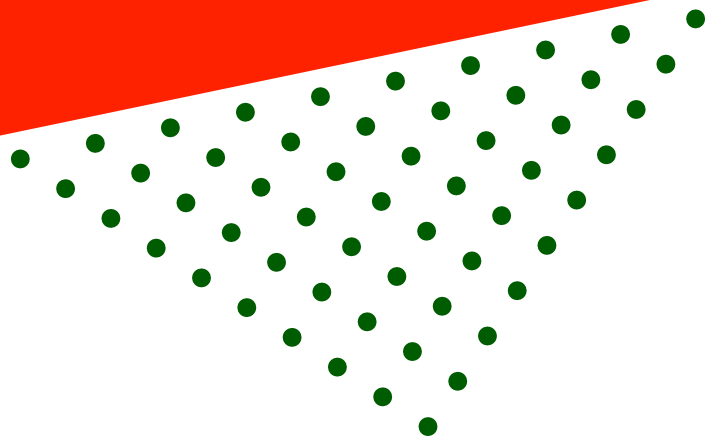


**Authors'
Licensing and
Collecting
Society**

2022-2027



Strategic Plan

We support, champion and fight for writers

Our background

The Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS) is a not-for-profit membership organisation started by writers for the benefit of writers' and we're still run by writers, for writers. We're open to all types of writers and owned by our members. We collect money that's due to our members for secondary uses of their work. These might include things like photocopying, retransmission, lending in overseas libraries and educational use. These sorts of rights typically bring in small amounts of money which are too difficult for writers to collect individually, so the most effective way to gather them is collectively. This takes tireless investigation, as well as experience and expertise. But nowadays, with the help of our bespoke IT systems, we can collect money from all over the world through agreements with over 50 different societies in more than 40 countries. We then pay this to our members whose works are being used.

We also campaign and lobby on matters important to writers — both at a national and international level — to ensure writers' rights are both recognised and rewarded.

Nobody else in the world does exactly what we do, though we're often compared to other organisations. For many members, we're simply an organisation that sends them a small payment once or twice a year. For others, the money we send them is all too important. We're open to all types of writers as members. We measure our worth by the amount of money we've collected and paid to writers, as well as by our successes in advocating for authors' rights and educating about copyright.

ALCS was set up by writers, for writers

We began in the 1970s when a group of writers, the Writers Action Group or WAG, were discussing why they weren't receiving payment when their books were being used. They set about trying to remedy this, campaigning initially for writers to receive recompense when their works were lent by libraries — payments a different organisation looks after these days. As a result of WAG's long-running campaign, ALCS was founded in 1977 and has grown to represent writers in all genres, collecting and distributing fees for many different rights. Initially a small affair, with writers volunteering their time to help with admin and campaigning, ALCS now employs staff chosen for their particular skills and experience and is run with more of a business focus. What started as an action group is now very much a passionate, professional and highly efficient body working worldwide on many levels.

Our values are important to us

We're bold

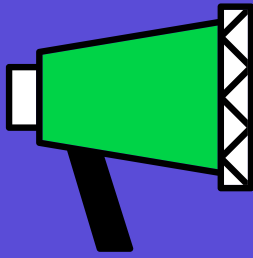
We support our membership by always being proactive and outward-looking. We seek to develop opportunities to support new streams of income, as well as to protect existing ones for the benefit of our 100,000+ members worldwide in what is an ever-changing digital landscape. We explain to legislators at all levels, the ways that they can better support writers. We diligently research the writers for whom we are holding money so that they can benefit from ALCS.

We take pride

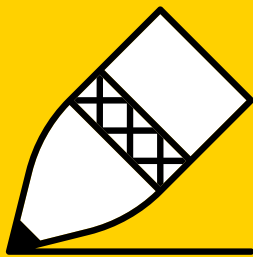
We strive to be the best we can be in all of our activities and celebrate our successes on behalf of writers. We recognise the central role that writers hold in society, creating works for education and entertainment for the benefit of us all. We are proud to be ambitious for writers and to celebrate our successes on their behalf.

We make an impact

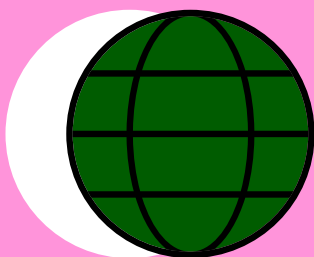
We champion the protection and promotion of authors' rights across the globe. We educate and support through partnerships and initiatives to enable our members to work in an environment that fairly recognises and rewards them for the work they do. We strive to create positive change for authors and to aim for excellence in all we do.



We support our membership by always being proactive and outward-looking.



We strive to be the best we can be in all of our activities and celebrate our successes on behalf of writers.



We champion the protection and promotion of authors' rights across the globe.

Our members

The rate of growth of our membership is around 4,000 members per year and, at the time of writing, the total membership sits at just over 115,000.

At the end of the 2011-12 financial year the overall membership was at just over 68,000, so in the last 10 years our membership size has increased by 69%.

Over
115,000 members

69%
increase



Overall membership in the last 10 years

The profile of our members

With the passing of time, the average age of our membership is obviously increasing. In 2011 the average age of ALCS members was 60. In 2021 it had increased to 63.

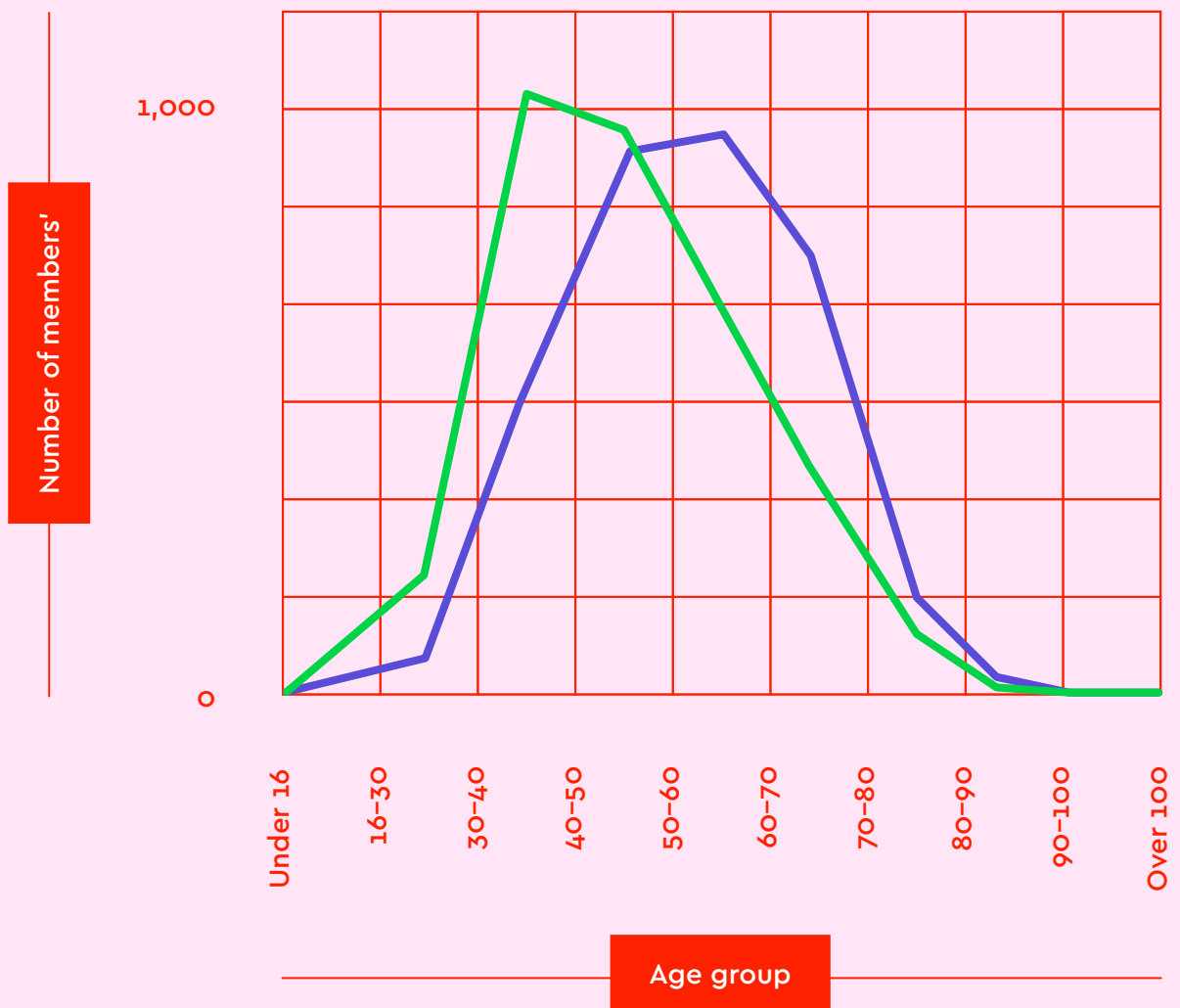
But the average age of new members joining ALCS is reducing; in 2011 the average age of a member joining ALCS was 52. In 2021 it was 46. This graph shows the shift over time of the age of writers at the point of joining ALCS.

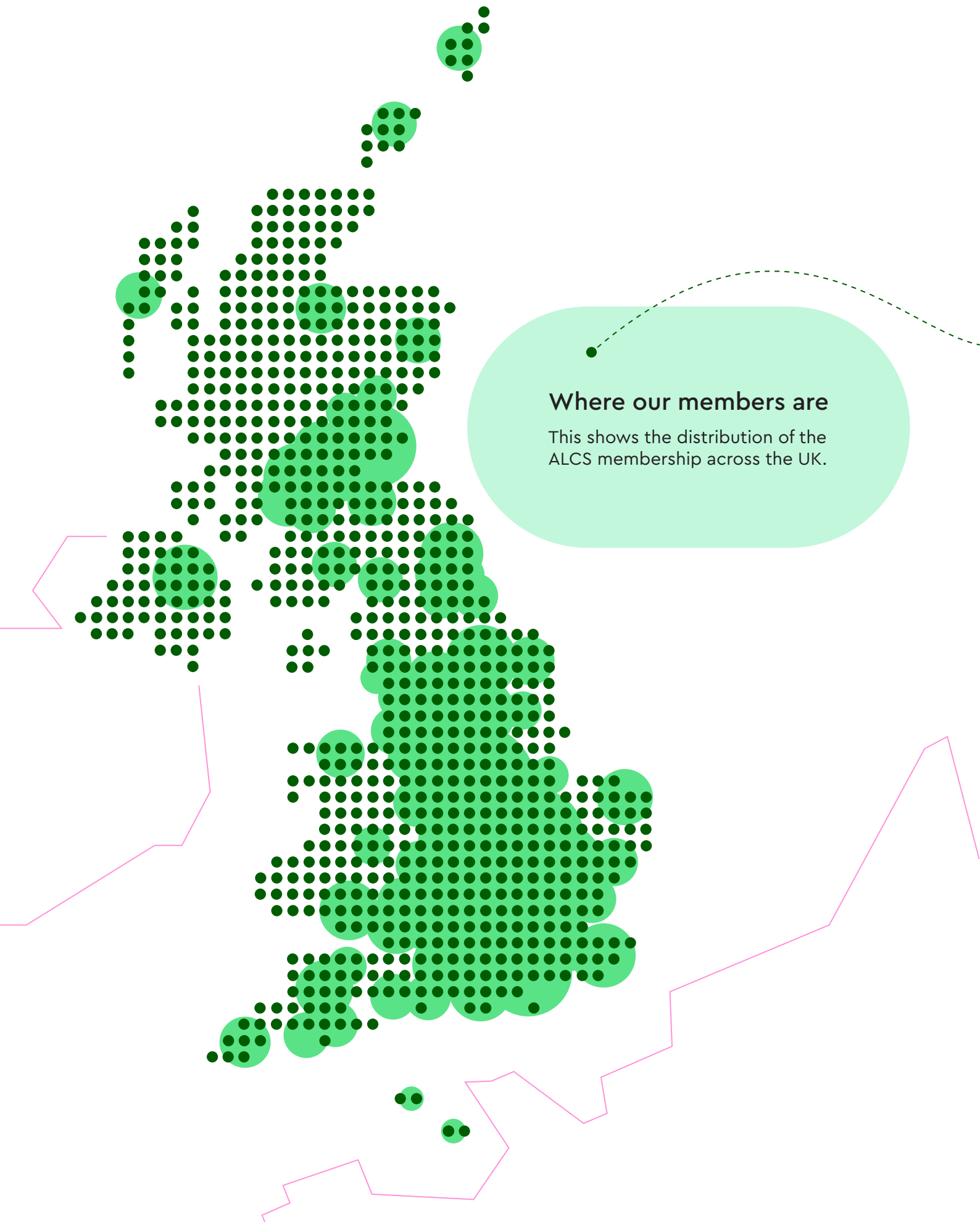
In 2011 the average age of a member joining ALCS was 52. In 2021 it was

46

New members' age by membership year

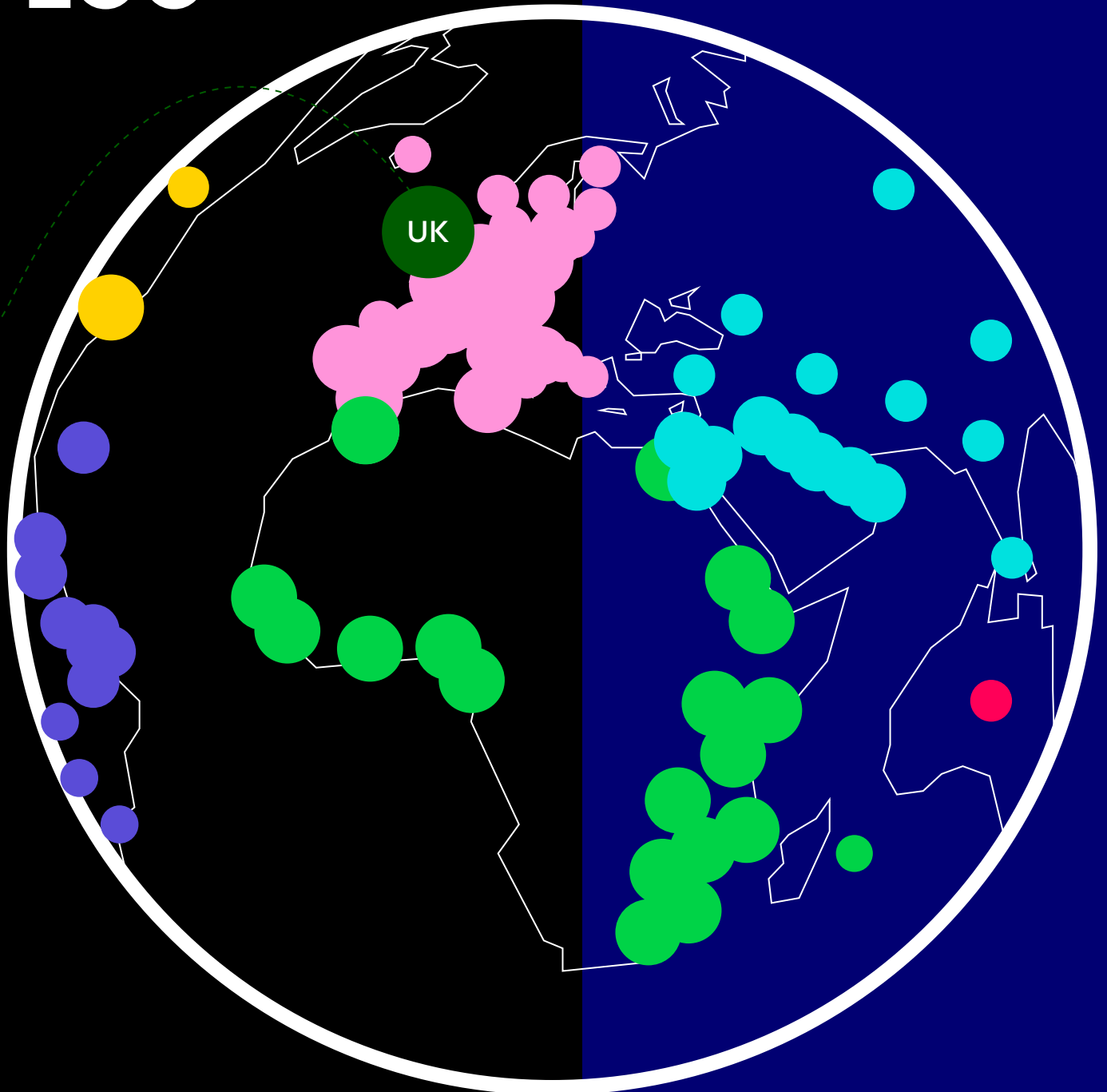
— 2021 — 2011





Worldwide, we have members in over

100 countries



Europe

South America

Australasia

North America

Africa

Asia

Payments to members

In 2020/21,
we paid

85%

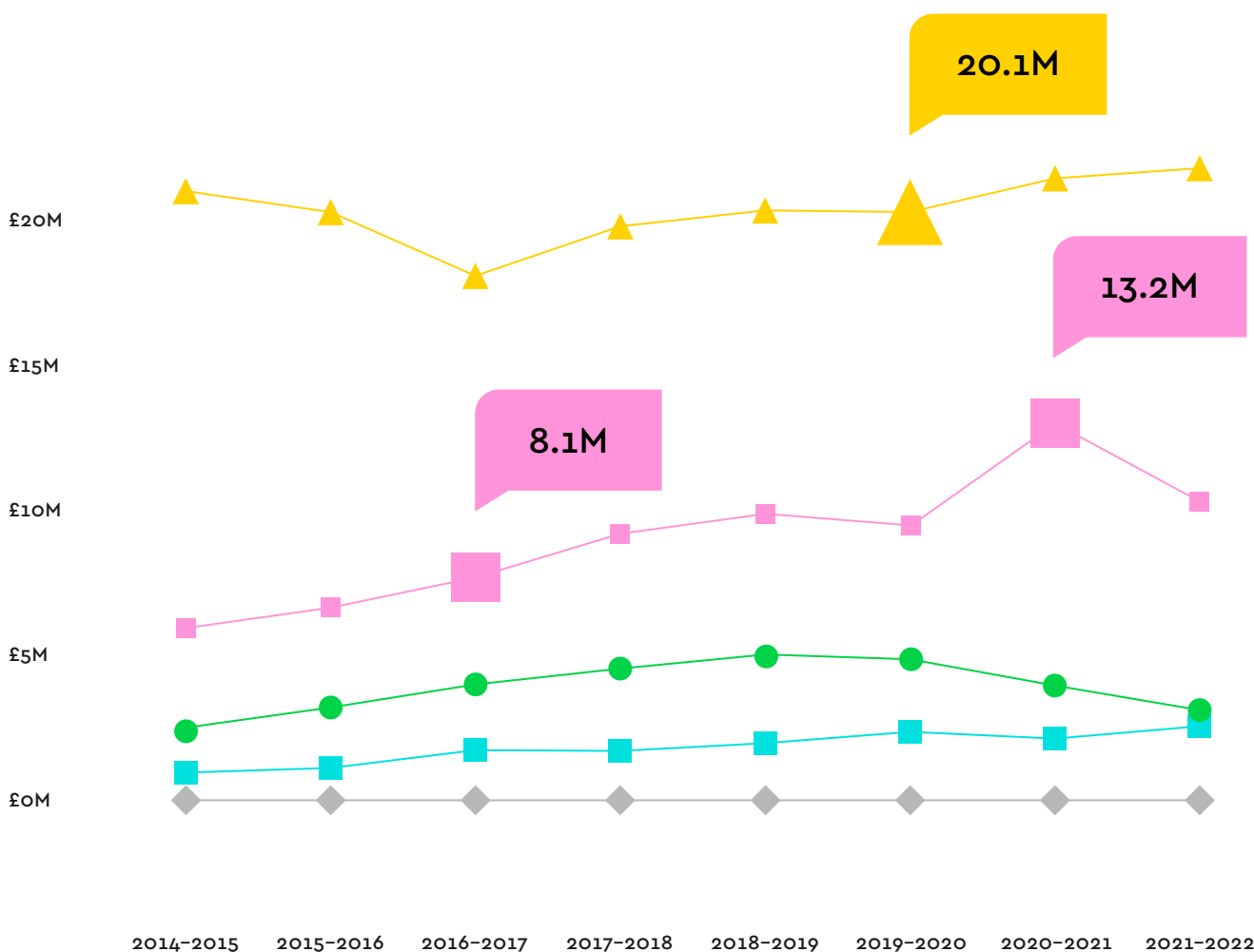
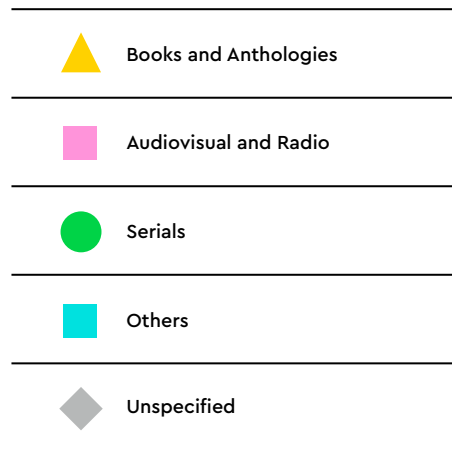
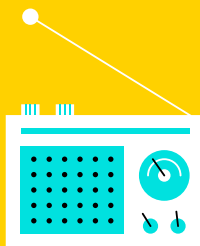
of our membership
over the course
of the year

and the median
payment made was
in the region of

£ **120**

Works

The graph below shows our collections according to work type. The area with the biggest overall growth is Audiovisual (AV) and Radio payments.



Our current working environment

Totalling over
£600m since
our inception

We have a strong track record in collecting fees for members and our annual income has increased over the years to a record breaking £40.9m in 2021 and totalling over £600m since our inception.

ALCS' strengths lie in a number of areas: our enthusiastic and dedicated team of staff, many of whom have worked for the company for a considerable length of time, resulting in a wealth of experience and knowledge that can be drawn upon. Having set up in 1977 we have 45 years of good standing among writers and our brand is well established, with a growing profile supported by a good social media presence and the word of mouth of our members.


We receive good data from both our members and other sources and our members' repertoire is one of the most widely re-used around the world. As a Collective Management Organisation (CMO) we are regulated and have robust controls to ensure we adhere to best practice and our standards remain high.

CMOs though can lack appeal and when this is coupled with a poor public perception of copyright this means we cannot compete easily with the shine of the 'big tech' companies who want copyright laws weakened to allow them to develop their own business models at the expense of the creators.

Copyright policy reviews, Brexit, poor trade agreements, publishers/producers taking more rights, and the threat of a 'fair use' regime all have the potential to undermine our ability to collect fees for writers and our writer members. None of these issues should be underestimated in relation to the damage that could be caused to our members' income streams as a result of any changes.

We live in a world where online platforms have a global reach and increasingly require buy-out contracts. These erode writers' entitlement to secondary-use fees as do the allure of copyright exceptions for governments, and the power of the consumer and their needs will often outweigh those of the creator.

The last Strategic Plan saw a focus on maintaining our approach in light of various challenges, and the last three years saw ALCS facing a range of issues relating to Brexit and latterly the worldwide Covid pandemic. As there were a lot of unknowns during this period our goal was to ensure an approach of 'steady as she goes' whilst navigating what has proved to be, and continues to be globally, the most uncertain period in our recent history.



our annual income has increased over the years to a record breaking £40.9m in 2021

Our priorities for the future (2022-2027)

Our focus is always on our members and on making relevant changes that will enable ALCS to effectively continue to support the lives of creators. Our vision of the future is one where we'll support our members' ability to write by increasing their income and by educating as many people as possible in promoting respect for copyright. We will celebrate the value writers bring to our world, fighting for their rights and giving them a powerful collective voice. We want all writers to thrive in our society. The way that we operate as an organisation should make the complex easy.

This vision makes up the five key areas where we will prioritise our work.

Our purpose

ALCS exists to support, champion and fight for authors

Our priorities

1

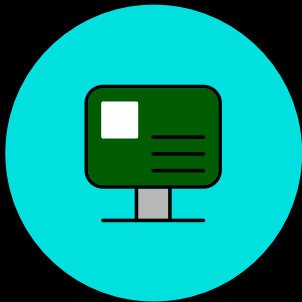
We'll support our members' ability to write by increasing their income

2



We'll educate as many people as possible and promote the respect of copyright

3



We'll make the complex easy; through technology, data and our committed workforce

4



We'll celebrate the value that writers bring to our world, fight for their rights and give them a powerful collective voice

5

We'll aim to operate in an ethical and environmentally conscious way

1

We'll support our members' ability to write by increasing their income

How we'll do this:

- / We'll assess our members' needs and our offering to them**
This is important because — We have a large and diverse membership, so we need to make sure we are relevant to members and that we give them what they want.
- / We'll maintain and improve current revenue streams**
This is important because — Writers' incomes are reducing in real terms, even though their works are being used more widely than ever before.
- / We'll explore new business development opportunities**
This is important because — Technology changes will inevitably reduce the value of traditional income streams but increase the value of new ones. We will need to mitigate the possible displacement, in whole or part, of existing licences and income sources.

What will success look like?

- / A more diverse portfolio of mechanisms and services generating revenue for writers.**
- / Improved membership engagement levels; where more members manage their accounts online, ensuring all their works are on our systems, and more members vote for the people they believe will give the best representation on the ALCS Board.**

Examples of how this might be achieved:

- / Engaging an external consultant to dig more widely into the membership to find out what they want from us.
- / Developing 'value added' elements for core licences, such as the Reteach site for schools.
- / Working with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) on developing tools for nascent CMOs.
- / Further automation to save time and costs.

Authors are the wealth generators of the UK's creative industries and deserve to be fairly rewarded for their creative endeavours.

Our development of income streams remains constantly under review. We aim to strengthen the partnerships we have already built by seeking ways of adding value to our core licences via new initiatives and to ensure our current partnerships are yielding additional income from new sources of payments.

As our world changes because of technological advances, consumer practices, attitudes to copyright and the bargaining power of authors with publishers, producers and, in this digital age, consumers directly, ALCS will seek to gain a current and comprehensive picture of all the opportunities and threats our members are experiencing in their ability to make a fair living from their creations. This will inform us to ensure our membership offering remains attractive and appropriate for all sectors of the writing community. It will guide us in both our advocacy strategy and our business development direction.

We aim to broaden our scope of new business seeking to help develop organisations across the globe, collaborating with others, whenever possible, to collect money for the use of our members' works and to develop appropriate tools to facilitate easy collection and distribution.

2

**We'll educate
as many people
as possible
and promote
the respect
of copyright**

How we'll do this:

- / **We'll develop resources about copyright that educate, inform and entertain audiences**

This is important because — Copyright underpins writers' ability to earn from their work as well as ALCS' ability to collect on behalf of writers. Copyright is often perceived as restrictive and as a blocker; the positives to creators are rarely shared, something that we want to change.

- / **We'll work with partners that share our values about copyright, to help us access relevant audiences**

This is important because — We want to change attitudes in students and the general public, and by working with partners who value the role of the writer in society, our goals can be more easily focused and valued.

- / **We'll support other cultural initiatives across the UK that help to promote copyright**

This is important because — The creative industries are a national success story, with writers at the heart of creation; therefore collaboration on initiatives that support the promotion of copyright are an essential part of the overall narrative for copyright to be respected by all.

What will success look like?

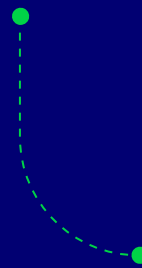
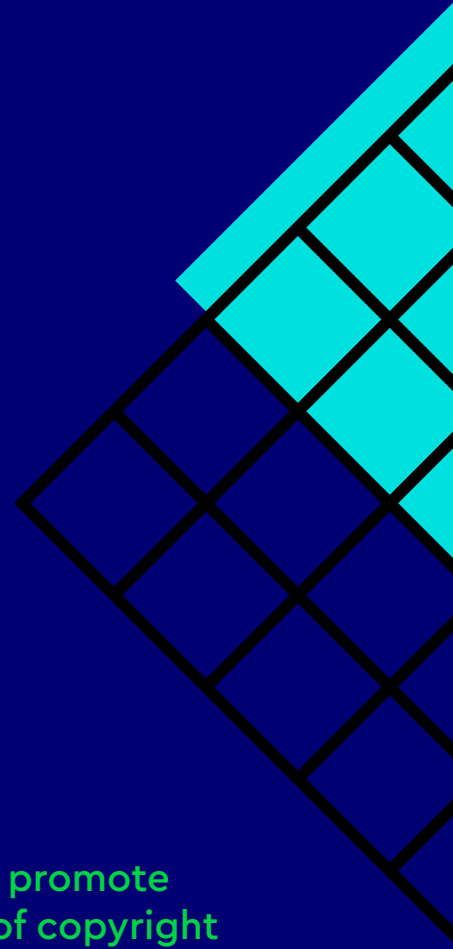
- / Our copyright resources will be valued, promoted and used by our partners in schools and libraries.
- / Students will better understand copyright and the need for it to be respected.
- / The general public will have a higher awareness of the importance of copyright to creators.

Examples of how this might be achieved:

- / ALCS has a long history of developing resources on copyright for use with the various copyright education initiatives on which we collaborate with partners. This will continue, as will our investment in programmes that have a significant reach and promotion such as National Writing Day, National Poetry Day, the Carnegie Awards.
- / We will continue to work with influential partners to promote the importance of copyright, including the National Literacy Trust with whom we have a longstanding relationship promoting *The Reading Champions* in a significant number of schools throughout the UK. We'll also seek out new partnerships where possible to help further share this message with different, relevant audiences.
- / Through our Cultural Support and Development Fund programme we will seek to work with partners who promote copyright among both the writer community and the general public.

Higher awareness of the importance of copyright

Educate and promote the respect of copyright



3

We'll make the complex easy; through technology, data and our committed workforce

How we'll do this:

/ Development of appropriate IT systems

This is important because — Investing in IT development enables us to stay secure and relevant. It empowers us to be proactive rather than reactive to business and industry changes. New business opportunities should be easy for ALCS to adopt and our technology should facilitate this.

/ Making sure we have the right people in the right jobs to ensure effective and efficient processing of monies and expansion of influence

This is important because — High calibre and highly motivated staff are essential to the work of ALCS as well as our ability to process monies accurately and efficiently where human intervention is needed. We also need exceptional influencers to make sure our new business and advocacy work yield positive results for our members.

/ Reviewing and monitoring of our internal processes and policies for relevancy and efficiency

This is important because — We are a not-for-profit collective management organisation. By maximising our efficiency and ensuring that appropriate policies are in place, we can pay out money owed to writers faster and more accurately.

What will success look like?

- / Systems will be agile and flexible enough to support our evolving business but still robust and rule-driven.
- / A high-achieving workforce will reach the desired goals to support our members' ability to write by increasing their income, which includes the right legislative environment for them to benefit from.
- / A robust set of documented policies and processes to support current and future decision-making, eliminating ambiguity and promoting transparency.

Examples of how this might be achieved:

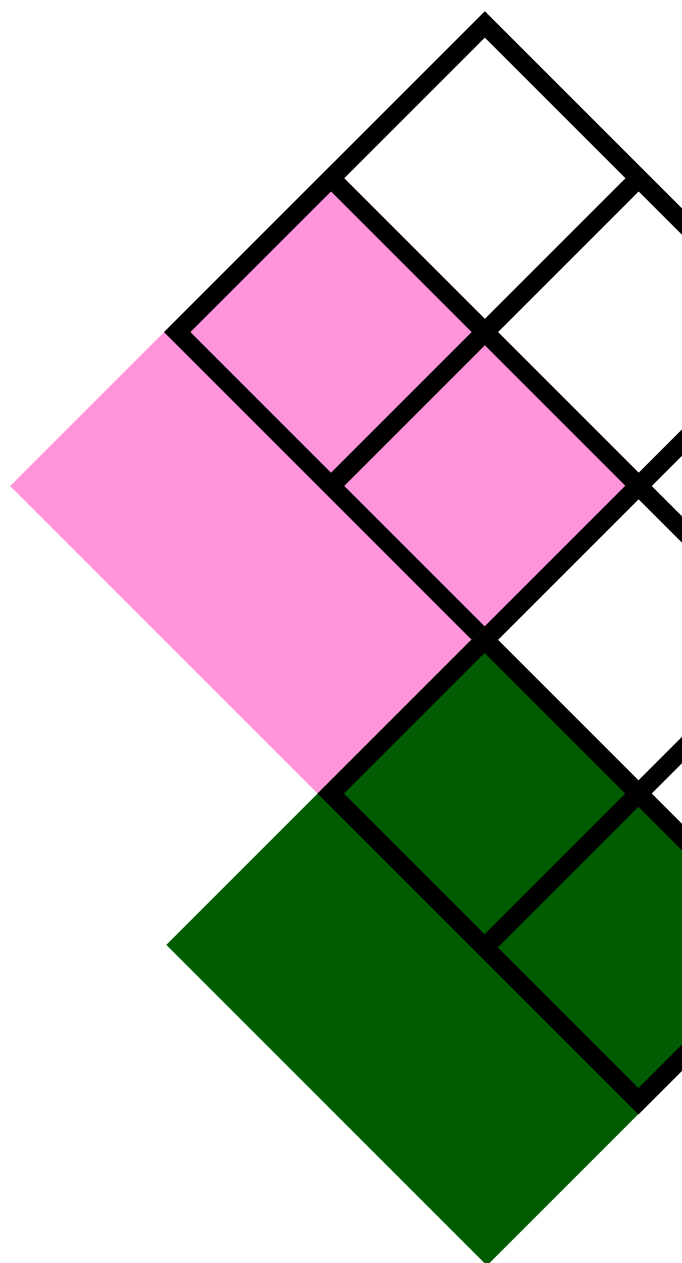
- / We'll invest in Business Intelligence and build the culture of a data-driven organisation.
- / By researching new technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning.
- / By being an employer of choice.
- / Through the automation and streamlining of processes to make efficiency savings.

As ALCS evolves, our methods of understanding trends and proactively seeking to increase and leverage existing income streams rely on good data and business intelligence from both personal relationships and cutting-edge technology. To achieve this, we aim to appropriately invest in our ability to stay ahead of trends and be proactive in our strategy to increase income streams, always ensuring we have the right technology and people in place.

At the heart of our operations lies a bespoke database system which helps to ensure we can process payments to our members in the most effective and efficient way possible. Technological advancements help us to make the complex easy for our members' and technology harnesses the power of our data. However, technology is always moving forward, hence our goal remains moving with the times and investing in and developing our systems accordingly.

As we go through a period of great uncertainty, ensuring we have the right skills to achieve our goals is paramount. ALCS works in a complex environment, processing millions of micro-payments, and we need the best expertise to ensure that our systems and processes remain not only fit for purpose but are future-proofed wherever possible. To do this we will continue to provide a challenging but rewarding workplace environment, whether that workplace be at home or in the office. Our main challenge going forward in a hybrid working scenario is to maintain motivation and cohesion of the workforce.

We aim to make the complex easy but fair and there is always a balance to be achieved. We will maintain our cycle of continuous review of our policies and processes with an aim to streamlining wherever possible to ensure payments are made quickly and effectively.



4

We'll celebrate the value writers bring to our world, fight for their rights and give them a powerful collective voice

We want to ensure that writers are recognised as being at the centre of and crucial to our society.

How we'll do this:

- / **We will engage with the UK Government and act as secretariat to the All Party Parliamentary Writers Group (APWG)**
Why this is important — The voice of the author should be heard by the UK Government when it is considering issues that affect authors' rights and incomes. By acting as secretariat to the APWG we are able to connect with a variety of MPs and Lords across the political spectrum to raise areas of concern for writers.
- / **We'll act as secretariat to the International Authors Forum (IAF)**
Why this is important — This membership organisation of writers' and visual artists' organisations is focused on addressing issues pertaining to authors at the international level and strengthening authors' organisations around the globe.
- / **We'll work to position ALCS as a key authors' organisation both in the UK and globally**
Why this is important — We represent well over 100,000 members in the UK and across the world. The more widely recognised ALCS is as an authors' organisation, the more ability we will have to represent authors' rights and views at all levels.

What will success look like?

- / Our voice is heard and recognised within the UK and international communities, and authors and creators are considered a valued part of the global eco-system.
- / Annual targets for meetings with relevant parliamentarians on key issues will have been met. Subsequently, the Government will listen to the voices of creators and their needs as much as they consider those of the creative industries that only exist because the writer is at the heart of their commercial enterprises.

Examples of how this might be achieved:

- / Holding APWG receptions and events throughout the year to connect writers with parliamentarians.
- / Engaging in global events that are carried out several times a year which enable us to connect to as many members of the IAF community as possible.
- / Building our presence at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and UNESCO as well as developing our offering to members to help strengthen authors' positions across all continents.

The All Party Parliamentary Writers Group (APWG) comprises a range of cross-party parliamentarians who are interested in writing and the role of writers in society. It is run by politicians and ALCS acts as the secretariat. We aim to continue our strategy of engaging with parliamentarians from all parties by supporting regular APWG meetings and receptions to both celebrate successes or to raise awareness around issues of concern and to ask for their help in developing change for the benefit of writers within the legislative arena.

Through our role as secretariat of the IAF we will continue to collaborate with authors' organisations around the world to make representations on behalf of authors at the WIPO, where currently a number of topics being discussed would be disadvantageous should they come to fruition, and with UNESCO. Where appropriate, we will hold events, both in person and online, to raise issues with relevant influencers/decision-makers to make them aware of concerns from an author's perspective.

Through our role as secretariat of the IAF we will also continue to offer help and advice to new and developing authors' organisations worldwide with a view to increasing the voice of the author at national level and increasing income streams of the future.

5

We'll aim to operate in an ethical and environmentally conscious way

How we'll do this:

- / **We will work with others to fully assess our carbon footprint**

Why this is important — We aim to operate in an ethical and environmentally conscious way at present but cannot truly measure our own carbon footprint or fully understand what we can be doing to make improvements; doing this research will help us to understand where we are currently and where we can make more effective changes across the company for the future.

- / **We'll regularly review our Investment Policy in respect to ethical considerations**

Why this is important — Our investment portfolio helps to provide valuable income for ALCS members; we aim to invest this ethically and to constantly monitor and review our policy to ensure our ethical aims evolve to meet approved criteria.

- / **We will make decisions and choices across all areas of the company's work that fit in with our ethical and environmental ideals**

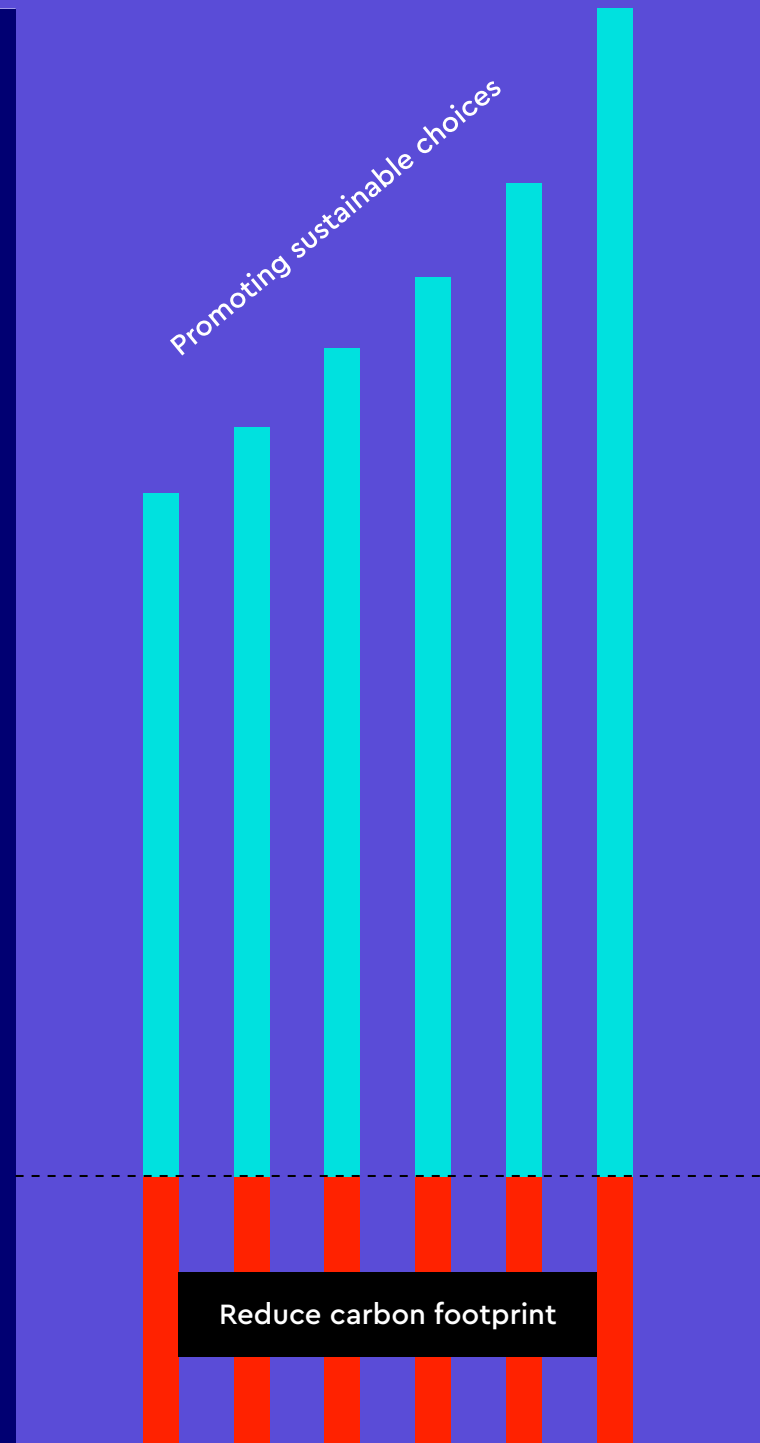
Why this is important — Small changes can make a big difference: from the material we use to print our membership cards on, to the way we choose to travel and the premises that we decide to work in. All decisions can and should be assessed for their ethical and environmental impact and where it is possible to do so, the more ethical, sustainable options chosen.

The changes that we hope to make

- / A transition plan towards carbon neutrality will be developed, with stretching annual targets.
- / An embedding of 'ethical status and sustainability' into the nature of the way we do business and into the culture of ALCS. We aim to operate in an environment where conscious, considered decisions have been made about the companies we work with, the materials we use and the environment we operate in.

Examples of how this might be achieved:

- / By undertaking a full audit of our current carbon footprint.
- / By using the audit to identify areas for improvement and to develop longer term plans towards carbon neutrality.
- / By promoting sustainable choices to ALCS staff.
- / By ensuring our travel policy appropriately reflects our goal to offset and reduce our carbon footprint wherever possible.
- / By incorporating questions about sustainability and relevant ethical considerations into our procurement procedures.
- / By including annual reviews of our Investment Policy which include questions about ethical and sustainable options.



carbon
neutrality

considered
decisions

ethical
status

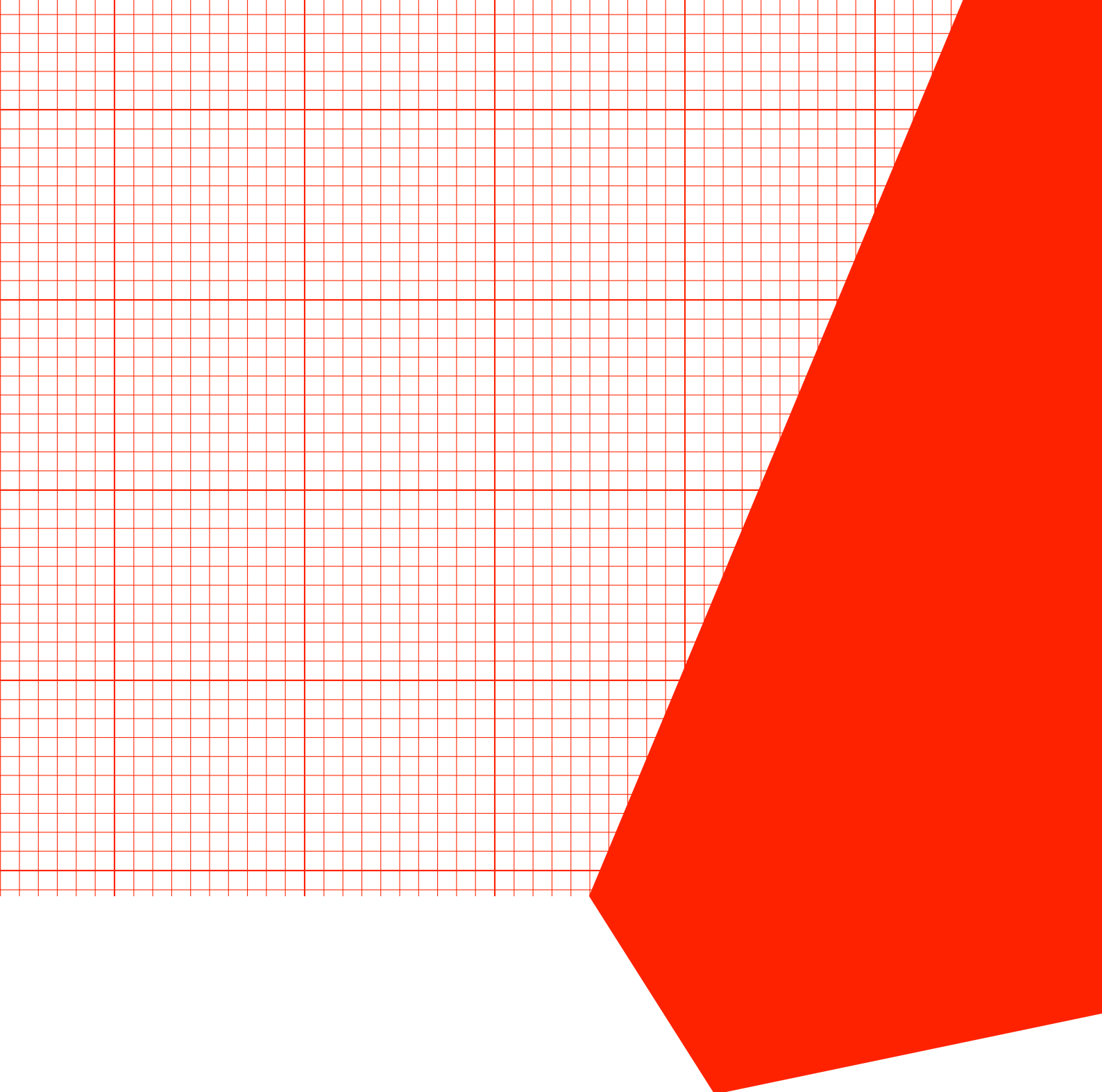
In summary

We have two key goals over the next five years: to improve writers' incomes and their perceived place in society.

In achieving this, we will also establish and develop a respect for copyright. We want young people, teachers, and the general public to understand the importance of writers' Intellectual Property, and to appreciate how it helps to keep writers creating the works we all learn from and enjoy. We will make sure that writers themselves understand how valuable their own copyright is to them.

As we seek to improve income streams for writers, we must have the technology to help us collect, process and pay our members quickly and accurately. That's why we will evolve our technological abilities; so that we can make the complex easy and extend our reach to boldly grow our income streams.

As always, we will continue to take pride in our work to represent our members and advocate their rights to ensure they get fair remuneration for all uses of their creative endeavours.



alcs.co.uk
alcs@alcs.co.uk