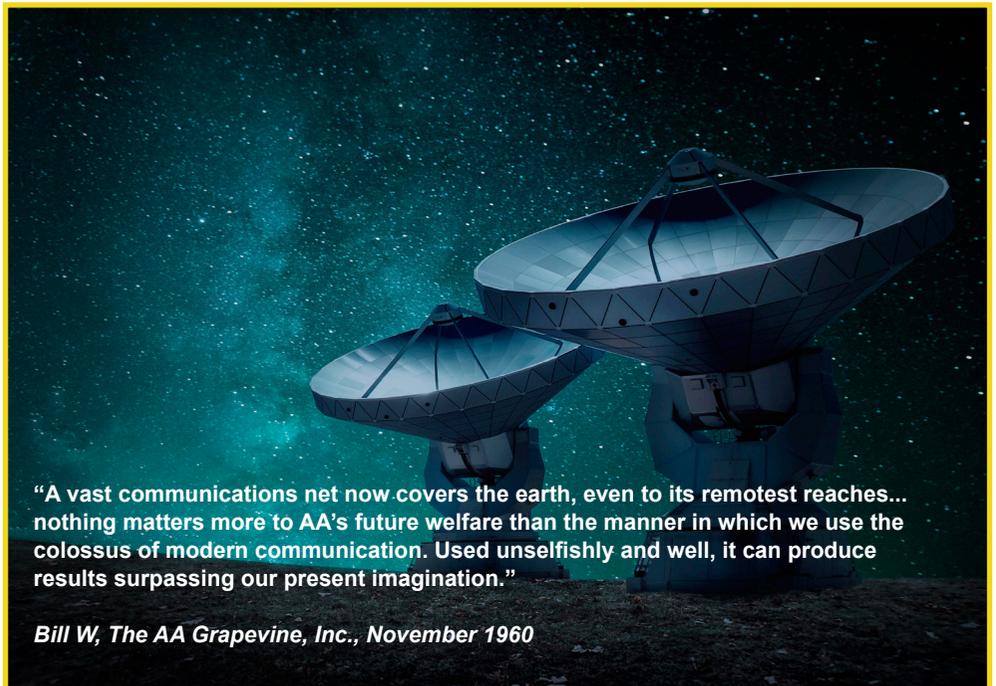
We are always looking for members to join our online services as responders. Online service is incredibly important in fulfilling our primary purpose and is extremely rewarding. If you would like more information about what is involved and how to apply, please email secretary.fro.sc@aamail.org for a job description and application form.

Margaret H – First Response Online Sub Committee

No of Chats (%) - 2025



▲ Pie chart 2 – types of enquiry on Chat Now (*figures rounded up*)



A.A.

Alcoholics Anonymous GB and English-Speaking Continental Europe

THE FIFTIETH ANNUAL

Northern National Convention

AA with AI-Anon Participation

To be held at the Norbreck Castle Hotel,
Blackpool, FY2 9AA



“A New Beginning”

26th - 29th March 2026

www.aa-gb.org.uk/i/northern-national-convention/

34th Welsh National Convention 2026

Confensiwn Cenedlaethol AA Cymru

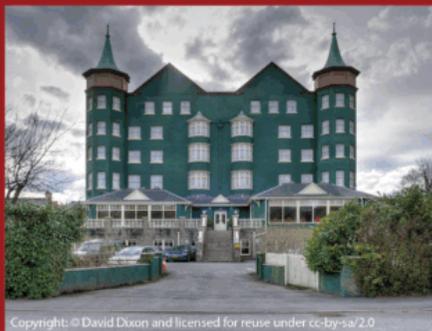
IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT
O'I WEITHIO, MAE'N GWEITHO

29- 31 May, 2026

29 - 31 Mai, 2026

With Al-Anon participation.

Gyda chyfranogiad Al-Anon.



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Metropole Hotel
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5DY
01597 823700
info@metropole.co.uk

Please contact the hotel to book.
Registration £15 for the weekend.



Scan the QR code for
more details or go to
www.aawalesandborders.org



Tradition 7

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

Tradition 7 Regional Contributions October - December 2025	Contributions £
Some of these contributions come from regional assemblies, whilst others may come from individual members or groups	
Eastern Region	48,162
London Region North	5,342
London Region South	28,487
Midlands Region	9,565
North East Region	9,051
North West Region	25,290
South East Region	57,216
South Midlands Region	31,166
South West Region	5,177
Wales & Borders Region	22,168
East of Scotland Region	9,678
Glasgow Region	16,308
Highlands & Islands Region	400
Scotia Region	17,468
South West Scotland Region	3,481
Continental European	23,139
Sundry- Unidentifiable receipts	7,034
Total	319,132

In Memoriam

1st October 2025 - 31 December 2025

In Memory of Brian P
In Memory of Clark I

Glasgow
Girvan

£600.00
£578.00

CONTRIBUTIONS UPDATE

A huge thanks to all the fellowship for their generosity and love, following the funding appeal put together with the Regional Treasurers. GSO's cash flow has much improved, though total reserves are still less than the prudent reserve target of 1.25 x annual expenditure.

However, as we are still a little short, continued donations will always be appreciated. So please continue to send money through the service structure via your Group Pot.

For **individuals** sending money to GSO, please use the contributions page of the website, and if you are a UK tax payer, use the Gift Aid form, as this is an easy way of maximising your valued contributions.

This QR code will take you to the Gift Aid form.



Subscribe to AA Service News

For your printed copy, update the group 'Pink Form' or contact Sharon at GSO sharon.smyth@gso.gb.org.uk Alternatively, complete the below and send to the address provided.

Printed AA Service News is mailed in a plain envelope.

SEND TO (BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)

Group Name/Day:

Group No:*

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email to:

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

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