



## The early history of the Association for the Study of Obesity

Presented by Dr Margaret Ashwell OBE during the ASO 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration dinner at the 4<sup>th</sup> UK Congress of Obesity 2017 – University of South Wales.

Date	<p>The logo for the UK Congress of Obesity (UKCO) 2017, held in Pontypridd, Cardiff, from 7-8 September. It features the text 'UKCO' in a large, blue, sans-serif font. Below this, the year '2017' is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font. To the right of '2017', the text 'PONTYPRIDD CARDIFF' is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the dates '7-8 SEPTEMBER' are written in a small, blue, sans-serif font.</p>
<b>1967</b>	The Obesity Society of GB was formed. It had two functions, and therefore, two branches: to educate lay people about obesity and suitable treatments and to promote scientific discussion. John Butterfield was President, Ian MacLean Baird was Chair, Philip Le Bon (a cosmetic surgeon from Harley St) was Secretary and Trevor Silverstone was Treasurer. Alan Howard took over as secretary after 6m. The annual fee to join was 2 guineas (2.20GBP).
<b>1968</b>	The Society held its first International Symposium in London. The Proceedings were edited by Ian Maclean Baird and Alan Howard. The lay branch was discontinued because it had caused too many problems about conflicts of interest. The scientific branch continued and flourished; the name was changed to the Association for the Study of Obesity. It held 3 meetings a year in London usually at the RSM. The committee meeting was held in the morning, speakers were invited to lunch and then the meeting was held in the West Hall in the afternoon.
<b>1972</b>	Trevor Silverstone suggested that his own secretary, Christine Hawkins (nee Norris) should become the membership secretary of ASO. Chris was rewarded with the MBE in 2005 for her services to the charity and continued to help ASO until she retired in 2010. Alan Howard met George Bray and they discussed holding an International Congress of Obesity (held in 1974 in London) and starting an International Journal of Obesity.
<b>1977</b>	Alan Howard approached Newmans Publishers and the first International Journal of Obesity was published with Alan Howard and George Bray as co editors. In 1982 Alan Howard was asked to step down as editor because of his commercial involvement with the Cambridge Weight Plan. He continued to support the ASO in many other ways.
<b>1983</b>	An International Congress of Obesity was held in New York. Dr Margaret Ashwell, who had been ASO Hon Secretary since 1981, met Marcelle Lavau from the French Society for Obesity. These two decided to suggest to their respective organisations that there should be a European Association for Obesity (EASO).
<b>1985</b>	Margaret Ashwell met with Per Bjorntorp from Sweden to draft the constitution of EASO.
<b>1988</b>	The first European Congress of Obesity (ECO) was held in Stockholm.