

Committee Meeting reports

The fifth General Committee meeting of 2025/26 took place on Saturday 21 June 2025 on a virtual basis. It was the second of the new format quarterly meetings, with a particular focus on finance, membership and communications. On financial performance, the committee received an update on publication sales and auctions, both of which have been successful in recent months. Longer term, the main financial indicators remain positive and the net worth of the organisation strong. Membership levels have shown a slow decline for some years and the committee agreed to examine this in more detail once further analysis has been undertaken. There was also a discussion about the need to increase levels of payment by direct debit and reduce the number who pay their subscriptions late, which creates an unnecessary administrative burden. On communications, the committee heard about a range of initiatives to increase social media engagement and approved a new membership flyer, featuring Andy Zaltzman, the Test Match Special statistician. The committee also approved several new publications.

The sixth General Committee meeting of 2025/26 took place on Saturday 26 July 2025 on a virtual basis. The committee heard an update on current work to investigate possible improvements to the ACS data analysis offer, and also gave the go-ahead for improvements to the layout of the ACS website, to be launched in August. The committee heard about progress in gathering material relating to Robert Brooke to be put forward for inclusion in the November edition of the Journal. There was an update on plans for a members' online meeting on 4 October, details of which will be issued shortly. The committee discussed a number of financial issues and also agreed revised draft contracts to be sent for approval by York Publishing Services, the company which distributes ACS publications.

The seventh General Committee meeting of 2025/26 took place on Saturday 23 August on a virtual basis. The committee expressed its sadness at the recent death of Eric Midwinter, ACS President between 1997 and 2004, and discussed how an appropriate tribute could be made. A discussion took place about the future of the Women's Cricket History website, as well as about the sales performance of the Men's and Women's 2025 International Year Books. The committee also discussed the idea of changing its current approach of publishing ACS books on a quarterly basis (whilst leaving publication of the Journal untouched). The committee also considered how to progress a suggestion that four recently-discovered West Indian matches from the late 19th/early 20th century might be candidates for first-class status. It heard that 42 new members had joined since December 2024 and agreed that it would be valuable to follow up with new members about how they had heard about ACS and why they had joined, so as to inform future publicity initiatives such as the recent mailing to Cricket Society members. The Treasurer reported positive news on recent book sales and on the most recent book auction.



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Modernisation of Communication Channels to ACS Members

At its August 2025 meeting the ACS Committee reviewed the way that the Association connects with its members, with respect to both sales communications and transmitting membership information. It was acknowledged that the traditional pattern of ACS quarterly communications to members did not align well with the current standard of almost instant communication of matters of interest that is prevalent in most other areas of society, leisure and business. Why wait for up to 90 days to transmit a message when the tools are available for almost instant communication?

It was also agreed that historic ways of doing business such as using cheques to pay for purchases and membership subscriptions was out of line with best practice in the modern world and caused unnecessary non-value-added work for ACS and its distributor.

The principal tool that is universally available to address and improve these historic practices is the internet which provides the platform for email communications, virtual meetings, electronic banking, etc. Relating this to the ACS environment, the good news is that 743 out of 809 or 92% of ACS members are already linked to a digital environment and have already provided an email address which is an entry point for such instant communications.

The committee agreed that ACS should provide help and support to assist the remaining members to engage in these more efficient ways of conducting business.

The modernisation process will be carried out in various phases:

The **first phase** relates to sales communications. Starting from 1 November 2025:

- All new publications are being communicated by email as soon as they become available in stock
- The back cover of *The Cricket Statistician* (the ACS Journal) will provide details of immediately available publications (notably those published in the prior three months), sales packages and discount offers, so those who are currently not on email will continue to receive the necessary information

- The quarterly sales flyer in both printed and digital versions is being discontinued, as is the hard copy order form. But email contactable members will be provided with pdf versions of the explanatory sales information previously contained in the sales flyer
- For the present time members who wish to continue ordering manually by post can initiate their own order and post it to ACS Sales, accompanied by a cheque which should include the £6 handling charge.

It should be noted that members who are not contactable by email already risk missing out on valuable benefits that ACS membership provides. These include the following:

- Participation in regular ACS online auctions
- Attendance at the ACS Annual General Meeting conducted via Zoom
- Joining other Zoom meetings that discuss ACS matters of interest
- Access to the ACS website, including the Records section and details of all current ACS publications and offers.

Other benefits to members from having email / internet connectivity with ACS include:

- Placing orders for ACS publications via the ACS Shop, thereby
 - Avoiding the postage cost and inconvenience of mailing their orders
 - Avoiding the £6 per order handling charge
 - Avoiding ordering books that are out of stock
 - Enabling entry of the discount voucher code online
- Immediate receipt of ACS communications on sales and membership matters.

The **second phase** of this programme will be to offer alternative payment options to ACS members who currently pay by cheque for their purchases of ACS publications. We are currently working with our distributor to develop these possibilities and hope to be able to offer them to ACS members within the next three to six months. We also hope to offer alternative options for ACS members who currently pay their annual subscriptions by cheque.

In parallel with these initiatives, it is planned over the next six to nine months for an ACS committee member to approach each non-email contactable member to discuss ways of engaging in email communications and alternative methods of paying for ACS publications and membership subscriptions.

The **third phase** of this programme relates to membership communications. These are currently undertaken via the Membership Bulletin for three quarters in each year and via the AGM booklet for the fourth quarter. After we have concluded the consultation process with non-email contactable members, it is the intention is to manage all ACS membership communications by email and to phase out hard copy communications. The only exception

will be *The Cricket Statistician* (the ACS Journal) where members will have the option to continue receiving hard copy paper versions.

The changes described above will not materially affect the 92% of ACS members who already benefit from the advantages of internet access and email communications. For the remaining members who may need to embrace some changes, we intend to make the transition as painless as possible.

John Bryant
Chair of the ACS General Committee

Committee elections

Nominations from members who wish to stand for election to the ACS General Committee must be received no later than 15 November 2025. Four committee places will be up for election at the 2026 AGM, and a ballot will be held if more than four people put themselves forward. The committee meets regularly via Zoom, enabling those from outside the UK to participate fully in its meetings. So please do not let distance discourage you from putting yourself forward. Please also note that the committee is always looking for a range of different skills and experiences amongst its members, and believes that many ACS members will have secured relevant skills during the course of their working lives. If you are interested email elections@acscricket.com for further details.

Discount Voucher Scheme for ACS Members

The committee would like to remind members that the £8 discount voucher for 2024/25, which can be used towards the purchase of any ACS publication, was issued on 1 February and will expire on 30 November 2025. Details of the current year's scheme, and the password to be used, were sent to members with the February mailing.

Membership Update

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members: Rudradeep Bhattacharjee, Robert Burn, Ian Ferris, Geoffrey Haydon, Leandro Jayarajah, Roger Maull, Danny McGee, Alex Newby, Mike Newell, Srimukundan Rajaram, John Reid, Marcus Tapley-Peabody, Richard Thomson and Derek Willis.

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to the bereaved families of the recently-deceased members Brian Croudy, David Lawrence and Eric Midwinter.