

Mid Surrey Intergroup Aims & Structure

December 2011

1. Introduction

Our Mid Surrey Intergroup (MSIG) Aims and Structure (A&S) has been produced with reference to:

- The AA Service Handbook for Great Britain (SH)
- The AA Service Manual Combined with the Twelve Concepts for World Service (SM)
- AA Comes of Age
- The pamphlet "The AA Group"
- The Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous
- The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. (12x12)

It is suggested that all Intergroup service members are familiar with these books and with the MSIG GSR's Welcome Pack

The AA Service handbook for Great Britain contains the Guidelines (G) referred to in this document.

Further guidance on the Terms of Reference may be obtained from any Intergroup Officers. They will be pleased to help.

2. Helpful MSIG terms

The Principal Officers – Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer

MSIG Intergroup Officers – The Liaison Officers; Regional Representatives; Archivist & Convention Convenor.

The InterGroup Committee – The Committee consists of Principal Officers and Intergroup Officers **who** meet four times per year, one month before Assembly, to discuss MSIG business, particularly the Liaison Officers work, the Convention and to plan for the following Assembly.

Co-opt – Principle Officers can co-opt a member or members, either from GSR's, or from Groups to perform a specific service. eg. convening a public meeting
The Intergroup Committee may establish sub-committees for specific purposes.

Casting Vote A vote given to the Chair to decide an issue in the event that the voting is tied.

Quorum The minimum number of voting members who must be present at MSIG Assembly for its decisions and elections to be valid. The number varies with the number of groups in MSIG, but is 51% of the number of voting members of MSIG. The proceedings are valid without a quorum but no decisions can be made or elections held.

For example:

The Committee	3	
GSR's	65	
Total	68	Quorum is to be 35

The Chair has a casting vote only

3. The Aims of MSIG:

- 3.1 To aid the Groups in their common purpose of carrying the AA message to the still suffering alcoholic.
- 3.2 To support groups and allow them to use their combined strength and unity, to improve and maintain good relations with all organisations in the community.
- 3.3 To improve communications and foster co-operation between neighbouring Groups in the primary purpose of helping the still suffering alcoholic.
- 3.4 To provide a forum for the sharing of Group experience.
- 3.5 To facilitate Group efforts in dealing with outside agencies and organisations, particularly in the fields of Public Information.
- 3.6 To be a channel of communication of the conscience of Mid-Surrey area

4.1 NEW GROUPS

All new groups should be registered with GSO, follow the 12 traditions and 12 concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous and be non-restrictive, therefore any member of Alcoholics Anonymous may attend. To become a member of MSIG, the new group contacts the MSIG secretary and completes the MSIG registration form. This ensures that the GSR is kept up to date with MSIG information and MSIG have an up to date record of the group information.

The aims of Mid Surrey Intergroup will be implemented through the Mid Surrey Intergroup Assembly, which is composed of the following, voting and non-voting members:

4.2 Voting members:

- 4.2.1 One elected General Service Representative (GSR) from each member Group (or their Alternate, who may vote in the absence of the GSR. Please note that the GSR must inform the secretary prior to the Assembly, that he is sending an Alternate and give details of who this will be)
- 4.2.2 Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The Chair has a casting vote only.

4.3 Non-Voting Members:

- Liaison Officers
- Regional Representatives (RR)
- Archivist
- Convention Convenor
- Conference Delegate
- Co-opted Members

Visitors:

Visitors are very welcome. They may express their views, but only at the invitation of the Chair.

4.4 Members of MSIG, voting rights and attendance at meetings

Position	Attendance at Integroup Assembly	Voting rights at Intergroup Assembly	Attendance at Committee Meetings	Voting rights at Committee Meetings
Chair	✓	Casting vote	✓	Casting vote
Vice Chair	✓	✓	✓	✓
Secretary	✓	✓	✓	✓
Treasurer	✓	✓	✓	✓
PI Liaison Officer	✓	x	✓	✓
Telephone Liaison Officer	✓	x	✓	✓
Health Liaison Officer	✓	x	✓	✓
Share Liaison Officer	✓	x	✓	✓
Prison Liaison Officer	✓	x	✓	✓
Probation Liaison Officer	✓	x	✓	✓
Employment Liaison Officer	✓	x	✓	✓
Armed Forces Liaison Officer	✓	x	✓	✓
Archivist	✓	x	✓	x
Regional Rep	✓	x	✓	x
Convention Conveynor	✓	x	✓	x
Convention Co-Conveynor	Will attend in conveynors absence	x	Will attend in conveynors absence	x

5. Group Service Representatives (GSR's)

Each Mid Surrey group may be represented at Mid Surrey Intergroup Assembly by one GSR or alternate GSR.

5.1 Suggested Responsibilities are:(From SH Guideline number 3)

- 5.1.1 Share with their group all Fellowship mail, communication and news items.
- 5.1.2 Keep members informed about local service activities.
- 5.1.3 GSR's can also help their Group solve problems by drawing upon the facilities of the Intergroup, Region and the General Service Office in York (where the staff is ready to relay helpful AA experience from all over the World).
- 5.1.4 They can ensure that up-to-date group information for the AA directory is sent promptly to GSO and MSIG.
- 5.1.5 The GSR is the vital link in the chain of two way communication between the Group and Intergroup. Each represents his or her Group at Intergroup service assemblies, sharing experiences with other Intergroup GSR's in workshops and sharing sessions.
- 5.1.6 The GSR holds conscience meetings and business meetings for their group See AA Service Guide
- 5.1.7 Prior to attending Intergroup Meetings, fully discuss agenda items with the Group.
- 5.1.8 Represent and express the Group's conscience at all Intergroup Meetings. The GSR should faithfully express the Group's opinions whatever his or her feelings maybe: thus putting principles before personalities.
- 5.1.9 Following Intergroup report back to the Group. In particular the GSR can highlight positions coming vacant at Intergroup and Region, and continue to do so regularly until these positions are filled. GSR's can actively help to find suitable candidates among their group members. The published Intergroup minutes should form the basis for this report, highlighting relevant issues such as finances and Liaison Officer activity.
- 5.1.10 The GSR has a responsibility to attend all Intergroup meetings and Workshops. If this is not possible, an alternate, approved by the Group, should be briefed to stand in.
- 5.1.11 Encourage observers to attend Intergroup in order to foster their interest in the Fellowship and sponsor other members into Service.
- 5.1.12 Only GSR's or their approved alternate, and Committee Members are entitled to vote at Intergroup meetings.
- 5.1.13 It is the GSR's responsibility to know the Group so well that should unexpected matters come before the Intergroup meeting he or she will have an understanding of the Group's conscience.
- 5.1.14 Maintain and update the groups 12 step list and keep the Telephone Liaison Officer (TLO) updated with the correct details at least every 3 months.
- 5.1.15 Inform the Intergroup Secretary and Telephone Liaison Officer before the December Assembly of the full details of meetings over Christmas and New Year.
- 5.1.16 Inform the MSIG secretary immediately of any short or long term changes to meetings such as start time, format and venue. THIS IS ESSENTIAL FOR 12 STEP WORK.

- 5.1.17 The GSR has a responsibility to conduct meetings with their group to discuss Conference Questions which are published in the winter edition of AA Service News, and on the National AA Website. The Group's response to Conference Questions is to be given by the GSR to Intergroup and the Conference Delegate. In addition the Conference Delegates' summary of the events at Conference is shared with the group.
- 5.1.18 The GSR provides the Intergroup Secretary with brief Group News, including service positions vacant, prior to, or at Assembly

5.2 Qualifications

Groups should take due care in electing their GSR, giving particular regard to the following:

- 5.2.1 It is suggested that the GSR should have at least two years' continuous sobriety and preferably not hold any other Group office including Liaison Officer.
- 5.2.2 GSR's, may serve as Archivist, Convention Convenor, Regional Representative and Conference delegate,
- 5.2.3 It is suggested that the GSR have a working knowledge of the AA publications referred to in the introduction.
- 5.2.4 It is suggested that the GSR have a good knowledge of the structure of AA.
- 5.2.5 The GSR should be a regular weekly attendee at his or her own Group and therefore be able, should necessity arise, to stand in for any other officer of the Group who is unable to be present.
- 5.2.6 The GSR should be prepared to serve for a minimum of two years and up to a maximum of 3 years.

6. Nominations to MSIG posts

Each candidate is nominated for the position via a group, a member of a group within the Intergroup area, or a Committee Intergroup Officer. A serving Committee member may nominate a proposed replacement. The Committee should examine the credentials of all nominees to ensure they meet the minimum requirements of length of sobriety and experience. However the Committee, by majority voting, has the authority to reject a nomination if the expected requirements are not met. Nominees will be presented to InterGroup.

Nominations are sought, and published in the minutes and Agenda of at least two Assemblies, preferably well before the positions are due to rotate. Nominations are sought and announced at two assemblies and these announcements will be noted in the minutes.

Election to a post as a Principal Officer, Intergroup Liaison Officer or other Committee Post will take place at Assembly. Nominees will not be elected in their absence.

7. Voting

Only GSR's and Principal Officers are entitled to vote. GSR's may brief an Alternate to represent the group at the Assembly and the Alternate can vote, but must inform the Secretary upon arrival. (Alternates must be notified prior to assembly to Secretary) The Chair will explain the voting procedure and ensure a quorum is present, so that business can proceed.

At Assembly each nominee/candidate will give a brief history of their AA service. GSR's and Committee members will have an opportunity to ask questions of the nominee(s). The nominee(s) may be asked to leave the room and further questions can be asked or pertinent issues discussed. Voting then takes place by paper ballot if there is more than one nominee, otherwise a show of hands is sufficient. Votes can be cast either for or against. Abstention is another possibility. If there is more than one nominee, voting members will cast their paper ballot for the nominee of their choice. The votes are counted and then the candidate(s) is/are then invited back in to the room and the result is announced..

For elections to all Committee Member posts, including Principal Officers and Liaison Officers, a simple majority in favour is required.

The Chair has a casting Vote.

Each voting member of MSIG has one vote only.

In the event there are no nominees the position will continue to be advertised

7.1 Co-opted members into service are not subject to election.

However in the event of a vacancy occurring among the officers before the expiry of their term of office a member may be co-opted for a limited period of time until the position is filled. Or until the original term of the appointment is reached. At this meeting the member co-opted, along with any others, could be recognised for formal nomination and possible election to this post.

The MSIG Assembly or the Intergroup officers may co-opt a member or members, either from GSR's or from Groups, to perform a specific service such as reviewing the Aims and Structures, organising a Public Information event, designing a web-site, or any other specific task deemed necessary by MSIG. The Intergroup may establish sub-committees for specific purposes. These are non-voting members of the Assembly, and serve a maximum term of 3 years.

7.2 Voting Process for other matters

A show of hands is taken for all other matters such as budget proposals, Public Information special functions, conference questions, and other matters not likely to alter how MSIG operates. A vote is counted for and against and abstentions. A simple majority is required to carry the vote, with the Chair having a casting vote. Paper ballots will only be used for elections.

8. MSIG Principal Officers, Intergroup Liaison Officers and Committee Members (Chair, Vice Chair Treasurer, Secretary, Liaison Officers, Convention Convenor, Archivist, Conference Delegate, Region reps).

8.1 General Qualifications and Responsibilities for ALL members.

- 8.1.1 They should be elected from experienced AA members from Mid-Surrey Intergroup.
- 8.1.2 Committee Members should serve for not less than two years and not more than three years
- 8.1.3 All posts are accountable to Assembly and subject to annual confirmation.
- 8.1.4 They should have a good working knowledge of the AA publications referred to in the Introduction.
- 8.1.5 They should have good knowledge of the structure of AA.
- 8.1.6 Must not currently be serving as GSR's, with the exception of Conference Delegate, Convention Convenor and Archivist.
- 8.1.7 InterGroup Officers will attend MSIG assemblies, Committee Meetings and Workshops. This involves a commitment of at least one evening per month.
- 8.1.8 Attendance at Regional Workshops, held twice per year in Burgess Hill.
- 8.1.9 All members may serve for 2 consecutive terms in separate roles and a maximum of 6 years.

8.2 Non active InterGroup Officers – any InterGroup Officers not present at 3 consecutive Intergroup meetings (Committee or Assembly), without good reason, will be notified that they are not fulfilling their service commitment. If they fail to attend the next meeting then the post will be considered vacant.

8.3 Principal Officers - Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

All posts are accountable to assembly and replacements may be called for at any time. There must be a valid reason for calling for a replacement, and this should be discussed and confirmed by the Committee Members. An election will then be held.

Careful consideration should be given to staggered rotation so that in the interest of continuity all the Intergroup Officers do not terminate their service at the same time.

All committee members must have a minimum of 2 years continuous sobriety and Principle Officers a minimum of 5 years continuous sobriety. Lack of specific service experience will not exclude any nominee from a particular position. Committee members may stand for a maximum of 6 years or two terms.

8.3.1 Intergroup Chair Responsibilities

- i. The Chair will carry the executive authority of Intergroup but should account for any action taken at the next meeting.
- ii. Convening and conducting Assembly, approving the Agenda and Minutes. The Minutes, after agreement by Assembly, will be endorsed by the signature of the Chair as being a true record. The Minutes will then be published.
- iii. Co-ordinating Intergroup activities, trying to prevent confusion and misunderstanding in those affairs.
- iv. The smooth running of Intergroup.
- v. Calling and presiding over InterGroup Committee Meetings.
- vi. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman will not fill Liaison Officer posts. However their experience may be used on agreed projects on a 'need' basis.

8.3.2 Desirable Qualifications

- i. Length of sobriety is a minimum of 5 years. Previous service experience as a GSR. Experience in other positions e.g. at Region or other Intergroup positions would also be valid.
- ii. Willingness to make themselves available to any GSR at any time within reason.

8.3.3 Vice Chair

The responsibilities and desirable qualifications of Chair also apply to the post of Vice-Chairman, who would conduct meetings in the absence of the Chair.

8.3.4 Additional Vice Chair Responsibilities in MSIG

- Organising the printing of up to date Where to Find Cards at reasonable intervals.
- Planning and overseeing workshops.
- Organising Public Liability Insurance if MSIG opts out of the S.E. Region Public Liability Policy

8.3.5 Secretary Responsibilities

- i.. Preparing the Agenda and Minutes of Assembly in conjunction with the Chairman.
- ii. Dealing with all general correspondence for Intergroup.
- iii. Keeping an up-to-date (STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL) list of the names, addresses and email addresses of all GSR's and Intergroup Officers, ensuring that they are passed only to those persons authorised to receive them.

- iv. Providing Committee members with an up to date list of names and telephone numbers for Committee members and GSR's. Telephone numbers will only be given out where necessary and will not be circulated on a regular basis. Any committee member and GSR can choose to with hold this information.
- v. Keeping in touch with GSO, taking particular care to see that a copy of all Minutes and up to date details of Liaison Officers and Intergroup Officers are sent without delay.
- vi. Keeping Region informed of matters relating to the Intergroup which do not come under the auspices of the Regional Reps.
- vii. Keeping the GSR's and Committee Members informed of all MSIG workshops, matters of interest and all important AA activities between Assemblies via email or post.
- viii. Exchanging Minutes with neighbouring Intergroup and passing a copy of Mid-Surrey Minutes to the GSB Member for SE Region.

8.3.6 Treasurer

Please see AA Service handbook for Great Britain Guidelines 4 and 5

Responsibilities

- i. The Treasurer has the responsibility for keeping a proper account of all Intergroup finances and ensuring that funds are available for its essential current requirements, such as rent, printing, postage etc. All Intergroup expenses are met from monies received from Groups and Assembly collections.
- ii. An annual budget exercise should be carried out to ensure that appropriate prudent reserves are maintained. The Treasurer reports to Intergroup against the budget.
- iii. Maintaining a prudent reserve to cover one month's estimated MSIG expenditure. This to include 1 month's rent, literature costs and refreshments. (suggested)
- iv. Surplus funds should always be transferred promptly to Region via the Region Treasurer. The exception being Gratitude funds which should go direct to GSO.
- v. The accounts should be open for inspection and presented to Intergroup at each meeting.
- vi. Group contributions should be clearly listed so that GSR's can confirm their group's contributions have been received. This is a fundamental part of the audit trail.
- vii. Having been audited or independently checked, annual accounts should be presented by the Treasurer to Intergroup for approval at the AGM. The audit will be conducted by 2 GSR's or by other suitably financially qualified members of MSIG.
- viii. Money should be kept in a bank convenient for the Treasurer and payments made by cheque signed by two of the three signatories authorised by the assembly.
- viii. Telephone or Internet banking should only be used where payments and transfers still require authorisation by two signatories.
- x. Paying expenses of members incurred in the course of their service activities. (This does not include Twelfth Stepping). Requests for expenses other than those stated should be made via the Treasurer and presented in the first instance to the Committee and where necessary and practical, approved by assembly
- xi. Liaison with Group Treasurers.

8.3.7 Desirable Qualifications

The treasurer will have the ability to keep simple concise accounts which can be followed by all members.

The maintenance of the accounts requires the ability to manage spread sheets.

Further operational details are available from the Service Guidelines.

8.4 Liaison Officers

Please see MSIG responsibility and qualifications under “MSIG InterGroup Officers and Trusted Servants”, pages 9 and 10. Role- specific qualifications and responsibilities will be those recommended in the Service Handbook Guidelines.

All Liaison Officers need to produce annual budgets that are agreed at Committee and presented for approval to Assembly.

8.4.1 Public Information Liaison Officer (PI)

AA Service Handbook of Great Britain Section 17, Guideline 4 and Guideline 7

8.4.2 Health Liaison Officer

AA Service Handbook of Great Britain Guideline and Guideline 9

8.4.3 Prison Liaison Officer

AA Service Handbook of Great Britain Guideline 4 and Guideline 11

8.4.4 Probation Liaison Officer

AA Service Handbook of Great Britain Guideline 4 and Guideline 13

8.4.5 Electronic Communications Liaison Officer

AA Service Handbook of Great Britain Guideline 19

Responsibilities

To maintain and update the MSIG website www.aamidsurrey.org.uk. On-going maintenance and update of the ‘Meeting Where to Find’ database with a downloadable version available via the website. Co-operation and communication with the AA UK webmaster to ensure that we follow the established guidelines for the MSIG website.

8.4.6 Armed Services Liaison Officer

AA Service Handbook of Great Britain Guideline 21 (published 2011)

8.4.7 Employment Liaison Officer

AA Service Handbook of Great Britain Guideline 4 and Guideline 8

8.4.8 Share Liaison Officer

AA Service Handbook of Great Britain Guideline 4 and Guideline

8.4.9 Telephone Liaison Officer

AA Service Handbook of Great Britain Guideline 4 and Guideline 6

8.4.10 Regional Representatives (RR's)

(see AA Handbook of Great Britain, Guidelines 5

It is suggested that at least three years' continuous sobriety are necessary since it is hardly possible for a person to gain enough Intergroup and Group service in less time than that to be of real use to the Region.

- The Regional Representative would, in the interest of continuity, serve for three years, after which he or she must retire and cannot be re-elected as a RR for at least one year.
- It is suggested that three Representatives per Intergroup be elected to the Region since this would give proper continuity. Staggered rotation is preferable.
- Region Representatives' will not hold any other Intergroup Service positions.
- In special circumstance the Regional representative may perform essential Liaison Officer duties.

8.4.12 Mini-Convention Convenor (and Co-convenor)

(see AA Handbook of Great Britain, Guidelines 14 and 15)

The MSIG Convention Convenor and Co-Convenor are non voting members of MSIG.

System of Election of Convention Co-Convenor

The Co Convenor will normally rotate into the position of Convenor for the following year. The Co-Convenor position will be advertised at one InterGroup Assembly. All nominations for Co-convenor, will be presented to Assembly for election by our accepted procedures (see page 7).

If the Co-Convenor steps down prior to the Convenor election, the normal MSIG structures for seeking a replacement will apply to the election, qualification and responsibilities of the next Convenor.

Desirable Qualifications

A minimum of 2 years sobriety.

Responsibilities and organisation of the Convention

The MSIG Mini-Convention is normally held on the third Saturday in July each year.

- I. The Convenor puts together a committee to plan, organise and run the convention. A convention budget will be produced and expenditure monitored by the Convention Treasurer. The maximum duration of convention committee service is 3 years, to respect the principle of rotation
- II. The Convenor serves for one year only in that role, but may serve 3 years on the Committee.

- III. The Treasurer of MSIG, an Intergroup officer, also serves as treasurer on the Mini Convention Committee
- IV. The Convenor and Treasurer consider the need for the convention to be self-supporting and will usually charge a registration fee.
- V. The Convenor will ensure that Tradition 11 is respected and that the AA Anonymity Statement is read at all open meetings.
- VI. The Convenor ensures MSIG Assembly is kept fully informed and that GSR's and Region representatives have flyers to distribute in Mid Surrey and at Region by the April Region meeting.
- VII. Present to InterGroup the names of companies of non-approved AA merchandise/literature which it is proposed to sell during the Convention. This will be displayed in a separate area where possible, from AA approved merchandise/literature.
- VIII. Need to report to each assembly.

8.4.13 MSIG Archivist

AA Service Handbook of Great Britain Guideline 4 and Guideline 20

8.4.14 Conference Delegate and Alternate

AA Service Handbook of Great Britain: Section 10 & Guideline 3 and Page 12 of this MSIG A&S

Conference delegates and Alternates are elected by South East Region which has 6 Conference Delegates and 6 Alternates from amongst the ten South East Region Intergroups.

Mid-Surrey Intergroup Assembly will propose a Conference Delegate or Alternate Conference Delegate when there is a vacancy at South East Region. Their name will be forwarded to the South East Region Secretary for election at their Assembly.

General Service Conference and Conference Questions

MSIG will hold a workshop each year to talk through the Conference Questions for the year and to explain the workings of Conference to GSR's and any interested group members.

MSIG will offer a structured way of collecting written responses from GSR's. These will be collated into a full report of MSIG's responses by the Conference Delegate.

The South East Region Conference Delegate(s) assigned to MSIG will provide a concise written summary of the outcomes of Conference to MSIG GSR's

9. General Finance

Please refer to AA Handbook of Great Britain, Guideline 12, and the MSIG Treasurer section of this Aims and Structure

10. Workshops

Please refer to AA Handbook of Great Britain, Guidelines 3 and 5.

In MSIG we endeavour to hold 3 general workshops per year on topics such as GSR's, Sponsorship, Prisons, Telephone Service, 12-Stepping and Traditions.

MSIG Committee will suggest suitable topics for Workshops, usually at the December AGM. However suggestions are welcomed from GSR's who will have the vote on the final selection.

GSR's are urged to encourage attendance by all group members.

There will also be a pre-Conference Workshop.

11. Public Liability Insurance

The Intergroup will ensure that all the groups are adequately covered, so long as they keep the Intergroup informed of the meeting, its details and any changes. An up to date registration form has been submitted to the secretary

The Intergroup will review its position on Public Liability Insurance prior to annual renewal. Any proposed change of provider should be presented to InterGroup supported with reasons for change.