

Croquet South East

Chairman's Report 2025

Another Croquet season draws to an end and it is a time when players, clubs, federations and national governing bodies reflect back on 2025 with at times somewhat extreme weather which I think is probably going to be the pattern for the future.

Croquet England has now established itself as the new charitable national governing body for croquet in England. At the recent AGM, Jonathan Isaacs from Sussex County Club and will be well known to most of you, took over as the new President. Just as importantly Andy Dalby-Welsh was appointed as the first paid CEO of Croquet England. He is a lifetime resident of Brighton so we will hopefully see him around our Federation clubs during the years to come. He is new to croquet, so has a very steep learning curve, but has many years of experience in sports administration which will stand him in good stead when starting to tackle his new job.

Also at the Croquet England AGM the new constituencies were confirmed with England now having six elected trustees and up to five independent/appointed trustees. I am continuing as the trustee for the Weald Counties of Kent, Sussex and Hampshire with IoW. Samir Patel is now trustee for The Western Home Counties which covers other parts of our Federation area of Surrey and Greater London. Carol Driver, formally a South East representative, is now an appointed trustee. There are some new independent trustees as well. At least one of which, Glenda Vencatachellum, I believe resides in our area so you may well see her visiting your clubs in the future.

All in all our region is well represented at the top level of our sport. Not forgetting members of the executive and committees.

Croquet South East has continued to run our usual leagues and tournaments and congratulations to all the winners this year. I did send around the Roll of Honour for 2025 which hopefully has been shared with all club members. We continue to be a little disappointed with entries to tournaments since Covid and we would like to see many more entries to these club competitions in 2026. I know Bob Clark, our tournament organiser, has sent around a questionnaire to try and ascertain what clubs would like as far as tournaments are concerned but continuing feedback is always welcome.

We have welcomed new clubs into our Federation. Aldershot Traction Bowls and Croquet Club and West London CC. Unfortunately Medway CC is still searching for new premises after having been forced out of their previous ground by the landlord with just two days notice. Tunbridge Wells CC has given many of their players a temporary home.

The Federation not only runs the leagues and tournaments but supports clubs in our region in other ways. Dougla Shand our Development Officer has been in touch many clubs and supports applications for funding to Croquet England. Also Richard Carline our Coaching Officer has visited many clubs throughout the year to give advice and support. This year we sadly see John Low our longtime League and Tournament organiser bow out. He has done sterling work over many years for which I am sure we are all very grateful. He is being succeeded by Matt Cook from Caterham as the League Organiser who will be in touch with

clubs in 2026. We also saw George Noble retire as a committee member after many years of supporting the federation. He will be greatly missed but Dr Alan Grundy from Surbiton has stepped into his place which we much appreciate.

I would like to give thanks to all the committee members for their work and support during 2025. I know some are looking to retire from their roles in the next year or so. We are therefore always looking for people to step forward to help run the Federation. If you are interested please contact me. The email address is on the federation website.

Many of our clubs have performed well during 2025 both nationally and internationally. In GC Roehampton CC won the 3rd European Club League Grand Final held at Sussex County CC in October this year. The Club also won the Tier 1 & Tier 3 Inter Club Competitions. Guildford and Godalming were runners up to Watford in the Tier 2 competition.

In AC, Surbiton CC won the Tier 1 Inter Club competition with Hurlingham CC winning the Tier 2 Competition. Sussex County CC won the Federations Secretary's Shield.

Many congratulations to all these clubs.

Hopefully many of our clubs will be able to continue to play during the winter months. We are very lucky in the south that this is possible with many northern clubs having to close down. I look forward to seeing many of you during 2026.

Andrew Stewart

Chair – Croquet South East.

November 2025.