



# Annual Report 2018

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Annual General Meeting

9<sup>th</sup> March 2018

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General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous  
in Ireland

(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

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## **General Information**

### **Directors:**

Caldwell Duncan Graham

Seamus Dooley

Liam O'Broin

Philip Garland

Edmond John Dillon

Patrick O'Keefe

Patrick Kennedy

### **Company Secretary:**

Breda Flood

### **Registered Office:**

Unit 2, Block C, Santry Business Park, Swords Road, Dublin 9

### **Premises**

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland, (GSBAA) is in legal possession of two properties. These are The General Service Office (GSO) at Unit 2, Block C, Santry Business Park, Dublin 9. This property is held on a 20 year lease, which commenced in January 2007.

The second property is the Central Service Office, located at Unit 11, North City Business Centre, 2, Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GG. This property is held on a one-year renewable agreement.

**Official Website:** [www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie](http://www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie)

**Bankers:**

AIB, Swords Road, Dublin 9

EBS, 28 Main Street, Swords, Co Dublin

Bank of Ireland, Collinstown Cross, Omega House, Cloghran, Co Dublin

**Solicitors:**

Patrick J. Morrissey & Co., 22 Crofton Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin

**Auditors:**

Whelan Dowling & Associates, Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm,  
Block 2, Unit 1 & 4, Northwood Court, Santry, Dublin 9

**Company Registration No.**      64287

**Charity Number:**                      6014

**CRA Number:**                          20010010

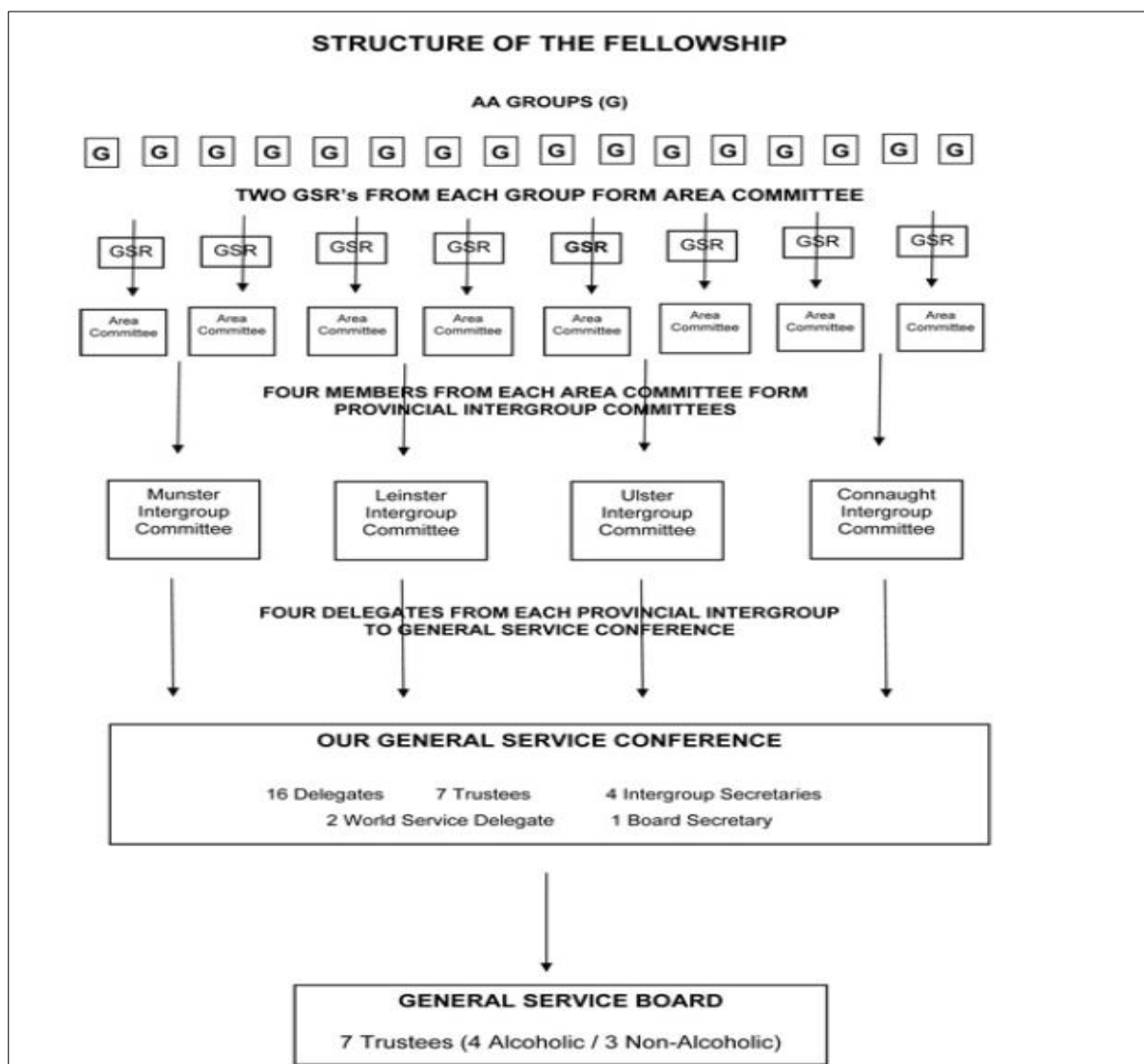
## Preamble

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organisation or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

## Overview

'The strength of our whole AA service structure starts with the Group and with the General Service Representative (G.S.R.) that the Group elects, I cannot emphasise too strongly the G.S.R.'s importance'....Bill W.



## History of AA

Alcoholics Anonymous was started in 1935 in Akron, Ohio, USA and came to Ireland in 1946.

### Significant dates in the history of AA in Ireland:

1946	18 <sup>th</sup> November	First Closed Meeting held in Dublin
1946	25 <sup>th</sup> November	First Public Meeting held in Dublin
1947	January	Departure of Conor F. for the USA
1948	April	Second Irish Group formed in Bundoran
1948	May	Group started in Belfast
1948	July	Group started in Limerick
1949	April	First issue of 'The Road Back'
1949	October	Group started in Cork
1950		Group started in Galway
1950		Bill W. and his wife Lois visit Ireland
1957		First All Ireland Convention held in Dublin. This Convention rotates yearly between Connaught Munster Ulster and Leinster
1968	24 <sup>th</sup> November	First meeting of General Service Conference held in Dublin
1970		General Service Office opened in Essex Quay, Dublin.
1974	April	Return visit of Lois to Ireland
1978	23 <sup>rd</sup> August	General Service Board was incorporated
1978	18 <sup>th</sup> November	First meeting of General Service Board held in Dublin
1978		Service Handbook for Ireland (Green Handbook) was published
1979	22 <sup>nd</sup> August	Sackville died
1979		Census estimated 6000 members
1980		Archival material was donated to General Service Board
1982		Ireland became a member of the new European Service Conference
1982	19 <sup>th</sup> December	Richard P died
1983	28 <sup>th</sup> April	Charity Status Number issued to GSBAA

1986		AA celebrated 40 years in Ireland
1987		General Service Office moved to new premises at 109 South Circular Road, Dublin 8
1988		Archives mobile display started
1992		Second edition of the Service Handbook for Ireland is published
1993	8 <sup>th</sup> July	Conor F. died in Philadelphia
1993		Census held – Conference decision to abandon it due to lack of response
1994		General Service Board acquired and developed the premises at 109 South Circular Road, Dublin 8
1996	13 <sup>th</sup> January	Opening of Golden Jubilee Year events held at the Burlington Hotel, Dublin
1996	25 <sup>th</sup> -28 <sup>th</sup> April	Golden Jubilee Year All Ireland Convention held in Killarney, Co. Kerry
1996	18 <sup>th</sup> November	Golden Jubilee Year Closed Meetings held throughout Ireland
1996	6 <sup>th</sup> &7 <sup>th</sup> December	Closing function of Golden Jubilee Year held in Newcastle, Co. Down
1997	August	Eva Jennings died
2001		All Ireland Convention cancelled due to outbreak of Foot & Mouth Disease
2005		AA in Ireland website launched
2007	July	General Service Office Office moved to new premises at Unit 2, Block C, Santry Business Park, Swords Road, Dublin 9
2009-2010		Census held
2011		The Road Back film was produced for use in Public Information
2016	October	Central Service Office, Belfast moved to new premises at North City Business Centre, Unit 11, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast BT15 2GG
2016	18 <sup>th</sup> November	70 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AA in Ireland held in Green Isle Hotel, Dublin
2017	August	Mobile phone number especially for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing introduced by AA

## General Service Office

The General Service Office (GSO) of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland is situated at Unit 2, Block C, Santry Business Park, Swords Road, Dublin 9.

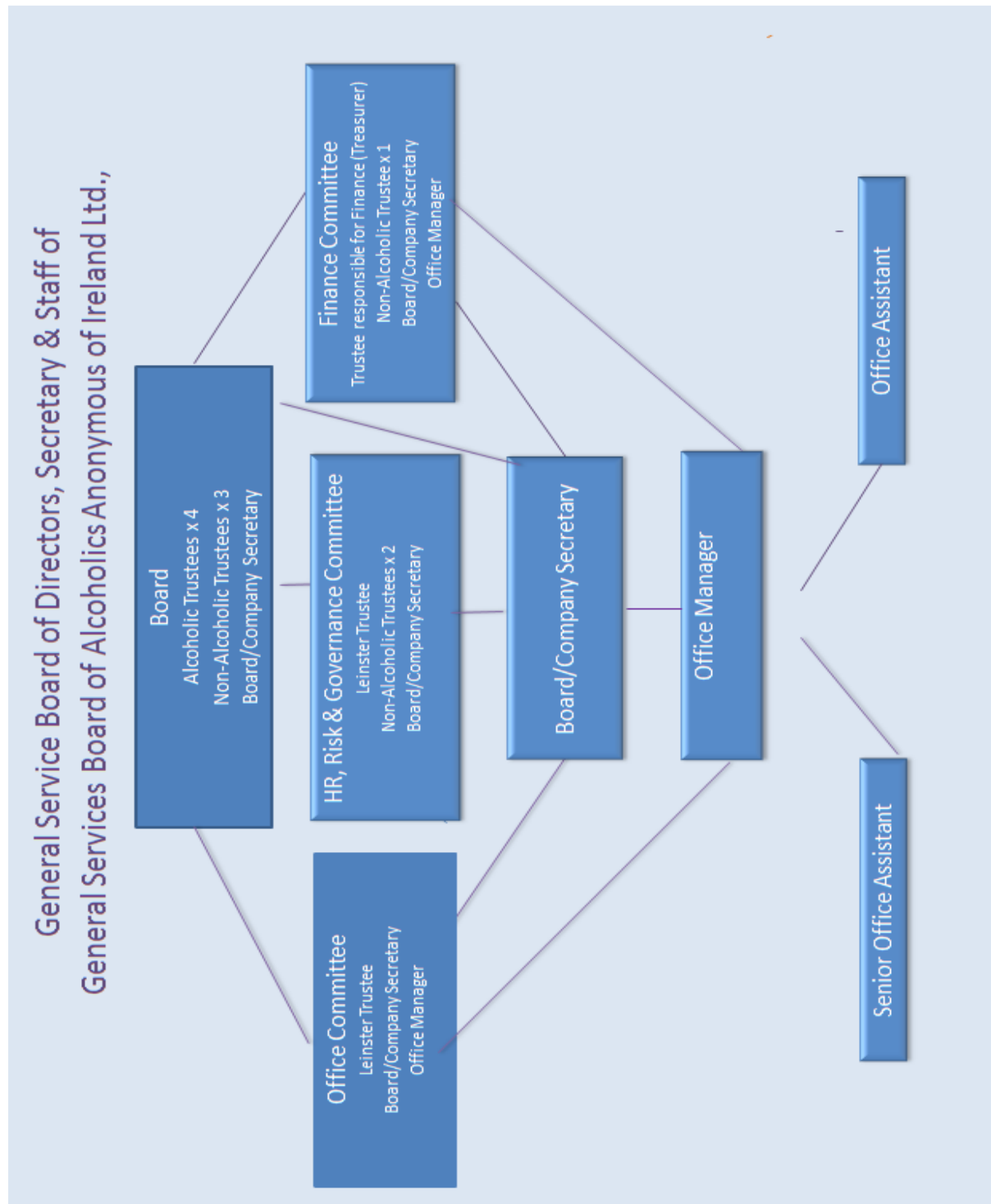
The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland is responsible for the General Service Office and its operations. They employ three full time staff to deliver the day to day services to AA members, AA groups and the general public.

The core objectives of the GSO include the following:

- Provide guidance for anyone contacting GSO. Calls known as 12<sup>th</sup> step calls within AA, are given priority.
- Process daily general enquiries relating to AA (see telephone call report)
- Process orders for AA publications to individuals, groups and AA events via telephone, email, website and counter sales
- Ensure adequate stock of AA Conference Approved Publications is available to AA Groups & individuals
- Design and collate various In-House booklets for AA Groups
- Update our CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system with relative details relating to AA Groups, Committees etc.
- Process Public Information requests on behalf of the Fellowship
- House the Archives for AA in Ireland
- Manage the Official website for AA in Ireland ([www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie](http://www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie))
- Process AA Group records
- Collate the Road Back magazine for distribution to subscribers
- Collate the News Sheet for distribution to AA Groups and AA GSOs overseas
- Organise an AA Conference approved publications display at the Annual All-Ireland Convention
- Provide administrative support to the General Service Board and Company Secretary
- Issue reports as required to the General Service Board of AA meetings
- Prepare accounts for annual audit
- Ensure accountability structures are upheld in relation to finance within the General Service Office
- Process Payroll and Revenue returns
- Co-ordinate annual Conference arrangements e.g., hotel venue, itinerary, invitations, documentation etc
- Co-ordinate Annual General Meeting arrangements e.g. hotel venue, itinerary, invitations, documentation etc
- Co-ordinate travel and accommodation arrangements on behalf of nominated Delegates from Conference travelling to overseas AA Events



## Organisation Chart for the General Service Office, Dublin



## **Directors' Reports**

### **1. Leinster Trustee**

- a. Office Committee
- b. Archives
- c. Publications
- d. Part Website

### **2. Connaught Trustee**

- a) Road Back
- b) News Sheet

### **3. Ulster Trustee (Outgoing Trustee 2018)**

- a) Public Information
- b) Part Website

### **4. Munster Trustee**

- a) Finance

### **5. Non-Alcoholic Trustees**

- a) Risk & Governance

## **Leinster Trustee's Report:**

### **Office Committee**

The Office Committee consists of the Board Secretary, the Office Manager, and the Leinster Trustee. Since January 2017 the Committee has met every two to three weeks. The increased frequency of these meetings was necessitated by the extra workload imposed on us by preparation for the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and by the need to fully comply with the Charities Regulatory Authority's compliance requirements. These developments required an enormous amount of background preparation, especially by the Board Secretary, the Office Manager and the office staff where required.

The above was in addition to the normal Office Committee work of ensuring the smooth day to day running of the General Service Office (GSO), which includes helping staff with any issues which arise, monitoring costs and expenses, workplace safety issues where these arise and any other relevant matters. Whenever the Office Committee meets there is a full written agenda for the meeting and minutes of all deliberations and decisions are kept. Full traceability is thus available, avoiding confusion and is in keeping with AA's policy of openness and clarity.

The primary purpose of GSO is to help the Fellowship to deliver AA's message to all who want it, and the General Service Board and the Office Committee are very grateful to the staff at GSO for their tireless work and continued loyalty to the Fellowship.

The core work of the GSO staff include the following:

- Provide guidance for anyone contacting GSO. Calls known as 12<sup>th</sup> step calls within AA, are given priority.
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### **GSO Telephone Calls Report**

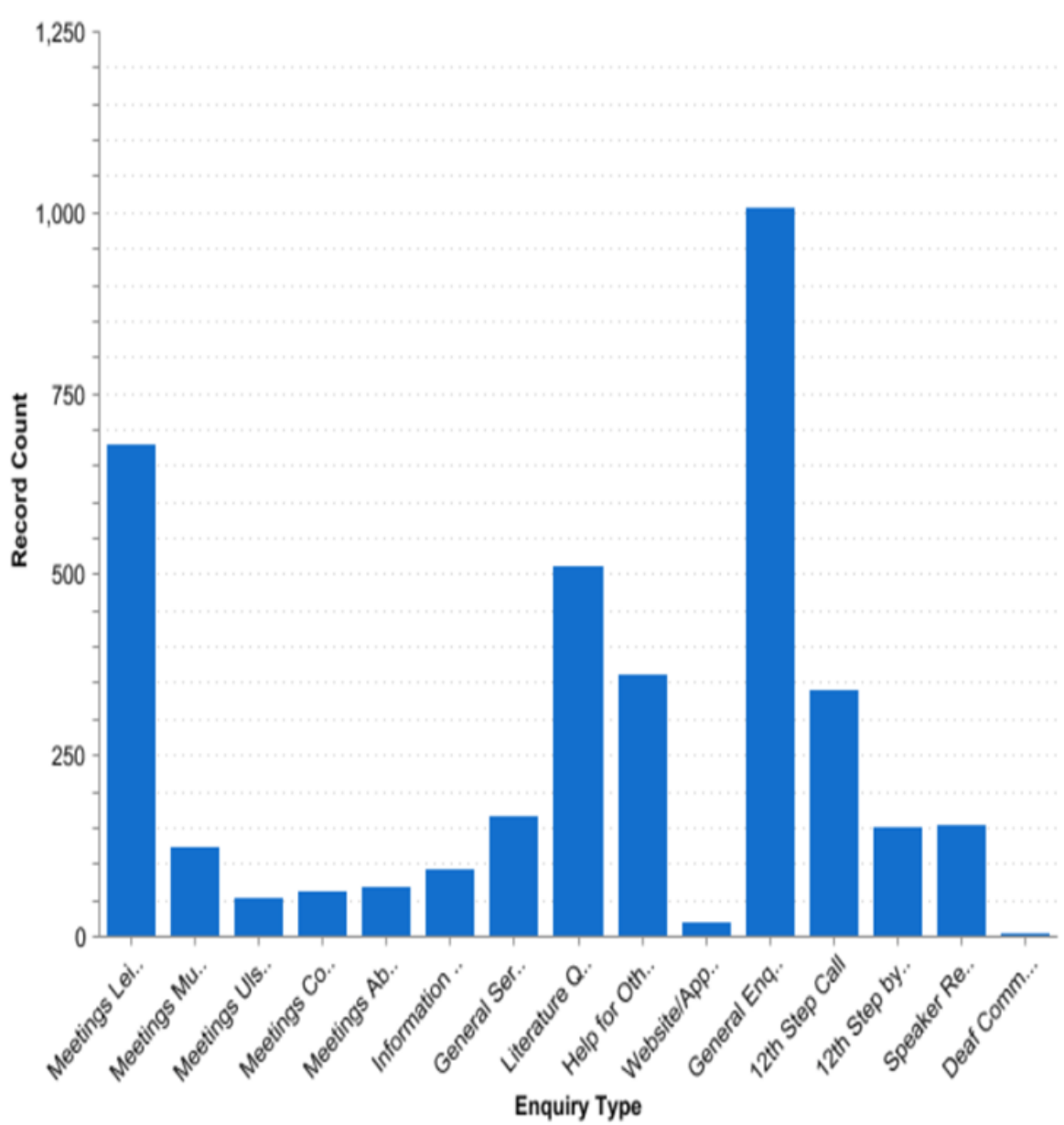
The General Service Office receives a range of calls on a daily basis which vary from general enquiries, AA related enquiries, orders for AA publications and calls from those seeking help for an alcohol related problem, whether it is their own drinking or somebody else's drinking.

The term used to describe calls from for those seeking help for their own drink problem is 12<sup>th</sup> Step calls; these calls are given priority over all other work.

The length of time it takes to pass a 12<sup>th</sup> step call to the Fellowship depends greatly on the availability of accessible phone numbers and groups are requested to regularly update their contact list. It takes, on average, 20 minutes to pass a 12<sup>th</sup> step call from GSO to an AA member, but it can take up to an hour or more.

GSO is an important point of contact for requests for AA speakers for various organisations, including schools, youth groups, hospitals, adult education colleges, places of employment, churches and so forth. Where relevant, the office staff is responsible for obtaining the information and forwarding it to the relevant public information contact. It then becomes the responsibility of the local PI contact/committee to contact the organisation/group making the request. PI contacts/committees are reminded that problems can arise when those responsible do not follow up with the organisation requesting the AA visit e.g. where teachers organise their timetable around the AA visit. To avoid any misunderstanding it is vital that we respond to all requests.

The following charts illustrate the variety and number of calls received by GSO in the year since 2017 Conference:



<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: Meetings Leinster (680 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: Meetings Munster (121 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: Meetings Ulster (51 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: Meetings Connaught (60 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: Meetings Abroad (68 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: Information on Outside Organisations (91 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: General Service Board Members (166 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: Literature Queries (509 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: Help for Others (361 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: Website/App Query (19 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: General Enquiry (1,007 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: 12th Step Call (338 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: 12th Step by Email (149 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: Speaker Requests/PI (153 records)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Enquiry Type: Deaf Comm. Text (3 records)</b>

The following chart gives a monthly breakdown of calls and what they were concerned with:

**Analysis of Monthly Telephone Calls from March 2017 to February 2018**

	Meetings		Meetings		Meetings		Information		General			12 Step Requests by email	Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service	Totals	
	Leinster	Munster	Ulster	Connaught	Meetings Abroad	Meetings on Outside Organisations	Board Members	Literature	Help for Others	Website/App	General Enquiries				12 Step Calls
Mar. 2017	73	10	3	5	5	9	22	40	38	0	117	48	17	0	404
Apr. 2017	69	5	5	5	4	9	5	42	28	6	73	31	9	0	303
May. 2017	58	10	7	4	8	10	14	56	33	2	87	23	7	1	340
Jun. 2017	70	13	5	7	9	5	12	47	28	2	96	33	2	0	342
July. 2017	65	14	5	7	6	9	14	61	45	2	101	39	3	0	387
Aug. 2017	55	14	5	6	12	8	18	50	35	2	106	40	17	0	379
Sept. 2017	75	15	5	5	10	8	7	45	32	0	100	34	30	0	377
Oct. 2017	62	9	4	6	2	6	23	46	31	1	86	23	24	2	339
Nov. 2017	42	13	3	5	3	14	11	54	34	2	82	25	20	0	319
Dec. 2017	42	5	1	4	4	5	13	27	17	1	68	16	7	0	217
Jan. 2017	69	13	8	6	5	8	27	41	40	1	91	26	17	0	369
<b>Totals</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1007</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3776</b>

## Archives

Over the course of AA's activity in Ireland there has been a steady accumulation of documents - books, pamphlets, letters, posters, photographs and other materials. There are many records of historical interest to the Fellowship such as Group records, Area minutes, and Intergroup minutes. Articles of interest continue to arrive on a regular basis and a comprehensive history of the Fellowship in Ireland has built up over the years. All of these are stored in a room dedicated to this purpose in GSO, appropriately called the Archives Room.

An effort to manage and collate and cross-reference all this material was undertaken in 1995, this is an ongoing process. There is a continuing need for Groups, Areas and Intergroups to forward minutes and, where possible, brief histories of their groups, significant milestones on their various journeys and anything else of possible interest. So, please send on any items of interest. A selection from the Archives is usually on display at the annual All Ireland Convention, and this tradition will continue.

The responsibility for the Archives forms part of the role of the Leinster Trustee. A notice of the vacancy for the voluntary position of Archivist was placed in the News Sheet for two consecutive months. A number of replies was received. Interested parties who responded were contacted and a number of informal interviews took place. At the time of writing this report (3<sup>rd</sup> February 2018) there is not yet an Archivist in place, but it is hoped the position will be filled by start of Conference.

Members may request to visit the archives and such requests are usually facilitated as soon as possible. There is an Archives Request Form available from GSO which needs to be completed prior to the visit.

## Publications

Literature sales remain much the same as previous years. There has been a slight drop in overall sales. The table below explains this well.

In-house leaflets are being updated and where necessary 2018 Conference will be presented with these for approval.

The Board has obtained permission from AAWS New York to print the Big Book and we are currently awaiting prices from a number of printers.

There is a continuing reduction in the sales of the directory to members; this may be due to more members using the website and App to access meeting information.

### Directory Sales 01/02/2015 and 31/02/2018

01/02/2015-31/01/2016	5414
01/02/2016-31/01/2017	4870
01/02/2017-31/02/2018	4090



Below is a sample of some Publication Sales from 1/2/2016-31/01/2018

<b>Publication Sales 01/02/2016 and 31/01/2018</b>			
<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>01/02/2016 to 31/01/2017</b>	<b>01/02/2017 to 31/01/2018</b>
B01	Big Book Hard Back	2807	2673
B12	Big Book Soft Back	1137	705
B18	Big Book Pkt. Soft Back	547	378
B02	12 x 12 Hard Back	687	659
B02C	12 x 12 Reg Soft Back	399	342
B02B	13 x 12 Pkt. Soft Back	214	128
B14	Daily Reflections	1368	1098
B04	As Bill Sees It	268	186
B05	Came to Believe	270	285
B06	Living Sober	675	732
M28	Road Back DVD	264	134

### **Website/App update**

As the design for the new AA website progressed in the capable hands of the Ulster Trustee it became frequently necessary to hold meetings in GSO with the website designers and other providers. For this reason, and to provide continuity, the outgoing Ulster Trustee, requested the help of his Leinster counterpart.

This website will contain many new features including ease of access across platforms, such as laptop, iPad, tablets and smartphones whether Apple or Android. The mapping facility will find the nearest meeting and not just a meeting in the requested county. For example, if a member requests information on meetings in County Dublin, he/she will also be directed to a meeting in Co. Louth if the Co. Louth meeting is geographically closer to the enquiry.

The online shopping facility will be upgraded to make it more user friendly and will include an online payment system.

In addition, there is an excellent short animated film which asks the viewer questions about their drinking. The AA film, THE ROAD BACK is of course also on the site. Information for Professionals section has also been updated.

There will be a new members' area where individual Groups, Areas and Intergroups can post their reports and contact other groups. All groups in Ireland will be given an email address and password for access. Steps have been taken to avoid misuse of this service and mail from these addresses is restricted and can only be sent within the fellowship, the domain of AA. The company, General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, will also make available all required statutory information on the site. It is hoped that GIS will now be able to be completed online and forwarded through the structure in the normal sequence – to Area, Intergroup and GSO.

There has been an enormous amount of work done on this project, especially by the Ulster Trustee and the member of staff responsible for updating the website, they have done Trojan work. Our thanks, to them in particular, and to all involved in bringing this project to fruition.

## Connaught Trustee's Report:

### The Road Back – A Meeting in Print

The Road Back, which is the second oldest AA magazine in the world, is being well received by the Fellowship in its new full colour format. There are six issues of the Road Back printed annually. While it falls to one particular Trustee to compile the magazine the final editorial decisions rest with the Board as a whole. Laterally the issues have been themed to our Twelve Step Programme of recovery. The Road Back was used effectively as part of the Registration package for the 2017 All-Ireland Convention with the programme details being included in the centrefold pages.

While the magazine is securing contributions from members i.e. articles, stories, funnies etc. there is a crying need for a renewed approach in marketing the magazine to the Fellowship. The Group Conscience of Conference may see fit in its wisdom to deliberate more fully on how best we as a Fellowship can carry our message of recovery by way of The Road Back magazine. Spirituality they say is practicality. This invariably comes down to somebody taking responsibility for AA literature at Group level. An increase in the subscription rate is being mooted by way of covering the costs of producing a full colour publication.



## Road Back Income v Expenditure

	2016	2017
Copies Printed (Conference to Conference)	9,000	9,000
Copies Distributed	3,984	4,542
Income from Subscribers (financial year)	€5,142	€3,751
Printing cost	<u>€7,284</u>	<u>€5,393</u>
Shortfall	-€2,142	-€1,642

Facilities for online ordering and a digital copy of The Road Back are currently in train.

## The News Sheet – an aid to service

Unlike the Road Back there is no subscription payment for the News Sheet. Ten copies per group are mailed bi-monthly to the Fellowship. While this may not be an ideal scenario as some groups can have up to 50+ members a digital copy is uploaded to the AA website bi-monthly and available to all members at the click of a button.

The Board has 9,000 copies printed in the A5 booklet format every two-month period. A budget delivery scheme operates with An Post and for weight and cost purposes, 10 is the maximum no of copies that can be accommodated as per the agreed rates.

Primarily the News Sheet is a means by which the Board communicates to the Fellowship on a regular basis. One has to remember that because it's a four page spread, it is contained by standard items that appear regularly. Our calendar of forthcoming events both here and abroad is a standard feature as is our diagram of the Structure of the Fellowship in Ireland.

The editorial pages are used by the Board to update the Fellowship on current happenings of note as well as aspects of AA Service from both a purely reporting perspective and a historical and motivational one. Arising out of a Conference decision one issue of the News Sheet reverted to the A4 format to facilitate the exercise of displaying the trends in finances in the Fellowship over the past ten years. This graphic and colourful portrayal of how contribution trends have changed over the years was indeed telling. There can be little doubt that the level of openness and transparency of the breakdown was a significant factor that resulted in a huge

influx of moneys from Groups and Areas, reversing our deficit of 2016 to a surplus in 2017.

The News Sheet is about communication primarily - an essential element in the growth and development of our Fellowship, however it has also been a vehicle for the Fellowship to share ideas and reports on various aspects of AA service throughout the Structure that has proved effective in carrying our message of recovery to the professionals, the public and more notably the still-suffering alcoholic.

### **Ulster Trustee's Report (Outgoing Trustee)**

With this Conference my tenure as Trustee and Board Director has come to an end. I will be introducing my replacement later this evening. The new Ulster Trustee will be introduced at the AGM.

Four years as a Trustee and a Director of the Board has been an experience. The seriousness and the responsibilities as Trustee and a Director of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous had to be experienced to be fully understood and appreciated. The role requires three things, first responsibility, not only to the Fellowship but to the legal entity of the Board as a registered charity, secondly accountability to both the Board and the Fellowship and last but not least commitment.

Responsibilities were originally with The Road Back, which requires no little commitment in preparing the articles for print. The baton for the Road Back passed two years ago to my fellow Board member, Connaught Trustee, who is to be complimented on the fresh look he has brought to the second oldest magazine in our worldwide Fellowship.

Subsequently, the role of National PI became part of my remit. The National PI needs to form a strategy and perhaps have a budget and become more proactive than it has been of late. It was my privilege to sit on a PI Sub-committee, which has made an impact on PI throughout the Fellowship and especially now that the PI Manual is available to further enhance the work of Public Information in the Fellowship.

The continued management of the meeting App, "AA Finder" also under my remit, has been up dated during the year and is an easy way to find meetings, which includes Google maps. It was gratifying to learn that visitors from abroad were able to find meetings on their travels.

Finally, responsibility for the website, along with the PI Subcommittee needed a fresher look and was not totally mobile responsive. We sought tenders from three web companies including the incumbent web master. After deliberation, the

subcommittee made representations to the Board and as a result, the Board appointed a new web company, which is considered both competitive and most comprehensive. They are now working on the new site. The responsibility of the website was passed to the Leinster Trustee who is on the ground in Dublin and it requires someone to liaise frequently with the web company.

On a personal note, I would like to thank the Conference Delegates from Ulster Intergroup both past and present who have been most supportive and I thank them for their guidance in my role as Trustee and not forgetting my fellows both in Conference and on your Board.

### **Non-Alcoholics Trustees' Report**

In a January 1966 Grapevine article Bill W reflected on the role of the Non-Alcoholic Trustee.

*"In the days when AA was unknown, it was the Non-Alcoholic Trustees who held up our hands before the general public. They supplied us with ideas that are now a part of the working structures of our Headquarters. They voluntarily spent hours on end, working side by side with us and among the grubbiest of details. They gave freely of their professional and financial wisdom. Now and then they helpfully mediated our difficulties."*

The current non-alcoholic trustees, Philip Garland, Eamonn Dillon and Séamus Dooley have inherited the responsibilities and challenges outlined by Bill W.

According to the Green Service Handbook, the General Service Board is the chief arm of Conference. It is responsible for the business affairs of the Fellowship and in particular the General Service Office. It consists of seven trustees, three of whom are non-alcoholic.

The alcoholic trustees are usually long standing members of AA and are well known not just to their fellow members in their provinces but to the Fellowship throughout Ireland. The non-alcoholic trustees are usually completely unknown to the Fellowship as a whole. They do not apply for the role and position but are always approached by the existing Board and invited to take up the service role. The role is wholly unpaid save for the reimbursement of expenses.

It would be true to say that the role of the non-alcoholic trustee and director within both the limited company and the Fellowship is both unique and greatly misunderstood. Bill W. writing in the Grapevine in 1951 pointed out that, initially, the number of non-alcoholic trustees exceeded the number of alcoholic trustees. Now of course, with the passage of time, the reverse is the position.

But the role that was originally envisaged for the non-alcoholic trustees - to provide an outside and independent voice and viewpoint and to safeguard the assets and reputation of AA - remains critically important.

In many ways, with the far greater transparency that is rightly demanded of all entities and the far greater regulation by the State of entities that operate in the public sphere, the demands on all of the trustees and directors - alcoholic and non-alcoholic - are greater than ever. In the past non-alcoholic trustees, by agreement and convention, did not attend every meeting of the Board nor stay for all of the meetings that they did attend. That has all changed. Now all trustees and directors attend all meetings and stay for the entire of those meetings. There is no difference whatsoever between alcoholic and non-alcoholic trustees and directors save that the non-alcoholic trustees are not formal members of the Fellowship.

The year that has passed has been challenging, not just for the Board, but for the Fellowship as a whole. It has however also been productive and beneficial and we as a Board and as an entity are better for it. Having drafted and prepared a wide range of policies and procedures to improve corporate governance we have endeavoured to implement and bed down the same within the corporate structure so that we can better serve, support and secure the Fellowship as a whole. The entire culture of the General Service Board has changed in terms of compliance and oversight.

The most significant development is the restructure of the limited company that is the General Service Board to ensure compliance with the Companies Act 2014. The net practical effect of this is that instead of the seven trustees and directors also being the shareholders / members of the limited company, the membership has been widened to include all members of Conference. This was proposed and adopted by the last Conference. This, we feel, will ensure far greater transparency and accountability to all members of the fellowship. This is an important step. It does involve change and we know that this has caused uncertainty and confusion but it is a vital and a necessary change that will benefit the Fellowship as a whole.

In addition the Board, as well as Conference and the Fellowship as a whole, has had to take greater cognizance of the practical effect of the Charities Act 2009 and how that intersects with our Traditions and Concepts. This has been tumultuous for many and that needs to be acknowledged. But, lest no one be in any doubt, AA is not above the law and that is the stark message that needs to go out to everyone in the Fellowship.

The good news for the General Service Board and the Fellowship is that much of what is required by the Charities Act 2009 is already provided for, and indeed demanded, by the Green Service Handbook for Ireland. It is just a matter of encouraging and supporting the implementation of the same. Autonomy at group, area and intergroup level is not affected in any way by the Charities Act 2009 and indeed the rigorous self-examination and accounting demanded by the said Act is welcomed by the Board as a whole.

Financially AA is in a far stronger position than it has been for several years and the Board greatly appreciates the contribution that each and every member has played

in this. The essential message that needs to go out to all members is that every euro that is placed on the plate is AA money and that needs to be properly accounted for - not just because the law requires it but because that is what each and every member of the Fellowship is entitled to and demands. No one has anything to fear from greater transparency and accountability.

There will be further challenges in the year - and indeed years - ahead not least in the areas of corporate governance, legal compliance and transparency. And all of these are to be welcomed. The purpose and intent of such legislative enactments is not to threaten or imperil AA or the work that it does but to provide greater protection to the Fellowship as a whole. The role of the non-alcoholic trustee is to bring an external viewpoint and fresh thinking to the deliberations of the Board and this, we think, that we have done to the best of our ability this year.

AA, as an idea, works and the role of both the alcoholic trustees and non-alcoholic trustees is to ensure that that continues to be the case and that we are still in a position to extend a helping hand to the still-suffering alcoholic who asks for it. Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's in his novel "The Leopard", which was published in 1958 famously stated that "If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change". That is equally true of AA. If we want AA to continue to exist and to provide the vital service and support that it does, we have to embrace and accept change. Change and compliance with the law and best practice will not diminish or threaten the existence of AA or any of our Traditions of Concepts. Rather it will enable us to do what we do better and in a more transparent, open and accountable way.

In the period under review, the non-alcoholic trustees have worked at Board level to ensure that AA meets its fiduciary responsibilities under company law and operates in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA).

As Directors, we are appreciative of the work of the Board Secretary and the staff of the General Service Office who have had to execute a wide range of Corporate Governance reforms under the direction of the Board. Under company law all Directors share equal responsibilities and legal obligations.

AA is a unique organisation with distinct characteristics and values. The Board has been mindful of the need to respect the tradition of the Fellowship. While ensuring that as trusted servants, we do not expose AA in Ireland to reputational or financial risk.

Among the changes, arising from the Corporate Governance reforms is the introduction of a rotation system for Non-Alcoholic Trustees. The longest serving non-alcoholic trustee, Séamus Dooley steps down in March 2018.

On behalf of all of the non-alcoholic trustees, it has been an absolute pleasure and honour to serve you all in the past twelve months.

## Munster Trustee's Report:

### Finance

In January your Board met and discussed the audited accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017.

The contributions from the fellowship have increased as result the accounts now show a surplus.

	2017	2016
Contributions	€266,555	€157,141
Sale of Literature	€101,675	€105,167
Sale of Road Back	€5,142	€3,751
Total Income:	€373,372	€266,059
Cost	€63,964	€90,367
	<b>€309,408</b>	<b>€175,692</b>
Overhead Expenses	€282,929	€278,539
	<b>€26,479</b>	<b>-€102,847</b>
Net surplus/deficit	<b>€28,549</b>	<b>-€101,035</b>
Overhead Expenses	€283,929	€278,539
Stocks	€46,350	€40,430
Debtors	€42,541	€47,705
	<b>€372,820</b>	<b>€366,674</b>

### Operating Expenses

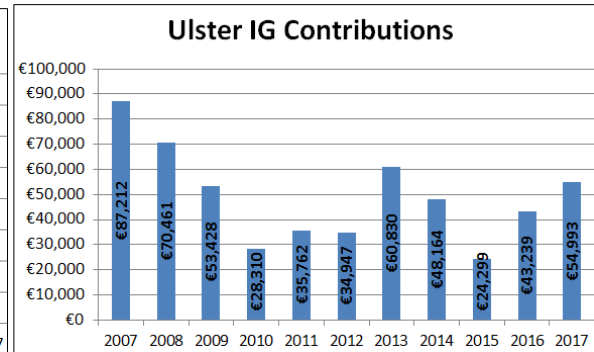
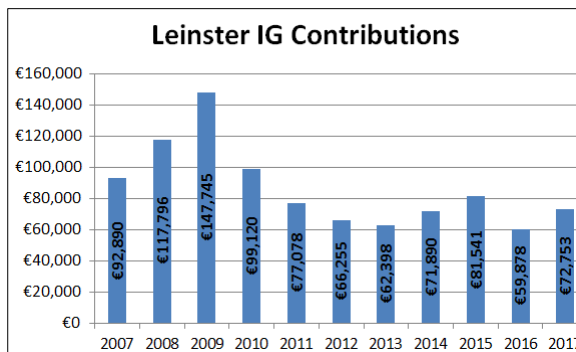
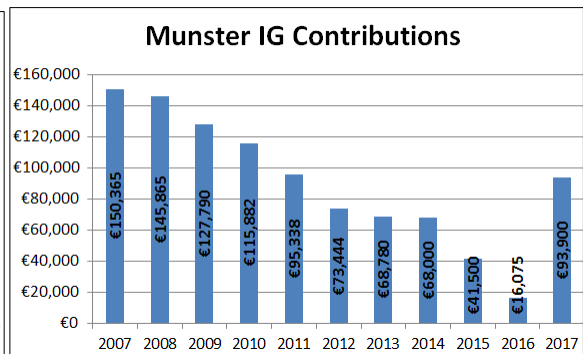
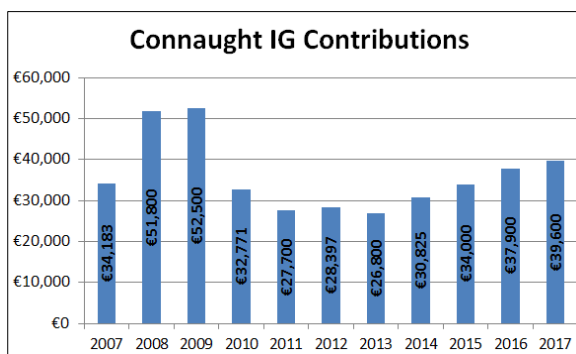
Total operating services for the General Service Office and all its services for the 12 months ended 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 2017 were €282,929 compared to the previous year €278,539.



Your Board would like to thank the Fellowship for their contributions, even though we have a small surplus this year we need to maintain this to continue to give the fellowship a good service. Your Board would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your help throughout the year

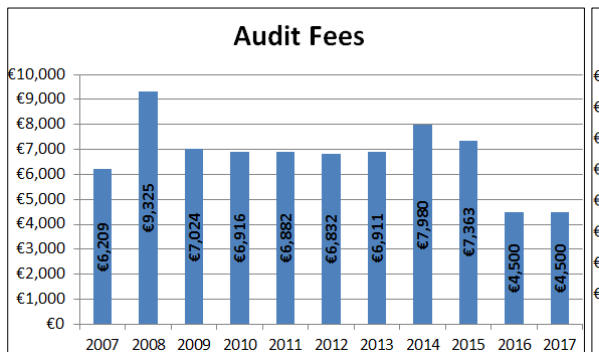
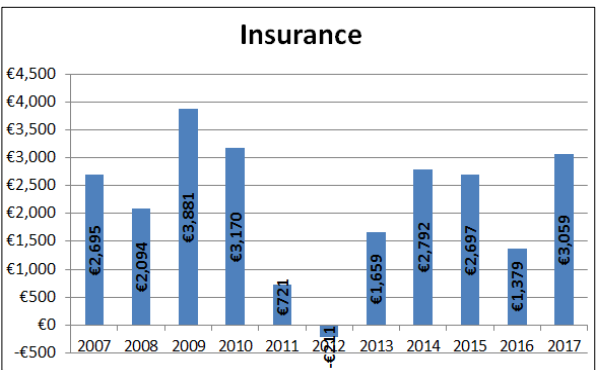
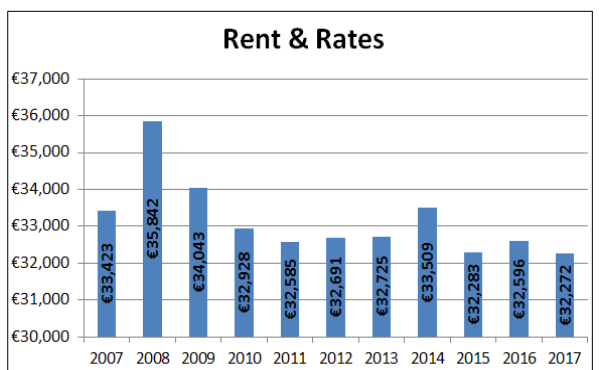
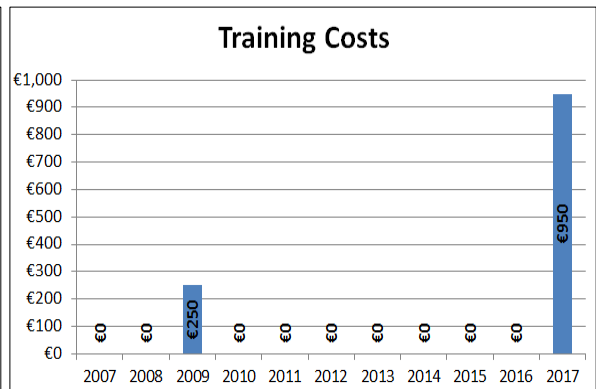
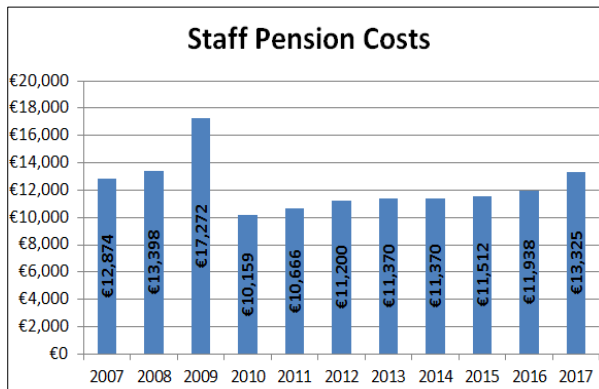
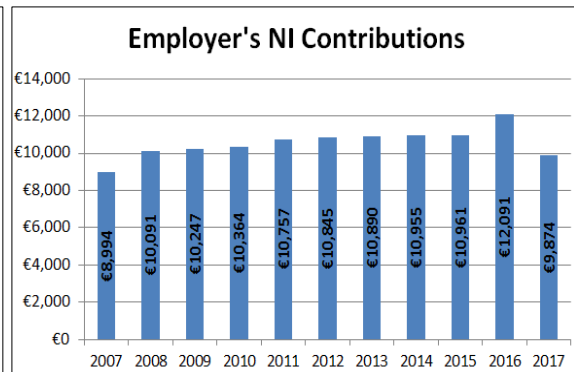
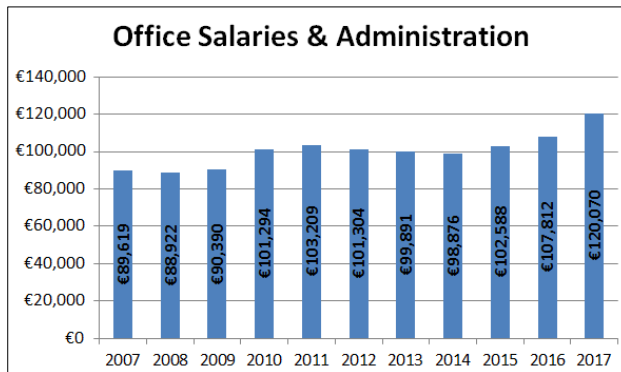
The following graphs illustrate the overall income and expenditure trends for the years 2007-2017

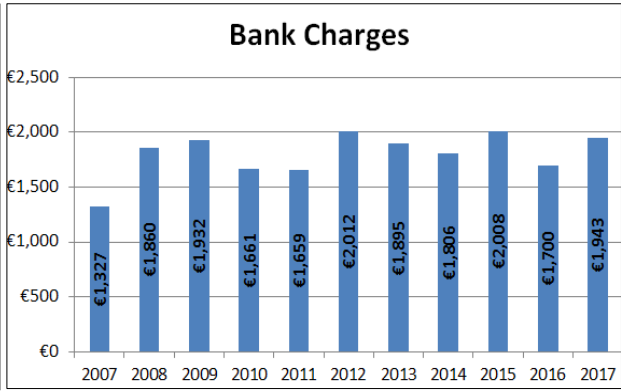
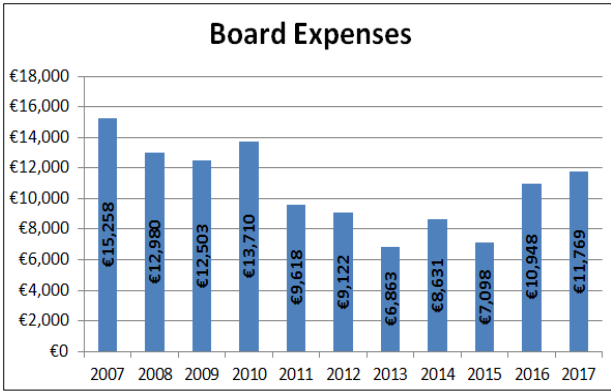
### TABLE-TOP CONTRIBUTIONS 2007-2017



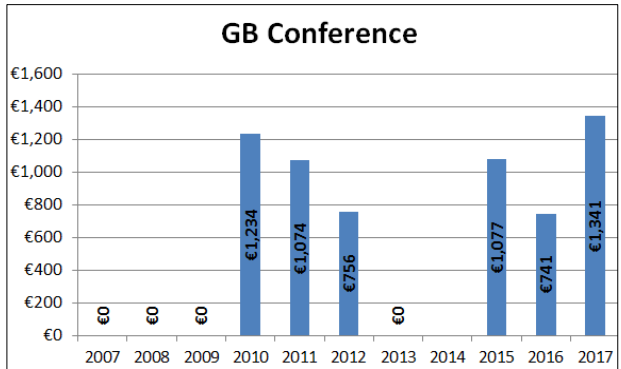
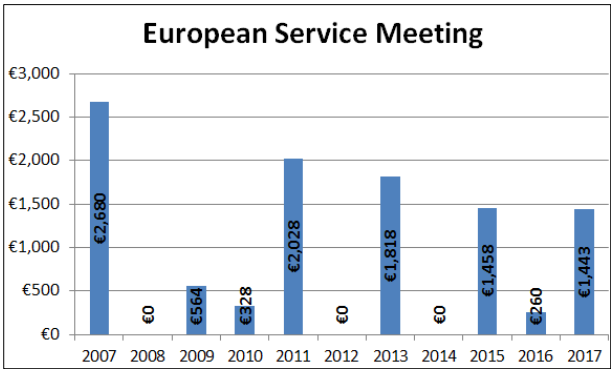
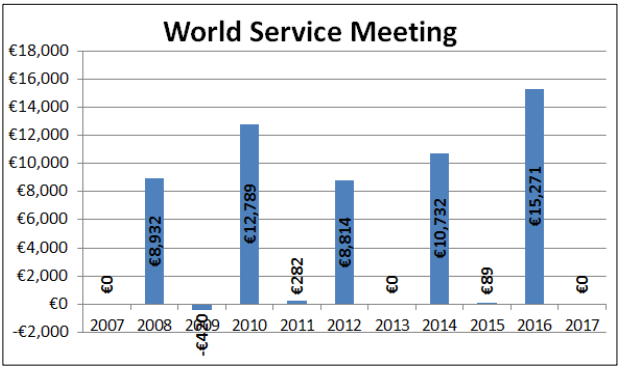
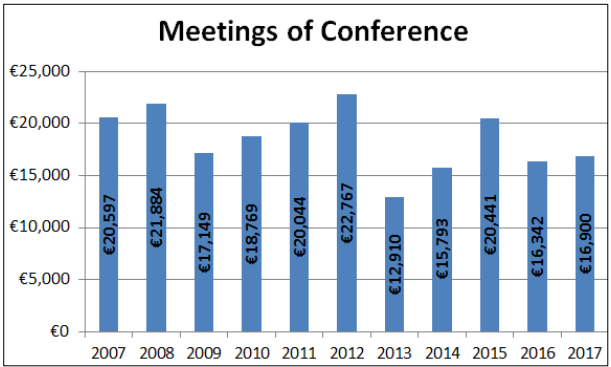
# EXPENDITURE 2007-2017

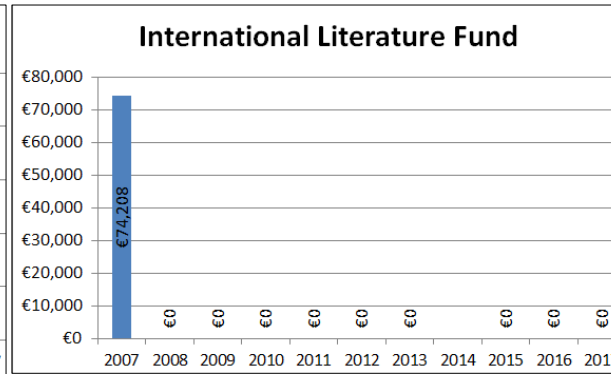
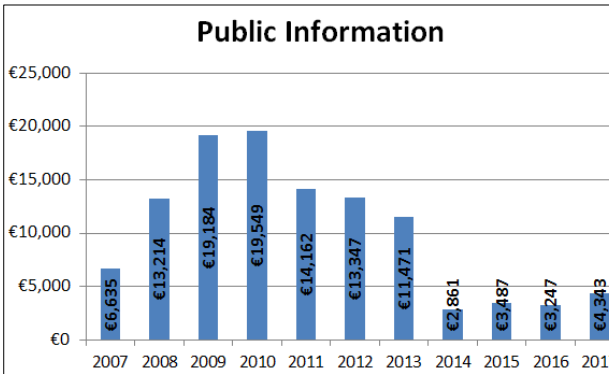
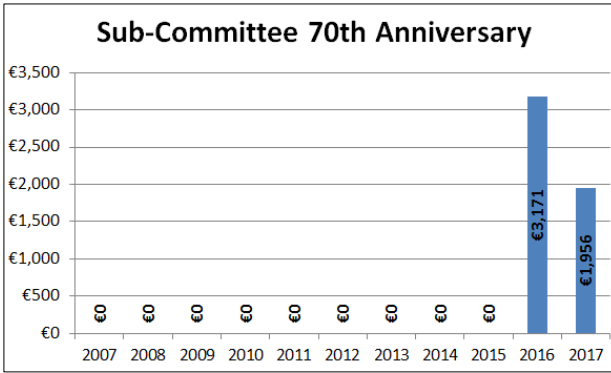
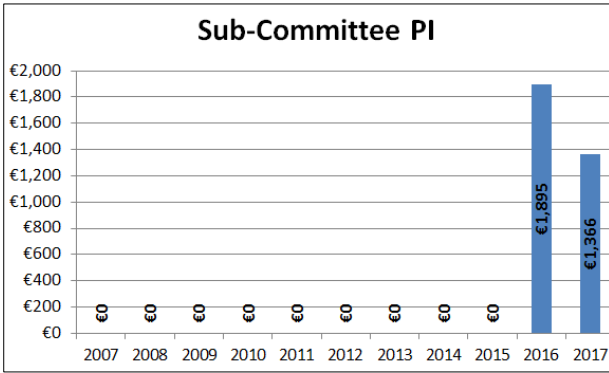
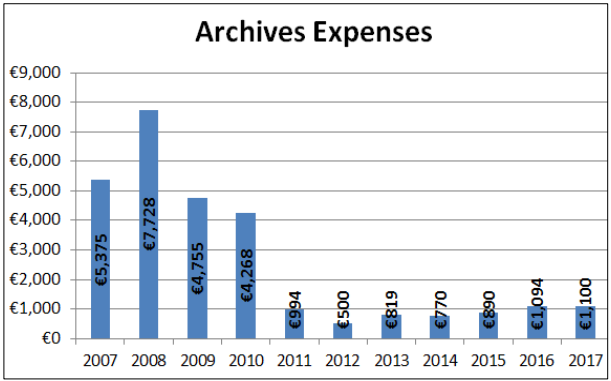
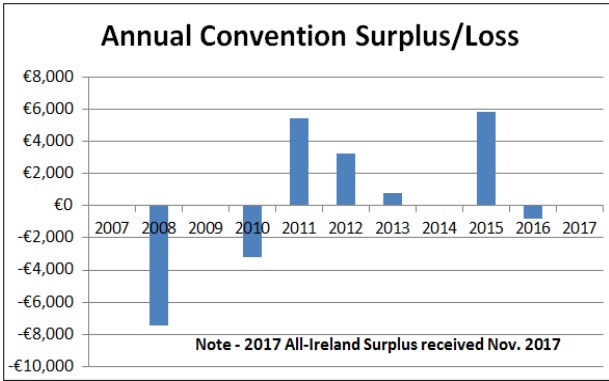
## General Service Board of AA - related costs



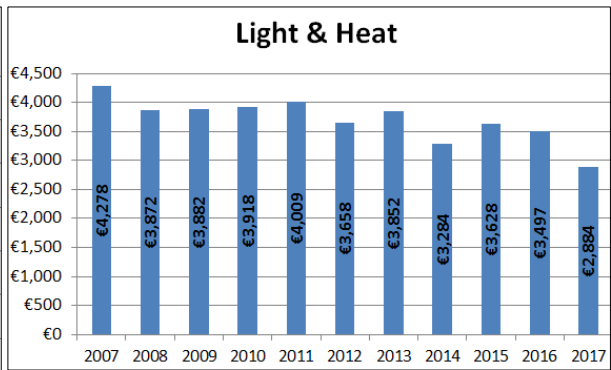
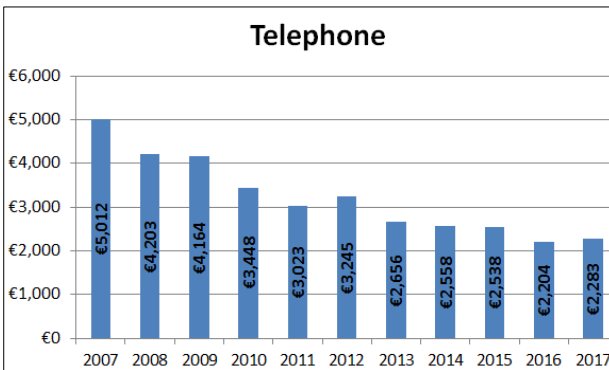


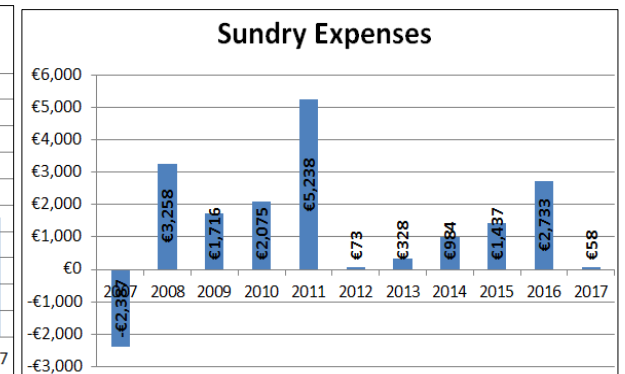
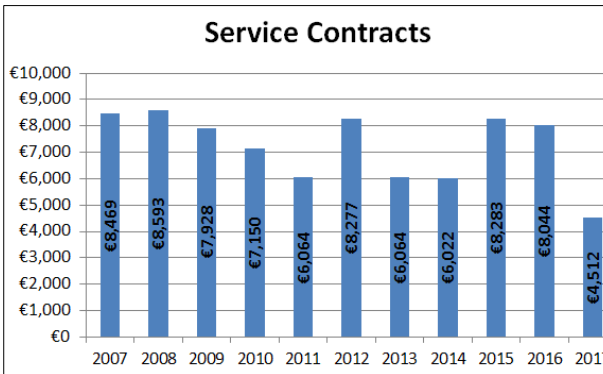
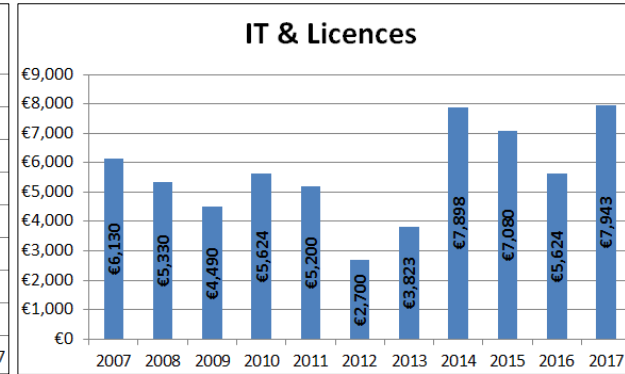
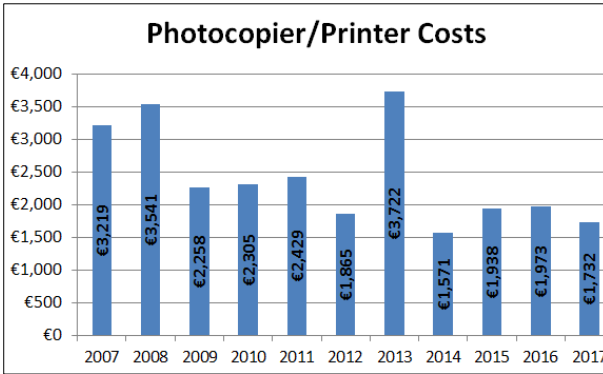
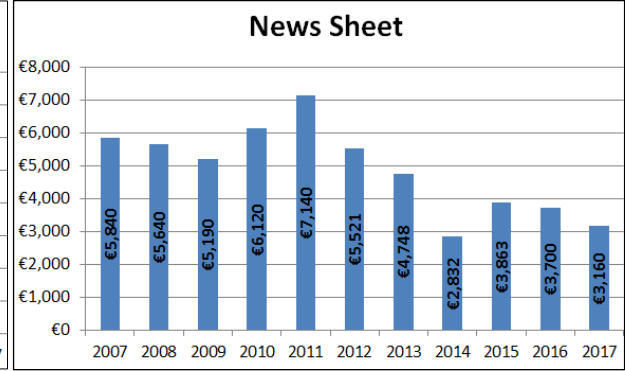
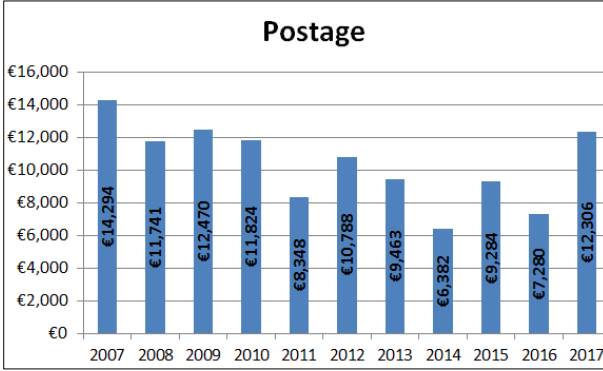
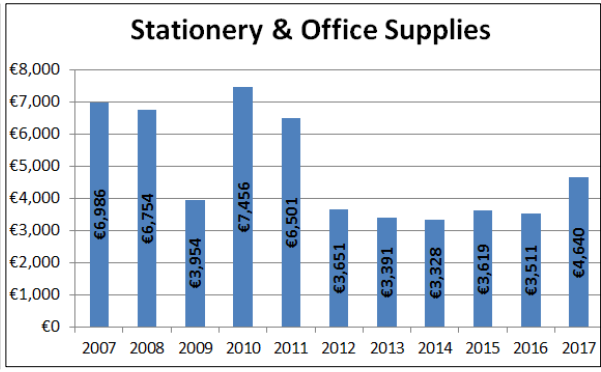
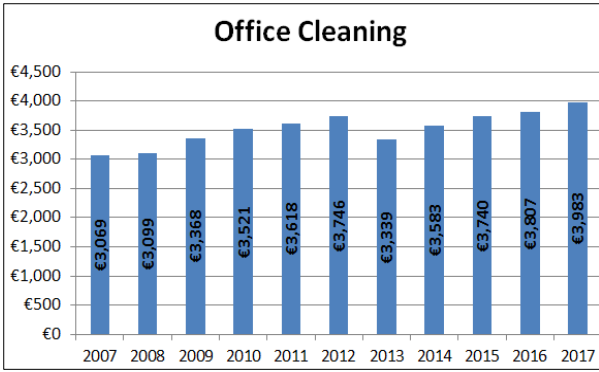
## AA Activities - related costs





## General Service Office - related costs





## **Conclusion**

The General Service Board wishes to thank all our friends whether members or not who contributed to the continued success of Alcoholics Anonymous in the past year. Without your input it would be impossible for the Fellowship to carry the message of AA to the still suffering alcoholic.