

Gamblers Anonymous Scotland

Minutes of National Meeting 30th September 2022

Whitburn

Voting Members Present(24)

Blackburn Monday, Edinburgh Monday, Parkhead Monday PM, Broughty Ferry Tuesday, Coatbridge Tuesday, Dennistoun Tuesday, Edinburgh Tuesday, Perth Tuesday, Rutherglen Tuesday, Kirkcaldy Wednesday, Paisley Wednesday, Toryglen Wednesday, Whitburn Wednesday, Cumbernauld Thursday, Dundee Thursday, Livingston Thursday, Rutherglen Thursday, Shawlands Thursday, Edinburgh Friday, Irvine Friday, Perth Friday, Dennistoun Saturday, Hamilton Saturday, Kirkcaldy Saturday.

Non-Voting Members Present(10)

Blackburn Monday, Edinburgh Monday, Broughty Ferry Tuesday, Rutherglen Tuesday, Paisley Wednesday, Whitburn Wednesday(3) Rutherglen Thursday, Edinburgh Friday.

Apologies (34)

Ardrossan Monday, Clydebank Monday, Cumbernauld Monday, Dundee Monday, Dunfermline Monday, Garthamlock Monday, Greenock Monday, Troon Monday, Dumbarton Tuesday, Garthamlock Tuesday, Hamilton Tuesday, Motherwell Tuesday, Blackhill Wednesday, Aberdeen Wednesday, Craigend Wednesday, Daisy St Wednesday, Kilmarnock Wednesday, Parkhead Wednesday, Partick Wednesday, Ayr Thursday, Edinburgh Thursday, Falkirk Thursday, Greenock Thursday, Hamilton Thursday, Maryhill Thursday, Parkhead Thursday, Anderson Friday, Coatbridge Friday, Dumfries Friday, Dundee Friday, Parkhead Friday, Aberdeen Saturday, Rutherglen Saturday, Viewpark Saturday.

David, PRO & Broughty Ferry Tuesday, chaired and opened the meeting in George W's absence, with introductions around the room.

Report forwarded by National Secretary

Sorry for being absent tonight and celebrating 40 years of intermittently happy years of marriage is a reasonable excuse.

I do not normally prepare a report and usually leave comments until AOB. Tonight, I have to refer to something that happened at a meeting recently that was celebrating a double pin with visitors.

A member put their hand up at the beginning of the meeting to speak.

They then began to say that it was only hearsay, but a contact in Ireland had made them aware that three of the signatories in GA Scotland had helped themselves to £40K of GA money and as the National Secretary was there that morning, what was he going to do about it.

My initial response was that GA business is for a National Meeting, not a double pin celebration and I had no intention of acting on a hearsay comment from Ireland and I have trust in our procedures.

I was later approached at the break to tell me if I did not investigate this I would not be doing my job.

The member has since apologised to another committee member as the comments stem from a conversation about 3 years ago in relation to GA UK & Ireland finances.

My disappointment not only comes from the effect this had on the meeting, but where this could have gone had I not been there to respond.

George W National Secretary/Rutherglen Thursday

Cash Sheets August 22

BANK 31/8/22	PINS/LIT	B/BOOK	BANK	TOTAL
MONDAY				
Airdrie				
Ardrossan				
Big Monday				
Blackburn				
Carlisle				
Clydebank			36.00	36.00
Cumbernauld				
Dundee				
Dunfermline			35.00	35.00
Edinburgh				
Elgin				
Garthamlock			675.00	675.00
Greenock			250.00	250.00
Hurlford				
Musselburgh			30.00	30.00
Parkhead AM				
Parkhead PM			300.00	300.00
Troon			200.00	200.00
Wee Monday				
Whiteinch				
TUESDAY				
Broughty Ferry				
Coatbridge				
Dennistoun			168.90	168.90
Dumbarton				

Edinburgh Oxc			50.00	50.00
Falkirk				
Garthamlock				
Govan				
Hamilton				
Maryhill				
Motherwell		10.00		10.00
Paisley				
Partick				
Perth				
Rutherglen				
WEDNESDAY				
Aberdeen				
Blackhill				
Craigend			94.00	94.00
Daisy St			125.60	125.60
Forfar				
Inverness				
Kilmarnock				
Kirkcaldy				
Paisley				
Parkhead			160.00	160.00
Partick				
Peterhead				
Toryglen			150.00	150.00
Whitburn				
THURSDAY				
Ayr			120.59	120.59
Cumbernauld			200.00	200.00

Dundee				
East Kilbride			100.00	100.00
Edinburgh				
Erskine				
Falkirk				
Greenock			100.00	100.00
Hamilton				
Kelso			100.00	100.00
Kirkintilloch				
Livingston			150.00	150.00
Maryhill				
Parkhead			110.00	110.00
Rutherglen			100.00	100.00
Shawlands				
FRIDAY				
Anderson			210.00	210.00
Bath St				
Coatbridge			100.00	100.00
Dumfries				
Dundee			50.00	50.00
Edinburgh				
Irvine			212.50	212.50
Parkhead AM			80.00	80.00
Perth			101.04	101.04
SATURDAY				
Aberdeen				
Dennistoun				
Hamilton				
Kirkcaldy				

Rutherglen				
View Park			80.00	80.00
SUNDAY				
Edinburgh				
Inverness				
Rutherglen				
NATIONAL COLLECTION			97.71	97.71
Sundry Income				
Total Income		10.00	4186.34	4196.34

CASH CARD/DIRECT DEBITS	
CHEQUES	
CASH CARD (A) B/F	1332.55
Digital Solutions	217.12
MM Digital Website	403.00
Aberdeen Council	68.30
Wiseman's Stationery	164.39
Travel Expenses Self	19.19
Internet Creations	333.90
Serenity Coins	277.88
Total Cash Card	1483.78
BOS Transfer in	1600.00
Total Cash Card C/FWD	1448.77

DIRECT DEBITS (A)	
Office Wages	1260.00
Trans out Cash Card	1600.00
CHEQUES (B)	
TOTAL D/D & CHEQUES	2860.00

TOTAL BANK £92,394.90

Cash Sheets September 22

30/9/22		PINS/LIT	BL BKS	BANK	TOTAL
MONDAY					
Airdrie					
Ardrossan				210.00	210.00
Big Monday					
Blackburn				534.59	534.59
Carlisle					
Clydebank					
Cumbernauld				100.00	100.00
Dundee				100.00	100.00
Dunfermline					
Edinburgh				100.00	100.00
Elgin					
Garthamlock					
Greenock					
Hurlford					
Musselburgh					
Parkhead AM					
Parkhead PM					
Troon				100.00	100.00
Wee Monday			10.00		10.00
Whiteinch					
TUESDAY					
Broughty Ferry				50.00	50.00
Coatbridge				50.00	50.00
Dennistoun				133.20	133.20

Dumbarton				180.00	180.00
Edinburgh Oxg				50.00	50.00
Falkirk					
Garthamlock					
Govan					
Hamilton					
Motherwell					
Paisley				100.00	100.00
Partick					
Perth				100.00	100.00
Peterhead					
Rutherglen				100.00	100.00
WEDNESDAY					
Aberdeen					
Blackhill					
Craigend					
Daisy St					
Forfar					
Inverness					
Kilmarnock					
Kirkcaldy					
Maryhill					
Paisley					
Parkhead					
Partick				140.00	140.00
Toryglen					
Whitburn				140.00	140.00
THURSDAY					

Ayr				100.00	100.00
Cumbernauld					
Dumfries					
Dundee					
East Kilbride					
Edinburgh					
Erskine					
Falkirk					
Greenock				80.00	80.00
Hamilton					
Kelso					
Kirkintilloch					
Livingston					
Maryhill					
Parkhead					
Rutherglen					
Shawlands					
FRIDAY					
Anderson				270.00	270.00
Bath St					
Coatbridge					
Dundee					
Edinburgh					
Irvine				172.45	172.45
Parkhead AM					
Perth					
SATURDAY					
Aberdeen					
Dennistoun				100.00	100.00

Hamilton					
Kirkcaldy					
Rutherglen					
View Park				80.00	80.00
SUNDAY					
Edinburgh					
Inverness					
Rutherglen					
Collection					
	TOTALS		10.00	2990.24	3000.24

B/F	193.96
CASH EXPENSES	
Office Expenses	
National Expenses	
Petty Cash Top Up	
Total Cash Expenses	0.00
C/FWD	193.96

<u>CASH CARD/DIRECT DEBIT/CHEQUE EXPENDITURE</u>	
C/FWD	1448.77
CASH CARD	
Digital Solutions	69.45
Aberdeen Council	68.30
Whitburn Nat Rent	25.00
TOTAL CASH CARD	162.75
C/FWD	1286.02

DIRECT DEBITS (A)	
Office Wages	1890.00
BT/Directories	22.41
CHEQUES (B)	
Group over Donated 11027	300.00
Total D/D/Cheques	2212.41

TOTAL BANK £93,182.73

It came to my attention that a group had donated £300 in August followed by another transaction of £300, the second donation was in error. Having spoken to George W it was agreed the second payment should be returned to the group, this is the reason for cheque number 11027 above to return the £300 to the group.

You will have heard me mention previous of the restraints on my role as treasurer, mainly down to getting a co-signatory present at the bank, with myself to enable transfer of funds over to the cash card . Currently there are two signatories, myself (Edinburgh) and Karen (Office), I recently went through to Glasgow to meet with Karen to enable a transfer.

To ease this situation, I have asked Tony from Edinburgh Monday a long-standing member of the fellowship, and someone I trust, if he would consider coming on as the 3rd signatory of the account, Tony has agreed to this, and I attend the Edinburgh Monday Meeting regularly this would make getting cheques signed and going to the bank much easier. I am bringing this tonight to gain approval from the National.

Proposed by Blair Rutherglen Tuesday, seconded Carly Dundee Thursday.
Approved.

Charles National Treasurer/Edinburgh Tuesday

Live Chat Coordinator Report

28 July to 27th September

During this period on the chat the system fielded 199 chats

From the system I've got the following stats

1. 82.91% of the chats were for personal help and 17.09% of the chats were from a friend or family member.
2. Chatters waited 67 seconds to chat, and the average chat time was 13 minutes and 8 seconds.
3. The chat was manned on average 22 hours and 3 minutes a day.
4. During the 1344 hours and 20 minutes the chat was manned nobody had to be put in a queue.
5. During this period there were no tickets raised on the chat.
6. We currently have 41 active live chat agents.
7. Chat satisfaction was 100% with 24 chats being rated as good.
8. We currently have 138 agents on the meet and greet page working hard to get new and returning members along to meetings.
9. We also have 64 agents on the Gam Anon page supporting friends and family to get the help they need.

Live chat and its associated groups have been working well with little issue.

There was a clean-up exercise done with the meet and greet recently to ensure all agents on the meet and greet are current and attached to the base meeting listed on the meet and greet.

Every month agents not logging in or not fulfilling the minimum requirement of 10 hours per month are either contacted in person or are sent messages of encouragement or support to see if we can help them up their hours and if the hours are still not met then they are removed from the agent list.

We have lost 5 agents this period, which is disappointing. On a positive, we have had 3 previous agents come back on the live chat.

We have posted messages on the live chat page and the secretaries page to see if we can recruit any further new or returning agents.

All agents that have been removed are free to come back at any time when they have more time to commit to the chat.

Thanks to all agents and moderators for giving back some of their precious time that the fellowship has given them.

Tam Live Chat Coordinator/Blackburn Monday

Scottish Life Editor Report

David read the report in Stephens absence.

Latest issue went live on Thursday 22nd September, through distribution on the Secretary WhatsApp group and uploaded onto the website. I would like to apologise for the lateness in the latest edition coming out.

There were 12 submissions in the latest issue from 11 groups (Blackburn Monday, Perth Friday, Motherwell, Broughty Ferry, Edinburgh Saturday, Dundee Monday, Hamilton Tuesday, Hamilton Saturday, Inverness, Ayr and Paisley)

At the time of writing this report I currently have around 6 contributions for the Next Edition of the magazine. This a great response already and much higher than normal at this stage so thank you to those who have contributed.

Please can you all share with your groups asking if anyone is able to send in an article. This can be a vital tool for members so please if you are free to write down your story then it would be very much appreciated.

Thank you to everyone for the contributions for the latest magazine and please continue to send in those articles (scottishlife@gascotland.org)

Stephen Scottish Life Editor/Motherwell Tuesday

David discussed changing the magazine editions from 6 per year to 4 with Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn editions, this will make it easier to fill the magazine, there were no objections to this, and it will be taken forward, the next edition will be in December.

Public Relations Officer Report

Good evening, all

I'd like to thank Whitburn Wednesday for hosting tonight's national meeting.

Bertha Park High and ST Luke School talks

Bertha High School have confirmed that 2 school talks will take place on February 1st, 2023, with Kirsty from Broughty Ferry Tuesday will be speaking to the students and another member TBC will be going along with

Kirsty to contribute to the Q&A session. ST Luke's are set to confirm the dates for the school talks this month and David from Toryglen Wednesday has agreed to provide his services.

DWP Teams share

Callum from Blackburn will take part in a share/ Q&A with DWP staff and various other departments on October 7th, Callum will be sharing his story to raise awareness of compulsive gambling and the support GA gives him to obtain a happy productive life gamble free.

Lloyds Bank Social Bites talk

Barrie from Whitburn Wednesday provided a therapy/recovery and shared how GA Scotland works for suffering compulsive gamblers. The staff of Lloyds bank took so much from Barrie's share and gave them all the information they needed and a better understanding of the illness. They have expressed their gratitude and would like a follow up session in the future.

Glasgow City Council Neighbourhoods

Kevin our Glasgow Area PRO is in talks with Alison Scott from Glasgow City Council with the view to having GA Scotland hold a stall on Monday 24th to Wednesday 26th of October. The stall will give the community an opportunity to speak to members about all things GA and supply information. The PRO team will post a request for volunteers via the Secretaries WhatsApp page very soon.

Finally, Bruce from Broughty Ferry has agreed to join the PRO Team as assistant PRO this will help the team massively and we are delighted he has agreed to come and join us with George moving from this post to National Secretary.

I would like to thank all our volunteers who are giving up their time to give back to the fellowship and carrying the message all over the country and as always, a thank you to the PRO team for the support.

David National PRO/Broughty Ferry Tuesday

David opened the room for questions following the first 5 reports:
John T, Parkhead Monday raised the rent contributions for the Peterhead meeting on the cash sheets, he noticed this has been paid by the fellowship for a few months and no contributions have come in during this period from the group, David explained that they only have 3 members and they will only be covering the costs of their tea and coffee etc with the donations coming in, also as Aberdeen changed to a Wednesday this is their nearest meeting, they changed to a Tuesday to try and compensate for this, the group will be monitored for a while to check on their viability. John also added that other groups who have opened received help but the donations to the national from some of them has been very little and that once they pay their rent and buy tea and coffee etc all monies should be sent into the national and not held onto. David agreed and all groups should be reminded of this.

Helpline Coordinator Report

Overall Calls 120 with 107 answered first time giving us 89% of calls answered first time.

Thanks to all volunteers for continuing to support those in need.

Between now and AGM I will contact all the helpline volunteers to confirm they are still happy to take calls and produce an up-to-date list of call takers.

My position will be available at the AGM as I have been in the role for 4 years however, I will stay in post beyond this if required as I understand there are several committee positions needing filled. If anyone is willing to take over the helpline, I will provide support for as long as necessary.

No other issues to report and again anyone looking to volunteer please contact me to discuss.

Thanks Bryan. Helpline Coordinator/Rutherglen Tuesday

Prison Liaison Officer Report

Simon has recently stepped down from his role as PLO, I am currently overseeing the work of the team until a new PLO is in place, this will hopefully be at the October AGM.

There are 15 Prisons throughout Scotland, 2 are run privately and may choose not to engage with us. Of the other 13 prisons we have received contact from 6 and are currently visiting prisoners in two areas, Edinburgh and Barlinnie.

A member recently attended a meeting and information day for prisoners at Low Moss, a meeting has taken place at Glenochil and Perth, I am awaiting replies to arrange meetings with Cornton Vale and Shotts.

Also awaiting initial contact from the other prisons; GA support information has been sent to them via their Head Quarters.

I have devised leaflets for the prisons anyone visiting a prison for the first time I can send out leaflets to take along.

All communication takes place through the PLO WhatsApp group, I will admit that I am struggling to get members to cover the visits/initial meetings and we are not as yet covering all of the prisons, it is very worrying that we may not be able to support other compulsive gamblers within the prison due to lack of engagement from our own members, there are only 5 members supporting current work. Please go away and speak to your groups at your next Business Meeting, are there members who have retired, aren't currently employed or have some availability to give back to the fellowship we all owe so much to, we have over 1000 members and less than 1% have shown willingness to support when it is desperately needed, please contact myself if you can give some time to support the work of the PLO Team.

Karen added on the night, that the above role is not very everyone as it can be very daunting but additional support is needed especially when trying to fill the PLO Role.

Karen Office Coordinator/Rutherglen Thursday

Social Media Coordinator Report

The social media pages continue to attract a steady number of visitors. We post on average 3 times each week and share a mixture of GA literature and members' stories.

There is currently a call out to the fellowship for people to comment on the 20 questions and how they answered when they were asked them for the first time. We have linked with the website team and there will soon be content from the social media pages appearing on the website.

We have encountered a couple of issues of late but these have been dealt with promptly and with minimal fuss. There is however a problem currently with the Facebook QR code displayed on the GA banners, this is proving a little trickier to sort out, but work is ongoing.

Stats and facts



Account insights

[See all](#)

286 accounts reached in the last 30 days, +35.5% compared to 29 Jul - 27 Aug.



Aims

- Upload members' stories to all social media platforms
- Continue to connect with other recovery and support groups
- Make access to the Live Chat faster and easier by setting up an instant reply message for those who message the pages directly
- Resolve issue with Facebook QR code

Final word

Thank you to the fellowship for their continued support. A notable mention to Katie from Broughty Ferry Tuesday who continues to work incredibly hard to keep the Twitter page running as well as it does. Thank you for volunteering to do a bit of Step 12 and for giving back to this incredible fellowship.

Hamish Social Media Coordinator/Perth Friday

Web Team Report

Enhancements

Since the previous National, the website has been updated with some new enhancements for users including:

- Literature section has been populated with the PDF and audio versions of GA Scotland booklets.
- Maps are provided for all meetings with ability to easily invoke full google maps-based directions / sat-nav style navigation.
- Ability to display a list of meetings based on distance from a user-entered postcode. A visitor to the site (or helpline / live-chat volunteer) can enter a postcode in the meetings search box and the meetings for next seven days are displayed in order of distance from that postcode, enabling the user to find the meetings nearest them.

Hosting Service Provision

By the end of 2022, we will end our relationship with our current web-hosting provider, Internet Creation, and have fully transferred our hosting account to Inventive Hosting.

The service level expected from Internet Creation has been far below the expected standard despite the very large fees they have continued to charge us. In the latest instance, they took 23 days to appropriately respond to a support ticket despite interim chasers.

The new hosts, Inventive Hosting have been trialled previously having provided hosting space during the development phase of our revised site. They were also our hosts for the meeting listing pages used during the pandemic and immediately prior to the re-launch of the website. They have always responded within an hour of any request made of them.

In addition to a higher level of service, the transfer to Inventive will also provide us with additional functionality, greater direct control over our content, and a number of services which come free as standard for which we currently pay additional fees to our current host. As a result, we will be saving well over £1000 each year with no resulting detrimental impact.

I would like to thank everyone for their continued support and patience as we continue to progress the GA Scotland website and its content to where we need it to be.

Mark M. Web Team Coordinator/Kirkcaldy Saturday

Office Coordinator Report

I have renewed the Public Liability Insurance for all groups requiring this and copies have been sent to the groups, if any other groups have this as a requirement of their hall lets, please let me know and I can arrange this for you.

I will be sending out a request for information on current base numbers, this was first requested in March 22 when we were almost back to normal live meetings, I am looking to update this. Going forward I will collect this information annually each October. I will also be looking to add information to the website on the availability of disabled access at meetings and will make the request for both at the same time on the secretary's page.

I am now able to update meeting information and add pin information to the website, can I ask that you all check your meeting information on a regular basis, if you could also check the following: if you have a beginners meeting that the information is on the website, if you are a STEPS meeting that this also shows on the website, if your information is correct there is no need to let me know, I only need to be advised of updates.

A reminder that Unity and Recover Banners, alongside Meeting Protocol Banners are available from the office, if you require these, please arrange with me to pick them up.

As you know the AGM is next month Friday 28th of October at 7pm in Rutherglen, there is 1 post needing filled the Prison Liaison Officer post, please advise members of this at your next business meeting.

Liz a member at Hamilton Thursday has very kindly agreed to take on the role of Wednesday Conference Call Coordinator, Liz will take this role on from Wednesday 5th of October and the meeting will change over to a Zoom Meeting on this date, please contact myself or Liz if you have any members who fit the criteria and would like to join the meeting.

Karen Office Coordinator/Rutherglen Thursday

A.O.C.B

The Collection on the night was £70.63.

Toni Edinburgh Friday.

David gave some background: Toni was invited along to speak to the National as concerns were raised by visiting members that the Edinburgh Friday Meeting was running as an open addiction meeting, the concerns were that we advertise this on the website as a GA meeting and any new members going along to the meeting were not receiving information and support relating to compulsive gambling as other addictions were being discussed at the meeting. The secretary at the group was contacted as this would need to be looked at and removed from the website if it wasn't run as a GA meeting, the secretary took the decision to request that the meeting should be removed, and this was taken forward. Due to the secretary taking this decision without consulting with the group the national committee were contacted, and Toni asked to come along and discuss this.

Toni agreed at the meeting that they would be run as a GA meeting and only compulsive gambling will be discussed at the Edinburgh Friday meeting and that he will be taking over as group secretary, he also requested that the group be added back to the website, this was agreed.

Date of next Meeting AGM Friday 28th October 7pm Rutherglen

Next National Friday 25th November 7pm Rutherglen

We are looking for a meeting to host the next away meeting 27th January 2023

The meeting ended in the usual manner with a vote of thanks to David in the chair.