

CLUB MARK STATUS FOR CROQUET

Guidance to help clubs become accredited with Croquet England (Gold Standard)



This guidance is designed to provide sources of information for any item in the Gold Standard accreditation requirements that a club would like to learn more about. It is NOT intended that it should all be studied but rather that it can be dipped in and out of and be a useful source of reference. Some of the links are to Croquet England's website and others are to external sites such as Sport England's Buddle (formerly known as Club Matters).

The sections and the numbering in this guidance are the same as that of the accreditation requirements so that it is easy to cross-reference.

To help get your club get started, we recommend that you use Sport England's [Club Health Check Tool](#). This will show you what your club is already doing well and where there is room for improvement. Links are provided from this to lots of advice and guidance in [Sport England's Buddle](#) that will help guide you towards these accreditation requirements. We have also produced this guidance document with links to useful information for each section.

[Sport England's Code for Sports Governance - Tier 1](#) contains explanations of all those requirements that are marked 'Tier 1 requirement'.

Croquet England's [Building a Successful Croquet Club](#) has advice and links, ranging from selecting a site, providing lawns and facilities to business plans, funding, people required, recruitment, publicity, social activities and subscriptions.

The webinar series [Croquet England Webinars - YouTube](#) also has some useful information on Legal structures, Reaching new audiences, Pay and Play sessions, Lawn care and maintenance, Marketing your club and A conversation on diversity and inclusion.

Finally, Sport England has produced a 3 minute animated video [Principles of good governance \(youtube.com\)](#) which explains why having a well-run club is important.

January 2025

Section 1: Club Structure and Management

Club Structure and Management	Evidence requirements	Advice and guidance
<p>1.1 The Club is affiliated to the National Governing Body and its members are registered.</p>	<p>Affiliation to Croquet England</p> <p>Club members are registered as standard associates of Croquet England</p>	<p>Club affiliation Croquet England Club Affiliation</p> <p>Advice available from the Croquet England office or Individual Croquet England Associates</p>
<p>1.2 The Club has governing documents in place and demonstrates how it is managed.</p>	<p>The Club has appropriate governance documents, such as a constitution, that clearly state the purpose of the club, demonstrate how decisions are made and how it operates.</p> <p>The Club can show that it has an inclusive and open approach to membership.</p> <p>The Club is governed by a committee that meets regularly and decision making is recorded (minutes) and approved.</p> <p>The Club can demonstrate that the committee has the skills and diversity needed to operate effectively.</p> <p>Elected committee members are subject to regular election, every 3 or 4 years, and ideally should serve no more than 9 years in succession.</p>	<p>Model constitutions for clubs Information for Clubs (croquet.org.uk) includes those suitable for CASC status and for Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO).</p> <p>The constitution or other governing document should not have any barriers to membership other than overall total number. The club and its members are welcoming to everyone within the local community. Tier 1 requirement 1</p> <p>Minutes or notes of meetings, including decisions made, should be available for all members, on request if necessary. Tier 1 requirement 2</p> <p>An assessment is made of the skills required of the committee. This will include some financial and administrative abilities. It is also desirable to have a good cross-section of the membership so there is a diversity of views. Tier 1 requirement 3</p> <p>Regular changes in the committee bring in fresh ideas and ensure a 'clique' does not dominate. Tier 1 requirement 4</p>

<p>1.3 All those involved in the management of the Club understand their roles and responsibilities and what is expected of them</p>	<p>The Club can show that at least three of the people on the committee are unrelated and not co-habiting.</p> <p>The Club has codes of conduct and outlines of roles for all those involved in the management of the Club.</p> <p>Conflicts of interest are recognised and managed effectively e.g. if there is a conflict of interest, the chair will require the relevant committee member/s to be excluded from decision making.</p>	<p>Tier 1 requirement 6</p> <p>A code of conduct ensures everyone knows what is and what is not acceptable. It is recommended that the code of conduct should apply to all members, not just the managers of the club. Croquet England's Codes of Conduct can be found here</p> <p>Avoiding conflicts of interest ensures decisions are made in the best interests of the club. Tier 1 requirement 6. Croquet England's conflict of interest policy can be found here.</p>
<p>1.4 The Club has specific membership categories and pricing policies as appropriate</p>	<p>The Club can show different classifications of membership categories and its pricing policy.</p> <p>Categories of membership include juniors and/or families.</p> <p>Provision is made for payment of subscription by instalments for those who find a single annual payment difficult.</p>	<p>Membership classification and associated subscriptions should be clearly displayed on the club's website or noticeboard. Different categories of membership may take account of the club's catchment area, different playing times, employment status etc.</p> <p>These categories of membership should be designed to encourage participation by young people.</p> <p>A payment provision for people who find a single lump sum subscription difficult should be available.</p>
<p>1.5 Financial procedures and practices</p>	<p>Budgeting, monitoring finances and financial planning is overseen by the Club's committee.</p> <p>The Club can demonstrate that financial decision making and processing transactions is not managed by one person acting alone.</p> <p>The Club can show that annual accounts are prepared and reviewed independently by someone other than the person who has prepared them, and that the final annual accounts are made available to members.</p>	<p>Sport England provides advice on online banking, business planning, budgeting, managing costs and reserves and getting organised with finances at Managing Money and Planning ahead</p> <p>Prevention of accidental errors as well as possible fraud or theft is less likely if more than one person is involved in all financial decisions and transactions. Tier 1 requirement 7</p> <p>Annual accounts should be independently examined and made available to all members, usually prior to the AGM so that questions can be raised and answered. Tier 1 requirement 7</p>

<p>1.6 Risk management, club resilience and management of liabilities</p>	<p>Identification of risks to the club’s future and its sustainability.</p> <p>Evidence that the club’s resilience is considered when setting subscription rates.</p> <p>Mitigation and control measures for those risks. Management of potential liabilities, particularly for unincorporated clubs.</p> <p>Consideration is given to the ratio of financial reserves to annual running costs.</p>	<p>Identifying what could go wrong or what could prevent the club from meeting its core goals or purpose is the first step to ensuring its long-term future. Tier 1 requirement 8.</p> <p>A club should have sufficient level of reserves to cope with an unexpected loss of income or sudden expenditure.</p> <p>Identifying possible risks to the future of the club and considering ways to prevent, avoid or minimise them. Tier 1 requirement 8. Lots of further information available in Developing a risk register</p> <p>A recognition of potential liabilities and who is ultimately responsible. Tier 1 requirement 8</p> <p>The committee has agreed what level of reserves are required based on its expected annual expenditure.</p>
<p>1.7 The Club’s premises, activities, and coaches are insured</p>	<p>Displaying, or providing to members, certificates of insurance, including the Croquet England Club Insurance Certificate.</p> <p>Copies of insurance of premises (if applicable) and property. (These are not covered by the Croquet England Club Insurance Policy)</p> <p>Evidence that coaches are qualified and therefore have professional indemnity insurance under the Croquet England Club Insurance Policy. Separate insurance is advised for unqualified coaches if they are not under the direct supervision of an insured coach.</p>	<p>Croquet England’s club insurance policy and some FAQs can be found at Insurance for Clubs (croquet.org.uk). All affiliated clubs should receive a certificate of insurance which should be displayed either as a paper copy on a noticeboard or a digital copy on the website. This page also gives guidance on seeking property insurance.</p> <p>All qualified coaches are recorded on Croquet England’s database. Club secretaries can check this at Coaches Referees Handicappers (croquet.org.uk)</p> <p>It is advised that clubs take out their own professional indemnity insurance if unqualified coaches are coaching without direct supervision from a qualified coach.</p>

Section 2: Duty of Care and Welfare

Members, volunteers, and visitors all want to enjoy their croquet, and other activities, at the Club in a safe environment. The requirements in this section will help Clubs to take the steps needed to ensure that.

Duty of Care and Welfare	Evidence requirements	Advice and guidance
<p>2.1 The Club ensures that all activities take place in a safe environment that complies with legal requirements</p>	<p>Guidance for safe play</p> <p>Examples of actions taken to ensure members are safe.</p> <p>First Aid kit</p> <p>Fire extinguishers or other fire prevention (if applicable)</p> <p>Health & Safety policy or equivalent</p> <p>Completed risk assessment forms.</p> <p>Sample accident or incident report form.</p> <p>Records of Staff / volunteers trained in first aid.</p> <p>Hygiene certificate for food preparation areas (if applicable)</p>	<p>Risk Assessments (croquet.org.uk) gives advice on what to consider and a basic template for safe play. Further advice is available from the HSE What to do to plan and manage low-risk, small-scale sports and activities: Leisure activities (hse.gov.uk)</p> <p>Details of what to do in an emergency should be clearly visible. Other actions may include signage, provision of handrails, stop boards etc.</p> <p>First Aid kits, fire extinguishers and fire blankets should be accessible, maintained and in date.</p> <p>HSE guidance for Amateur Sports Clubs – Guidance on running a safe sports club: Leisure activities (hse.gov.uk)</p> <p>Templates for risk assessments and for accident/incident reporting are available at Risk Assessments (croquet.org.uk)</p> <p>The Food Standards Agency has advice and links for Food hygiene for your business</p>
<p>2.2 The Club has necessary provision in place for the safeguarding and welfare of its members (Child & Adults Safeguarding Policies that meet statutory requirements)</p>	<p>Welfare and/or safeguarding policy and reporting procedures linked to Croquet England’s policies.</p> <p>All members, including young people and parents / carers are made aware of these policies and procedures.</p>	<p>Step by step guidance for safeguarding, links to videos and training courses and links to all Croquet England’s Safeguarding Policies and Procedures can be found at Welfare Matters - Croquet England</p>

	<p>Lead coaches and volunteers working in regulated activity are subject to a DBS check at enhanced level including a barred list check; other individuals in DBS eligible roles undertake an enhanced level DBS check (without a barred list check).</p> <p>Implementation of welfare and safeguarding procedures for recruitment, induction and deployment of volunteers (and workforce if applicable).</p> <p>Evidence of how the Club collects and safely stores all members' registration details – to include information on contact details, disability, medical conditions, parental consent(s) and emergency contact information for under 18s.</p> <p>The Club can show how it follows Croquet England guidance regarding photography and video, social media and events.</p>	<p>Croquet England keeps a list of coaches who register as licenced U18 coaches. Contact Croquet England at office@croquetengland.org.uk for details.</p> <p>Details of how to arrange DBS clearance can be found at Welfare Matters - Croquet England</p> <p>Verbal or physical evidence that safe recruitment and deployment is used. Safer recruitment procedures can be found here</p> <p>Croquet England's security and privacy policies can be found here</p> <p>See Welfare Policies - Croquet England for Guidance for photography, video and live-streaming, and for Online communications and content.</p>
<p>2.3 Club Welfare (safeguarding) Officer</p>	<p>The club has appointed a Club Welfare/Safeguarding officer/s with a clearly defined role. It has informed Croquet England and ensured Croquet England has up to date contact details.</p> <p>The Club Welfare/Safeguarding Officer has completed the child and adult safeguarding training courses, required by Croquet England, within the last 3 years.</p>	<p>Club Welfare/Safeguarding Officer details in Croquet England database should match the details provided at the club or on its website. View Group: Club Safeguarding Officer - Croquet England</p> <p>Safeguarding training records held by Croquet England should be up to date. You can check with the Croquet England office.</p>
<p>2.4 There are clear systems to report, respond to and manage safeguarding concerns or allegations of poor practice or behaviour that arise</p>	<p>The Club knows how to recognise, respond to, record and report safeguarding concerns raised within the Club.</p>	<p>Step by step guidance for safeguarding, links to videos and training courses and links to all Croquet England's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures can be found at Welfare Matters - Croquet England</p>

	<p>Where poor behaviour or poor practice is identified the club has a mechanism to deal with it, in the first instance.</p> <p>The Club should have a written complaints and disciplinary policy to address breaches of codes of conduct or the safeguarding policies – this should be communicated to all members, parents / carers, coaches, volunteers and instructors.</p>	<p>The club should have a Code of Conduct and some rules on how it will deal with poor behaviour or poor practice. Croquet England’s Codes of Conduct may be adopted or adapted.</p> <p>A Volunteer Grievance Procedure is provided by Croquet England which may be suitable for club use. This can be found at Governance Matters - Croquet England. Either this or the club’s own adaptation should be available to all members on the club’s website or in the clubhouse.</p>
<p>2.5 Coaches, volunteers and Club Welfare Officers receive an induction which includes information about safeguarding responsibilities, policies and procedures.</p>	<p>The contact details of the Club Welfare/Safeguarding Officer are clearly displayed at the club (if it has permanent facilities) and are readily available to all members via its website, newsletter or other communication methods.</p> <p>Evidence of communication of safeguarding information to all coaches, volunteers and other members and the parents / carers of U18s and ‘at risk’ adults.</p> <p>All club members have an awareness of the safeguarding policies and how to raise any concerns they may have.</p> <p>Records of details of Welfare Officer(s) and coaches’ safeguarding training records and DBS checks available through the Club (or through Croquet England).</p> <p>All lead coaches have received safeguarding training.</p>	<p>A Club Welfare Officer poster template is available at Downloads and Forms (croquet.org.uk)</p> <p>Safeguarding Introduction - Croquet England includes a link to a free child safeguarding course that is highly recommended.</p> <p>Coaches who coach U18s should now be licenced by Croquet England. Details available at Coaching under 18s (croquet.org.uk)</p>

Section 3: Playing Facilities and Coaching Programme

What playing facilities and opportunities is your Club providing, when are you providing them, how are you delivering them and by whom?

Most people have many competing claims on their time. They want opportunities that are fun, sociable, convenient and competitive. They want to be able to progress in the sport to whatever is their desired level of achievement. Croquet competes with other leisure and family commitments and so the playing timetable and coaching programme need to be flexible if people are to keep coming back.

Playing Facilities and Coaching Programme	Evidence requirements	Advice and guidance
3.1 Playing facilities and equipment	<p>At least one full sized croquet court, maintained to a standard to ensure safe and appropriate competitive play conditions.</p> <p>Facilities for playing short croquet (i.e. splitting a full court in half or a separate court).</p> <p>Hoops and balls should be approved by Croquet England for competitive play.</p> <p>Sufficient club mallets should be available for all participants on learn-to-play courses to have one each and for new players to have the use of until they buy their own mallet.</p>	<p>Advice on Croquet Lawns: Their construction, maintenance and development is available at Information for Clubs (croquet.org.uk)</p> <p>See Equipment Specifications and Maintenance (croquet.org.uk) for technical information and Shop - Croquet England for further information on playing equipment.</p>
3.2 The Club provides a suitable coaching and playing programme(s)	<p>The Club coaching and playing programmes provide opportunities for players of all levels of ability.</p> <p>The club participates in team events in local, Federation or National leagues.</p>	<p>See Coaching (croquet.org.uk) for a wide range of information about coaching croquet.</p> <p>UK Coaching has a wealth of information for all sports coaches. Some of this is freely available and some requires a subscription.</p> <p>For details of fun games that can be used as part of a croquet coaching programme or for Open days or social occasions go to Fun Games on a Croquet Lawn.</p>

	<p>Playing and coaching programmes for AC, short croquet and GC</p> <p>Players are encouraged to play in competitions for individuals at local, Federation or National tournaments.</p>	<p>National Inter-Club Events (croquet.org.uk) are for a range of abilities in both AC and GC.</p> <p>Details on croquet competitions, including advice for entering your first tournament, the Fixtures Calendar and the tournament entry system can be found at Croquet Competitions.</p>
<p>3.3 Where appropriate, and in partnership with Croquet England, the Club offers development pathways for all talented players</p>	<p>The Club can show how it recognises and provides support to individuals who show potential or who want to develop.</p> <p>The club has a Level 1 Player Pathway facilitator.</p> <p>Example(s) or evidence of a development pathway with coaching for different levels of ability.</p> <p>Evidence of communication with parent(s) / carers where appropriate</p>	<p>The Croquet Academies offer a full range of courses to develop croquet skills.</p> <p>Croquet England's Player Pathway is in development – links will be provided as soon as available.</p> <p>A merit award scheme is designed to encourage player development Merit Award Scheme (croquet.org.uk)</p> <p>Coaching Resources (croquet.org.uk) provide manuals for coaching AC and GC along with many other resources.</p> <p>ClarkeCroquet: from North to South and CroquetDev - Home both provide excellent material for all abilities. Both sites require registration, but it is free.</p>
<p>3.4 The playing/coaching programme is regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the needs of members and delivery is of a high quality</p>	<p>Evidence of engaging with members to review their satisfaction.</p> <p>Actions taken to ensure and maintain high quality delivery.</p>	<p>Advice on understanding and communicating with your members can be found here.</p> <p>UK Coaching provides a Coach learning framework that looks at the foundations that make up a high-quality coaching environment, much of which is free.</p>
<p>3.5 The Club actively welcomes and encourages new members and delivers sessions appropriate to their ability</p>	<p>Evidence of sessions for new members and delivery of sessions appropriate for beginners.</p>	<p>The rules of garden croquet are explained here</p> <p>Ideas for Fun games to use as part of coaching sessions or for Open Days, corporate events etc.</p>

	<p>Sessions to meet the varying abilities of all beginners and those in the early stages of their playing career.</p> <p>Availability of sessions to meet working people's time limitations e.g evening or weekend coaching, Pay to Play.</p>	<p>Further coaching resources are available at AC and GC coaching resources</p>
<p>3.6 The Club ensures all coaches are appropriately qualified and meet minimum standards as set by Croquet England.</p>	<p>Evidence of encouragement for active coaches to become qualified coaches or engagement with other clubs/academies to provide shared coaching.</p> <p>Records maintained of all coaches and their relevant qualifications.</p>	<p>See Coaching (croquet.org.uk) for how to become a coach and how to upgrade coaching qualifications.</p> <p>All Croquet England qualified coaches are listed at here</p>
<p>3.7 Coaches, volunteers, Club Welfare Officers and all those involved in delivery of suitable activity / playing programme understand their roles, responsibilities and expected standards of behaviour.</p>	<p>People in the various roles can explain their roles, responsibilities and expected standards of behaviour.</p> <p>Code(s) of conduct and role outlines are given to coaches, Club Welfare Officers and other volunteers with specific roles. Demonstrate how this is implemented at induction and reviewed within the Club.</p>	<p>Croquet England's Codes of Conduct is a useful starting point on behaviour Governance Matters - Croquet England.</p> <p>UK Coaching's Code of Practice for Sports Coaches is recommended reading.</p> <p>The role of club welfare officer can be found at Club Welfare Officers - Croquet England</p>
<p>3.8 Those involved in the delivery of the playing programme are provided with support and participate in training and development.</p>	<p>Evidence of training and development for coaches such as progression in Level of coaching qualifications, membership of UK Coaching, courses undertaken etc.</p>	<p>See Coaching (croquet.org.uk) for how to become a coach and how to upgrade coaching qualifications.</p>
<p>3.9 Assignment of handicaps</p>	<p>A club handicapper is appointed to assign handicaps to all members who have been with the club for 12 months or more, or arrangements made with the Federation handicapper to do this.</p> <p>Club handicappers capable of assessing both GC and AC handicaps are appointed.</p>	<p>Details about the handicapping system are given in Principles and Overview of Croquet Handicapping</p> <p>The role of handicappers is explained in Managing the Handicap System (croquet.org.uk)</p>

<p>3.10 The Club has a vision for its development.</p>	<p>The Club can show it has discussed, within its committee and with its members, ways to develop and improve the club and it has some actions planned.</p> <p>A 3 to 5-year development and/or improvement plan has been developed in consultation with the members.</p> <p>The resources needed to achieve the plan have been identified.</p> <p>Action points are assigned to individuals or small groups and overseen by the general committee.</p> <p>An update on progress of the development and/or improvement plan is provided to members annually.</p>	<p>A great deal of information is available on Develop and grow Buddle, including the importance of planning and creating a development plan, both of which have links to further information.</p> <p>Marketing strategy Buddle helps clarify what you offer, what you want to achieve and how you get there.</p> <p>Some croquet specific resources are given in Build a Successful Croquet Club</p>
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Section 4: Knowing your Club and Community

Having a friendly, welcoming and sociable club is one of the most important factors in being a club member. This is crucial in retaining members as well as making new members feel welcome. Your club also needs to be known in your area. Word of mouth and personal recommendation are the most frequent ways new members find out about croquet.

This is also about recognition of all the people who make playing croquet possible, particularly all those volunteers who help the club run, and keeping your existing members happy.

Knowing your Club and Community	Evidence requirements	Advice and guidance
<p>4.1 The Club engages with and demonstrates an awareness and appreciation of who its current members, volunteers, coaches, and club officers are.</p>	<p>The Club recognises and regularly thanks the contribution of coaches, volunteers, instructors, club officers and Club Welfare Officer(s).</p> <p>The Club actively engages in succession planning through constant effort to recruit new coaches, volunteers and committee members.</p>	<p>Contributions can be recognised publicly, e.g. at the AGM or in club newsletter, and privately with thank you emails.</p> <p>Top tips for retaining volunteers can be found here</p> <p>Advice on succession planning can be found here</p>
<p>4.2 The Club creates an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members at all levels.</p>	<p>The Club has information specifically for new members as part of induction; this can be in a range of formats.</p> <p>The Club welcomes and encourages new members from all sectors of the community and uses appropriate methods of communication to engage different sectors.</p> <p>The Club has an inclusion and diversity and/or equity policy. Coaches, volunteers, club officers and Club Welfare Officers are made aware of the inclusion policy of the Club.</p> <p>The Club creates opportunities to actively engage specific groups in coaching, volunteering, committee, and other roles.</p> <p>The Club can show how it provides an inclusive programme for specific groups e.g. introductory sessions for targeted groups - women's session, youth, disabled participants etc.</p>	<p>A major report on Improving Inclusivity and Diversity in Croquet has many ideas that clubs can implement.</p> <p>Some 'Welcome' templates in different languages can be downloaded from Downloads and Forms (croquet.org.uk) (at the very bottom of the page)</p> <p>Being inclusive Buddle explains how to diversify your offer, improve accessibility, creating an inclusive culture and communicating with different groups.</p> <p>Croquet England's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and Procedures are available at Welfare Policies - Croquet England</p>

<p>4.3 The Club proactively encourages new members and manages the process for waiting lists where this applies</p>	<p>The Club assigns an appointed person for new member enquiries.</p> <p>The Club has due process in place for waiting lists (if operating at full capacity) and communicates these as required.</p> <p>Evidence that the Club has an agreed approach to increase participation from specific groups / audiences, such as ethnic minorities, disabled participants, and young people.</p>	
<p>4.4 The Club actively engages with its members</p>	<p>The Club can show ongoing communications with members e.g. newsletters, website, social media etc.</p> <p>The Club consults with members to ensure it meets their needs e.g. quality of facility, coaching, subscriptions.</p> <p>Evidence that the Club acts on feedback following consultation with members.</p>	<p>Tier 1 requirement 5 People who know your club well can communicate more effectively and are more likely to want to get involved.</p> <p>Advice on understanding and engaging with your participants can be found here</p>
<p>4.5 Retention of members is essential for the long-term survival of the club</p>	<p>The club examines the retention figures of new members into their 2nd and 3rd year and discusses ways to improve retention. Club can demonstrate activities aimed at retention of members.</p> <p>Evidence that the Club actively follows up with non-active members and lapsed members to re-engage.</p> <p>Feedback from new members, near the end of their first season, is acquired.</p> <p>Feedback from members who have left is sought.</p> <p>An action programme to improve retention, based on the above feedback, is developed and regularly reviewed in the light of updated retention figures.</p>	<p>Some advice on retention can be found in Planning for Recruitment and Retention (croquet.org.uk)</p>

<p>4.6 Engagement with the wider community</p>	<p>Evidence of using the press, social media, posters or other methods to let the wider community know where your club is and what it does.</p> <p>Holding Open Days that are widely advertised in the local community.</p> <p>Examples of appropriate sessions developed to engage different sections of the local community e.g. schools, local employers, youth organisations and community groups.</p>	<p>Communications Buddle has tips and guidance on the best ways to keep people informed and how to engage with different audiences.</p> <p>Social media Buddle contains a lot of advice on using social media to connect with members, and the wider community.</p> <p>Croquet England's Communications Toolkit provides lots of information on working with the media, taking good photos, video and radio, blogging, social media and writing for websites.</p>
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