Q2a

Is there need for Safeguarding Representatives (for whom DBS checks are suggested) at groups, intergroups and/or regions?.

Q2b

Do you think issues that arise can be dealt with by the group conscience or the experience of older members?

Q3a

*Are you aware that the safeguarding policy **suggests** that TLO's should take out a DBS check for members who want to do telephone service?*

It is possible for any individual to take out a Basic DBS, however, Standard or Enhanced DBS can only be lawfully taken out by employers in regulated activities such as schools, care homes etc. As AA Fellowship is not a regulated activity the only possible use of DBS would be Basic and this is only accurate up to the date taken out. If a DBS raised concerns, it would fall to the TLO's to decide which offences were permissible for telephone service and which were not. The SWP were largely agreed that DBS did not add value and raised more queries than solutions and that the current selection process is robust without its use.

Q3b

Do you think DBS checks should be used in the selection of AA members for the Telephone service?

Q4b

Are you happy with references to the policy in the Structure Handbook, relating to Safeguarding guidance for the Fellowship?

Q4a

*Are you aware that the Safeguarding Policy on the website is currently titled "AA **fellowship** Safeguarding Policy"? (It is only obligatory to the General Service Board)*

We asked GSB if the AA Fellowship had a legal requirement to have the policy? However GSB said No. GSB suggests that Banks or Insurance companies may ask for a safeguarding policy

If you would like to talk further about this, please contact your Region Rep or Telephone Liaison Officer.
Please send your responses to:
safeguarding@sw-reg.uk

Safeguarding in AA

Have your say!

Tradition 1 Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. AA must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

South West region set up a **SAFEGUARDING WORKING PARTY** to consider the impact on the AA Fellowship of the Safeguarding Policy and Guidance materials currently in place created by GSB and any potential conflict with our Traditions, Concepts and UK Law. Then to inform groups of their findings, encourage open discussion, feedback and opportunity to voice views, concerns, objections etc.

THERE ARE 3 MAIN DOCUMENTS THAT DESCRIBE SAFEGUARDING IN AA

1. **THE AA FELLOWSHIP SAFEGUARDING POLICY,**
   See the AA National website. The General Service Board (GSB) is a charity and has employees and as such requires a policy. AA, the Fellowship is not a charity and has no legal requirement to have a policy. GSB has a duty of care to guide and advise the AA Fellowship.

2. **SAFEGUARDING AND PERSONAL CONDUCT GUIDANCE, see the 2023 AA Structure Handbook, page 113**

3. **NATIONAL TELEPHONE SERVICE GUIDANCE, see Document store, Members section, AA National website.**

The Safeguarding Working Party (SWP) used an analysis tool to examine all elements of these documents and reached broad agreement that the majority is accepted as useful.
Some issues were contentious or required clarification and our enquiries were sent to York for the attention of the General Service Board

Questions for Groups

Q1a

Are you comfortable with the term 'Safeguarding' in use in the AA Fellowship?
The term 'Safeguarding' is used across society/industry and is broadly understood but could imply that the AA Fellowship is similar to regulated activities and has professional knowledge and training in Safeguarding which we do not.

Q1b

If you would prefer a different term what would you prefer. Terms we considered were. "Safety in AA", "Personal conduct in AA" and "Common welfare in AA".

We asked GSB if alternative terms had been considered? We were told that the term safeguarding is the most widely used and understood across society and would foster a safe space for all with clearly signposted procedures and guidance.