



# Report of the 2022 Quinquennial Survey of Croquet Players



2022 Survey of Croquet Players

December 2022

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# Executive Summary

## **Introduction**

This survey, the fifth five-yearly one organised by the Croquet Association (CA), was conducted from 22<sup>nd</sup> March to 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022. Though members were offered the opportunity to respond by post, only 23 paper replies were received in a total of 2269 responses; the remainder were submitted on line.

The membership structure of the CA has changed since the last survey in 2017. The previous categories of “associates” and “non-members” have changed to “Premium Members” and “Standard Members”. This change contributes to the number of CA members increasing more than fourfold since the last survey. In addition, the number of members in clubs has increased by 18%\* to 8863 over the same period. A further consequence of this structural change is that it is now far easier to contact members directly.

Sport England, through their Code of Sports Governance, requires national governing bodies such as the CA to acquire a much more detailed understanding of their members than before. Being more inclusive and increasing diversity among our members is an expectation of Sport England and it also offers opportunities for recruitment, fresh ideas and enthusiasm. This survey includes new questions to gain a better understanding of our members.

The survey was established by the Executive Board who set the objectives, and it was led by a small team. Many others across the CA helped to check and refine the questions. Club secretaries were key in helping to promote the survey and to attract players who are not members of a club or CA to respond.

## **Methodology**

The questions were created from previous surveys and by using a recent report on inclusivity and diversity. They were refined through a broad consultation process that included the use of focus groups. This brought other insights such as the need for a set of “frequently asked questions” and an edited, shorter set of questions for members under the age of eighteen. It was created for on-line completion, with an option for members to receive a paper questionnaire. An extensive communication plan ensured members were well informed in advance and were reminded to complete the survey. Members were incentivised through a chance to win one of four £150 CA shop vouchers for their own use or for their club.

The 2269 responses is a 56% increase on the responses to the 2017 survey.

Analysis was based on three key assumptions; the data was correct; submissions were made in good faith and each response was from a unique respondent. Significant effort has been made to preserve the anonymity of responses.

## **About You (Part 1)**

A similarity between the percentage of respondents to percentage of CA members in each seven geographical voting constituencies confirms there is no geographical bias to the survey results.

The median age of members is 73, increasing from 70 in 2017 and 65 in 2007. The loss of members under 60 years of age continues. The age profile for males and females is similar.

Almost a third of the respondents have joined a club since 2017: With a median age of 68, the new members are on average two years older than the new recruits in the last survey and 84% of them are

over 60. The challenges of an ageing membership remain, and a full analysis of the problem taken from the 2017 survey results is repeated as an appendix to this report.

11 of the 40 CA members who are under 25 responded to the survey. This cohort is too small to present a separate analysis.

The percentage of female respondents is significantly higher than before. This may be because the change in the membership structure results in more female members, rather than an increase in the number playing croquet. However only 24% of females are premium members which is reflected in their under-representation in tournaments.

Whereas, according to the ONS, 13% of the population of England and Wales are from minority ethnic backgrounds only 2% of the respondents are from Asian, Black or Arabic origin or are multi-ethnic.

Over 71% of the respondents are educated to degree standard or beyond and only 16% are currently in full or part-time work, the remainder being retired. Over half are, or were, qualified professionals or senior managers.

The survey provided insight to the health of croquet players for the first time since 2002 and revealed most respondents believe croquet has a beneficial effect on their well-being. Further insight is gained into the type and number of their long-term health conditions. Whereas very many respondents have no special requirements to allow them to play, 35% of those that do so, have two or more.

### **Your Croquet**

Over 94% of respondents are members of one or more croquet clubs. The number who have not played croquet before joining a club has increased to 62%, up from 44% in the last survey. The others may have been playing casually, or not at all, for up to fifty years between first playing and later joining a club. The age at which people first played croquet informally can be inferred; over half did so before the age of 30.

The effort to attract respondents who are not, or have never been, club members had little success. 40 respondents were no longer club members and provided some insight to their reasons for leaving. But only 9 respondents have never been a club member. The median time respondents in a club have been a club member is 8 years; the mean is 12 years.

80% of respondents are CA members, but 10% don't whether they are members or not.

The most important reason respondents took up croquet is the influence of family and friends followed by those looking for a new social activity or who wanted to find a new sport after retiring from a previous one. Three quarters said the reasons they continue to play are fresh air, good company and friendly competition.

Just over half of respondents said they played less during the pandemic but over 10% took up the game during this period. The main reason given for playing less was lack of access to a club.

### **The Cost of Croquet**

With the cost of travel rising, the distance a player lives from a club may become more significant. A fifth of players live within walking distance of their club and just under half live within a bike ride or short bus trip. Another fifth travel more than 10 miles are likely to be the most sensitive to rising fuel prices.

Overall respondents think croquet is good value for money. Almost all pay their club subscription as an annual lump sum and 3% of respondents would prefer to pay in instalments if they had the option (rising to over 5% in the lowest income bracket). Club fees very significantly but 40% of adult club members pay under £100 p.a.

86% of respondents said they would be prepared to pay more, or maybe would pay more, to replace some of the volunteer labour that runs the CA with paid employees to support growth and assist volunteers.

### **Your Game**

Respondents were asked for their Association Croquet (AC) and/or Golf Croquet (GC) handicaps: 936 gave an AC handicap, 1525 gave a GC handicap, 646 gave both and 454 had no handicap. Generally this compares well with the spread of handicaps listed in the CA database suggesting the survey sample is a good representation of the playing community.

The number with higher handicaps has risen markedly in both codes. Most likely in AC this is a consequence of the structural membership changes but the change in GC high handicap numbers is more significant and likely also reflects an underlying increase in membership across clubs.

More than half of those who have taken a break from playing croquet cited work and/or family commitments as the reason. The second most frequent reason was “no convenient croquet club”.

As was the case in 2017, GC players outnumber AC players by two to one (61% v. 28%). The proportion of those who play both codes has fallen from 12% to 10% over that time. Among premium members the proportions are unchanged from 2017; 49% play AC, 35% play GC and 16% play both codes.

Over three-quarters of new recruits play predominantly GC. An analysis of data from both the 2017 and the 2022 survey concludes that by and large new players take up GC early in their playing career and are then unlikely to take up AC as well.

Of eleven different types of croquet listed, the most frequently played are GC doubles and GC level play. However, premium members play a much broader range of croquet than other players. The increasing popularity of one-ball and short-croquet that was observed in 2017 seems to have continued.

More than 58% of players who identify as “predominantly GC” have no interest in taking up AC. They view it as taking too much time, too difficult to learn or less sociable than GC. However 28% of GC players do play AC or would like to. Similar questions to “predominately AC” players elicited a different response. Over half of them already play GC and only 20% said they have no interest in GC.

Although no formal definition of “competitive croquet” exists the survey assumes it means “participating in competitions and tournaments”. By this definition 71% of respondents are “competitive” since they participate in one or more of seven listed categories of competitions and tournaments. The remainder never compete in these categories or only play occasional internal club competitions. It is more likely that predominantly AC players will play in Federation leagues, inter-club competitions or tournaments of all levels than predominantly GC players.

A quarter of respondents indicated a desire to play at a higher level than they were currently playing. These include players who aspire to reach World Championship/International Level and those aiming to progress to A, B or C class. The remainder appear to accept, or wish to remain at, their current level.

The two top requirements for external support to help players are “better or more coaching tailored to my means” and “more competition within my own club”.

Of the respondents playing in Federation, CA Fixture Calendar or International tournaments; 31% are female and 68% male; nearly 40% are over 75 and only 7% are under 55. This gender disparity and age profile are causes for concern.

94% of respondents received GC coaching, 68% received AC coaching and 34% received both. Most received coaching from a qualified coach but a very significant proportion of coaching is given by club members and family or friends. Responses revealed a significant number of qualified coaches or referees who are no longer active and that there is a large body of people who are coaching yet do not hold formal qualifications.

Three quarters of respondents are helping to run croquet. Many people have multiple roles at club, Federation and CA level. However the data underlines the well-recognised shortage of active referees.

### **How Welcoming is Croquet?**

A section in the survey, that is new this time, is focussed on exploring what people think about croquet as a welcoming and diverse sport.

Asked how much they agreed with four statements, people responded very positively to “people like me are made to feel welcome” and “the background, knowledge, skills and life experience of all croquet players are respected”. But the survey fails to capture the views of those who may have not joined a club or have left a club because they feel differently. Excluding “White British or Irish” did not result in a significant variation, although a greater percentage somewhat agreed that “people like me are made to feel welcome”.

A large majority (85%) of respondents find their club welcoming; a view shared by those with less than two years in their club. But, importantly, 10% find their club rather cliquey and a similar number feel like outsiders. These views are held to a greater extent by those not “White British or Irish”.

A large majority of respondents are willing for the CA to collect and hold confidential for statistical purposes, their year of birth, gender and ethnicity.

An option to enter free text ideas on how to make croquet more welcoming resulted in 1121 responses that provide a rich source of ideas for all involved in croquet.

### **Communication**

A hard copy of the Croquet Gazette is sent to all Premium, Overseas and Supporter Members unless they choose a “paperless” online subscription. Standard members receive a paper copy for their first year followed by access to the online version. All but 19% of respondents read the Gazette and, of those readers, similar percentages read it on line as read the paper copy. There are ambiguities between the numbers not in receipt of copies and the overall membership status. Insight is provided as to the popularity of types of articles in the Gazette.

Premium, Standard and Supporter members should all receive the e-Newsletter unless they have either chosen not to share their contact details or have opted out. 70% of respondents confirmed they receive it, of whom over four in five also read it. The answers to the question on this topic throws light on the



232 of respondents who don't know their membership status. 100 of these receive the e-Newsletter and are presumably CA members.

More than a quarter of respondents never use the web site and just under half only use it occasionally. In each of six categories it was deemed "satisfactory" or "good" by the majority of those that do use it.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents do not use social media. However there was a recognition that the CA could make more use of social media.

### **About You (Part 2)**

The questions in this part of the survey were optional but nevertheless attracted numerous complaints in the final free text section. Insights from this section include:

Over a quarter of the adult respondents live alone, two thirds are in a household of two people and just 3% have children under 18 living at home.

As to other pursuits, in general individual sports are or were more popular amongst croquet players than team sports and croquet players have a wide range of hobbies and other interests. Gardening and reading being the two most popular named pastimes.

84% of respondents chose to answer the question regarding their income, though cross-checks with other data received in the survey gives reason to query some outcomes. Whereas around 20% of respondents recoded a household income below £25,000, More than a quarter recorded household incomes over £60,000.

Almost two thirds of respondents support charities, with a broad range being listed. Almost 10% of respondents have either made a provision in their will for a club or the CA or are considering doing so.

### **Any Other Comments**

Finally, 969 respondents chose to add free text comments which have been allocated across nine categories.

\* In this executive summary fractions have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Background**

In 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017 the Croquet Association, through its marketing committee initially, organised surveys of croquet players.

These have proved to be very useful in providing data to support:

1. Providing an important foundation for the CA's strategy and plans.
2. Enabling the CA to take into account more easily and fully the needs and desires of members.
3. Promoting croquet more effectively and increasing recruitment.
4. Identifying trends
5. Obtaining financial backing.

In 2002 and 2007 paper questionnaires were sent to CA Members (with their Fixture Book) and also significant numbers of non-members, through club secretaries. Responses from the former were good and the latter less so.

In 2007 an online version was also made available through the CA website. There was a concern that an online response mechanism might introduce an element of bias, because those with online access might be more inclined to respond and these would tend to be the younger and more technology literate players.

However, there was evidence that this fear was unfounded, not least because the majority still preferred to use the paper response method. Making it easy to return the paper questionnaire via Freepost no doubt contributed greatly to this decision.

The methodology for the 2012 survey was a repeat of that for 2007 but with extra efforts to obtain co-operation from club secretaries, to push up the number of responses from non-members, which was achieved. The online option was provided on the CA website and this time 70% of respondents preferred online to paper. Other than age, no significant differences between paper and online responses was measured.

The same path was trodden in 2017, with online and paper options. The online option was developed using Google Forms, a free service, which was considerably quicker to program than that five and ten years previously. The paper version again appeared in the Gazette, as a four-page pull-out section in its middle. For the first time, a Freepost service was not provided, which was probably a factor in boosting the proportion of responses online.

Club secretaries were again asked to help us get to non-members, inviting them to complete either the online questionnaire or an attached paper version, which they were able to print. Co-operation from club secretaries was excellent and we achieved a large response.

The 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017 projects were managed by Kevin Carter, who runs a research company Profundus Consulting Ltd. We would like to thank him for his assistance with this year's survey and to acknowledge the enormous amount of time and effort he has expended developing, managing, analysing and reporting on the previous ones.

## 1.2. The 2022 survey

A significant difference between the previous surveys and the 2022 survey is that membership of the CA has changed.

Date	Number of affiliated clubs	Members in clubs	CA members	Ratio of CA members to Club members
Nov-22	225	8863	7056	80
Nov-17	211	7500	1650	22
Sep-11	185	6110	1751	29

Dec-06	142	4547	1640	36
Dec-01	119	3730	1682	45

Whereas previously there had been associates, who were largely tournament players, and non-members, who were other club players, the membership categories have been changed to Premium and Standard. Premium members are still largely tournament players. Standard members are a roughly comparable group of people to the former non-CA members but the big difference in terms of this survey is that they are now members of the CA whereas previously they were not.

This meant that it was possible to contact these club members directly and it was therefore much easier to canvass their opinions in 2022 than has been possible with previous surveys. Club secretaries were still an important communication channel for encouraging all their members to fill out the survey and for contacting their members who have not taken up free standard membership.

The two years leading up to the 2022 survey had probably been one of the most disruptive periods since World War II, with the Covid-19 pandemic sweeping the World. Both the 2020 and 2021 croquet seasons had been affected, although croquet was lucky to be a summer, naturally social-distanced sport that could take advantage of relaxations in the lockdown rules when they occurred. Some clubs saw an upsurge in interest in the sport as people looked for a low-risk outdoor activity. Other clubs struggled when their older members were reluctant to venture out to play or maintain their lawns.

The expectation that all National Governing Bodies in sport meet the high standards of governance set by Sport England in their Code of Sports Governance (2021) requires a more detailed knowledge and understanding of our members than we have previously had or needed to have. Making the sport inclusive and increasing the diversity of those playing croquet not only brings us more into line with expectations of a modern sporting body but it also extends opportunities for recruitment and brings in new ideas and fresh enthusiasm. Being seen by others to be the welcoming and inclusive sport that we think we are from our own experience, is essential. However, the only guide we have had to such basic information as the age and gender of croquet players has been entirely from the 5-yearly snapshot of those members responding to the survey and we have had no information at all on ethnicity or health.

Some of the questions are identical to those in previous surveys. This is because we wished to measure trends and changes over time. Others are completely new. Overall, this survey was much more comprehensive than previous surveys.

The 2022 Quinquennial Survey Team was established by the Executive Board and comprised Eugene Chang, Paul Brown and Beatrice McGlen.

Other thanks are due to the CA committees who put forward suggestions for information that would be useful to their work; to members of Council and the Executive Board who checked questions and made suggestions; to the focus group of club and non-club croquet players who helped refine, sense-check and try to break the survey; and to the staff in the CA Office who very efficiently handled queries and sent out and input data from paper returns. Finally, of course, to all those croquet players who responded to the survey.

### **1.3. Objectives**

The aims of the survey were:

- To capture the current 'state' of croquet within the CA's domain
- To measure changes over the last five years (including the pandemic)
- To assess the state of the game including AC v GC, competitiveness, handicapping and coaching
- To better understand diversity and inclusion in croquet,
- To generate analysis to guide future decisions on governance, recruitment, fund raising and sponsorship,
- To generate analysis to improve marketing and PR at both national and club level.
- To provide information to help clubs and Federations

The survey was scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 and 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022. This included the Easter period when many clubs start their playing season. It was thought that this would help with both direct and indirect communication as play resumed after a winter of covid restrictions.

#### **1.4. Planned analysis**

The following detailed analysis was planned for the complete report:

- Data preparation: checking for duplicate entries, creating derived variables, cleaning data,
- Considering the representativeness of the data,
- Time series on demographics of croquet players, comparing with previous years,
- Understanding what attracts croquet players to the sport
- Recommendations for the CA, and its various committees, and clubs,
- Diversity and Inclusion,
- Covid impacts,
- Thematic analysis of free text comments.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Question design

There were two starting points for the question design. The first was questions that had been asked in previous surveys. The second was the recommendations in the report from the inclusivity and diversity working group to plug gaps in the knowledge about current croquet players. A preliminary draft of questions was produced and circulated to CA committees, the Executive Board and Council. After some refinement, rearrangement, and culling or amalgamation of questions a second draft was produced.

The second draft went to a focus group comprising 18 club members and 4 croquet players from a U3A group who were not club or CA members. The age range in the focus group was 12 to over 80, with 12 men and 10 women. 3 had only been playing a year, 2 were in their second year and the remainder had been playing between 3 and 35 years. There was one junior and one student in the group. Half played GC, with a handicap range of -4 to 16, and half played AC, with a handicap range of -1 to 24. 7 of the group regularly played both AC and GC. Again, there was some refinement of questions to accommodate unforeseen answers, extra options given, some corrections to logic errors and typing errors, and a re-ordering of questions. The suggestion of producing a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) came from the focus group. The advice on how long the survey would take to complete and suggesting a shorter survey with a sub-set of appropriate questions for the under 18s also came from the focus group.

The final questions sent out in the paper version of the survey can be seen in Appendix 1.

### 2.2. Online versus paper

Previous surveys had shown an increasing number of returns made using the online questionnaire. One positive effect of the covid-19 pandemic had been a surge in the use of electronic means of communication and by March 2022 it was felt that the majority of croquet player would now be comfortable with an online survey. The survey was therefore designed using Google forms. This is free to use and has the big advantage over a paper form of allowing previous answers to direct the respondent to the next set of questions. For example, at the very beginning of the survey players were asked if they were Under 18. If they clicked yes then they were directed to a much shorter survey with each section clearly headed Under 18s.

In recognition that some croquet players would not be able or not wish to complete an online questionnaire a paper version was also produced. All communications mentioned that this was available and all they had to do was give the CA Office a call and a questionnaire and a return paid envelope would be provided.

### 2.3. Communication.

A lot of effort was out into letting people know in advance that the survey was coming. An article in the Gazette and the CA website, a letter to club secretaries and a piece in the eNews were all provided about a month before the survey commenced. The letter to club secretaries asked for help in identifying groups who regularly played croquet but were not members of their clubs.

A letter to Federation secretaries and Chairs asking them to help identify clubs that were not affiliated to the CA and a search of the internet for croquet clubs completely outside the organised structure of the game resulted in 23 clubs being identified and contacted.

A week before the survey commenced club secretaries were invited to one of two Q&A sessions held via Zoom. The FAQs and a link to the reports from previous surveys were included with the invitation. Over 40 attended one or other of these sessions.

Emails were sent directly to CA members the day before the survey opened, again with a link to the FAQs and with the link to the survey itself.

Reminders were provided in the eNews at the end of March, by another letter to club secretaries in the middle of April and a direct email to all CA members on the last Friday before the survey closed. Some of these communications can be seen in Appendix 2

#### **2.4. FAQs**

The Frequently Asked Questions can be seen in Appendix 3.

#### **2.5. Prize draw**

An incentive to complete the survey was provided with a Prize Draw. At the end of the survey, in a separate section, people could give their name or the name of a club of their choice. Each completed survey was assigned a number as it was received. Immediately after the survey was closed this last section was separated from the rest of the survey. A random number generator was then used to select numbers. The first four numbers, where a person or club had been given, were awarded a £150 voucher for the CA shop. The winners were published on the CA website and in the Gazette. The prize winners were contacted directly.

#### **2.6. Analysis methodology**

This preliminary analysis was carried out using the open-source analysis language R and its associated packages.

Further analysis was carried out using Microsoft Excel.

Analysis took place between April and December 2022.

#### **2.7. Assumptions, data corrections and caveats**

Assumption 1: all data submitted by respondents was correct.

Much of the time taken to prepare this report has been spent on identifying, and resolving where possible, the numerous discrepancies and inconsistencies provided by respondents. For example (and there are many more!) some declaring as U18 whilst stating a birth year before 2004, some saying they started playing croquet in a year before their declared birth year, some saying they had no coaching or refereeing qualifications and then also selecting they had a coaching and/or refereeing qualification.

Assumption 2: all data was submitted by respondents in good faith.

Unfortunately, it became apparent that a few respondents had just ticked every box regardless of what the options were. These entries had to be filtered out.

Assumption 3: Each response is from a unique respondent.

Only one pair of responses was identified that was identical.

Suppression: To preserve anonymity and reduce the possibility of identifiability of individuals from the data, responses are presented in groups.

## 2.8. Survey response

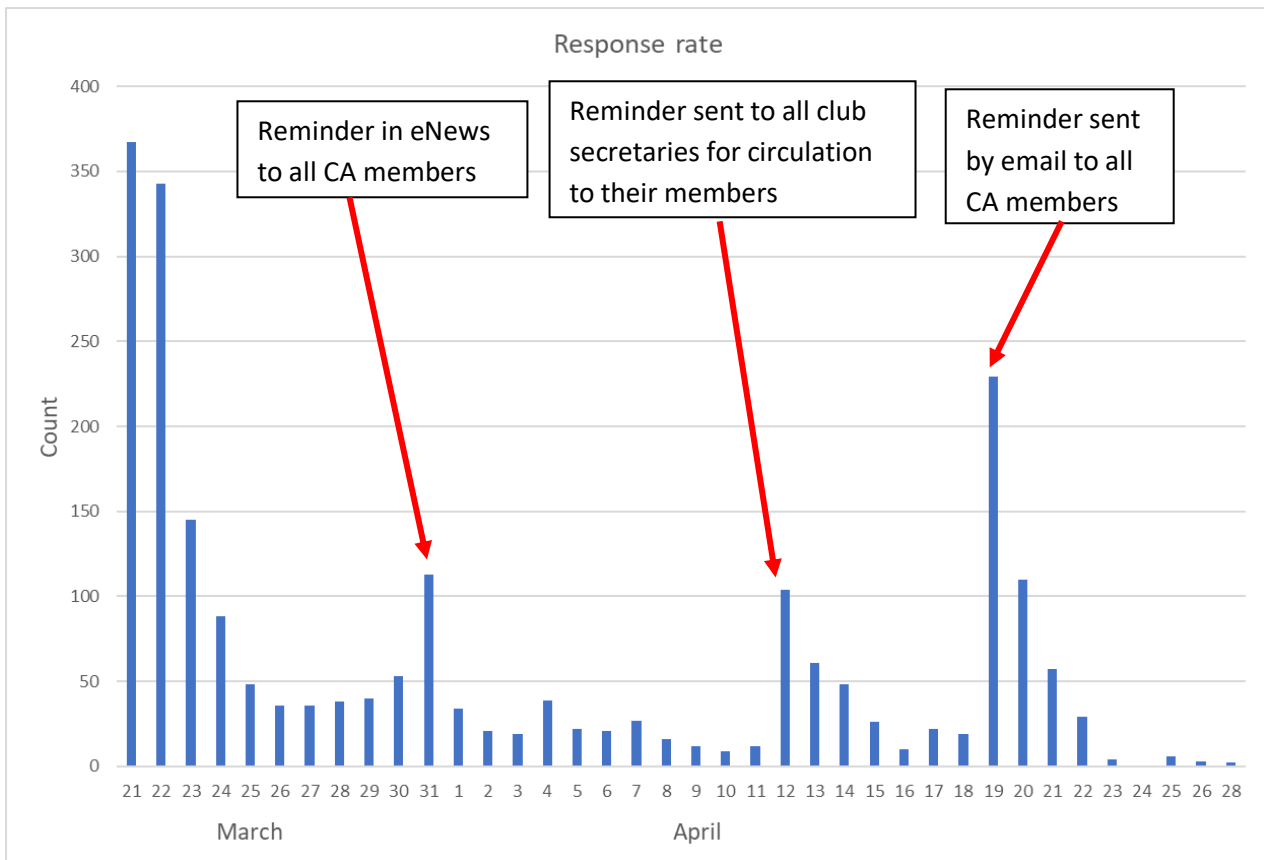
There were 2269 responses including just 23 paper responses.

This is shown in the following table in comparison to response figures from previous surveys:

Year	Total	Online	Paper
2022	2269	2246	23
2017	1455	1274	181
2012	1020	708	312
2007	716	231	485
2002	708	N/A	708

The survey was scheduled to open on 22<sup>nd</sup> March but was actually opened just before 4pm on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March to make sure that it was available immediately after midnight. Somewhat surprisingly, responses started to appear very quickly and 367 had been received before the official start! The survey closed on 22<sup>nd</sup> April but some paper returns were received in the CA Office over the following few days so these were entered. 30 paper survey forms were requested but some of these were from club secretaries who asked for a few in case they were asked for one. 23 were returned, the data from which was input to the online form as it was received by the CA office staff.

As expected, the highest rate of completions was in the first couple of days but there were other peaks, which, as shown below, can be directly linked to reminders.

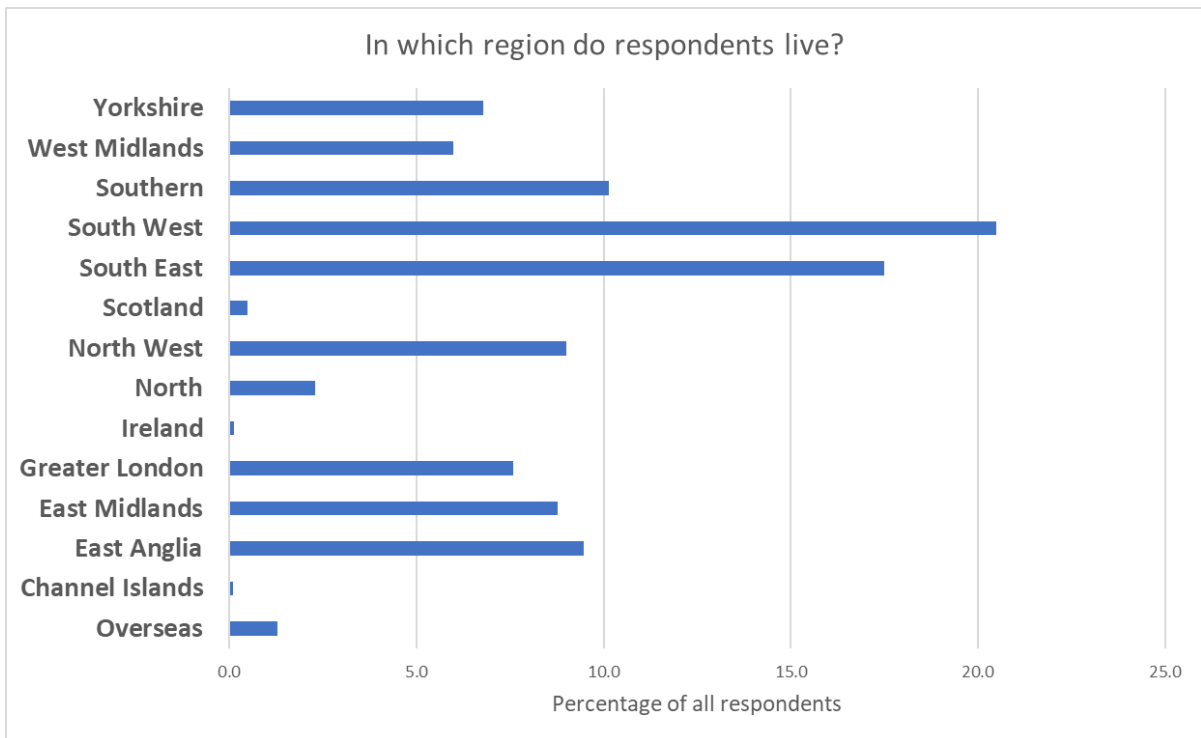


### 3. About You (Part 1)

The questions in the 'About You' part of the survey were split into two parts. The first part provides the demographic data which puts most of the rest of this report into context. It is therefore given at the start of this report, even though the questions were posed at the end of the survey.

These questions required an answer, although all except year of birth and ethnicity had a 'prefer not to say' or 'other' option.

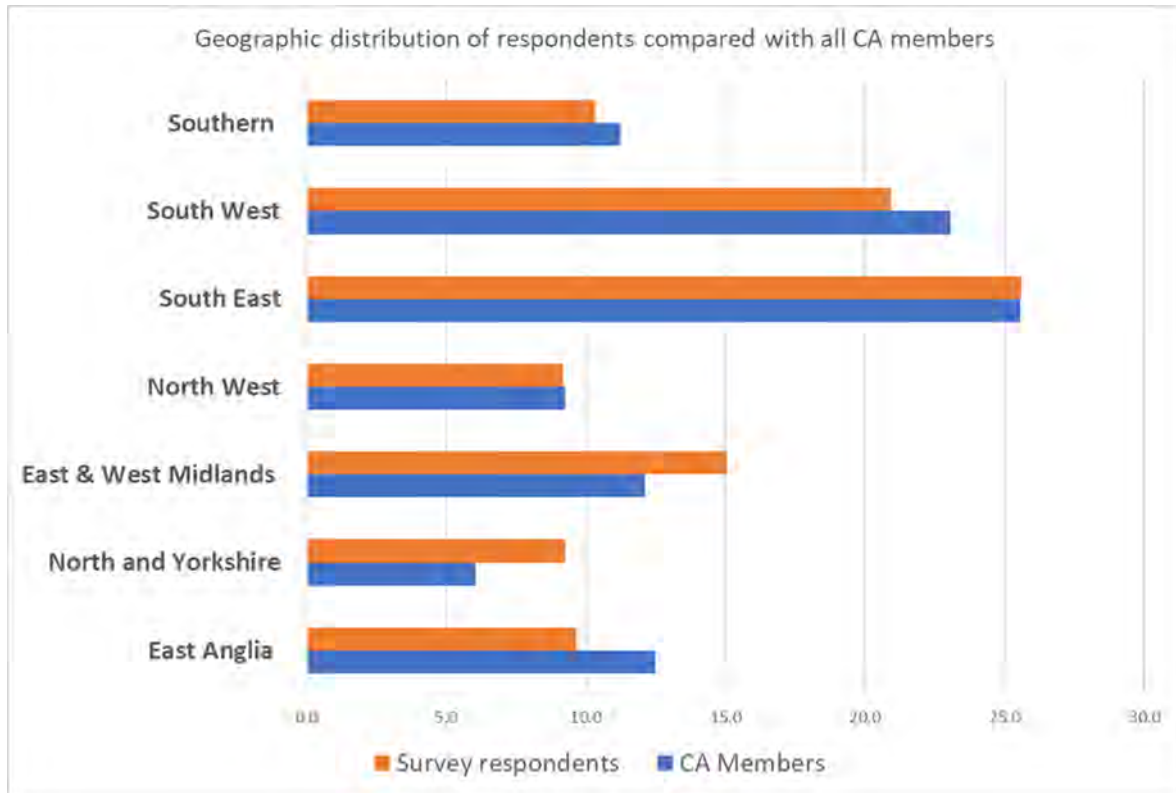
#### 3.1. In which region do you live?



In order to see if the regional response rate was reflective of the geographical distribution of CA members, these results had to be combined into the seven CA voting constituencies, since this is how this data is stored in the CA database.

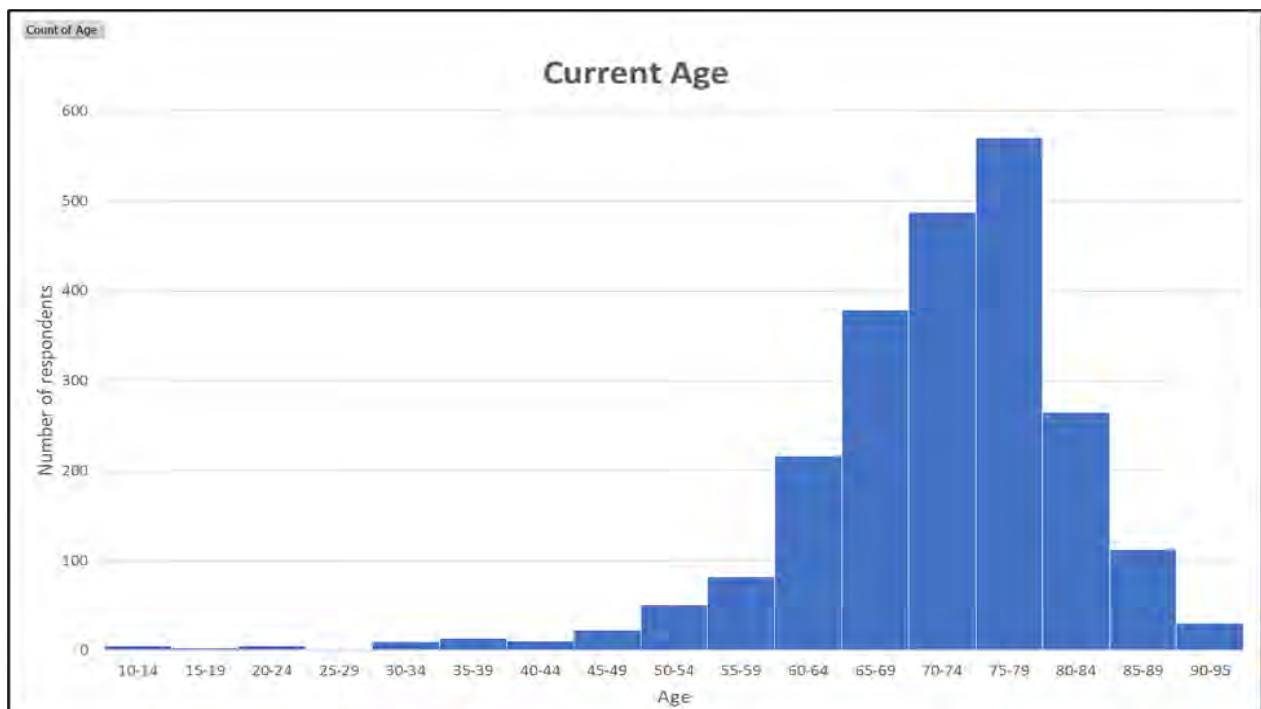
As the chart below shows, the South-East and North-West regions have a response rate exactly proportional to the number of CA members in those regions. Southern, South-West and East Anglia are slightly under-represented, whilst the East and West Midlands and the North and Yorkshire are slightly over-represented. The overall pattern of distribution does not give any cause for concern of results being biased by a disproportionate response.





### 3.2. Age and gender

The age profile is skewed heavily towards retirees and beyond. This is a similar profile to the last survey conducted in 2017 and shows there has been little recovery in the substantial loss of under 60s since the first survey in 2002. The median age is now 73, which is a further rise from 70 in 2017 and 65 in 2007. The age profile for men and women is very similar.

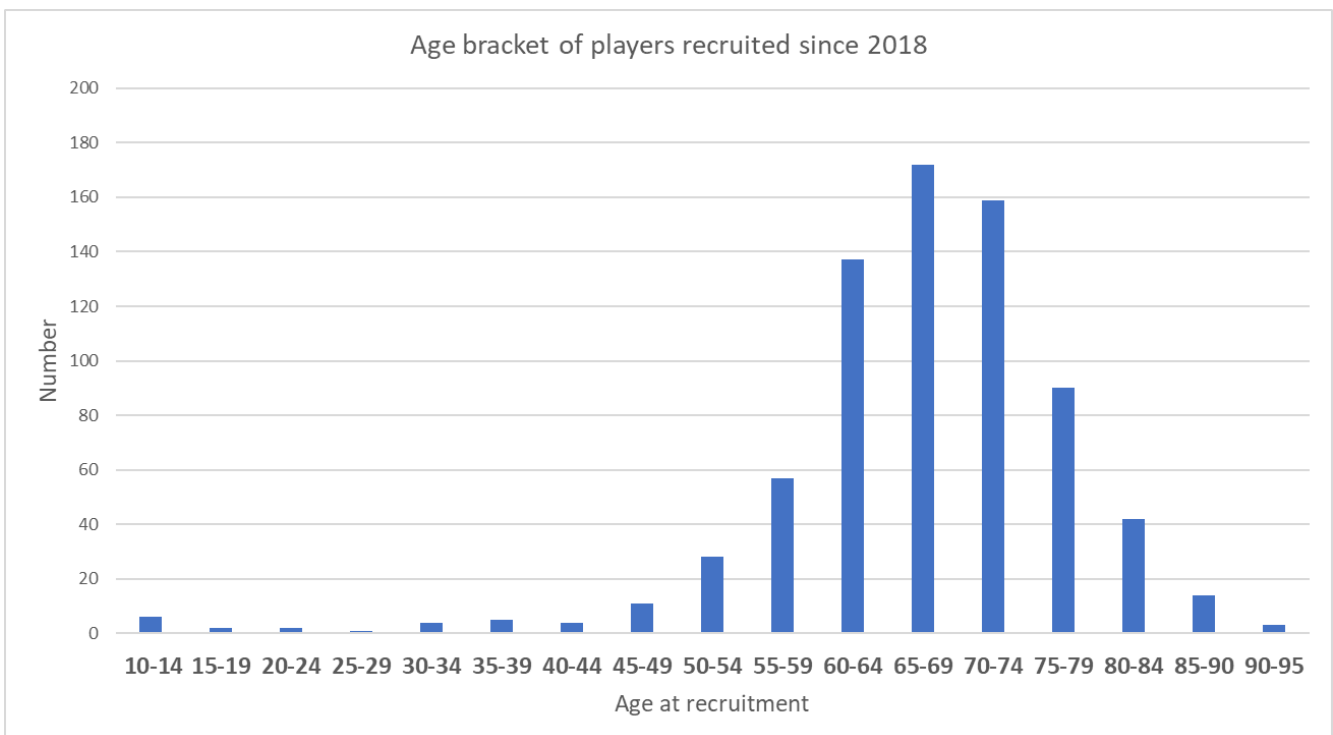


As the graph shows, there is a lack of players below retirement age. Some of the free comments provided at the end of the survey indicate that club activity that is confined to working hours is very off-putting to working-age people. This includes club sessions, social activities and matches between clubs arranged during the week.

There are currently 40 members of the CA who are under 25 but only 11 completed the questionnaire. Attempts were directed specifically towards them to encourage them to fill out the survey. We know there are others who are members of clubs but not members of the CA and 2 of them did respond. Those under 18 were given a much shorter sub-set of questions. Since the number of respondents under 25 is so small no separate analyses are shown but their responses have been included in the total dataset.

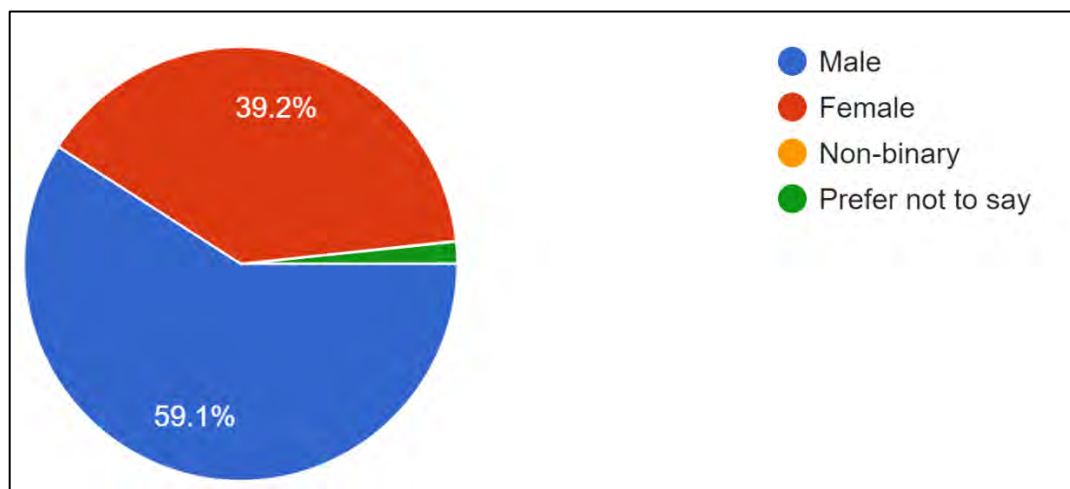
To help encourage more young people to consider croquet, the CA appointed Hope Bourton, in the summer of 2022, as the Next Generations Development Officer. She is liaising with a range of youth organisations and preparing material to help clubs. who wish to work with schools, higher education establishments and other youth groups. It is hoped that a survey in 2027 will show some positive effect of this initiative.

737 of respondents have joined a croquet club since the last survey was conducted in 2017. This represents 32.5% of the 2269 responses received. The distribution of age at recruitment is shown below. The median age at recruitment was 68 years, which is 2 years older than the median age of new recruits in 2017. What is more, the percentage of new recruits over 60 has risen from 82% in 2017 to nearly 84% in 2022.



The percentage of female respondents has increased since the last survey, with just over 39% compared with 23% in 2017. This is probably because the introduction of standard membership has had a greater effect on bringing women into the CA, who were previously not members, and therefore they are more

likely to have completed the survey, rather than a significant rise in the number of women playing. In 2017 only 23% of the CA Associates were women but 43% of non-members were female



Looking at those recruited since 2018, 55% are male, 43% are female and 2% prefer not to say.

There is still a large discrepancy in gender of Premium members, with only 24% being female, which is a similar proportion to that of female Associates in 2017. Standard members are 43% female, 55.5% male and 1.5% prefer not to say. So, the apparent rise in the number of female players since 2017 is almost entirely due to the change in membership status, as conjectured.

The real problem is the same as has been identified in previous surveys - women are less likely to progress to tournament play and therefore do not become Premium members. Some barriers to progression were identified in 'Improving Inclusivity and Diversity in Croquet' published in Feb 2021. These included lack of confidence; perceived competition with partners; playing safe rather than taking risks; and discouragement from others. Sadly it seems the last one is particularly from other women and is a significant factor in them not taking up AC.

2% of respondents said they were LGBTQ+. Just under 7% said they preferred not to say. According to the 2020-Office for National Statistics, 3.1% of the population over the age of 16 identified as Lesbian, Gay or bisexual.

### 3.2.1. The Age Issue

Despite various initiatives by the CA, the ever-increasing age profile is a depressing fact. The median age of a player is now 73, whereas 20 years ago it was 63, and that of a new recruit is now 68. This problem has been predicted for the last 20 years and so far there is no sign of it slowing down. It appears to have become a self-perpetuating phenomenon: older people recruit others like themselves and younger (under 50) people are discouraged by the perception or reality that clubs are run by retired people for retired people.

A player coming into the game at 68 may stay an active participant for 12 years if their health permits; at 48 it would be 32 years. More of these younger recruits would make a huge difference:

- They would have time to develop their skills before physical decline limits it
- They will contribute to running croquet and the shortage of coaches, referees and tournament managers will ease

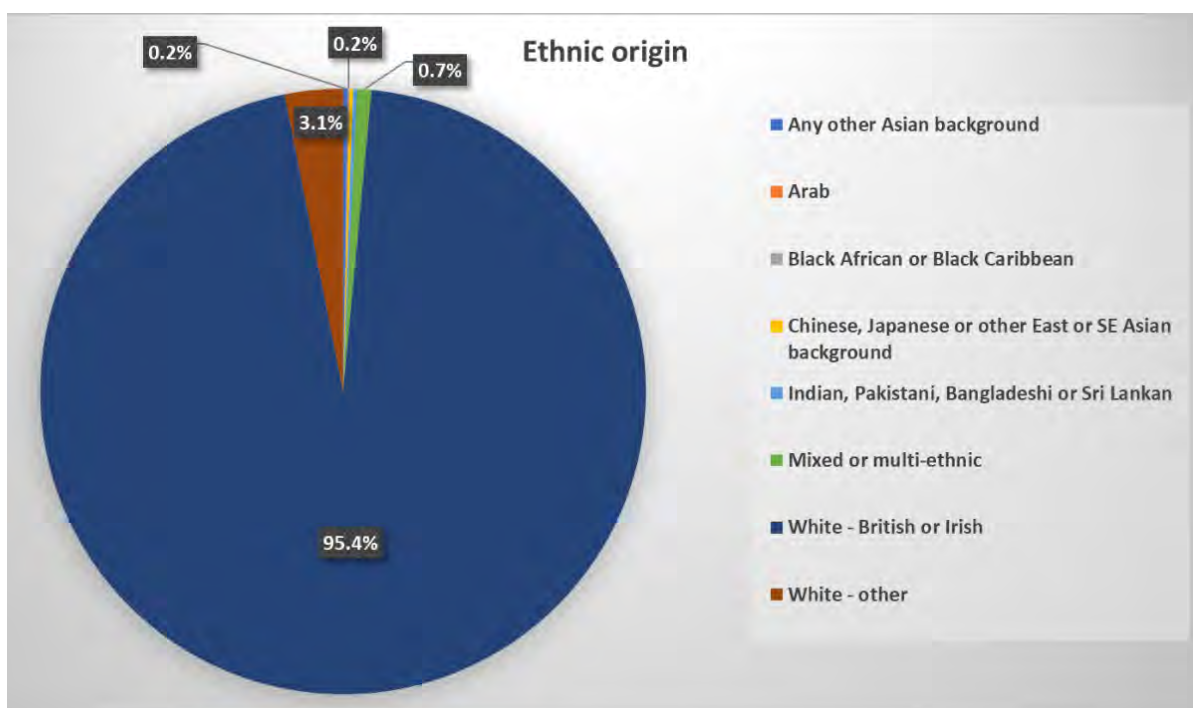
- They will recruit more in the same age bracket and therefore the age progression cycle will be reversed.

A very full discussion of the age issue was given in the report for the 2017 survey. Most of it is depressingly true so it is included again for convenience in Appendix 4 of this report.

### 3.3. Ethnicity

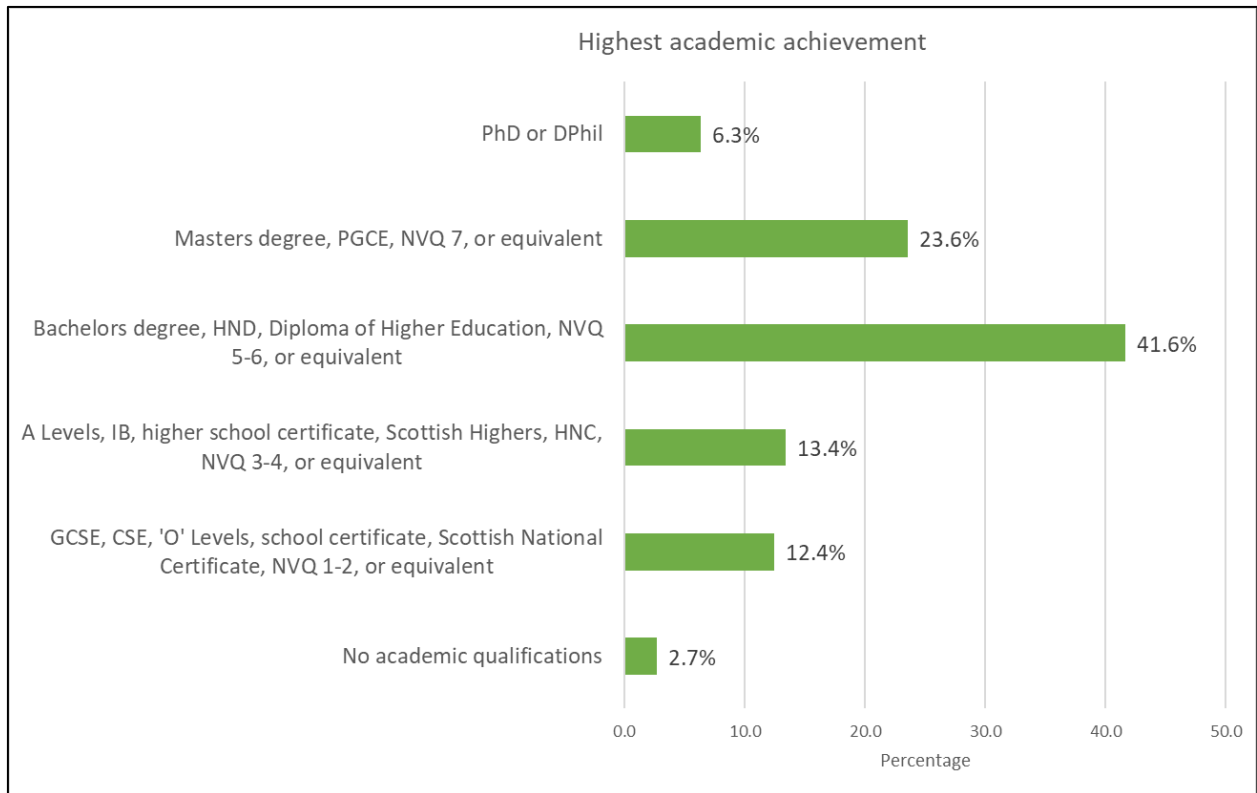
95.4% of the survey respondents are white British or Irish, with 3.1% being white from other regions. A total of only 1.5% are of Asian, Black or Arabic origin or are multi-ethnic. According to the latest figures published by the Office for National Statistics, 13.4% of the population of England and Wales are from these minority ethnic backgrounds.

There is clearly much more that can be done to attract people from ethnic minorities to croquet but over-coming the perception that it is for white people is not easy, particularly if everyone seen playing is white. A very similar barrier exists with young people only seeing much older people playing. Making the first breach in that barrier is difficult but it then gradually becomes easier. Trying to portray diverse images on websites and promotional material is the first step to breaching those barriers.



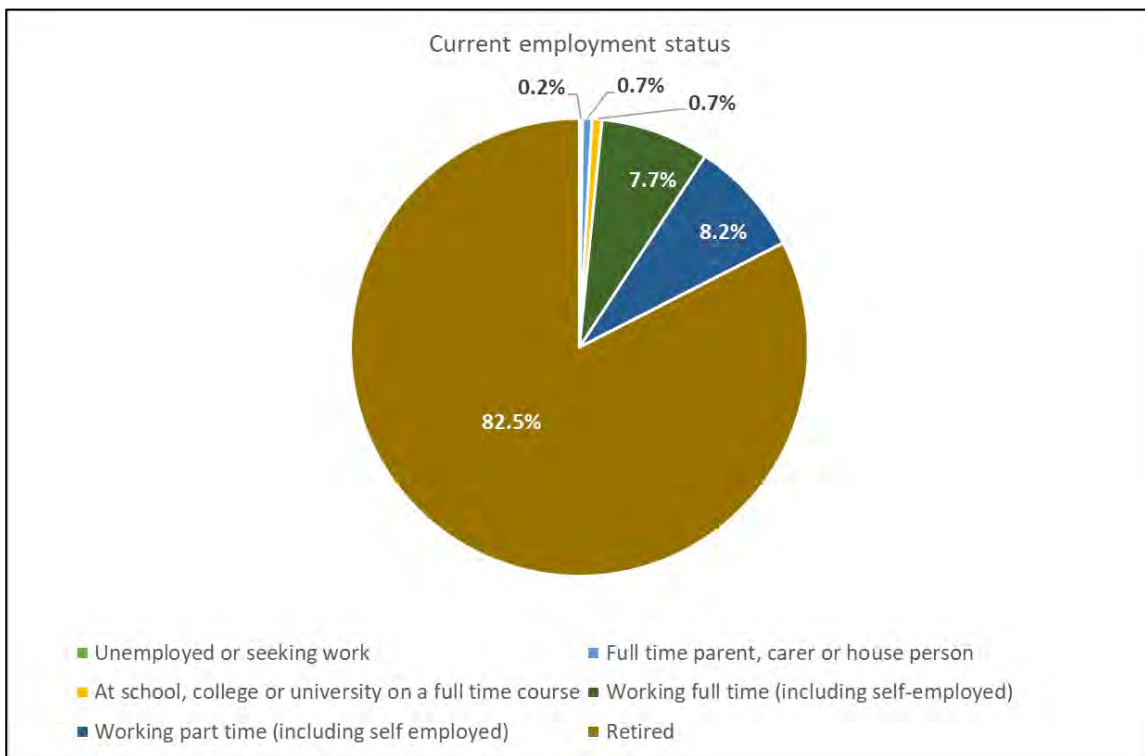
### 3.4. Education

The standard of academic achievement amongst croquet players is particularly high, especially considering the age profile. For people who are now in their 80s the school leaving age was just 14. Although over 40% of school leavers now go to university, in the 1960s it was just 4% rising to only 14% by the late 70s. Yet over 71% of croquet players are educated to degree standard or higher.

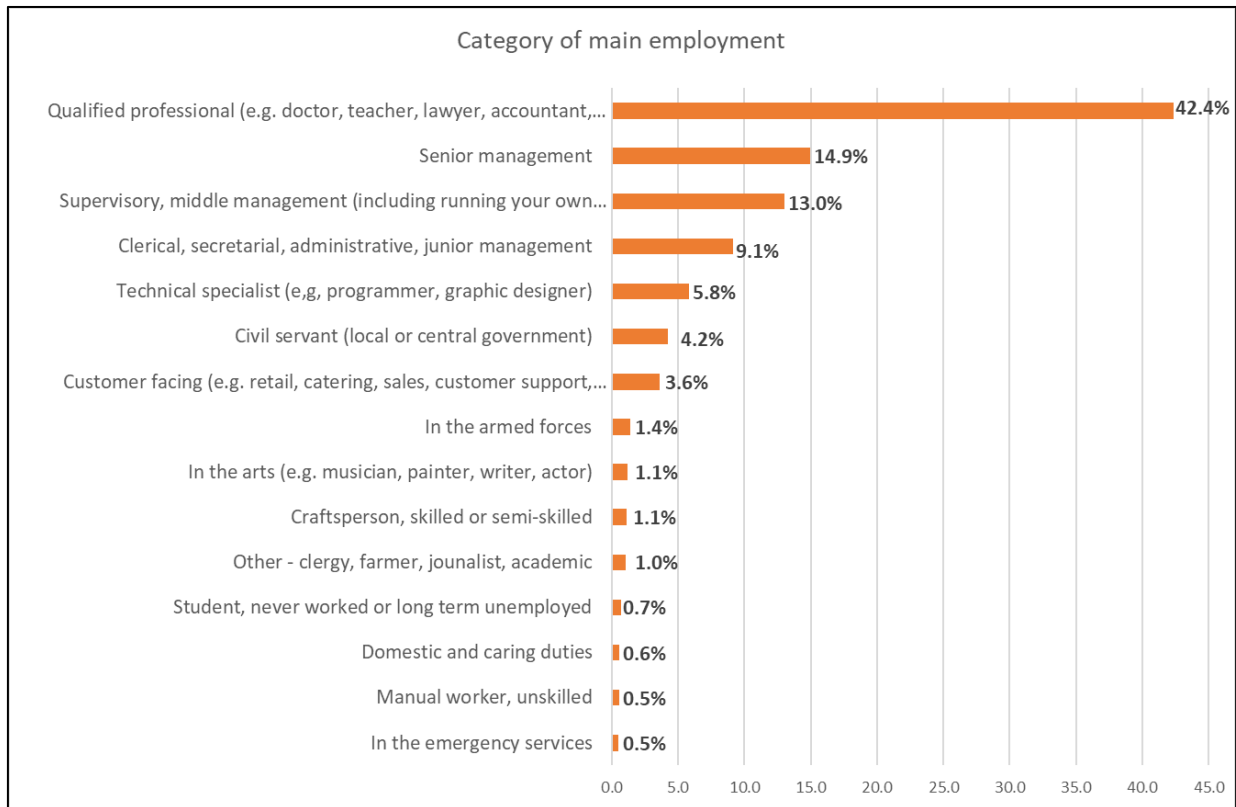


### 3.5. Employment

Croquet players are predominantly retired (82.5%), with just 16% currently in full or part-time work. When croquet players were first surveyed in 2002 only 71% were retired.

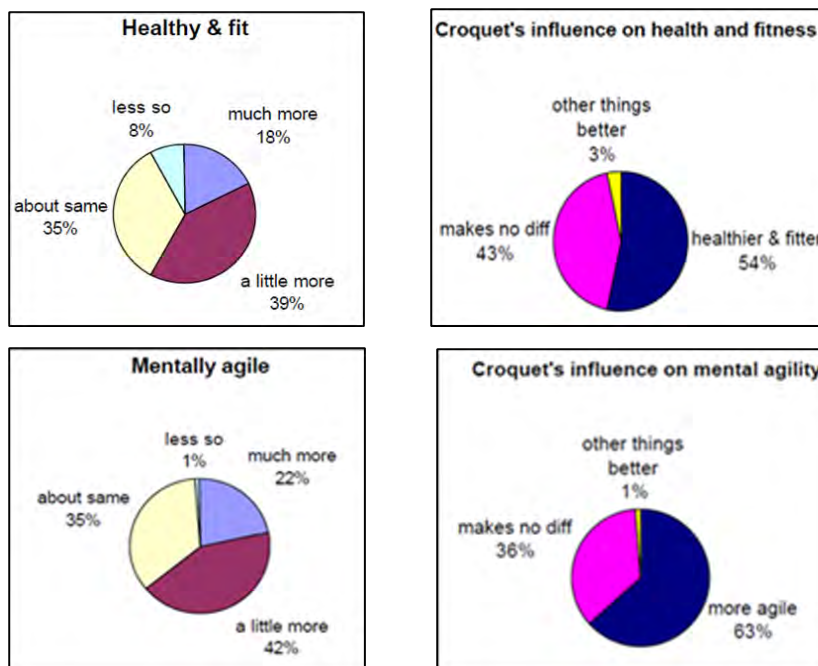


The respondents were asked to pick a category that most closely described their work, or their work before they retired. Over half were qualified professionals or senior managers.



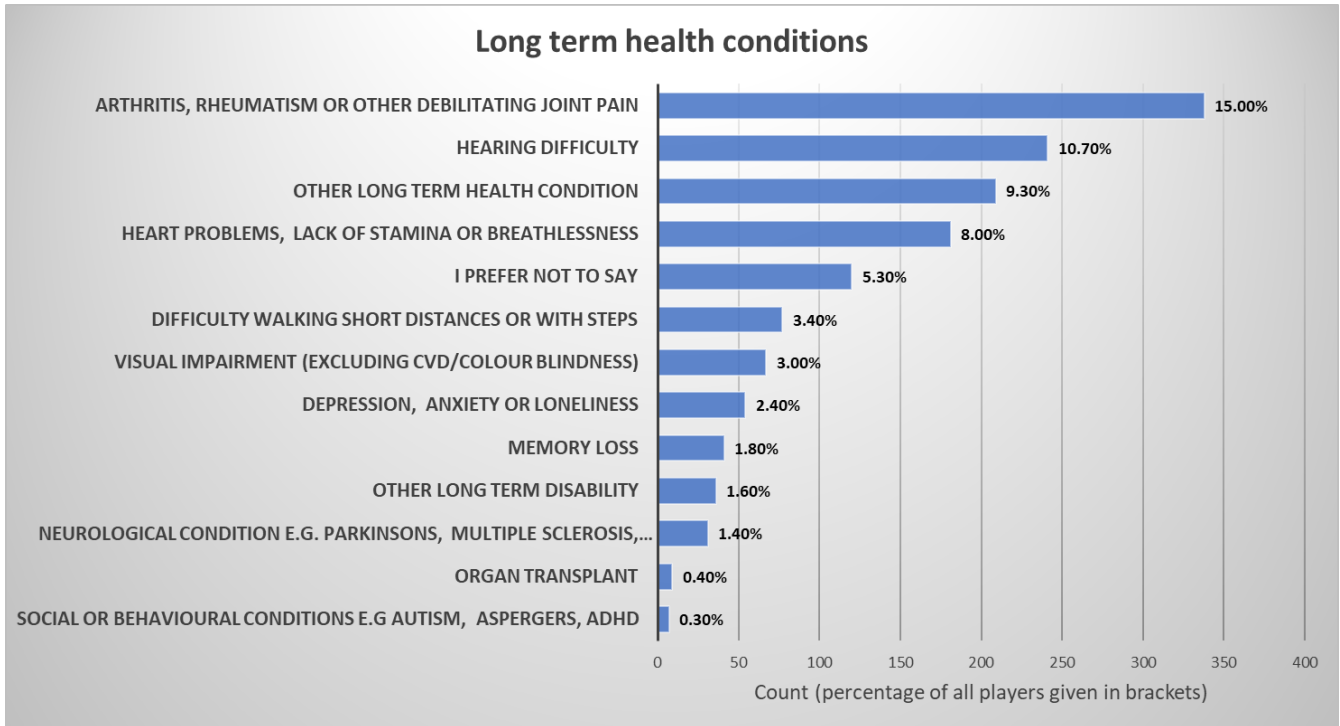
### 3.6. Disability and long-term health conditions

This is the first time since 2002 that data has been collected on the health of croquet players. Twenty years ago 57% thought they were fitter and 64% more mentally agile than non-croquet players of the same age. 54% felt that it was croquet that kept them healthier and fitter and 63% thought croquet helped improve or maintain mental agility.



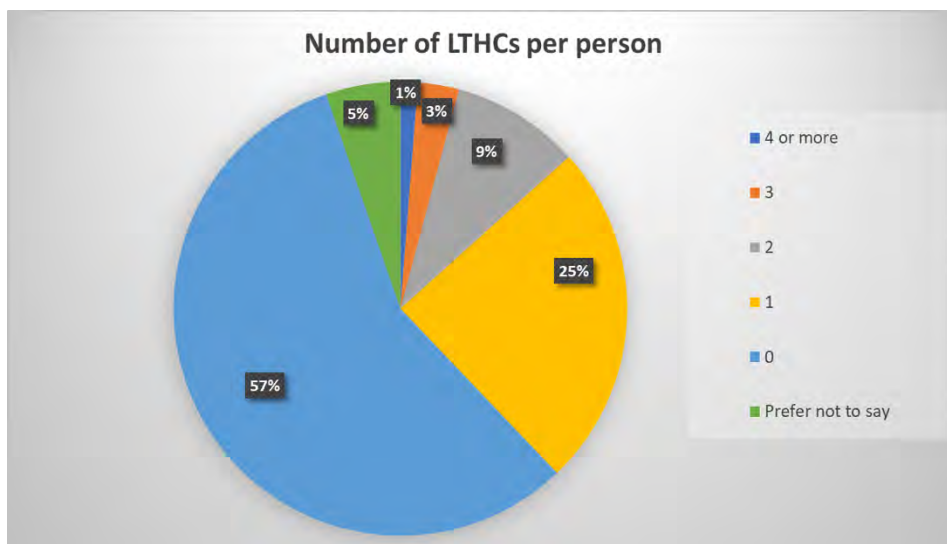
Two questions on long-term health conditions and special requirements needed to play were included in this survey. Both questions gave an option 'I prefer not to say' and, perhaps surprisingly, only 120 respondents chose that option.

56.8% of respondents said they had no significant health conditions. The remaining 43.2% answered as shown in the following chart:

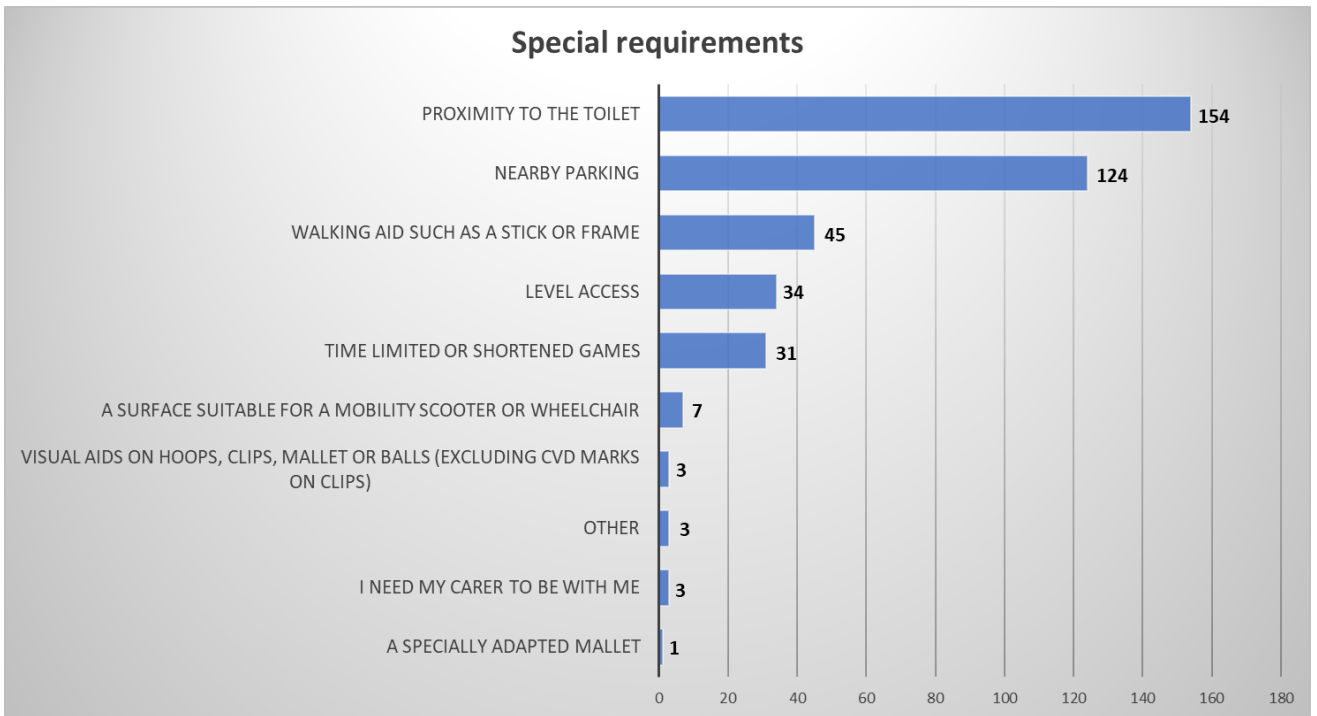


Comparing results with 2002 when 10% had cardio-vascular disease, in 2022 it was 8.5%. In 2002 15% had unspecified 'long-term physical disabilities' whereas 47% had 'physical' long-term health conditions in 2022. Either asking about specific problems elicited more response, or the 10 year increase in median age of the croquet population has given rise to the significant and inevitable increase in ailments.

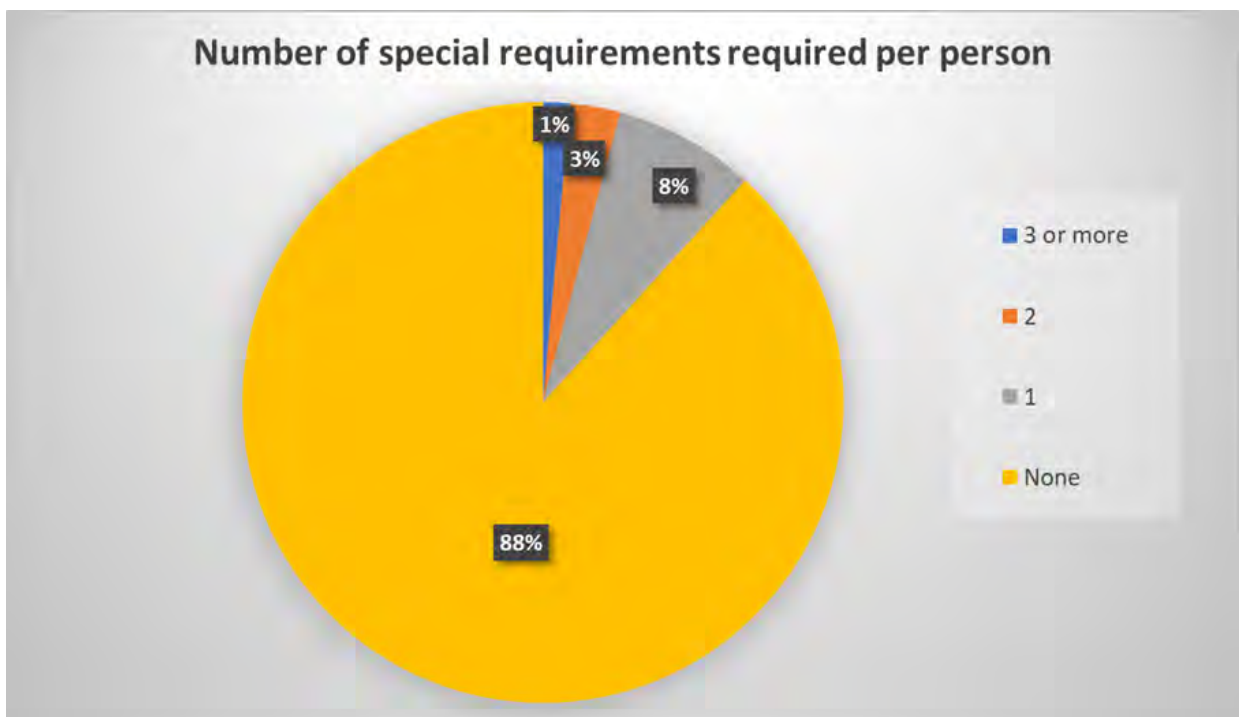
Since the respondents could select all that were applicable it was useful to see whether any players had multiple problems or conditions. This revealed that over 13% have two or more LTHCs



With regard to special requirements to enable the individual to continue playing, 88.5% said they did not need anything. Of the remainder, proximity to a toilet and nearby parking were the most frequently cited. There is little that can be done about nearby parking other than clubs approaching their local Councils to see if parking provision can be made available. The requirement for a toilet at those clubs without facilities is possibly something that grant providers will consider funding, particularly given the age profile of many clubs' members.



4.2% of the total number of respondents had 2 or more special requirements, but this equates to 35% of those who had any special needs to help them play croquet.





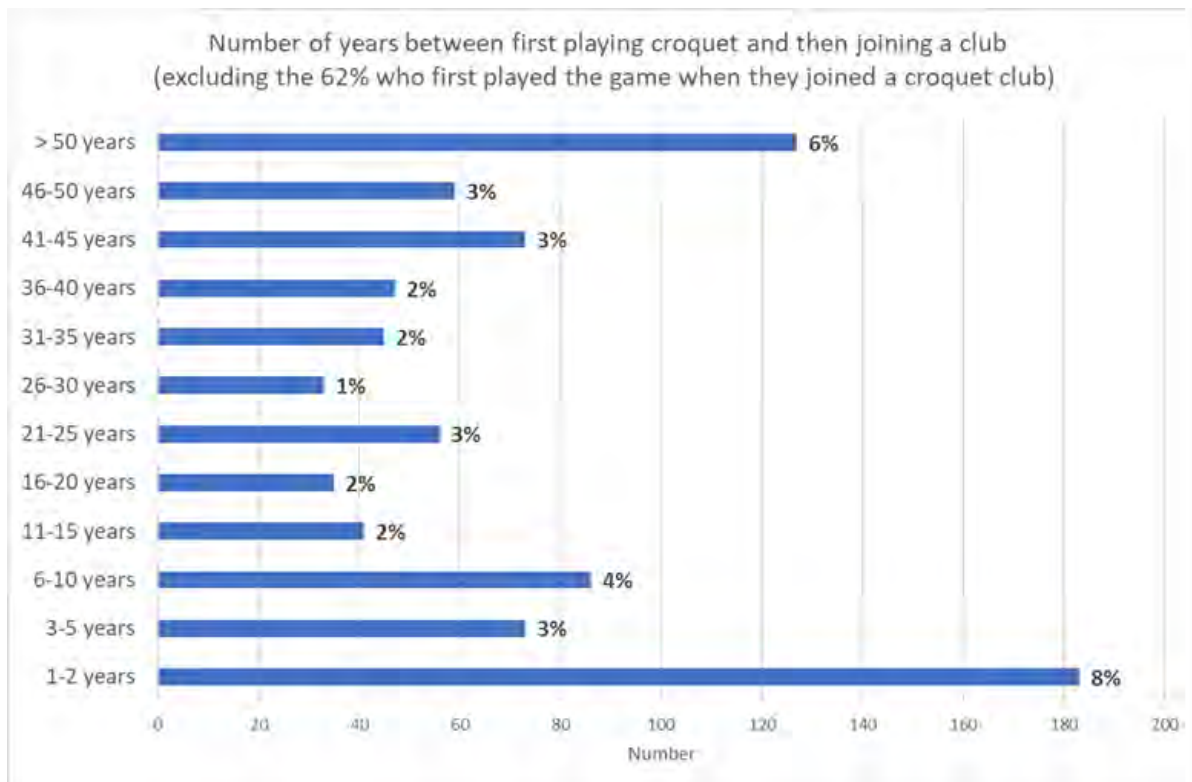
## 4. Your croquet

### 4.1. Club and CA membership

#### In what year did you first play croquet and when did you first join a croquet club?

The purpose of these two questions was to establish whether people had their first encounter with the game when they joined a club or if they played casually for some time before joining. It also gave information on how long each respondent had been a member of a croquet club and could therefore be considered 'hooked' on the game and likely to remain playing for some years or if they were still in the transitional stage where they may or may not continue in the sport. This transitional stage is usually considered by clubs to be the first 2 years of membership.

62% of people have had their first encounter of croquet when they joined a croquet club. This is a change from 2017 when 56% of croquet players had played the game informally before joining a club. The reasons why this has fallen to 38% could be linked to better recruitment attracting people who are genuinely new to the game and/or it could be an effect of the pandemic where people were actively looking for a low-risk outdoor activity when they were furloughed, redundant or decided to retire early. Of the remaining 38%, the interval can be anything from a year to more than 50 years, as shown below:



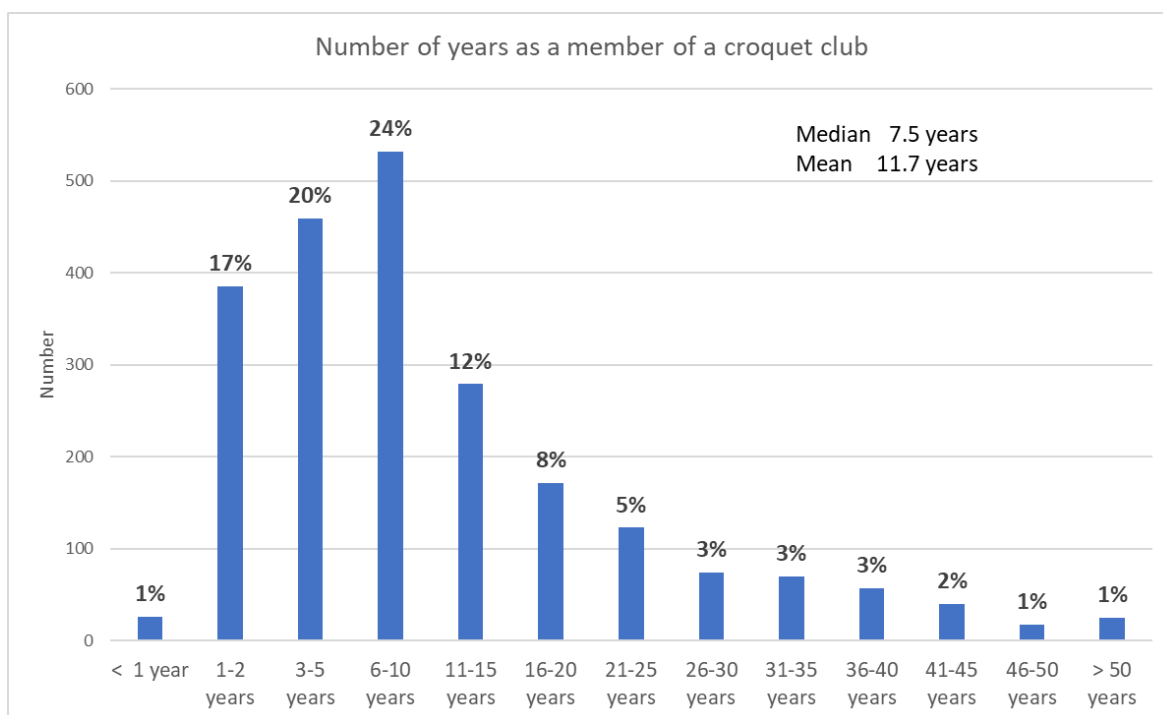
#### Are you a member of a croquet club?

Over 94% of the respondents are members of a croquet club. Of these 84% are members of a single club, 14% are members of 2 clubs and 2% are members of 3 or more clubs.

There were 40 respondents who are no longer a member of a croquet club but had been previously. The number of years they had been members ranged from 1 to 42. The most frequent reason given for leaving was moving house with no croquet club nearby. Unable to afford the subscription, unhappy, illness or infirmity and being able to get all the play wanted in tournaments were the other most cited reasons.

Only 9 respondents said they had never been a member of a croquet club, so our efforts to get the views of those outside the formal club structure were very largely in vain.

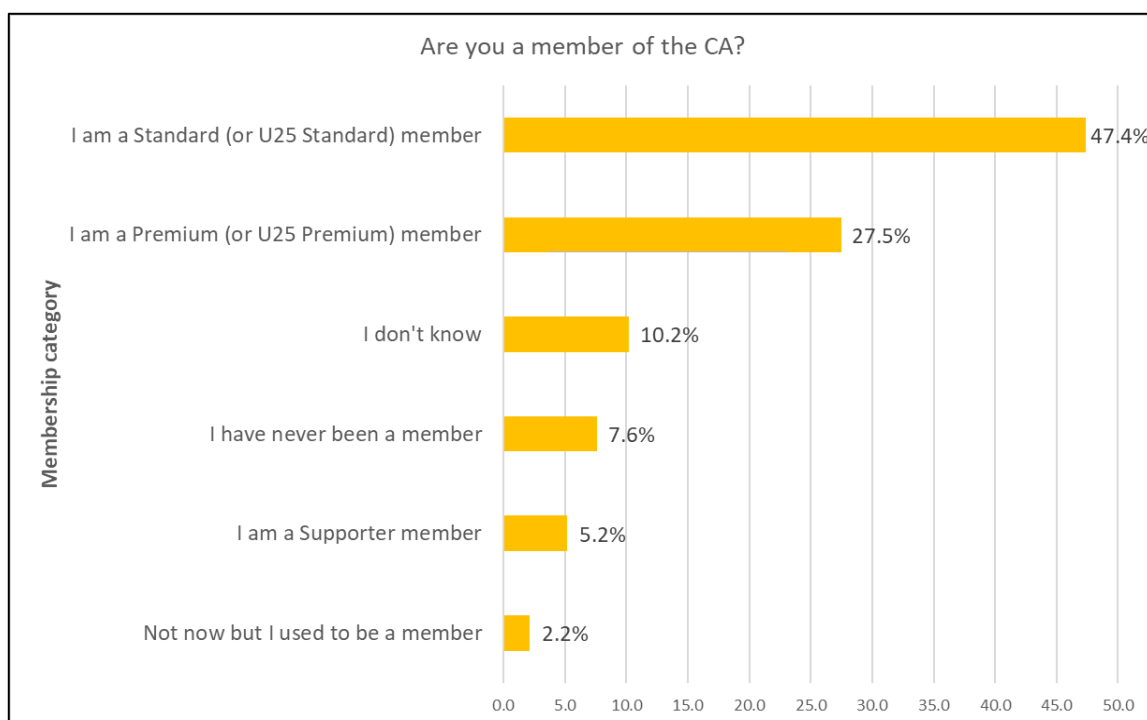
For those who are currently members of a croquet club, the number of years they have been a member is not just interesting in its own right but is also an indicator of the spread of experience that has been covered by the completed returns for this survey.



### Are you a member of the CA?

Just over 80% responded that they were, although there is a rather worrying 10% who do not know – there clearly needs to be a bit better explanation of Standard membership. The percentages are shown overleaf – the absolute numbers of respondents in each category is:

Premium CA member	623
Standard CA member	1075
Supporter CA member	118 (note: 1 has never been a club member)
Former CA member	49
Never been a CA member	172 (note: 7 of these have also never been a club member)
Don't know	232



In previous surveys it has been noted that the percentage of female Premium (formerly Associate) members was decreasing. In 2002 it was 34%, in 2012 it was 27% and now in 2022 it is 24%. With the introduction of Standard membership, however, the proportion of female CA members has increased to just under 37%.

The previous survey reports have compared the number of years CA members have been members of a croquet club with those of non-CA members. Because of the change in membership categories described in 1.2, Premium members are assumed to be equivalent to the previous Associates and the combined total of Standard members, 'don't knows' and non-CA members to be equivalent to those previously described as non-CA members. The total numbers in each CA membership category are given in the first table and then the time series from previous surveys are shown, with the 2022 data added.

Years since joining a club	Premium	Standard	Don't know	Not CA member	Supporter
0-4	74	425	115	91	32
5-9	133	292	62	56	23
10-14	100	158	28	22	22
15-19	74	81	8	17	13
20-24	61	46	8	10	8
25-29	38	29	3	7	1
30-34	44	14	3	4	5
35-39	41	14	3	2	3
40-44	23	10	0	3	4
>45	35	6	2	2	6
Total	<b>623</b>	<b>1075</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>117</b>

How long have Premium (previously Associate) members of the CA been members of a croquet club?

Years since joining a club	2022	2017	2012	2007	2002
0-4	12%	22%	18%	10%	19%
5-9	21%	19%	23%	22%	23%
10-14	16%	17%	18%	21%	26%
15-19	12%	11%	10%	18%	13%
20-24	10%	7%	11%	14%	7%
25-29	6%	8%	8%	5%	4%
30-34	7%	6%	4%	4%	3%
35-39	7%	5%	3%	3%	2%
40-44	4%	2%	3%	2%	3%
45+	6%	3%	2%	1%	1%

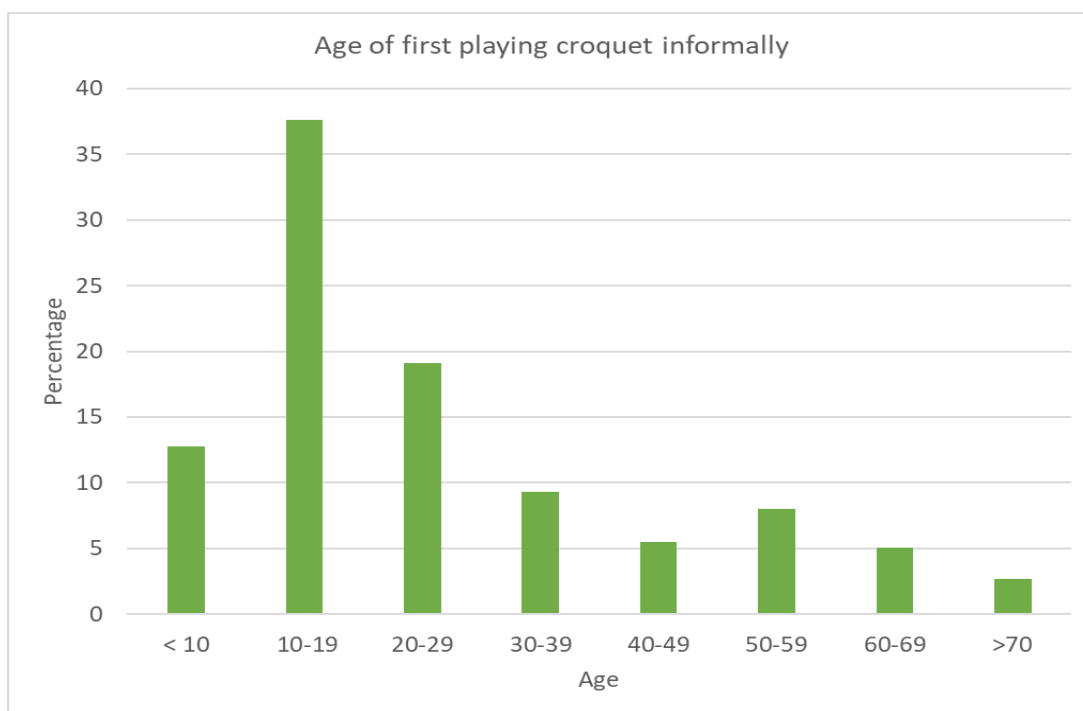
The significant drop in the 0-4 years category (12% compared with 22% in 2017) coincides with the change of membership structure. It is assumed from this that people who would previously have become Associates of the CA have now decided that Standard Membership is adequate for them and not opted to pay for Premium membership.

How long have Standard members, those who don't know if they are CA members and those who are not CA members (previously all non-CA members) been members of a croquet club?

Years since joining a club	2022	2017	2012
0-4	42%	48%	50%
5-9	27%	25%	29%
10-14	14%	13%	11%
15-19	7%	5%	3%
20-24	4%	3%	2%
25-29	3%	2%	2%
30+	4%	3%	4%

The age at which people first played croquet informally was not asked directly but can be ascertained from other answers. In 2017 a different pattern emerged from the previous two surveys. However, the 2022 survey shows a distribution very similar to 2012, with a peak in the 10-19 age bracket and then a steady drop-off, although there is a slight increase at 50 to 59 which was observed in 2017.

This demonstrates very well that effort in getting the 10-19 age group interested in the game is worth the effort, even if it is a long-term investment, but especially so if the playing environment for them encourages them to keep playing through the difficult 'family and work commitments' period.

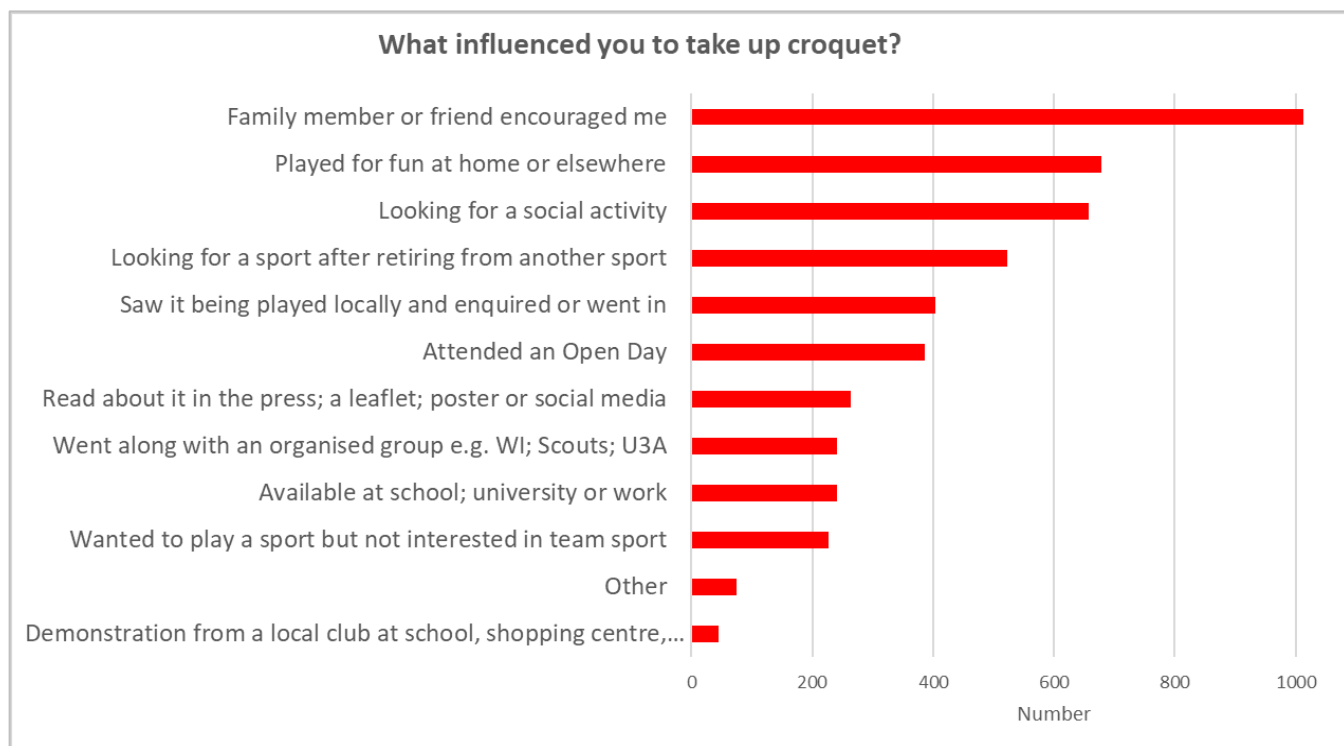


#### 4.2. Reasons for playing croquet

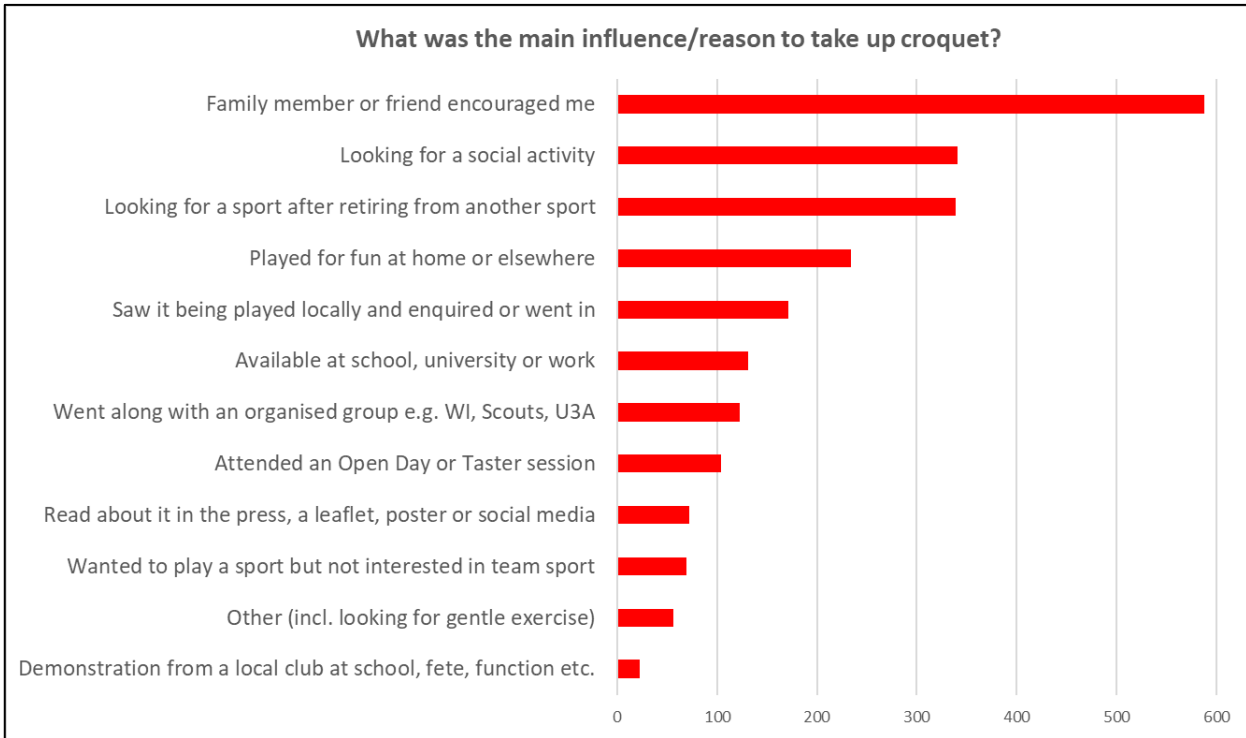
##### What were the influences for taking up the game and what was the single most important reason

These questions have been asked in a different format in all the previous surveys.

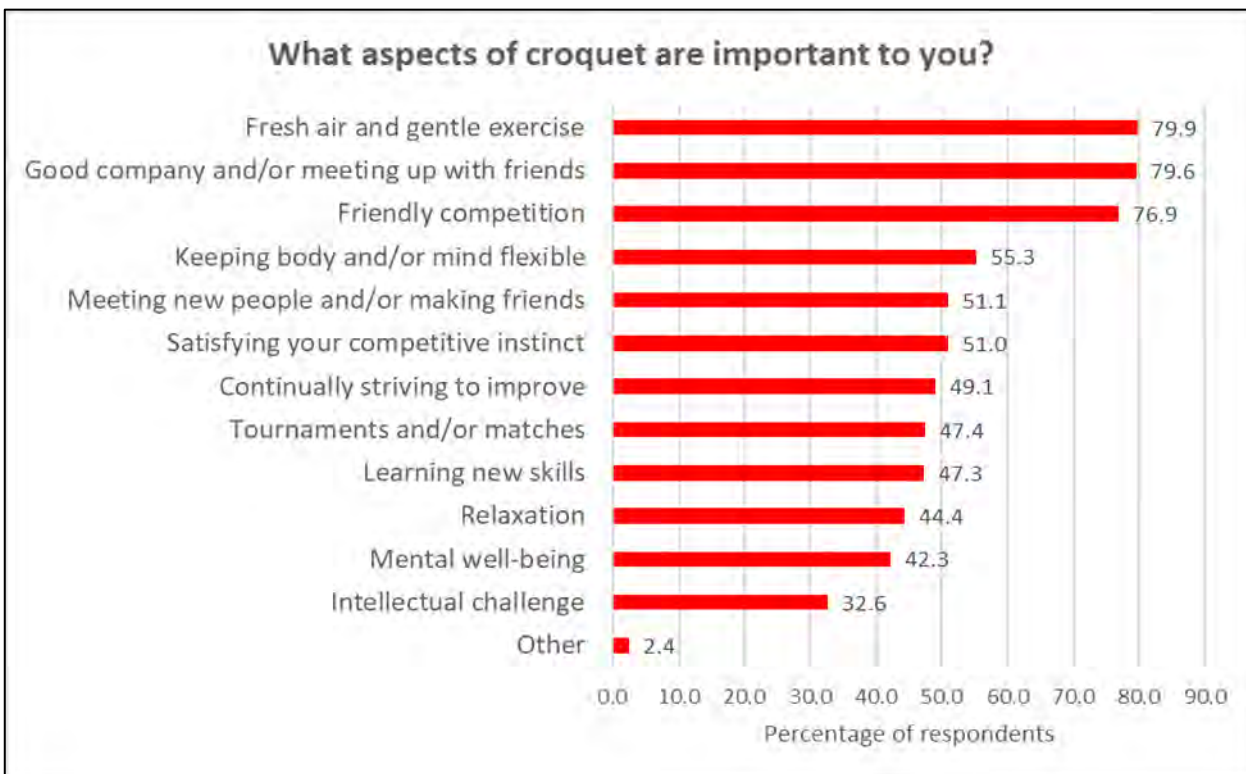
Respondents could select as many options from the list of factors as they felt had had an influence on them deciding to give croquet a try. The social factors of family, friends, previously playing at home or on holiday and wanting a social activity were the dominant influences.



The single most important influence for taking up the game are family and friends. However, people who were looking for a new social activity or wanting to find a new sport after retiring from a previous one, represent over 30% of those who now play croquet. In previous surveys an option for ‘a club local to where you live’ figured highly. This was accidentally omitted from the options in this survey but a later question in this section asking how far away the respondent lives from their club suggests that proximity to a club is probably still one of the most important factors.



Having taken up the game, players were asked what were the important factors that kept them coming back.



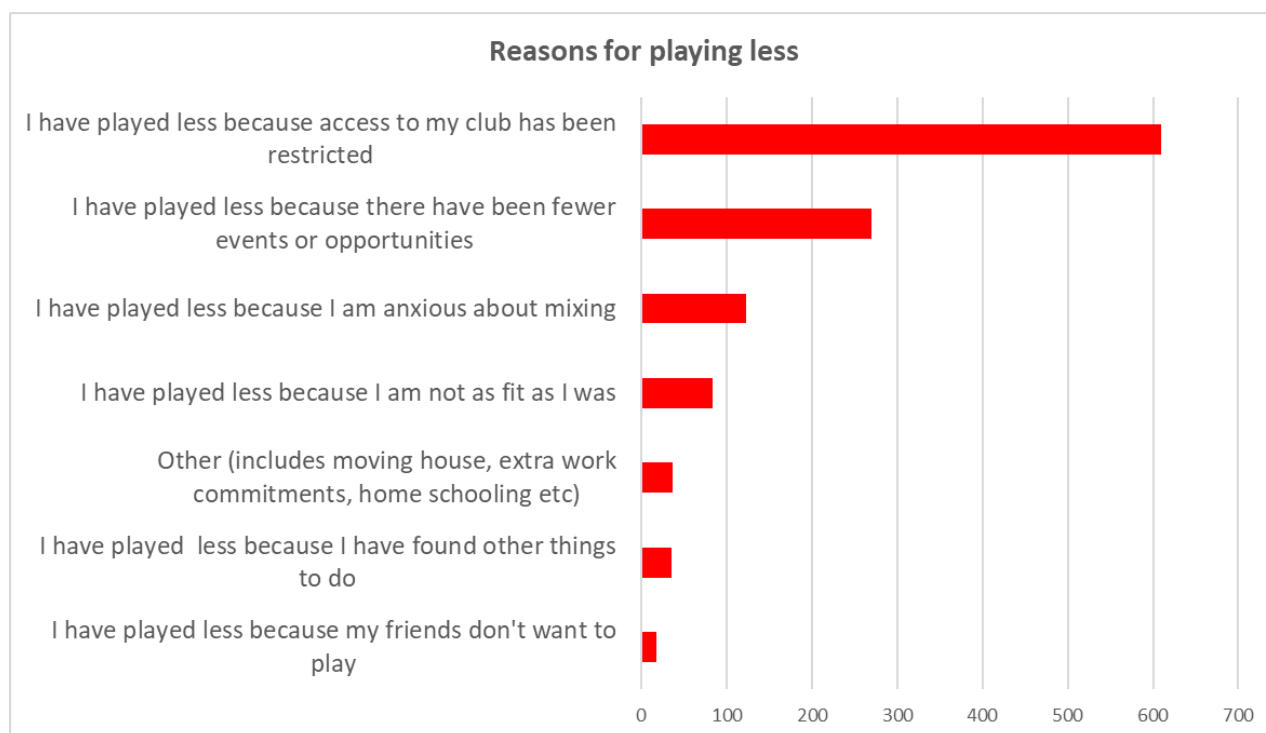
The graph above shows how important fresh air, good company and friendly competition is to three-quarters of respondents. These have leaped in importance since 2017. This is probably a response to the restrictions imposed by covid-19 regulations from March 2020 to February 2022. This survey was conducted in March/April 2022 just after all restrictions were finally lifted. The full list is a very good advertisement for croquet as a sport!

### 4.3. Effect of Covid

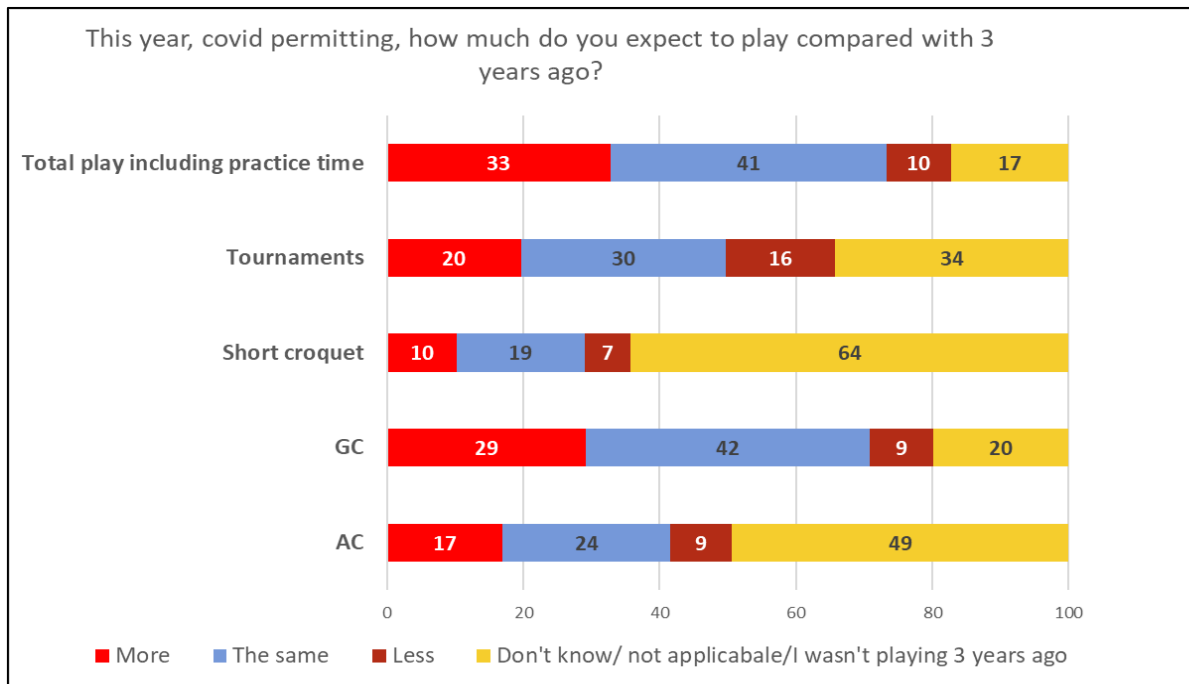
#### What effect has the Covid-19 pandemic had on your croquet activity?

Just over half of respondents said they played less during the pandemic but interestingly over 10% took up the game during this period. As can be seen the main reasons given for playing less were lack of access to the club (those clubs that usually remained open during the winter months were obliged to close, some were not permitted to open by their landlords when restrictions were relaxed, and others struggled with volunteer and contractor labour to maintain their lawns). Fewer opportunities to play were caused by the cancellation of the entire tournament programme in the first half of 2020 and then a reduced tournament programme in later 2020 and 2021. Many Federation leagues did not run at all.

The encouraging aspect of these responses was that these people would be likely to return to the game once these barriers were removed.



When asked if they expected to play more, less or the same as they did 3 years ago, the majority expected to be playing as much or more croquet going forward.



Clubs were sent the information from these covid questions at the end of July, along with other preliminary results from the survey. It was suggested that it may be worth contacting those club members who had not re-joined to see if they could be persuaded to return to the game.

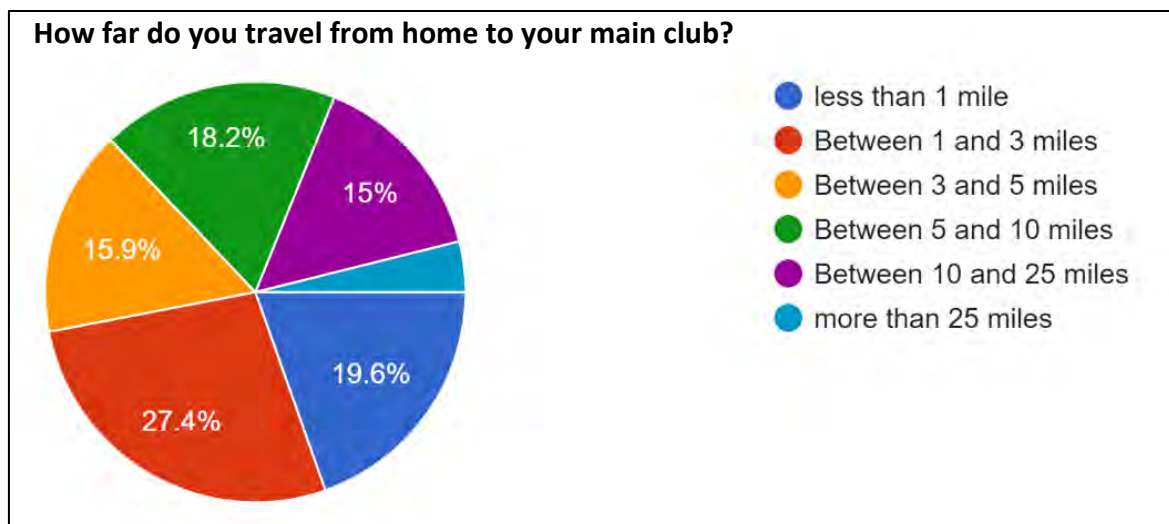
Data obtained from clubs at the end of the 2022 season suggests that the majority of clubs have returned to pre-pandemic levels of membership and activity.



## 5. The Cost of Croquet

### 5.1. Distance from club

With wildly fluctuating fuel costs and rising inflation, distance from home to club could become a significant factor for players and volunteers.

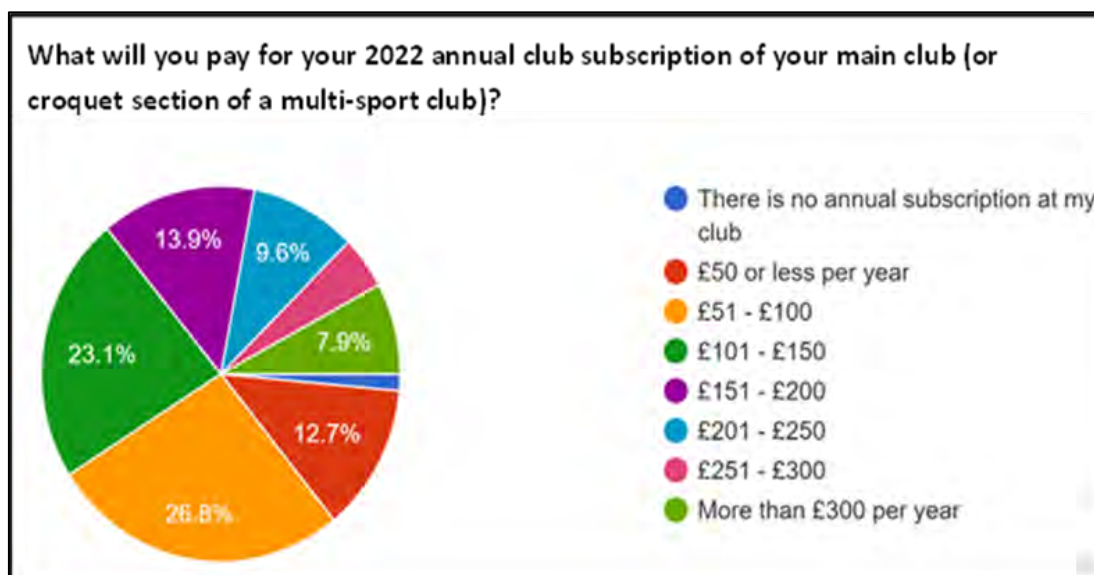


The distance brackets were chosen because less than a mile is walking distance, 1 to 3 miles is cycling distance or a bus trip, 3 to 5 miles is a bus or car journey, and over 5 miles is probably a car journey.

Thus, a fifth (19.6%) of players live within walking distance of their club, and just under half (47%) live within a bike ride or short bus trip. Proximity to a club is clearly a very significant factor for many croquet players.

The 20% who travel more than 10 miles are likely to be the most sensitive to rising fuel prices, although these are the people who are likely to be most dedicated to the game. If a club has a large catchment area, then the percentage of members affected may be even greater and costs incurred by volunteers when travelling to the club could become a significant factor.

### 5.2. Subscriptions



Nearly 95% of club members pay their annual subscription as a single lump sum. Just 1% pay in instalments but 2.5% said they would prefer to pay in instalments if they had the option (rising to over 5% in the lowest income bracket).

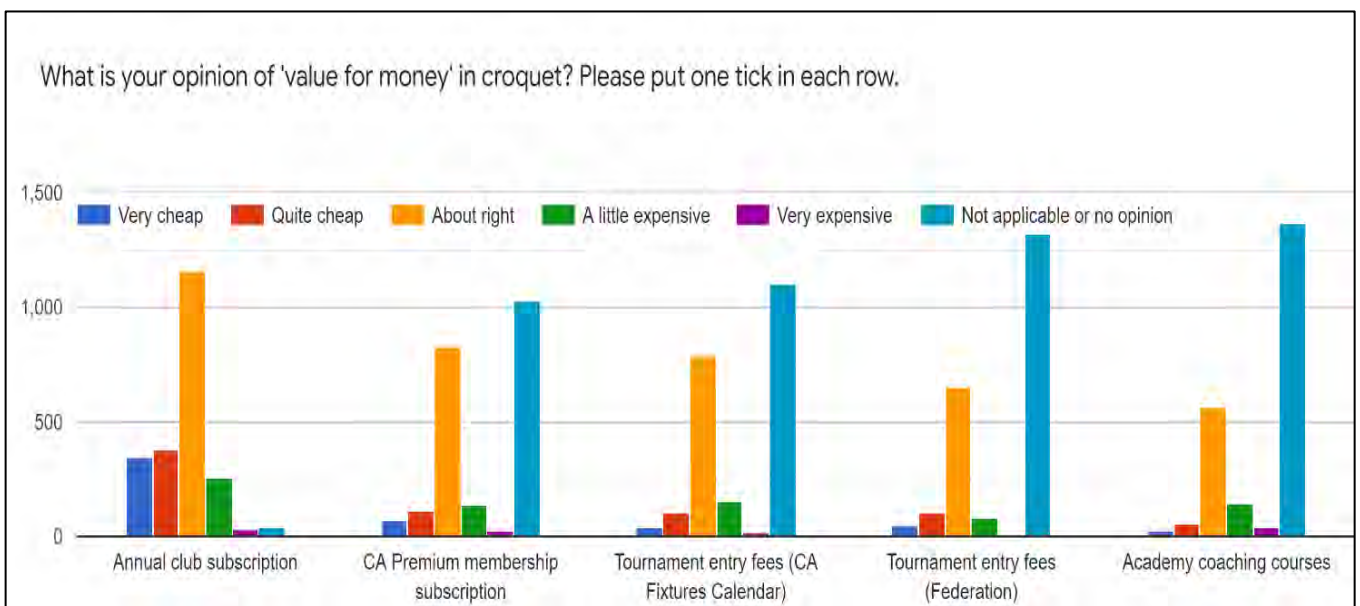
40% of adult club members are paying under £100 per year for their club membership. This is less than £2 per week i.e. less than a cup of coffee. What value are club members putting on what is provided in terms of volunteer effort, lawn maintenance, coaching, competitions, social activity etc? With rapidly rising costs and many clubs already facing rent increases and increased lawn maintenance costs, this is perhaps a conversation that some clubs should have with their members.

People with a total household income below the national median of £31,000 have been identified nationally as the ones who will face the biggest problems with the rising cost of living. Offering a phased payment subscription may be the difference between retaining such members and losing them if subscriptions have to rise. Methods of payments by instalments that are already offered by some clubs include separate summer and winter subscriptions, payment in a certain number of instalments or monthly standing orders.

Some clubs, covering the full range of subscriptions, have extra charges for club competitions and/or coaching. Attendance or green fees are usually only paid by members of clubs with the lowest subscriptions. Other obligatory costs given by respondents include membership of English Heritage or National Trust, and car parking charges.

Junior respondents (i.e. under 18) are paying up to £100, but most pay less than £50 for their annual subscription.

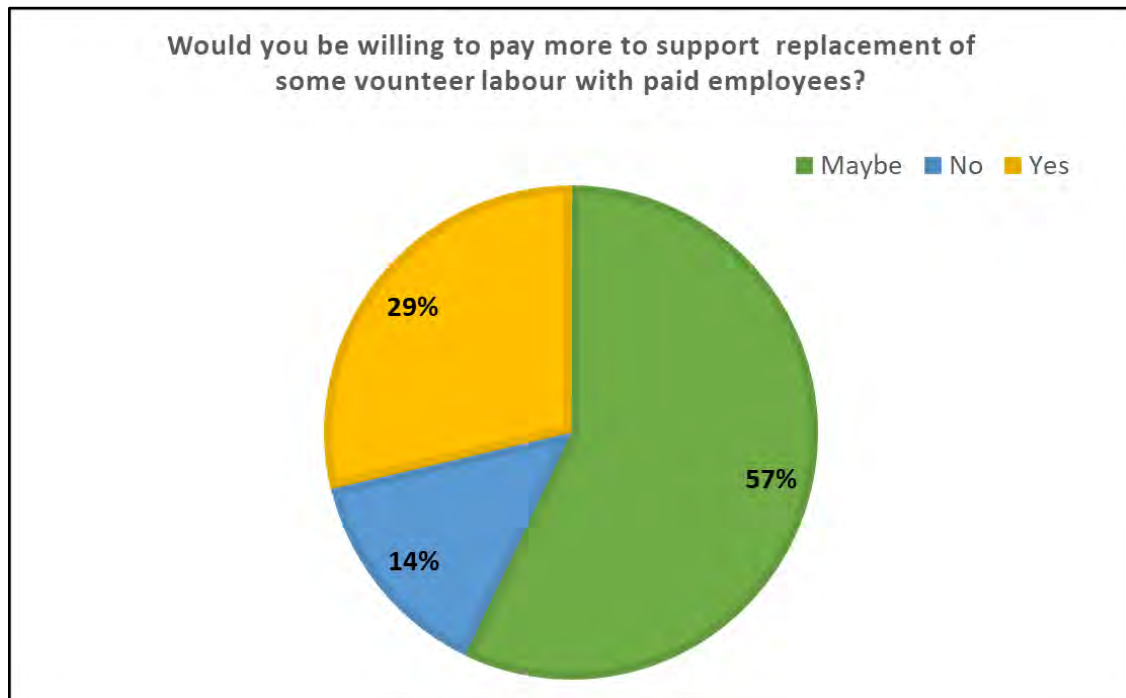
Overall, respondents think croquet is good value for money.



### 5.3. Running the CA with volunteers versus paid employees

The final question within the cost of croquet sub-section explored to what extent existing CA members would be prepared to pay for the replacement of some volunteer labour with employed labour. They were asked:

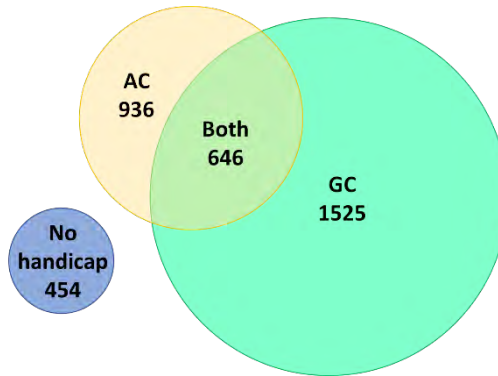
The CA is run almost entirely by volunteers, which has kept fees to a minimum. With higher levels of activity and the expanding bureaucratic burden put on all sports bodies, the workload for volunteers is increasing. It is likely that more people will have to be employed to support growth and assist volunteers. Would you be prepared to pay more for your croquet to support such recruitment?



## 6. Your Game

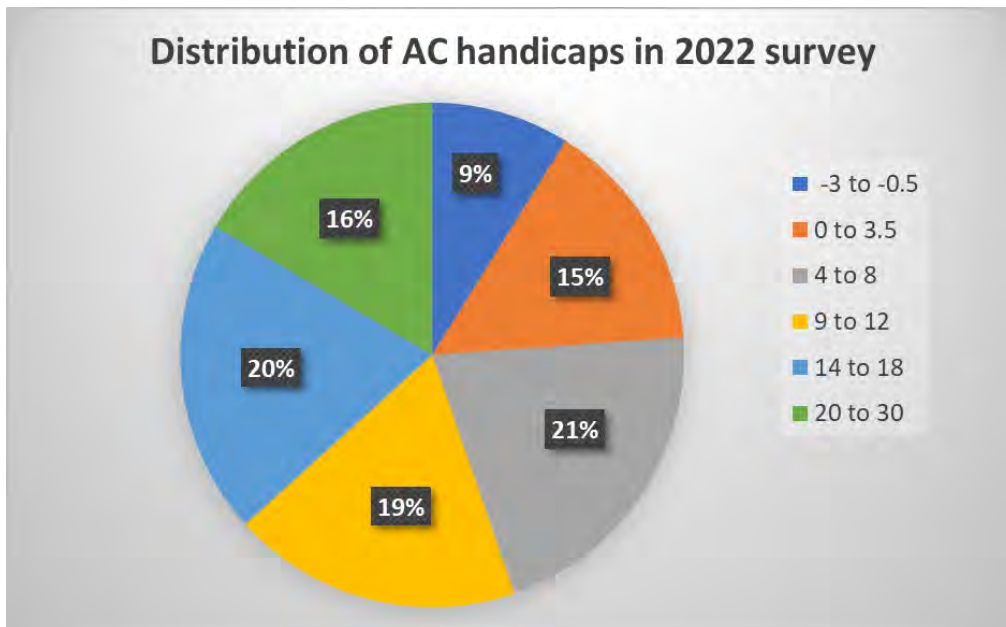
### 6.1. Handicap

Respondents were asked to give their AC and/or GC handicap if they had one. The handicaps ranged from -5 to 16 for GC and -3 to 30 for AC. 936 respondents (41% of the total) gave an AC handicap, 1525 (67%) gave a GC handicap, 646 (28%) gave both and 454 (20%) had no handicap.

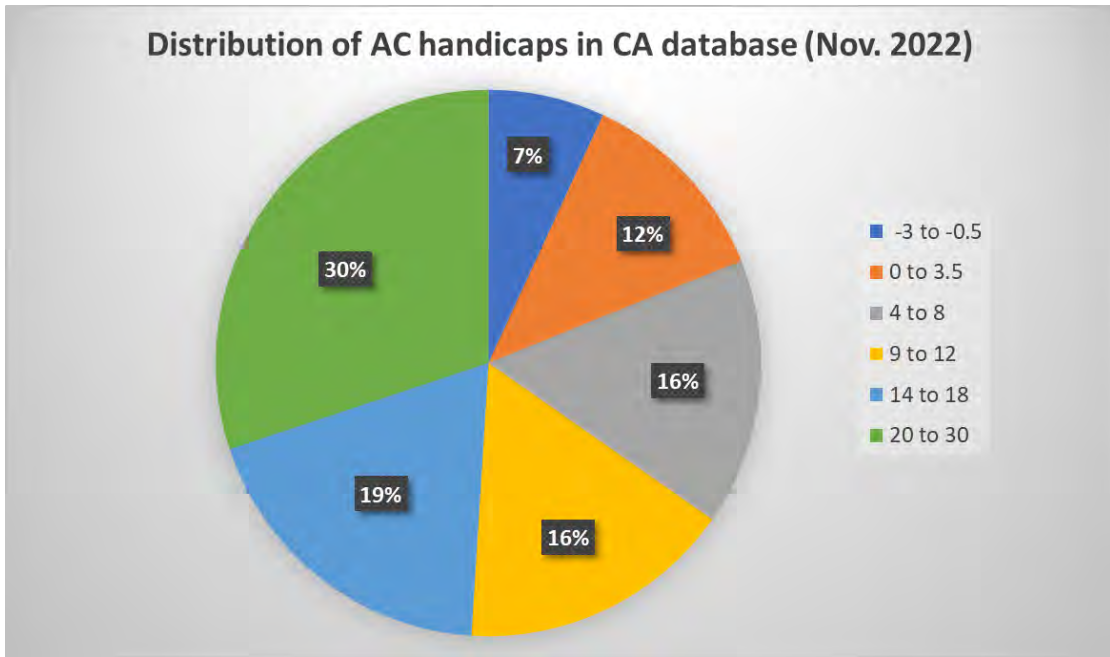


31% of those who say they are predominantly AC players have a GC handicap as well, whereas 11% of those who describe themselves as predominantly GC have an AC handicap. A rather strange feature of those who say they play both codes equally is that 41% have both AC and GC handicaps, as one would expect, 5% have no handicap at all and the remaining 54% have either an AC handicap or a GC one but not both!

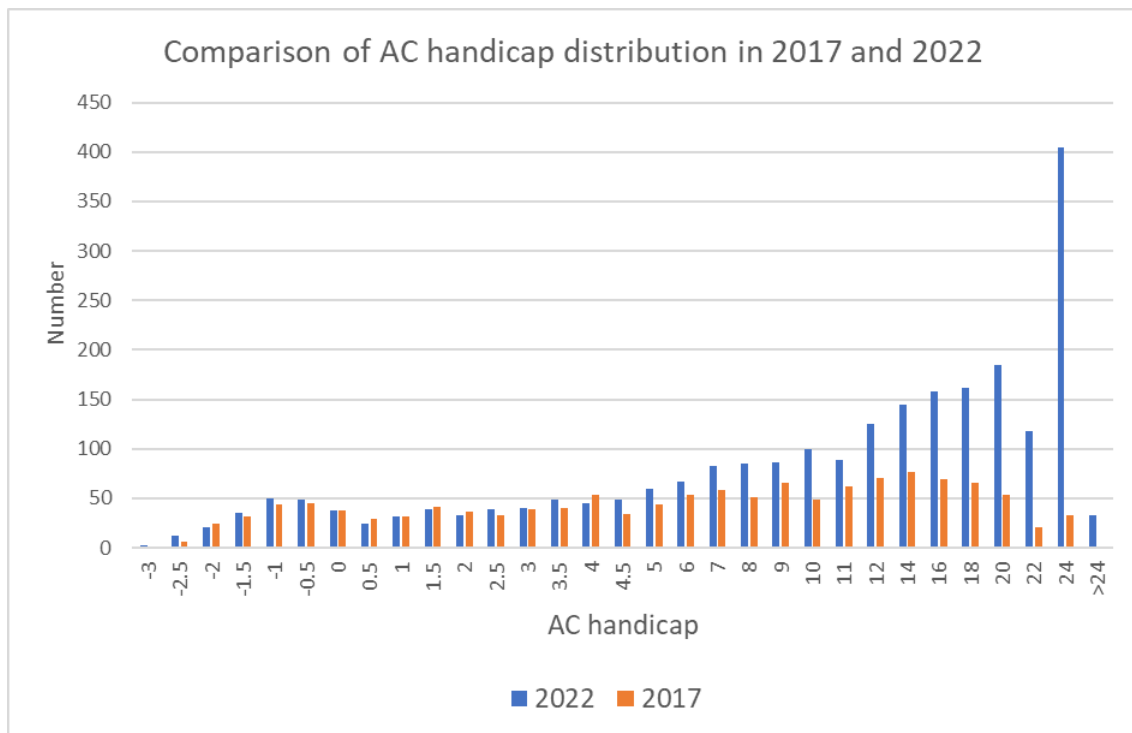
Looking at AC handicaps first:



In order to check how representative this is of the AC handicaps of all players, the graph below shows all the AC handicaps recorded in the CA database (Nov. 2022). It can be seen the highest handicaps are not as well represented in the survey (16% versus 30%), but that handicaps of 18 or below are a good representation of the AC playing community.

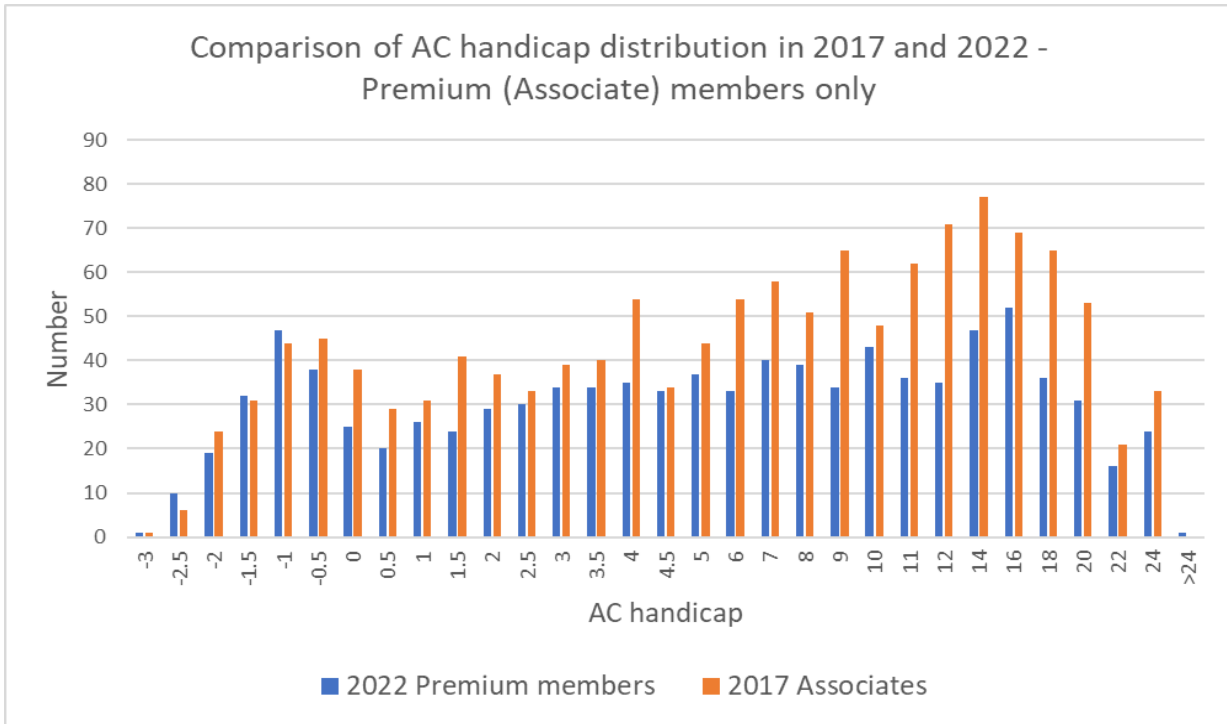


A plot of all AC handicaps in the CA database taken in Nov. 2022 is plotted below in comparison to those in 2017:



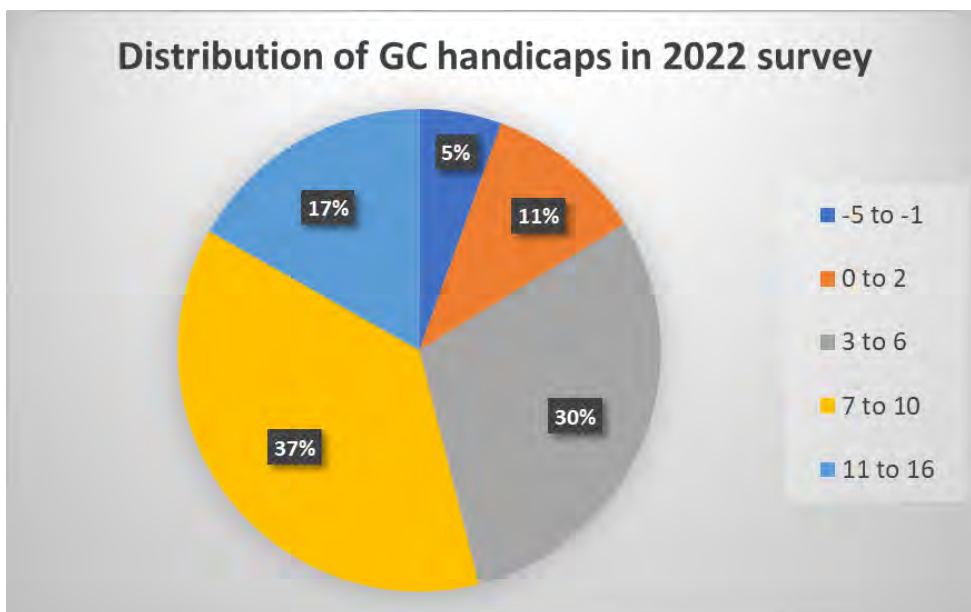
Whilst the numbers in the handicap range -3 to 5 have remained much the same over the 5 years, the number with higher handicaps has risen markedly. This is most likely accounted for by club members who were formerly not members of the CA, now having standard membership. It could also suggest that there has been a rise in the number of players taking up AC, although this is unlikely to be a significant factor. This can be tested by comparing the handicaps of just the Premium members in 2022 with the 2017 Associates members

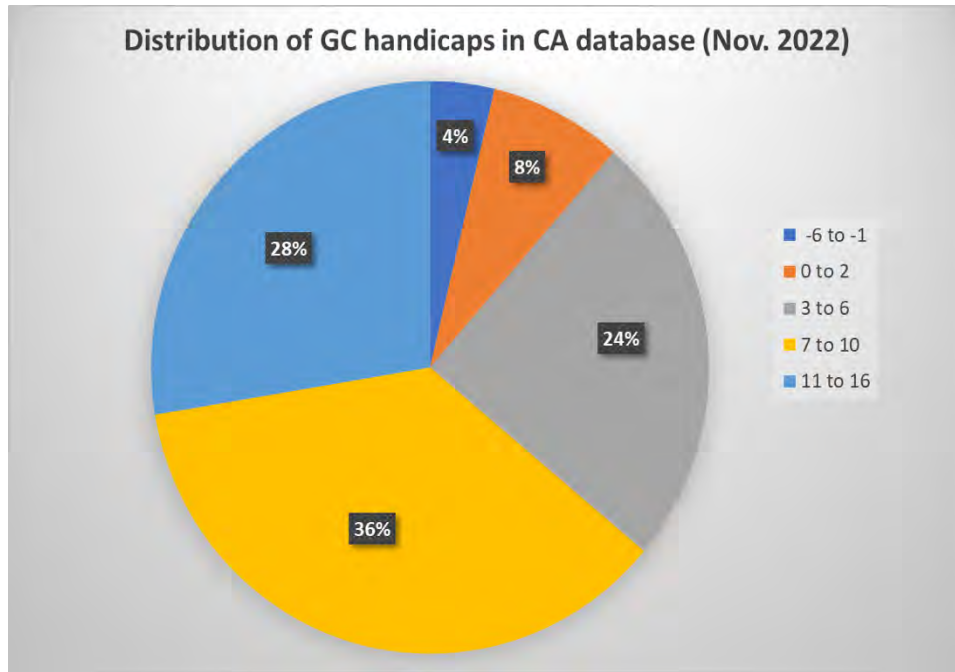
This shows that for almost every AC handicap the number of CA Premium members in 2022 is less than it was in 2017. The total number of Premium members with an AC handicap is 941. Note the fairly even spread of the 2022 data (blue) across all but the extreme ends of the handicap range.



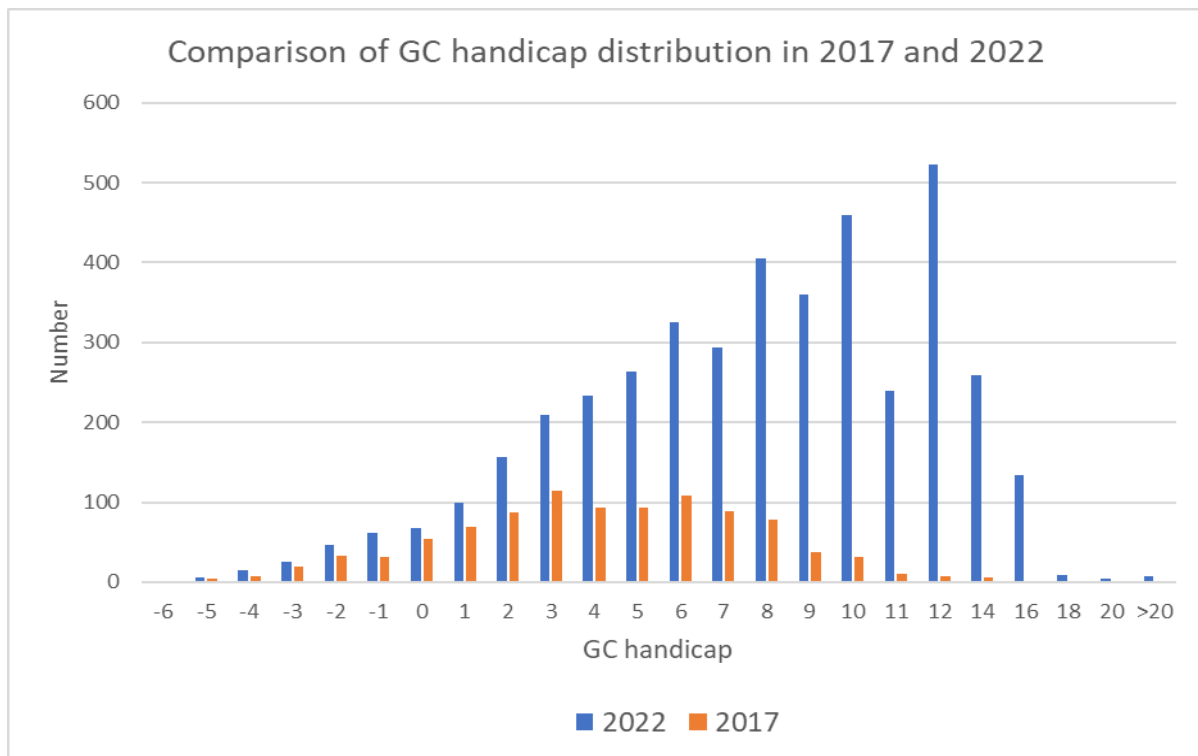
The large spike at 24 handicap seen in the preceding graph is likely to be club handicappers assigning the maximum (which should be 24) to players who are either very new to the game or who don't actually play any AC. This spike is the main reason that the survey cross-section of AC handicaps appears to under-represent the highest handicapped players.

A similar analysis for GC shows that there is also under-representation of the highest handicap bracket.

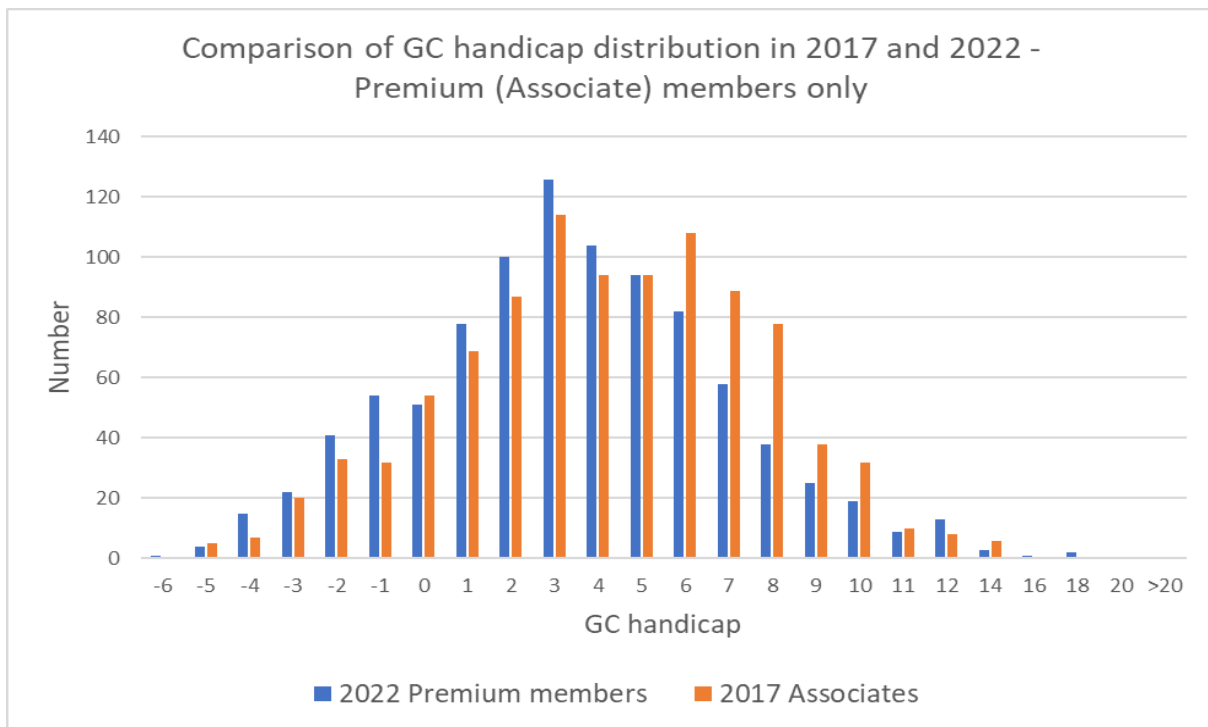




There has however, been a really significant rise over the last 5 years in the number of higher handicapped GC players, who are now members of the CA. Again, this is probably largely explained by former non-CA members now being Standard members but, since the overall number of club members has risen in this period as well, there may have been a 'real' rise in the number of people taking up GC.



As with the AC handicaps, a comparison of the GC handicaps of the 2022 Premium members with that of the 2017 Associates will reveal if there has been a real rise in the number of GC players.

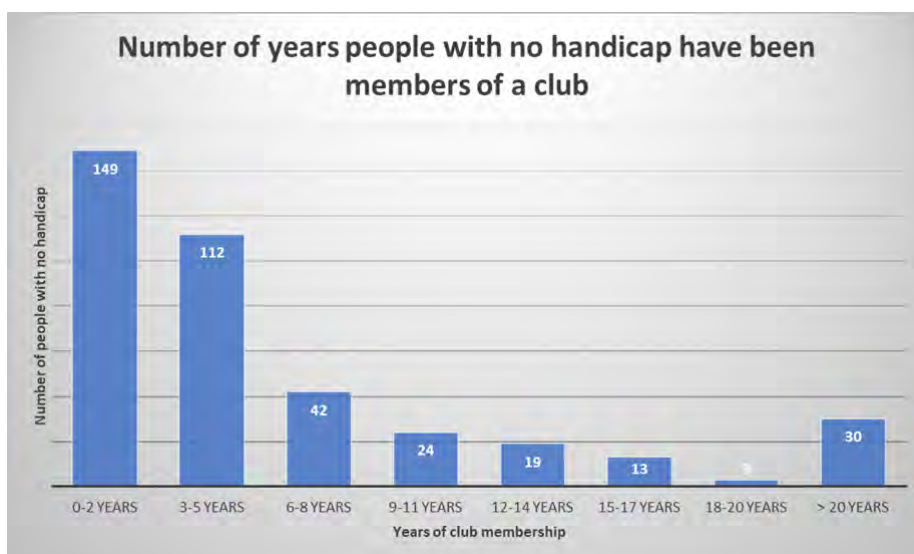


Although there has been a small rise in the handicaps of 3 and below, there has been a much larger drop in the 6-10 handicap range. It seems that GC players are getting better but higher handicap GC players are not becoming Premium members of the CA.

Interestingly there are 940 Premium members with a GC handicap and 941 with an AC handicap. Note the very different distribution though.

20% of the survey respondents have no AC or GC handicap. They may have a short croquet handicap, but this was not asked. However, looking at the handicaps in the CA database there are 449 people with a short croquet handicap but only 10 of them do not have either an AC or a GC handicap as well.

Within the CA database 30% of members have no handicap assigned. It is thought that the difference between the proportion in this survey and the proportion in the database could be because club administrators have not uploaded handicaps for some of their members and those members are unaware that they should check the database themselves.

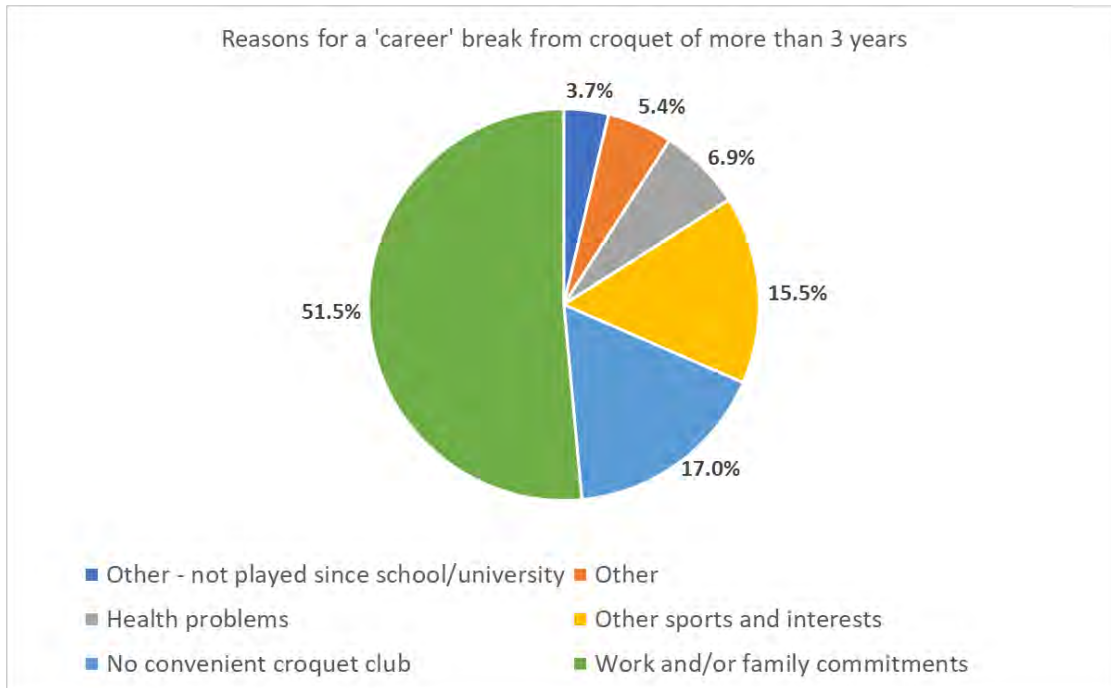


Analysing the 20% of respondents with no handicap, one would expect that most would have taken the game up in the last year or so. The graph below shows that just under 40% of them have only been playing for 2 years or less. The 60% who have been club members for more than 3 years and have still not been assigned a handicap is perhaps a cause of concern.



## 6.2. 'Career' breaks

As has been shown in previous surveys, young people who play croquet at home, school or university often return to the game in later life. The 2022 survey asked if the respondent had taken a 'career' break from croquet of more than 3 years. 18% said they had, with 11.6% of them having a break of more than 10 years. More than half (51.5%) cited work and/or family commitments as the reason for the break, the other most frequently stated reason being no convenient croquet club when they moved elsewhere.



This is a common problem across the sports sector, with high participation in children and young people, a significant dip between 25 and 50 and then an increase in sporting activity as family commitments reduce. Unfortunately, croquet does not have the high participation in young people but more could be done to encourage working people and families to remain in the sport rather than drift away, particularly if/when the Next Generations project is successful.

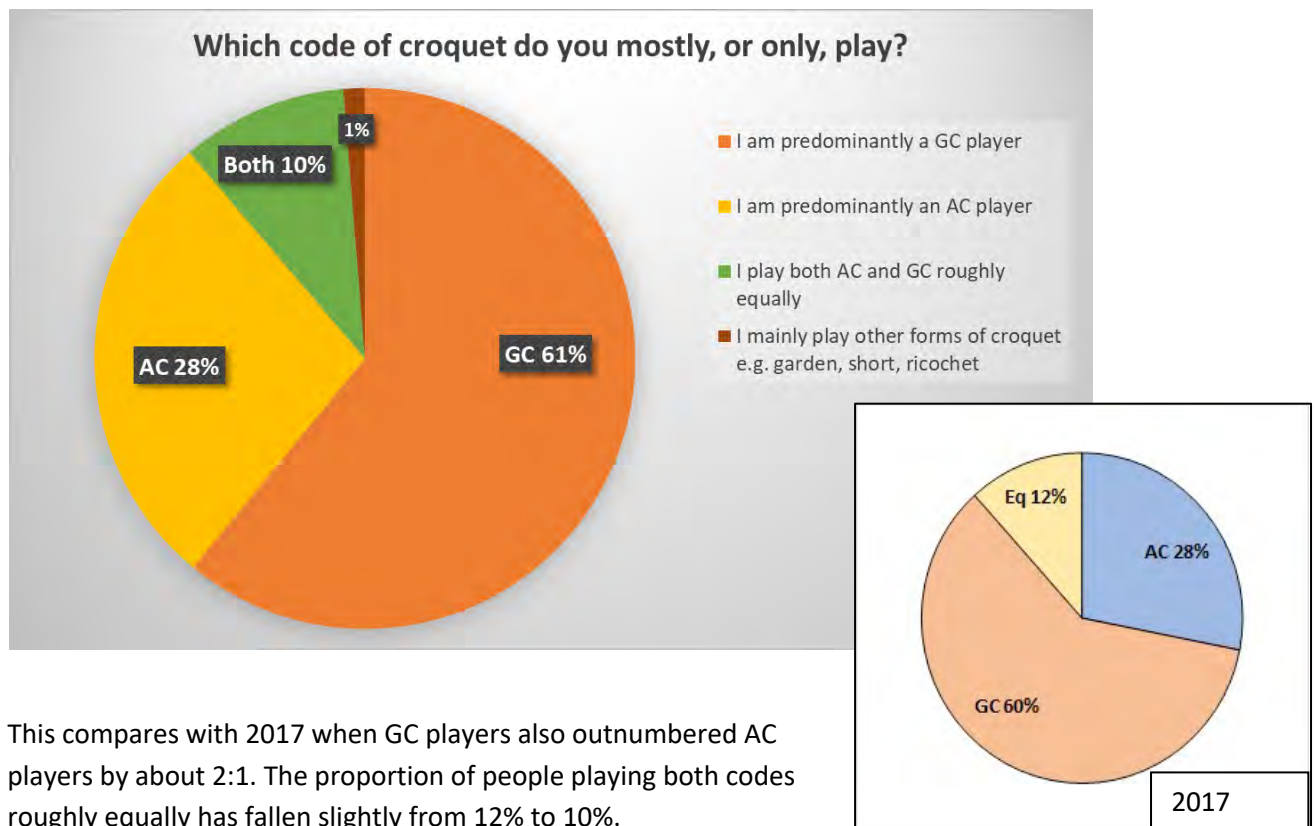
### 6.3. Association Croquet (AC) and Golf Croquet (GC)

The CA would like both forms of the game to be played at most clubs and to see them both flourish side by side. The opportunity to learn and be coached in both codes should be available to everyone, whether that is at their club, Federation or an academy.

There has been a noticeable rise in the last few years in the number of low handicap AC players successfully taking up GC. It is hoped that this trend will cascade down. Equally it is hoped that more GC players will be inspired to take up AC, so that 'AC players' and 'GC players' will be replaced with all-round croquet player.

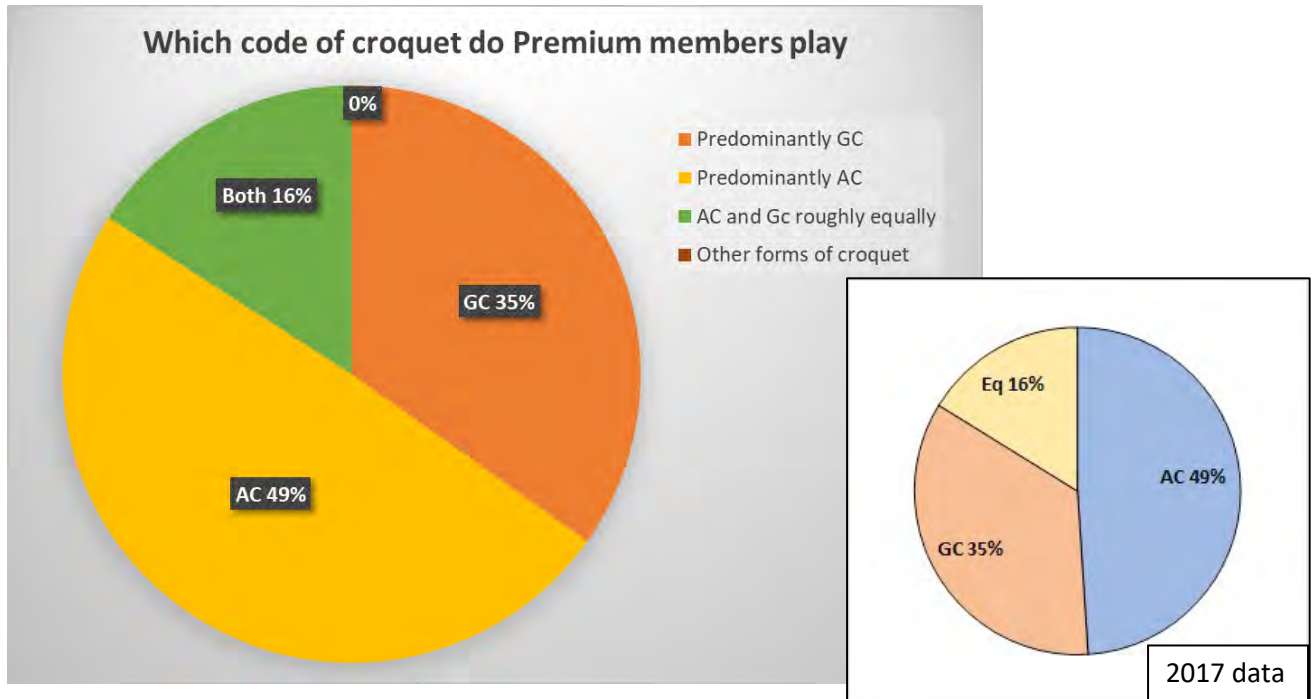
#### 6.3.1. Code of croquet played

Taking the results from the entire survey:

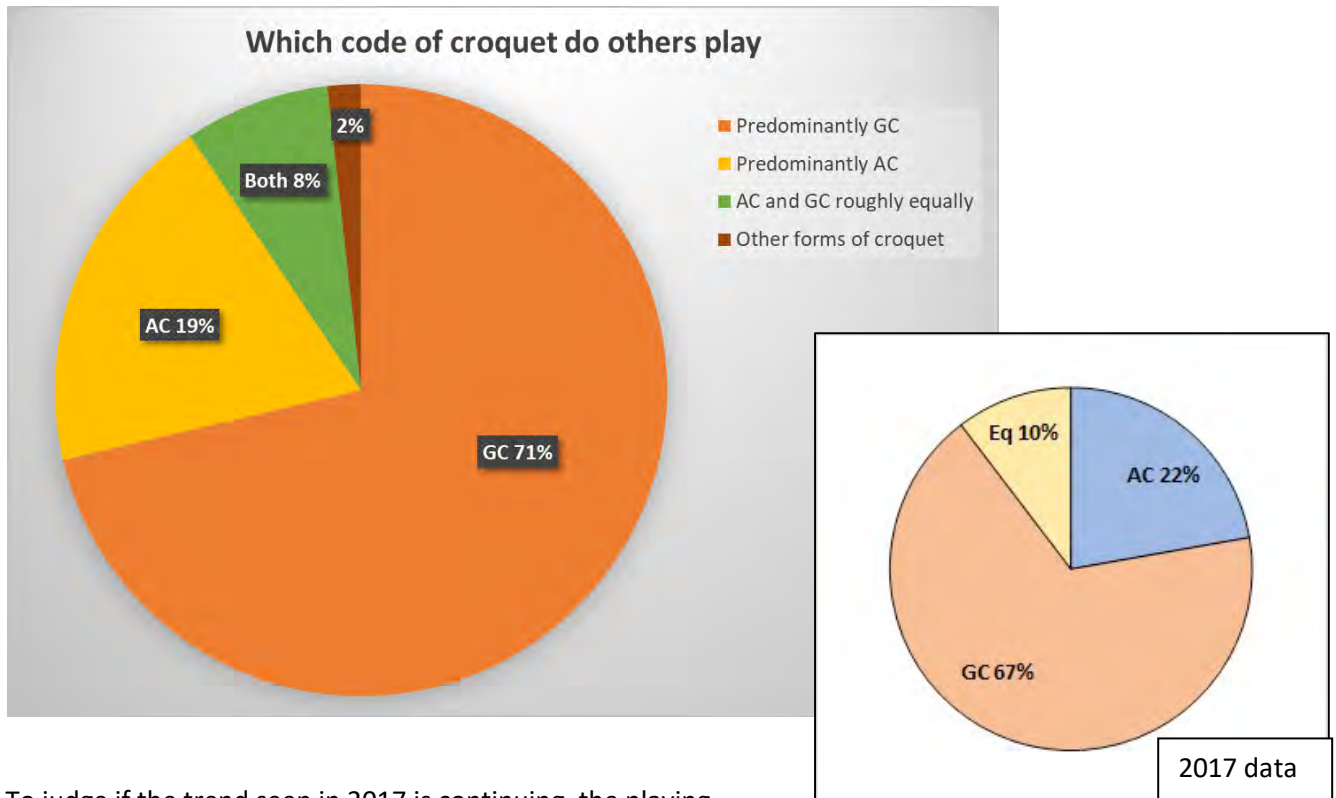


This compares with 2017 when GC players also outnumbered AC players by about 2:1. The proportion of people playing both codes roughly equally has fallen slightly from 12% to 10%.

With Premium members (which are equivalent to the former Associate members), the proportion of predominantly GC players is nearly halved, again giving a very similar distribution to that found in 2017:

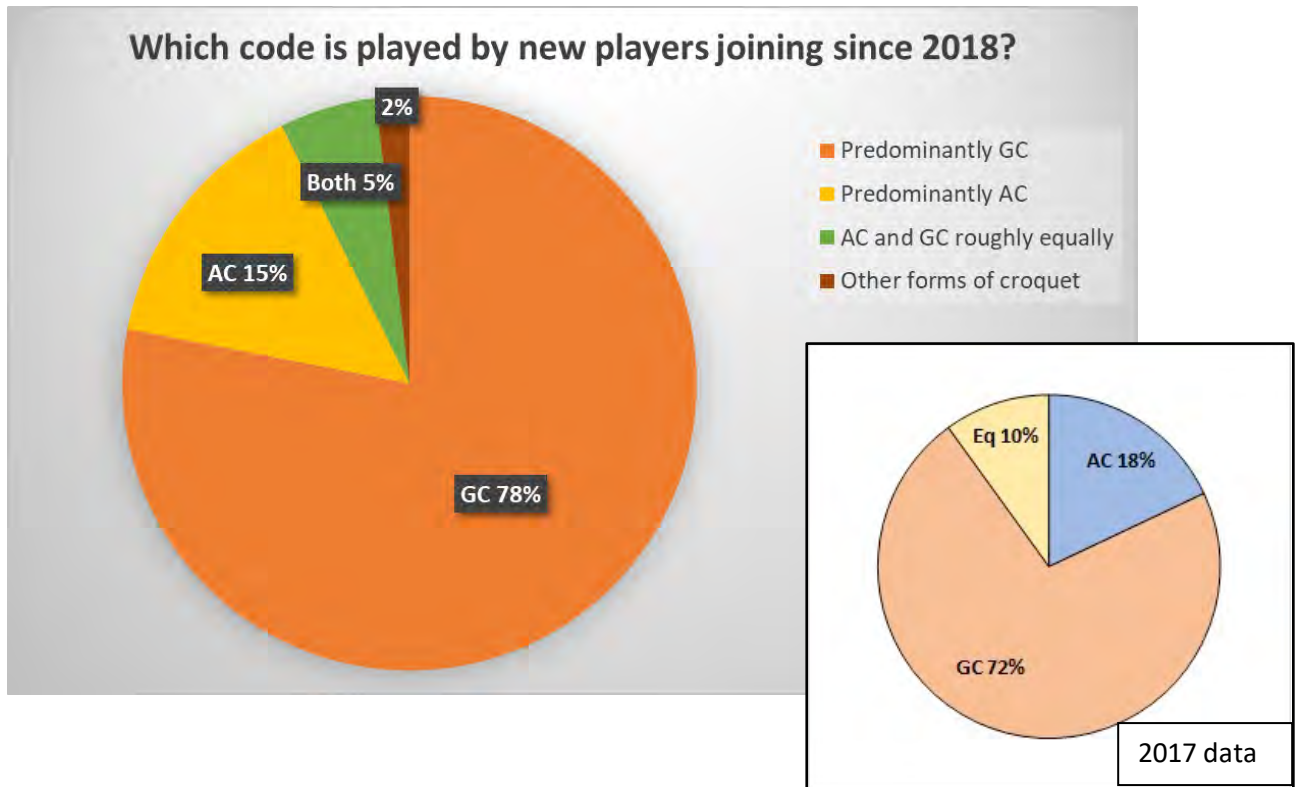


So, as expected, the comparison with Standard members plus non-members shows a similar result to that of non-members in 2017, although the proportion playing predominantly or equally AC has fallen from 32% to 27%



To judge if the trend seen in 2017 is continuing, the playing preference of the 737 people who have started playing croquet at a club since 2018 was analysed. The

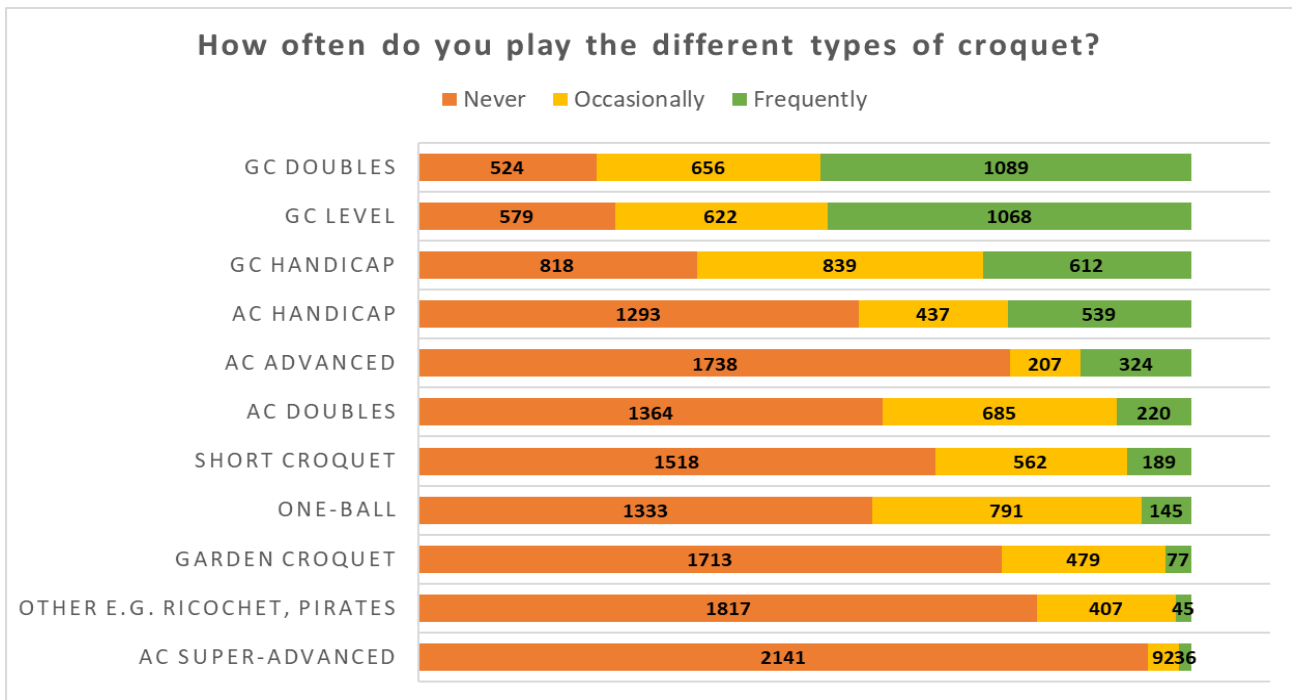
percentage playing predominantly GC has risen from 72% to 78%, and the proportion playing both codes has fallen from 10% to 5%.



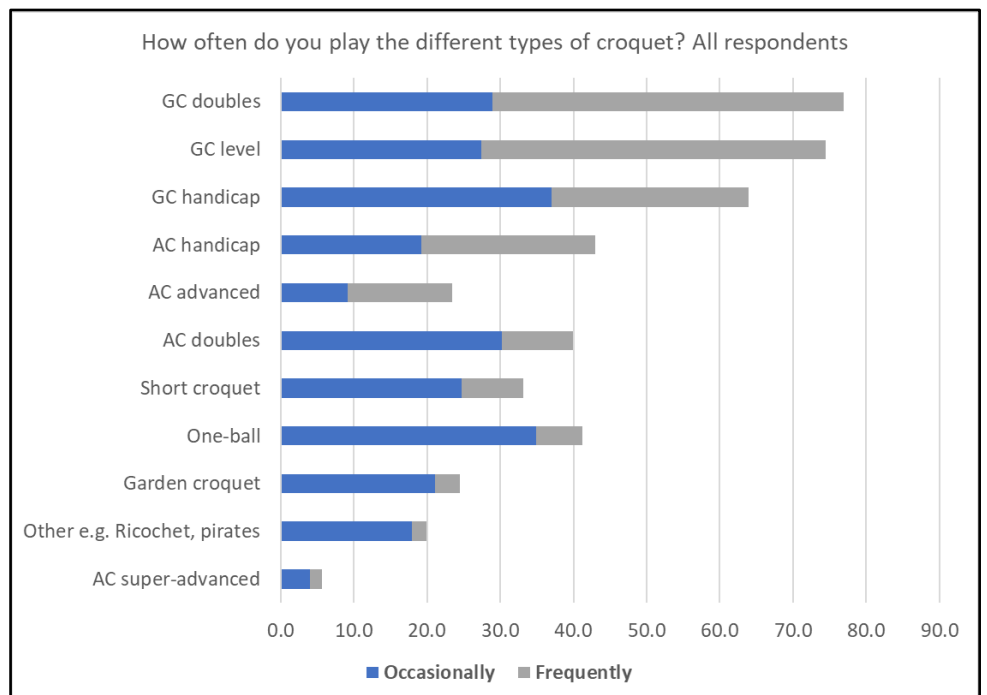
So, it is clear that over three-quarters of new recruits are playing predominantly GC. To see if beginners who are taught GC first will then move on to play AC as well, we looked at the 567 respondents who first joined a club in 2013-2017. 72% are predominantly GC, which is exactly the same percentage as the 2017 inset diagram above. The percentage of predominantly AC had risen slightly to 21% but this was at the expense of the proportion playing both codes which had fallen to 6%. So, the inevitable conclusion is that people who are playing predominantly GC in their early playing career are unlikely to take up AC as well.

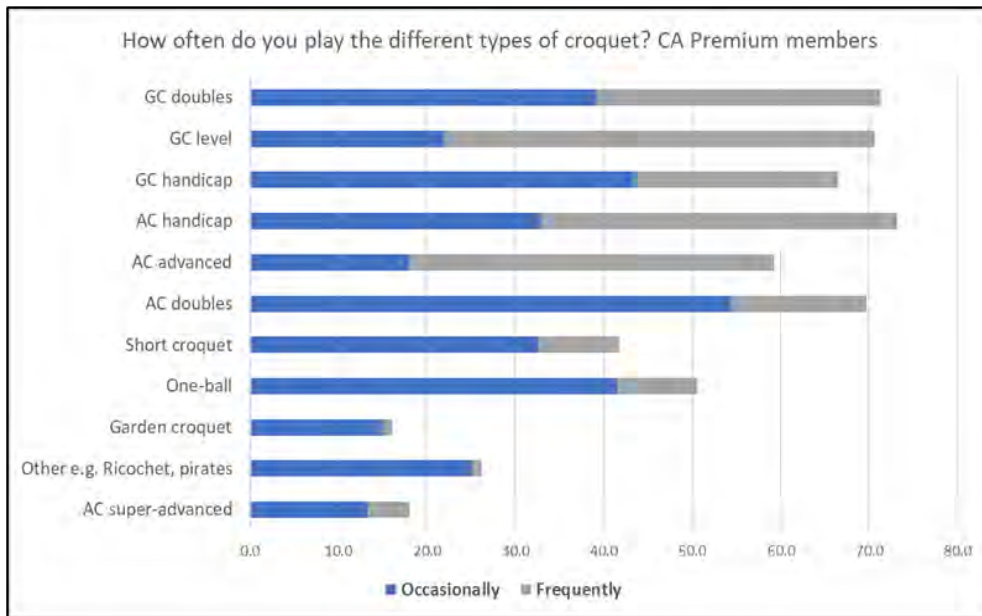
### 6.3.2. How frequently are different types of croquet played?

The result from all 2269 respondents shows that GC doubles and GC level play are the most frequently played forms of croquet.

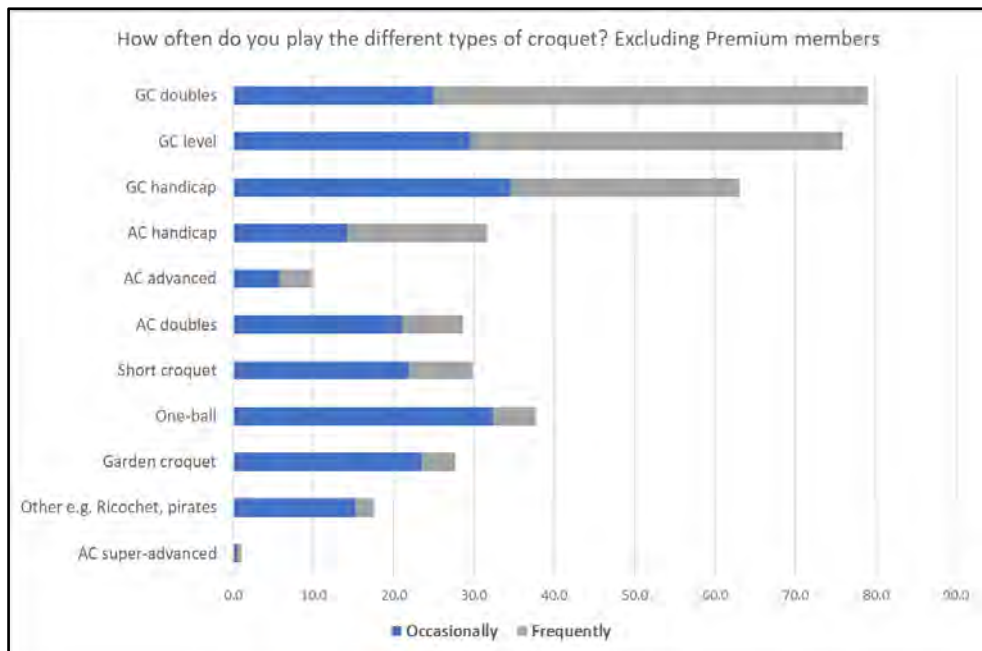


This chart shows the same results as above but displayed as percentages with the 'never' omitted.





Splitting these results in the same way as has been done in previous surveys, reveals that CA Premium members (formerly CA Associates) play a much broader range of croquet than the Standard plus CA non-members (formerly non-members) where GC predominates.



The growth in the number of people playing one-ball and short-croquet, observed in 2017, seems to have continued.

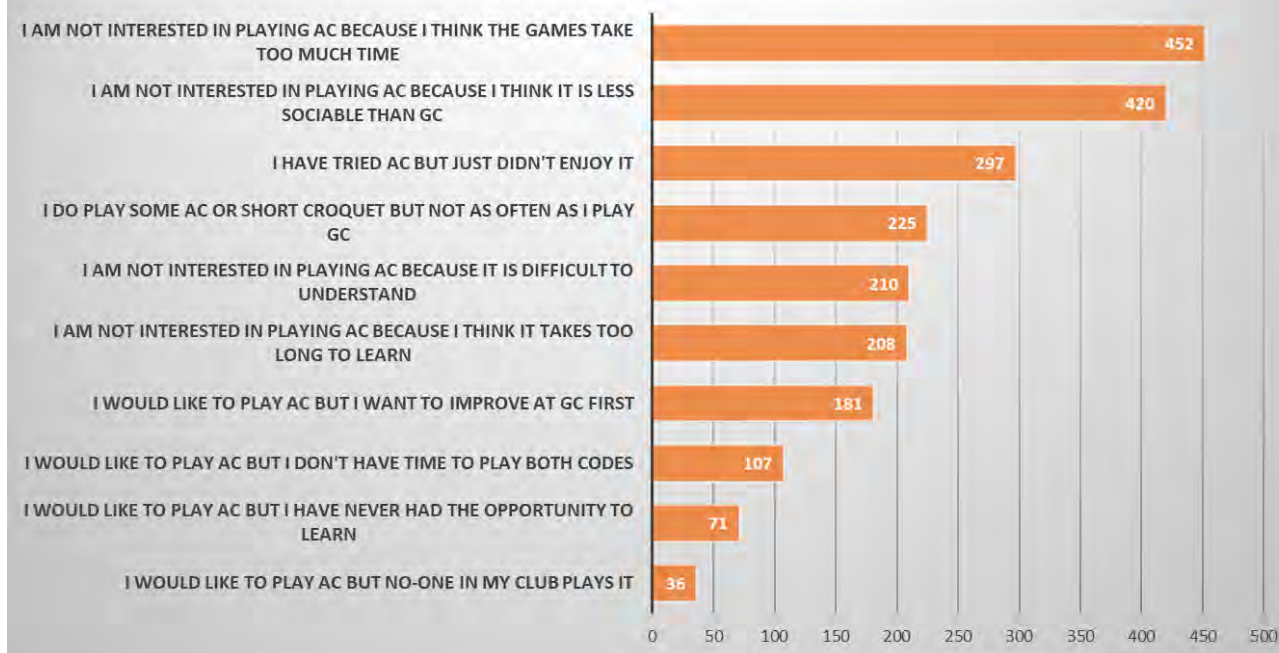
### 6.3.3. The GC player's view of AC

The 1383 respondents who said they were predominantly GC players were asked to select from a list of options all that were applicable to their experience and thoughts about Association Croquet. More than 58% said they were not interested in playing AC because they thought it took too much time, was too difficult to learn or was less sociable than GC.

Of the remainder, 13% had at least given AC a try but preferred to stick with GC.

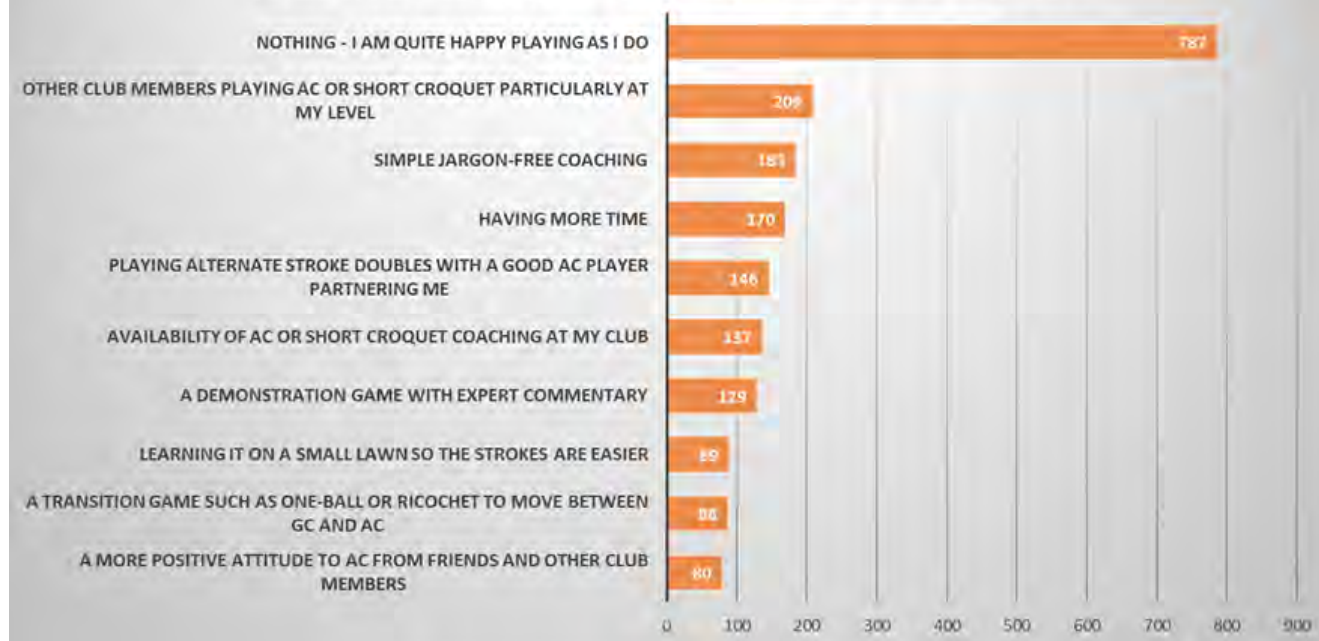
Perhaps surprisingly 28% are already playing some AC or would like to. This is a significant number when you consider that many clubs are now effectively GC only. Interestingly in 2017 30% of GC players said they would like to play more AC but the rise in the number of clubs where GC is the only game played in the intervening 5 years has been significant.

## You are predominantly a GC player but what is your experience of AC ?



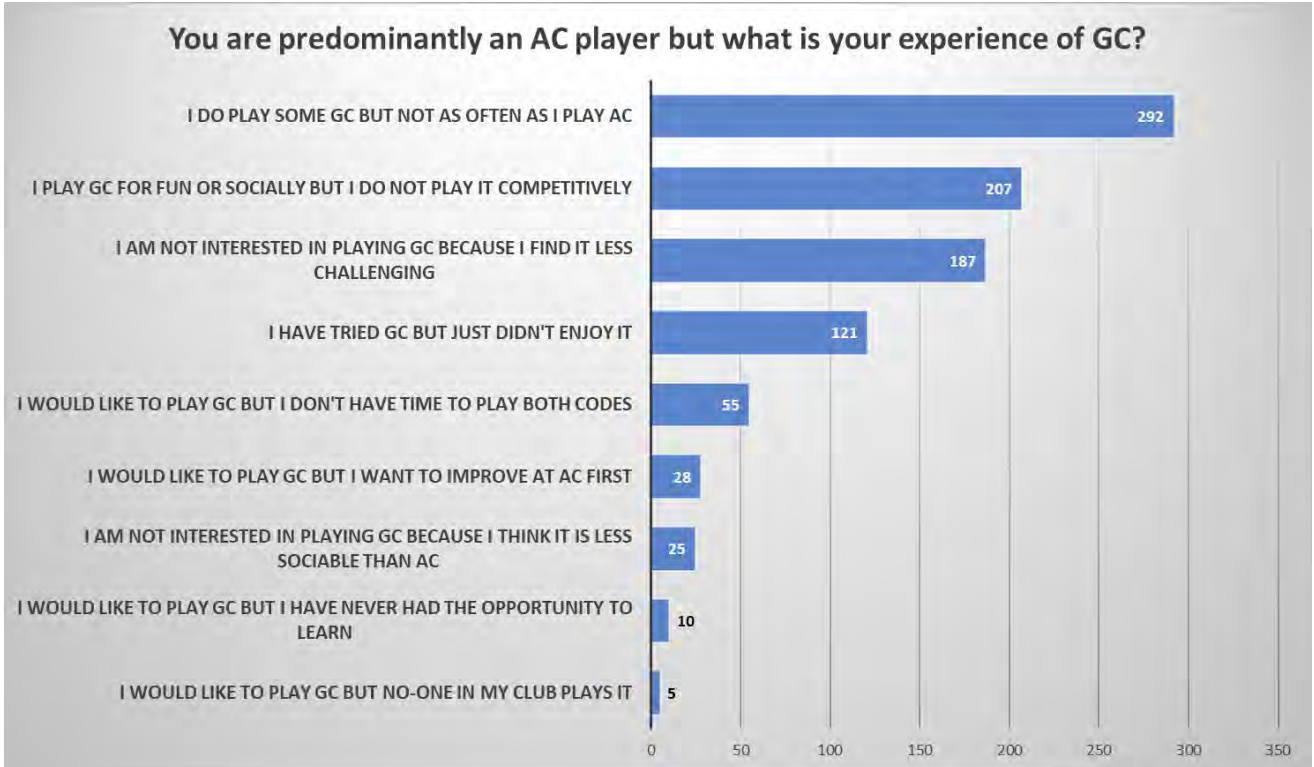
In order to get an understanding of what would encourage more GC players to have a go at AC, they were asked to select as many from a list of options that they thought applicable to them. Although 57% said nothing would encourage them, which is similar to the number who said they were not interested in playing AC, the other responses give a very useful guide to what may be helpful to clubs and coaches.

## What would encourage you to try AC or to play more AC?



### 6.3.4. The AC player's view of GC

The 631 respondents who said they were predominantly AC players were asked a similar set of questions as above about their attitude to GC. The responses were very different. A much greater proportion (54%) already play some GC and only 20% said they were not interested in playing it. A similar 13% said they had tried it but didn't enjoy it.



Maybe because so many AC players are already playing some GC, the answers to what would encourage them to play more, were also very different.



### 6.4. Competitive croquet

The object of a game of croquet, whether it is GC or AC, is to score more points than the opponent. This is true whether the game is a social game between friends or an international tournament. In other

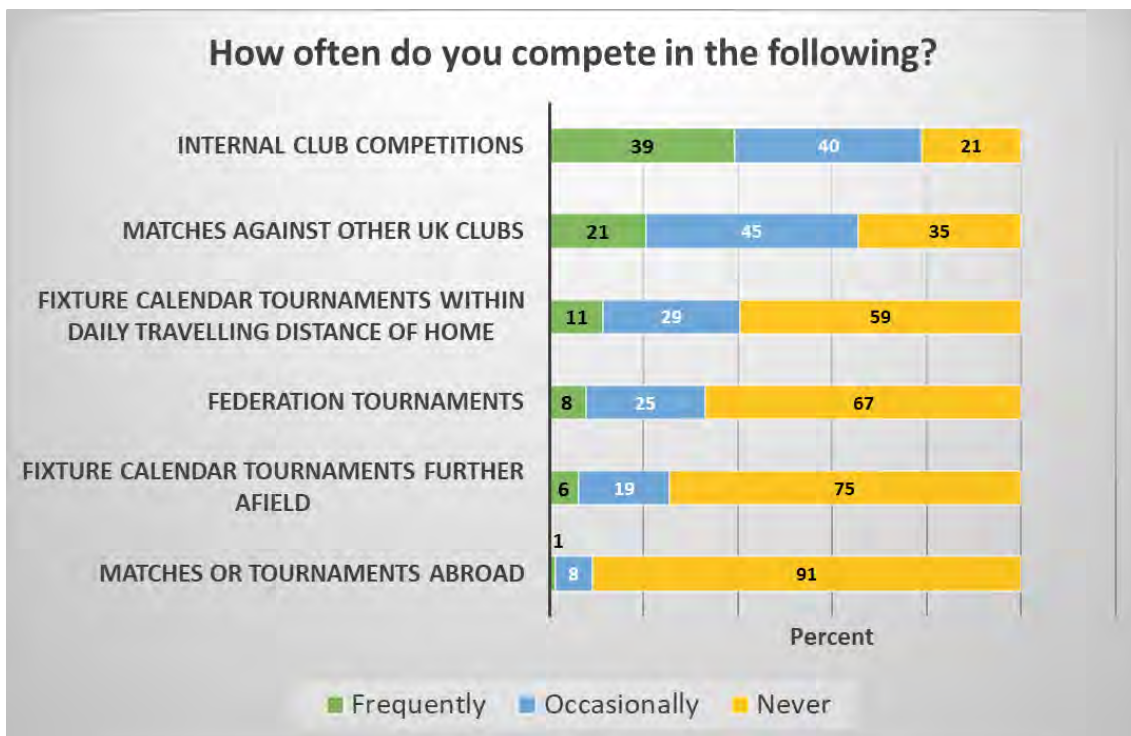


words, all croquet is competitive. However, the level or seriousness with which that competition is regarded, varies widely between players. A section of the survey was dedicated to trying to help quantify that variation.

There has been a lot of debate and concern about ‘competitive’ croquet being squeezed out by ‘non-competitive’ croquet, which is perhaps better referred to as ‘social’ croquet. Defining these categories though is not straight-forward. In the 2012 and 2017 surveys player were described as ‘competitive’ if they played frequently or occasionally in external competitions but not frequently in friendlies, whereas ‘non-competitive players’ were defined as those who did not frequently play in external competitions but did frequently play friendlies. It was admitted that this was a rather crude definition, and resulted in about half of all players being put into an ‘inconclusive’ category.

In March 2021 a strategy for the development of competitive croquet was published. The Competitive Play Strategy – Final Report can be downloaded at [Growth and Recruitment in the CA \(croquet.org.uk\)](https://www.croquet.org.uk/growth-and-recruitment-in-the-ca). Unfortunately, no definition of what constitutes ‘competitive croquet’ was given but it is implicit in the report that it means competing in competitions and tournaments. Nor was any estimate given of what percentage of players are ‘competitive’ or ‘non-competitive’. So, in the 2022 survey, the questions were redesigned to try and get a more accurate picture, and maybe quantify what percentage of croquet players will remain social players and what percentage are interested in competitive play.

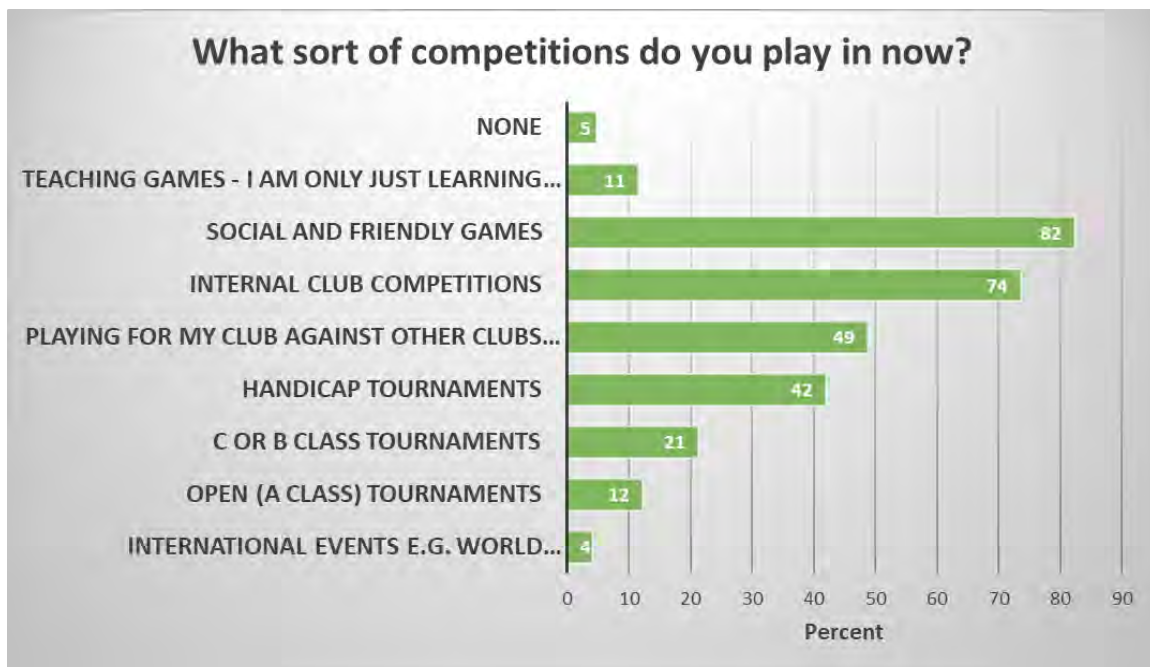
The first question gave the same set of options of competitions from which to select as in previous years. The categorisation into frequent, occasional, or never was left to the individual to decide based on how often they played overall. In other words, someone who doesn’t play very much but when they do they always play in Federation tournaments, may select frequent for that, whereas someone else who plays in just as many Federation tournaments but competes in far more Fixture Calendar tournaments may have selected occasionally for the former and frequently for the latter.



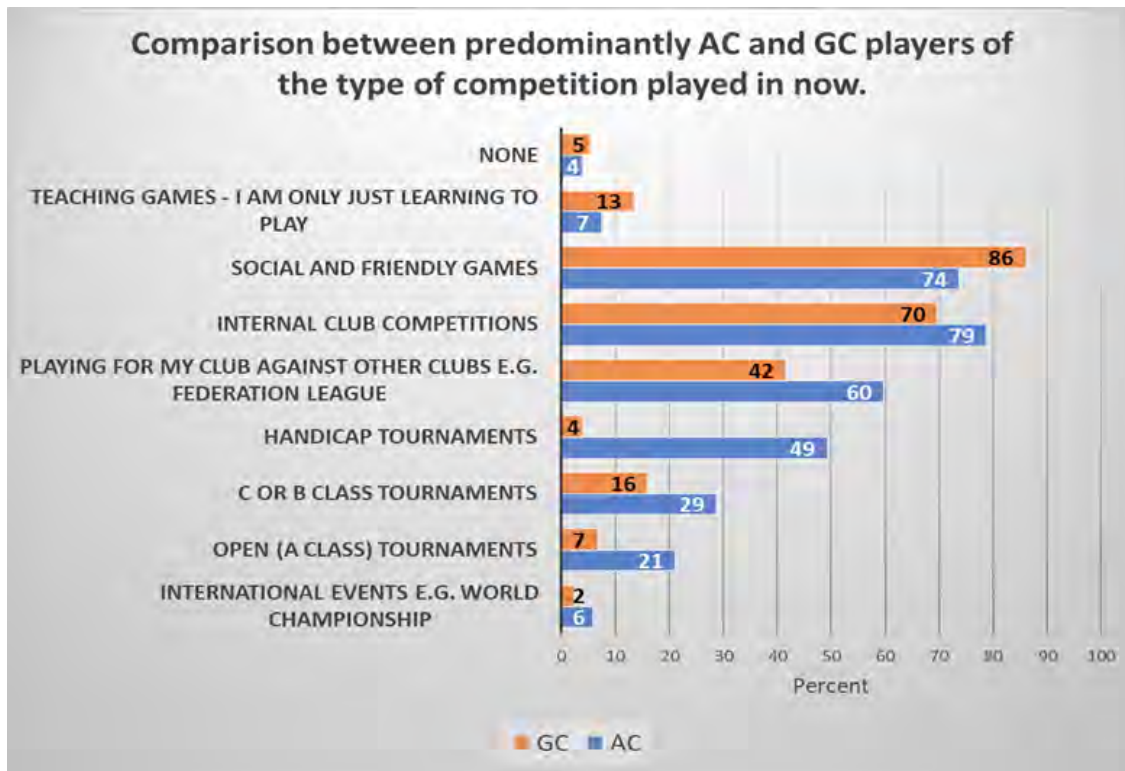
352 people (15.5%) said they never competed in any of these categories and a further 273 (12%) only ever play occasional internal club competitions. This is the group that could be most confidently defined as 'non-competitive' and an analysis of these people follows later.

The remaining 71% are playing in competitions, to a greater or lesser extent, so could therefore be considered competitive. To try and get an idea of how competitive, we gave a more detailed list of different competitions and asked what they played in now.

This gave some interesting results. Firstly, the number who selected 'none' in this question was considerably fewer than those who said they never played in any of the competitions in the previous question. However, this time they could select social and friendly games which explains that difference. It does beg the question though what are the 107 people (4.8%) doing who still selected none of these options? It appears that 55 of them have only joined a club within the last 12 months, 14 are no longer a member of a club, and 9 are not playing because of family/work commitments or poor health. It is a little worrying though that 55 new recruits have not got involved in social or friendly or even teaching games.



Although respondents were not asked to specify if they were playing in AC or GC competitions, by taking those who previously said they were mainly AC players and comparing with those who said they were mainly GC players, we can compare results. It can be seen below that there is a much greater likelihood that predominantly AC players (blue) will play in Federation leagues, inter-club competitions or tournaments of all levels than predominantly GC players (orange). This graph does not show whether those people who play both codes roughly equally are entering similar competitions in both codes.



As part of this same question we asked which of these same competitions the respondent was aiming to play in in the next 3-5 years. 585 (25.8%) indicated a positive desire to play at a higher level than they were currently playing. Although it is not entirely clear, it appears that 1577 (69.5%) either accept or are content to remain at their current level with no ambition to progress. This group will contain people who consider they have reached their playing pinnacle and therefore feel that in 3-5 years time they are likely to be playing at the same or lower level than they are now.

The other 107 (4.8%), as discussed previously, have no desire to play competitively.



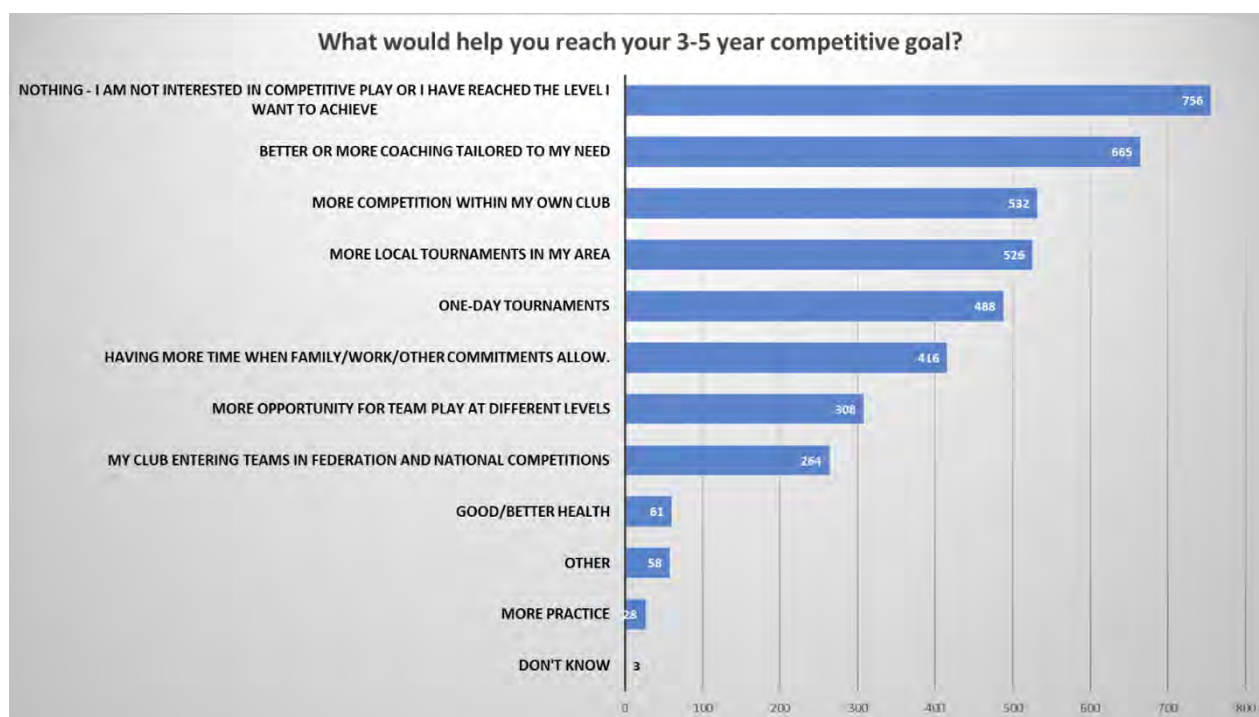
The 25.8% (585) players seeking to play at a more competitive level encompass those that had just joined clubs or are currently only playing social games (107), to those already competing in A-class competitions (41). 360 are not currently playing in tournaments, 242 of these hope to do so.

117 players, including current beginners, not already playing at World Championship/International Level aspire to do so, a further 115 aim to progress to A-class level and another 114 to B/C-class. Playing in handicap tournaments is the ultimate aspiration of a further 121. 105 are hoping to move up to playing for their club, or to participating in internal club tournaments.

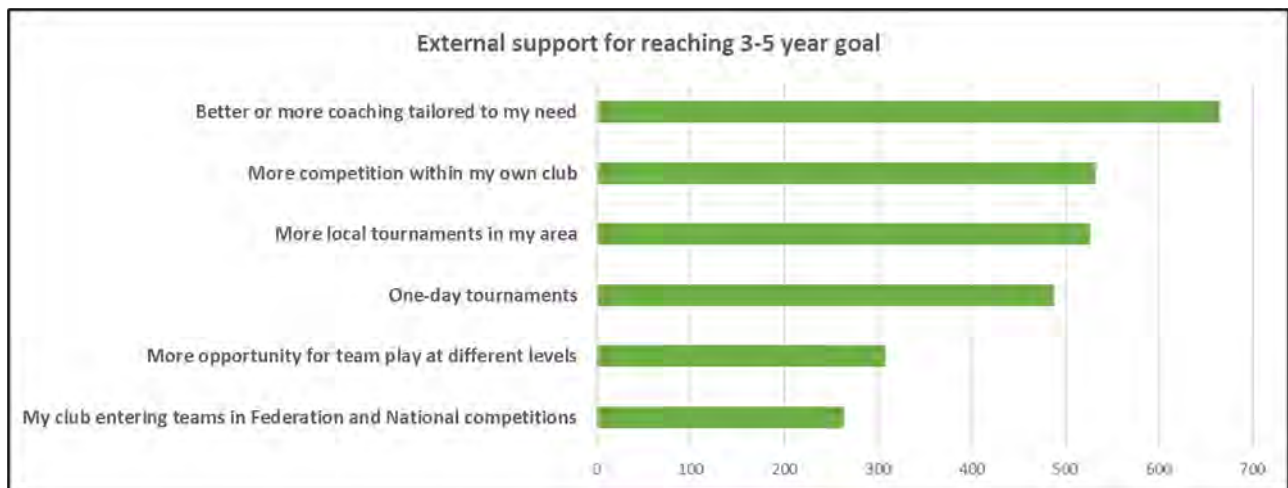
The next question asked what would help them achieve their 3-5 year competitive goal. We can see that the largest group 756 (33%) are either not interested in competitive play or feel that they have already reached their maximum potential. It should be remembered that top-flight international players would feel that they had reached their personal goals based on these categories and players whose health or ability was starting to decline would also be likely to select this option.

So, you would expect to see two-thirds of players aiming to reach a higher level than they currently are, but in fact only just over a quarter said they were. Perhaps by providing the tailored coaching, more competition within clubs, more local tournament etc. some of the 69% who appear to have no ambition to progress, would actually be inspired to do so.

In the 'other' category a high proportion mentioned their health or the need for more practice. These have therefore been separated out and shown as categories in their own right below.



Some of the help above is clearly only within the power of the person themselves e.g. having more time, more practice. However, some are external opportunities and it is these that clubs, Federation or the CA may be able to improve.



#### 6.4.1. 'Non-competitive' players

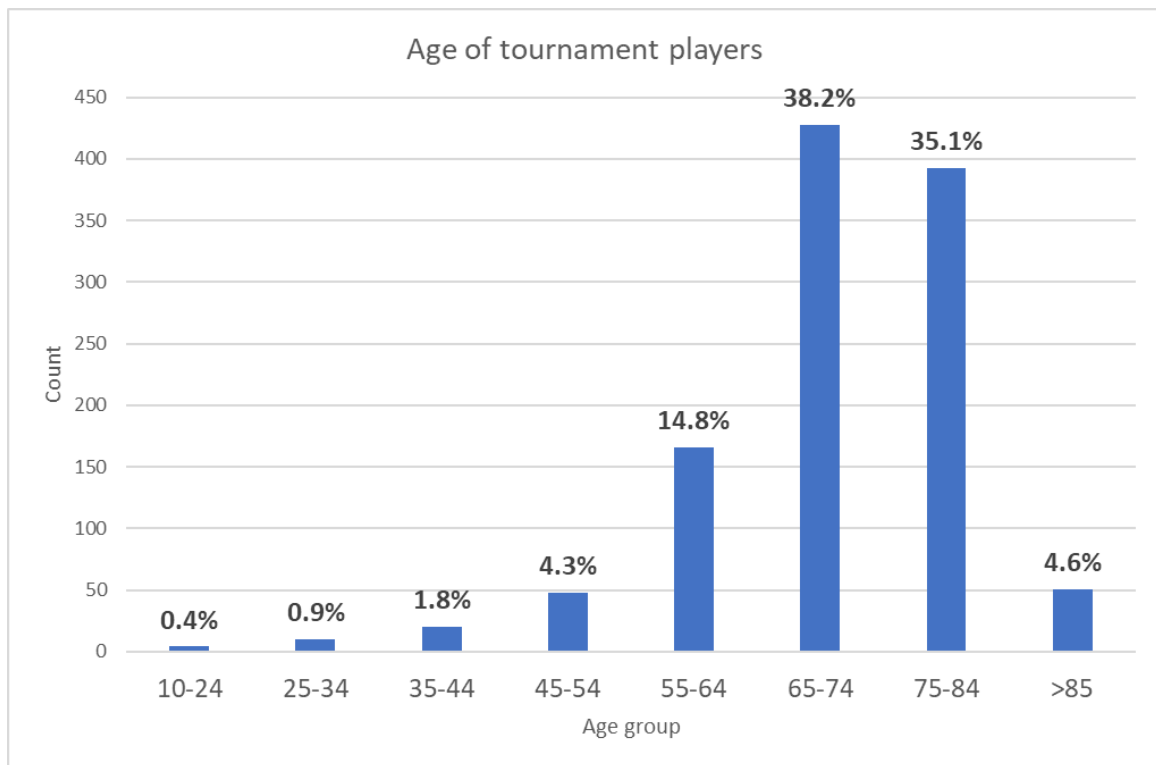
Going back to the 625 people who said they never play in any competitions or they only occasionally play in internal club competitions and nothing else, these are the ones tentatively identified as 'not competitive'. Nine of these have never been a member of a croquet club and 16 are no longer members of a club, so they would not be expected to be competing in any club, Federation or tournament competitions.

134 of this cohort of 'non-competitive' players have been members of a club for less than 2 years. Considering the significantly reduced opportunities to play competitively in the preceding 2 years it is perhaps unsurprising that these people have not been competing. 57% say better or more coaching tailored to their need would help them reach their competitive goal, which suggests that they are at least interested in improving.

Of the remaining 466, in answer to the question about what would help them achieve their competitive goal, 299 of them said nothing. If we add the other 25 above who are not club or CA members, it gives 324 people who could truly be described as uncompetitive. This represents 14.3 % of the respondents. It comprises 55% female, 39% male and 2% prefer not to say. The age range is 47 to 95 with 28% over 80 and less than 4% under 60.

#### 6.4.2. Tournament players

Just under half of respondents (1120) play in Federation, CA Fixture Calendar or International tournaments. 31% are female and 68% male. The age distribution of those players is a cause for concern. As shown in the chart below, nearly 40% are over 75. In 10 years' time very few of these will still be playing. With only 7.4% of current tournament players being under 55, this leaves a potential drop in tournament players of over 30%. In order for the tournament scene, and competitive croquet, to survive in anything like the way it does at present, the shortage of working age players has to be overcome.



#### 6.4.3. Summary

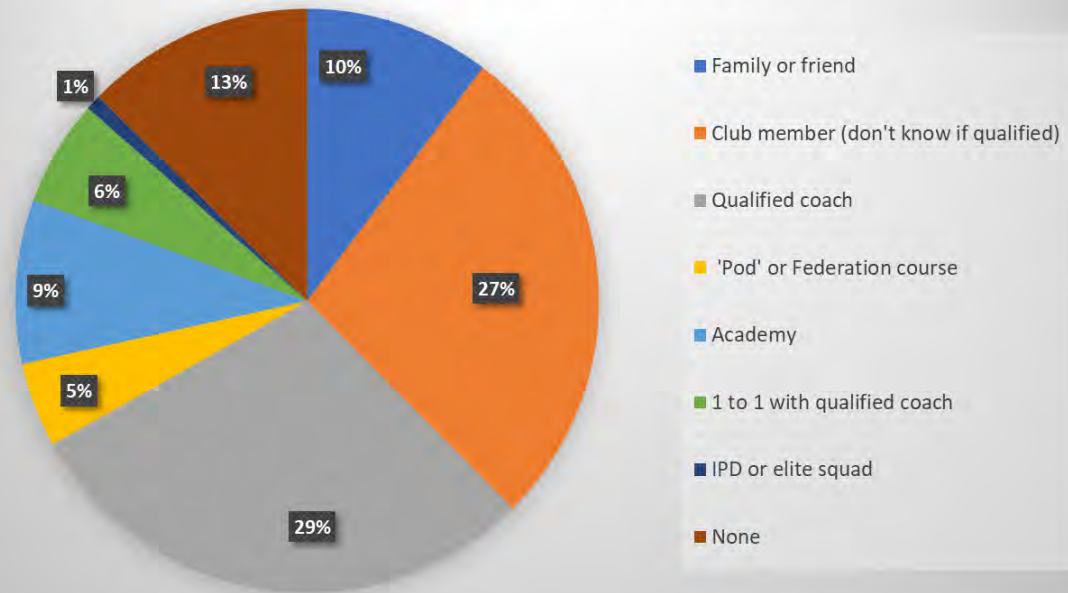
The method used in the 2012 survey to try and define competitive and non-competitive, resulted in 39% being categorised as non-competitive, 25% competitive and 37% as inconclusive. This was refined slightly in 2017 resulting in a big change to 25% being defined as non-competitive, 24% as competitive, and 51% as inconclusive. A different approach used here results in only 14.3% of players being described as non-competitive, 25.8% as definitely competitive and 59.5% who are competing at some level, whose ambitions are not clear, but some of whom may, given the right encouragement, progress beyond their current level.

However it is calculated, the number and age of people who are playing in tournaments is a very real concern if croquet is to retain its sporting element rather than becoming just a past-time.

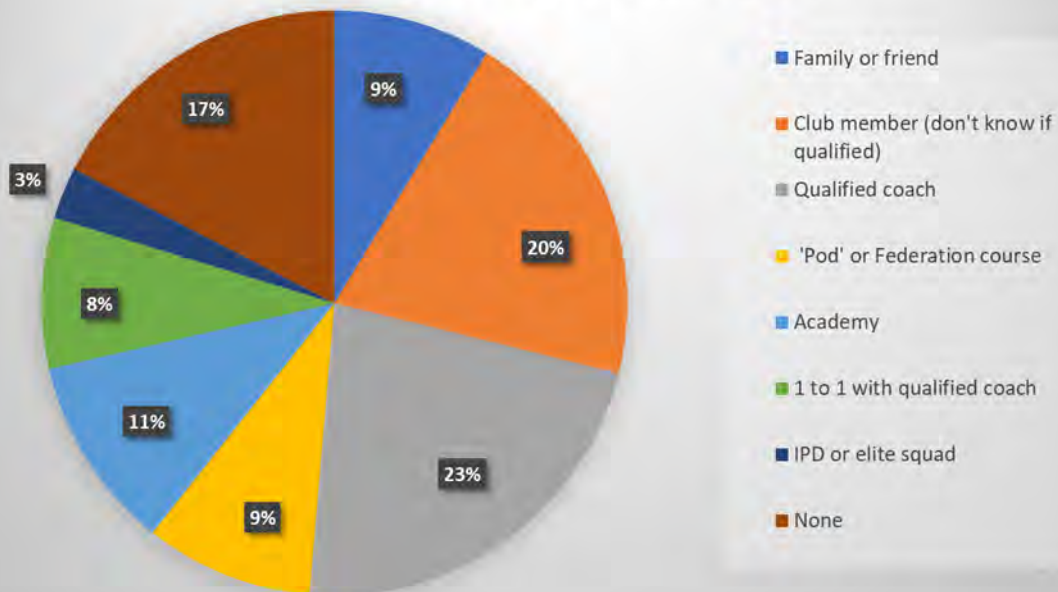
#### 6.5. Coaching

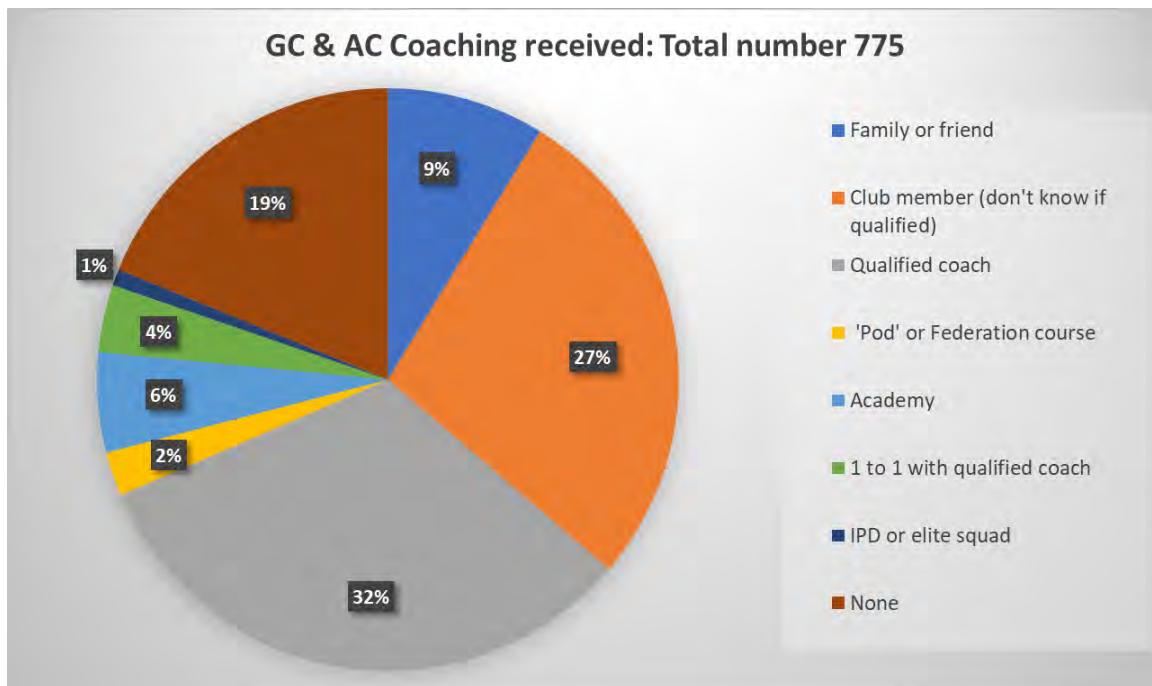
The survey asked whether coaching had been received in GC and AC and who gave that coaching. 2129 (93.8%) of respondents had received GC coaching, 1538 (67.8%) had received AC coaching and 775 (34.2%) had received both. In all cases the largest proportion had received coaching from a qualified coach but a very significant proportion of coaching is given by club members (who may or may not be qualified coaches) and family or friends.

**GC Coaching received: Total number 2129**



**AC Coaching received: Total number 1538**





#### 6.5.1. Coaching and refereeing qualifications

A question exploring what croquet qualifications were held, covered refereeing and coaching. It did not cover handicapping since there is no qualification. It may have been useful to ask if a person was an appointed club, Federation or CA handicapper.

Just under 20% of respondents have a coaching and/or refereeing qualification:





Everyone was also asked about their coaching and/or refereeing activity:



This graph highlights a couple of problems:

Firstly, a fairly small but significant number of people hold coaching and refereeing qualifications but are no longer active. Keeping track of who has 'retired' from coaching and refereeing is important so that the sport is not lulled into thinking it has more coaches or referees than it actually has.

Secondly, there is a very large number of people who are coaching but hold no coaching qualification. In fact this survey suggests that this number is not far short of the number of qualified coaches. Clubs are clearly reliant on the goodwill and enthusiasm of their members to bring on new players. However, the high proportion of coaching being done without any qualification does raise concerns about the standard of coaching being given, which may be excellent or may be very poor. It is also worth noting that, when applicable, the CA's insurance policy only provides Professional Indemnity cover to CA qualified coaches.

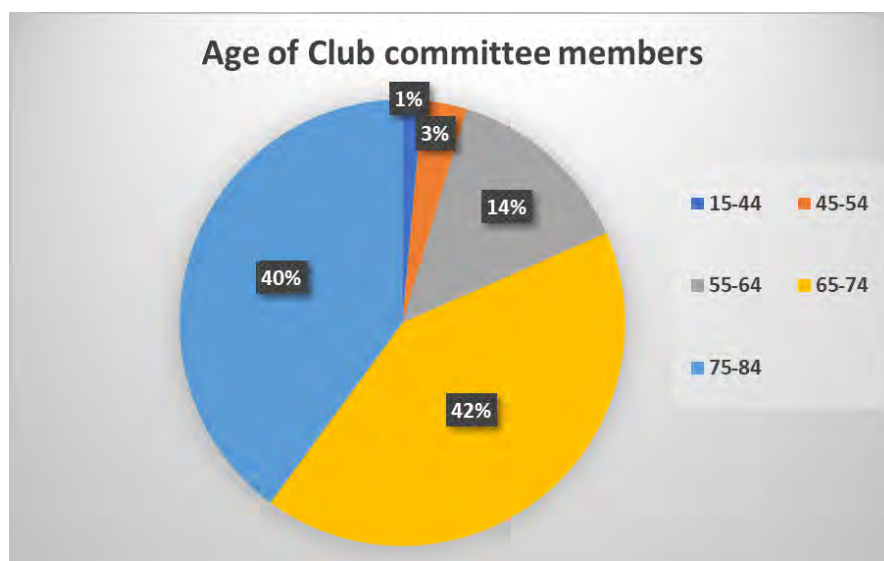
## 6.6. Volunteering

Croquet is almost entirely run by volunteers, from the smallest club, right through the structure to the World Croquet Federation. An astonishing three-quarters of respondents are helping in some way in the running of croquet. Many people have multiple roles at club, Federation and CA level (hence these totals add up to more than 100% in the table below). Of those respondents who said they are not helping in any way, many said they have been involved in the past but work or family commitments, age, infirmity, or simply feeling they have done their bit, means they have stepped aside.

It is worth considering, when looking at the age profile of croquet players, what the consequence of an ever-aging croquet population means to the running of our sport. Already some clubs that have previously relied on members to maintain their lawns are having to employ contractors, and clubs that had a nice income in the past from catering or a bar are no longer providing this service because they are short of helpers. This all results in higher subscriptions.

Member of club's committee	689 = 30%
Has a designated role at the club that is not on the committee	453 = 20%
Involved with lawn maintenance	384 = 17%
Helps informally at the club e.g. teas, odd-jobs, welcoming visitors etc	997 = 44%
Contributes to running of Federation	80 = 4%
On CA Council, Executive or one of the CA committees/working parties	65 = 3%
Helps run croquet internationally	15 = 0.7%
Manages tournaments	199 = 8%
Active coach	456 = 20%
Active referee	104 = 5%
Helps in other ways. Wide variety of tasks given from safeguarding to mole catching!	67 = 3%
Would like to be more involved in running croquet at club level	68 = 3%
Would like to be more involved in Federations or CA	32 = 1.5%

There is a wealth of analysis that can be done on this data. For example, the 684 people who said they are members of their club's committee comprise 40% women, 59% men and 1% who prefer not to say. 59% are predominantly GC players, 29% predominantly AC, 11% play both equally and 1% play mainly other forms of croquet. 40% of them are over 75 which means that they are probably likely to step down before the next survey is conducted.



3% of respondents said they would like to be more involved in running their club. Some of these are new members but others are already volunteering.

The shortage of active referees (only 5%) has been an issue for some time. It has recently been raised at the Federation Forum that there is a shortage for their leagues and matches, as well as by the organisers of the World Championship to be held in the UK in 2023.

Recognising, thanking and appreciating the contributions that so many people make is important to keep them motivated and continuing their volunteering. Croquet depends on them!

## 7. How welcoming is croquet?

The introduction to this section of the survey explained what was meant by inclusivity and diversity:

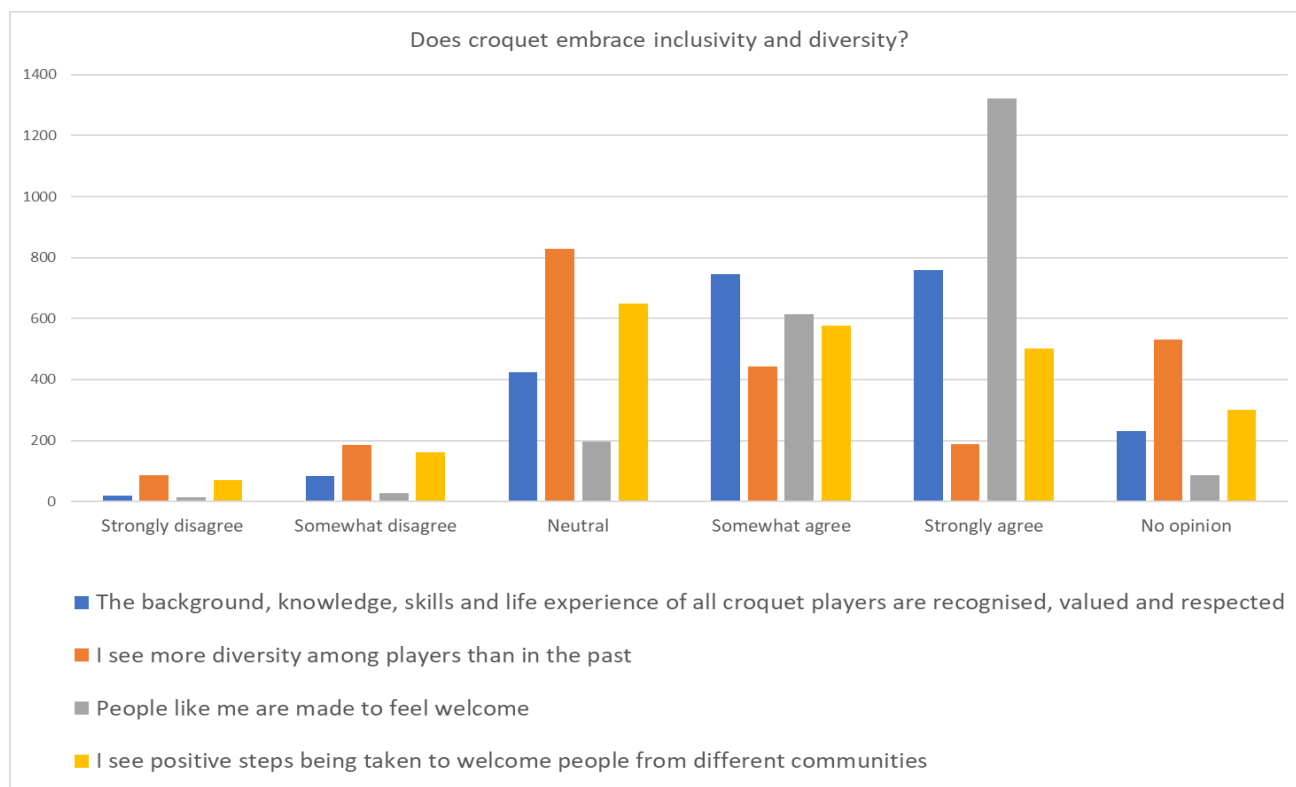
*‘We would like to explore what you think about croquet as an inclusive, welcoming and diverse sport. Inclusivity is about making everyone feel valued, included and welcomed. It is also about identifying and removing the obstacles and barriers that different people face so that everyone can take part and enjoy our game.*

*Diversity is embracing and incorporating people from all backgrounds into the game. Think of a bowl of fruit salad and how all the different fruits are identifiable but are all mixed up to make one delicious dessert - that is diversity.’*

Although there were some specific questions examining attitudes, the demographic data in Section 8 of this report reveals much more information on age, ethnicity, gender, health, income, education and employment, all of which reflect the degree of inclusiveness and diversity in the sport. The report published in February 2020 ‘Improving Inclusivity and Diversity in Croquet’ can be downloaded at [Inclusivity, Diversity and Equality Policy \(croquet.org.uk\)](https://croquet.org.uk/inclusivity-diversity-and-equality-policy).

### 7.1. Does croquet embrace inclusivity and diversity?

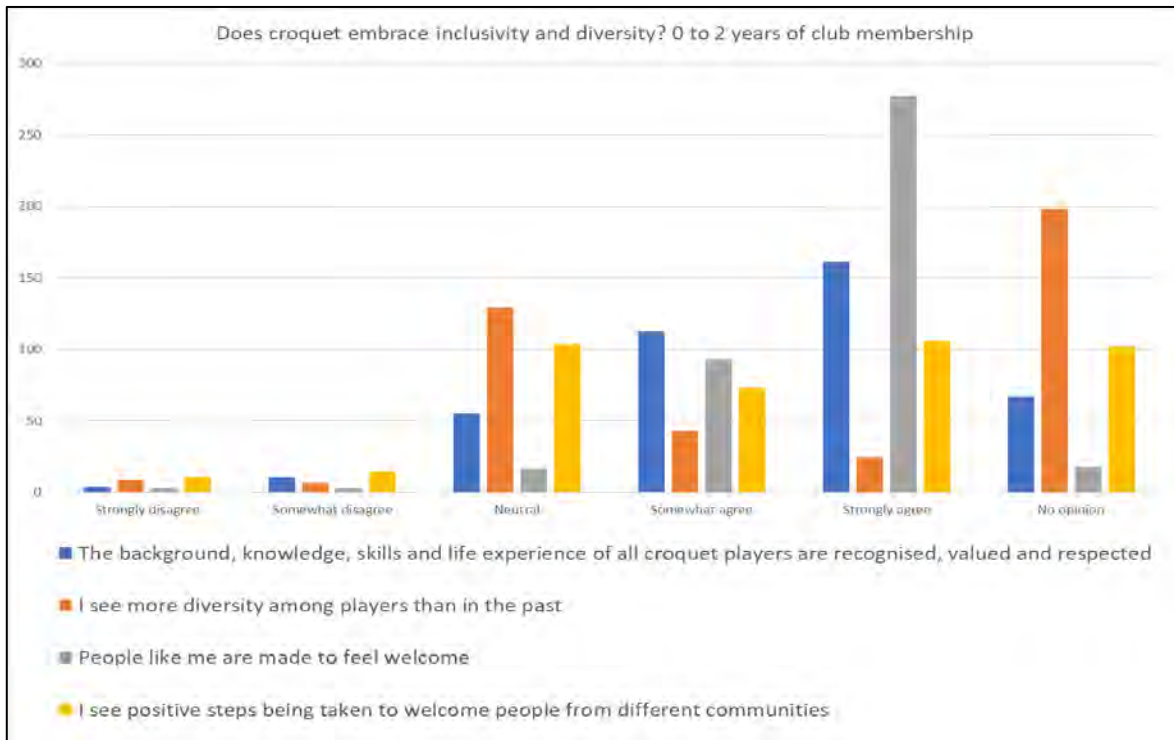
The first question asked people to say how much they agreed with four statements. Looking at the overall results, there was a very positive response to ‘people like me are made to feel welcome’ and ‘the background, knowledge, skills and life experience of all croquet players are respected’.



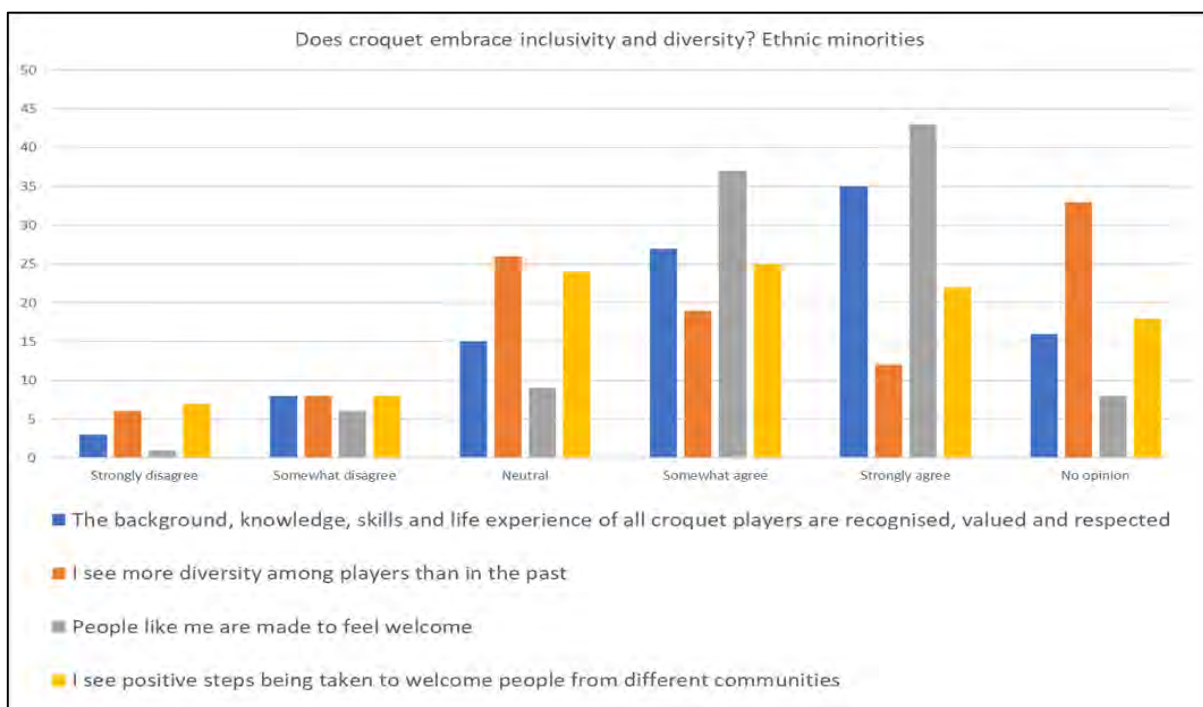
On the assumption that those who are happy will stay and those who are not will leave, exit feedback asking people who do NOT renew their membership similar questions may reveal much less contentment. Clubs who are keen to promote and improve their welcoming atmosphere may find it useful to get the honest opinions of those who leave.

In order to get some idea if the responses are just a reflection of people who have stayed at clubs because they feel comfortable, the same analysis was performed using the data from 411 people who had been members of a club for 2 years or less. At many clubs, these people will have been paying a reduced subscription so are more likely to have stuck with the club even if they were not entirely happy, but they may not renew when their subscription level rises.

A very similar pattern of answers emerges, although, understandably, a greater number do not give an opinion on seeing more diversity amongst players than in the past

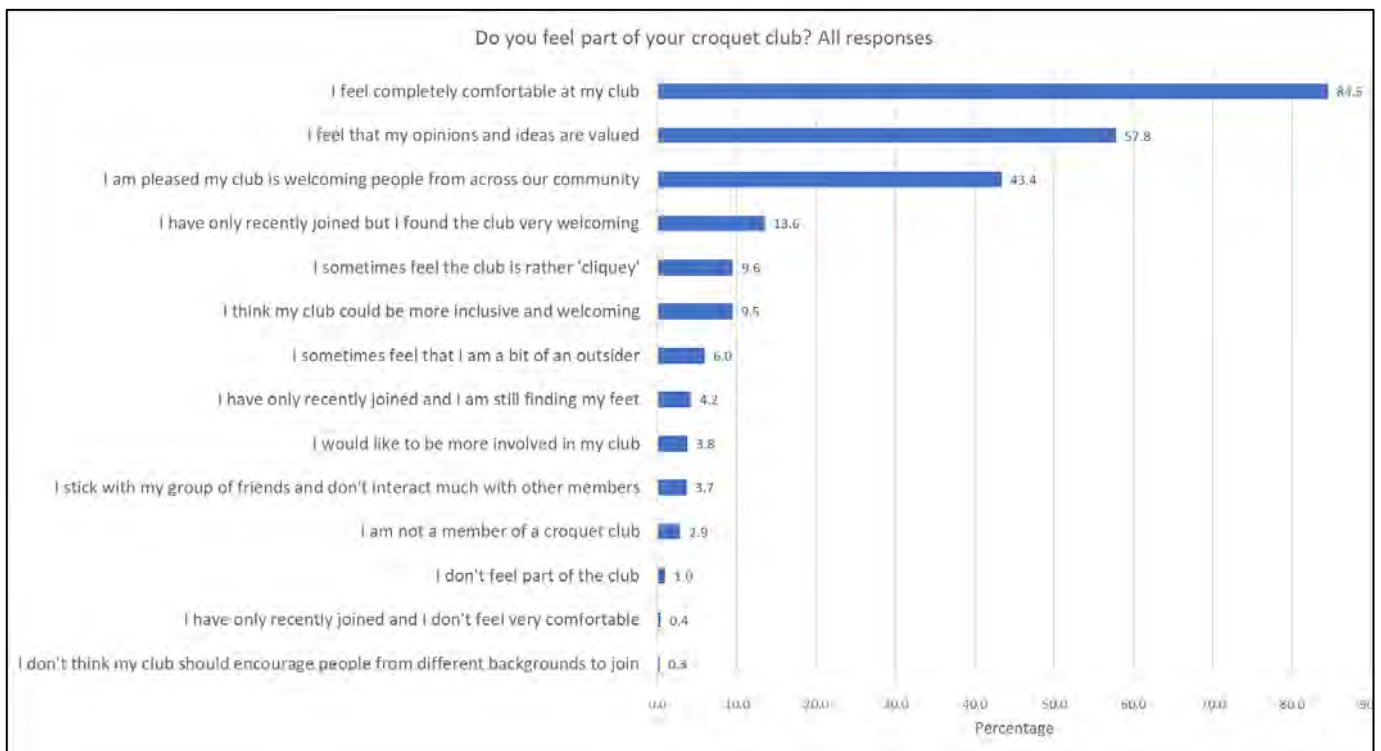


Excluding the 'White British or Irish' did not result in any significant variation of responses, although a greater percentage somewhat agreed that 'people like me are made to feel welcome'

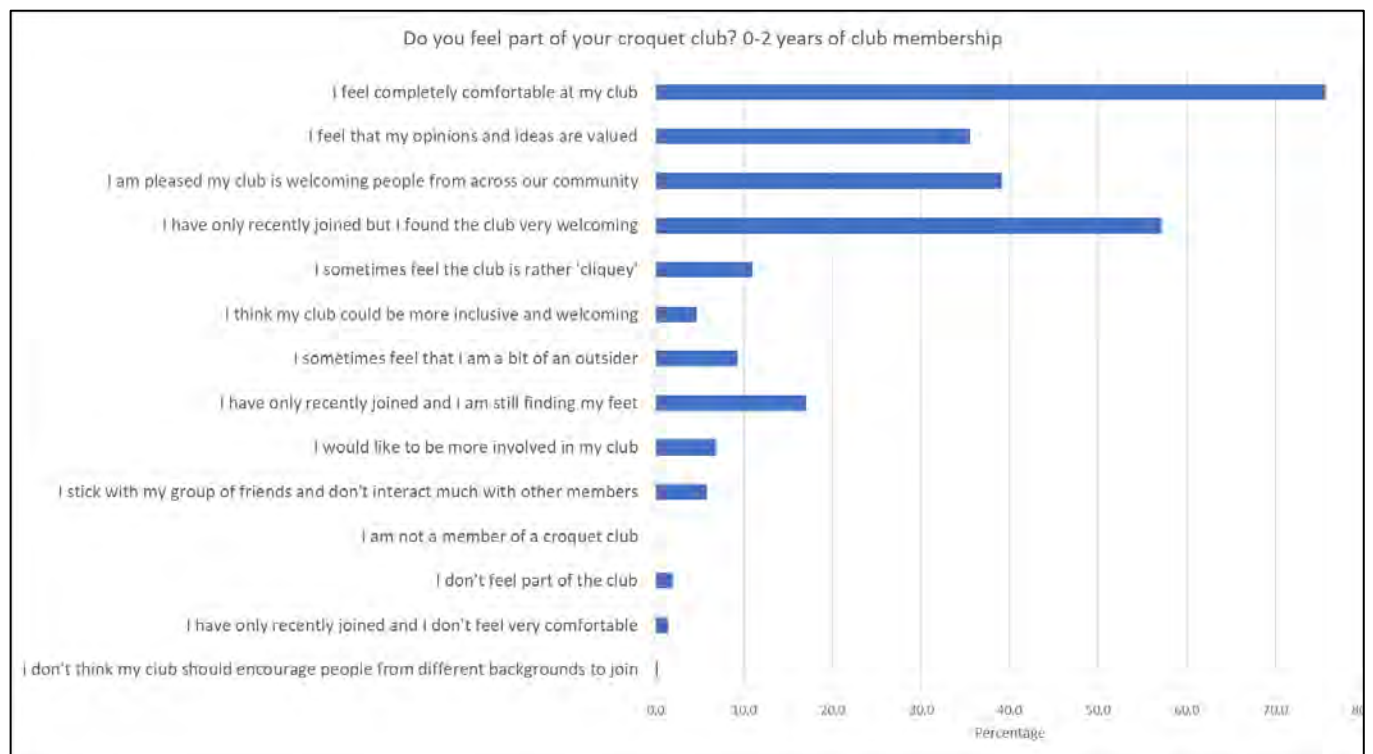


## 7.2. Do you feel part of your club?

The second question asked if people felt they were part of their club. 84.5% feel completely comfortable. Less than 2% do not feel they are part of the club.

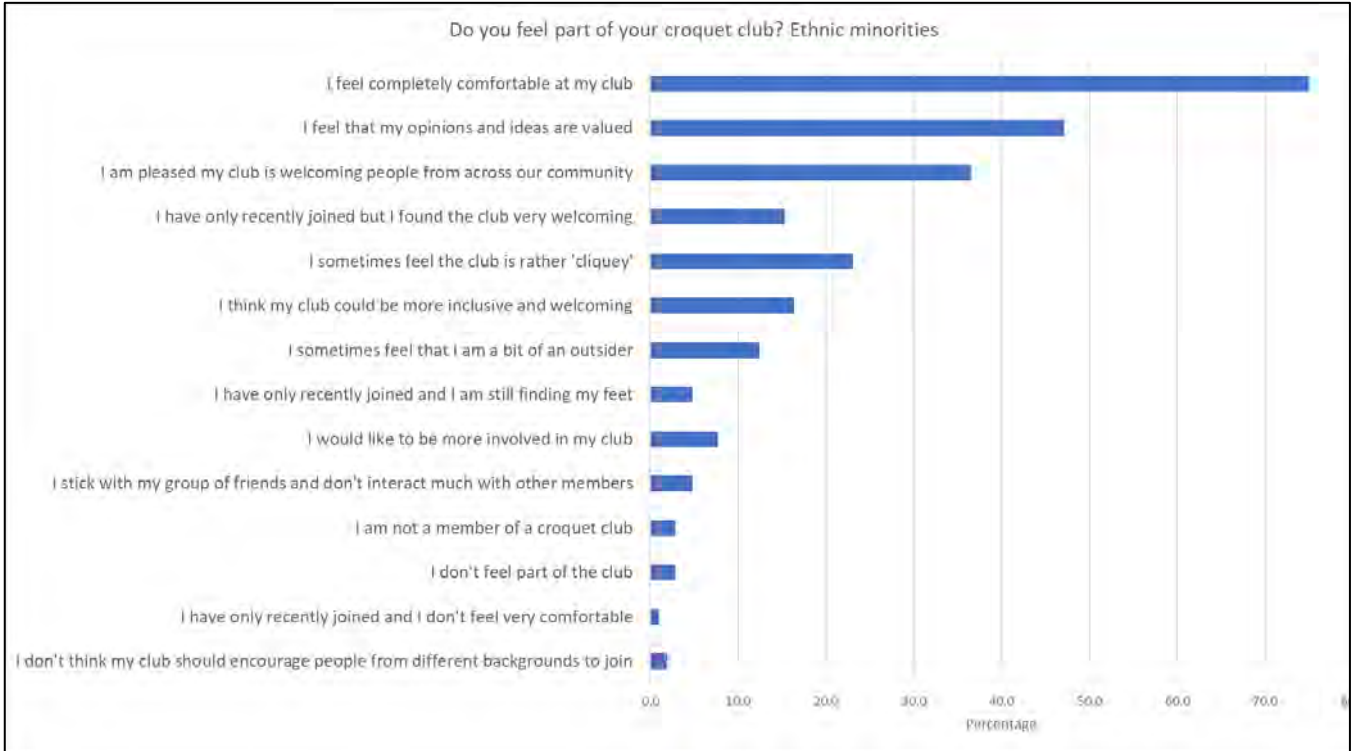


A comparison with the answers from those who have been club members for 0 to 2 years, not surprisingly shows a greater percentage selecting the answers referring to those who have recently joined. Once again the responses show that clubs are doing a good job of making people feel welcome.

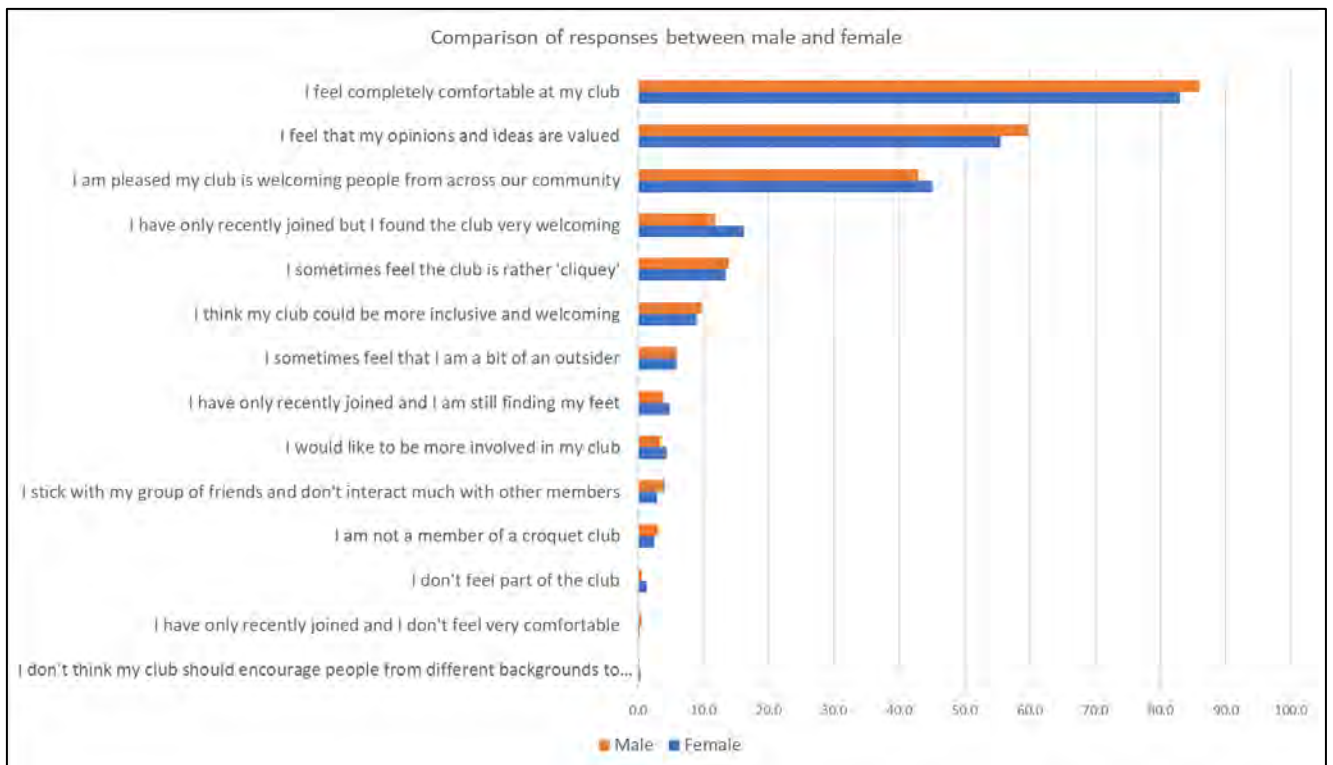


Of course, there is more that could be done to address the 10% who find the club rather cliquy or the 9% who feel they are outsiders.

Excluding all the 'White British or Irish' respondents, shows a greater percentage of the other ethnicities who think that their club sometimes feels rather cliquy, that it could be more inclusive and welcoming, and that they sometimes feel a bit of an outsider.



A comparison between male and female reveals mainly subtle differences, although women who have recently joined a club appear to be more likely to feel welcome than men.

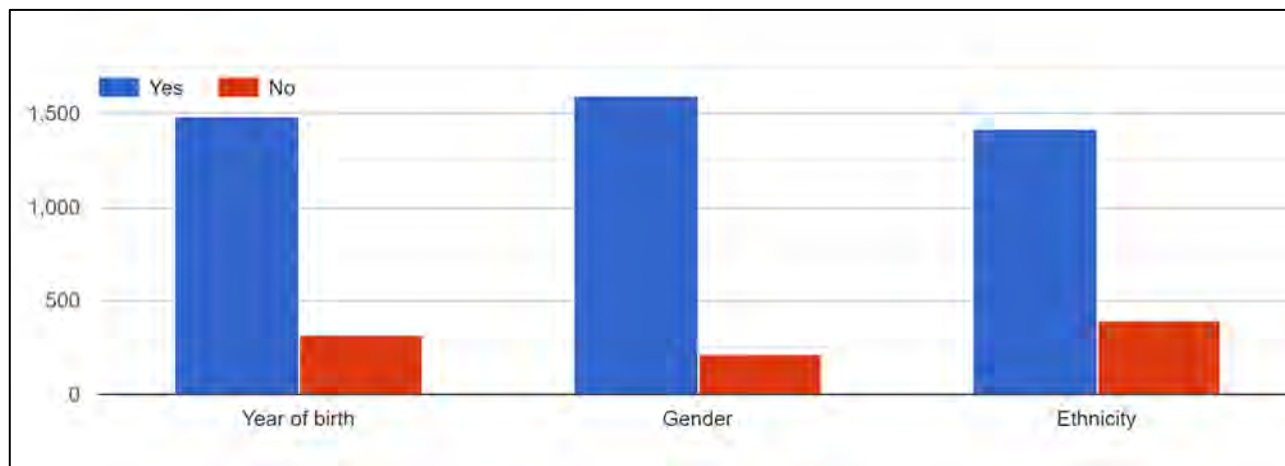


### 7.3. Collection of data regarding standard characteristics

As has been mentioned previously, the CA has previously collected very little information about its members which is a significant hindrance when assessing the impact of initiatives. The following question was posed to those respondents who are already members of the CA:

*Currently only your name, handicap, colour vision status, club, croquet qualifications and contact details are held on the CA database (plus DoB if under 25). In future, would you be willing for your year of birth, gender and ethnicity to be collected and held confidentially as well, purely for statistical purposes?*

The overwhelming majority said they would be willing.



With this mandate plans are underway to add these fields to an individual's entry in the database so that they can fill them in themselves. These fields will not be visible to any club or data administrators, but an annual, completely anonymous, aggregated list can be produced.

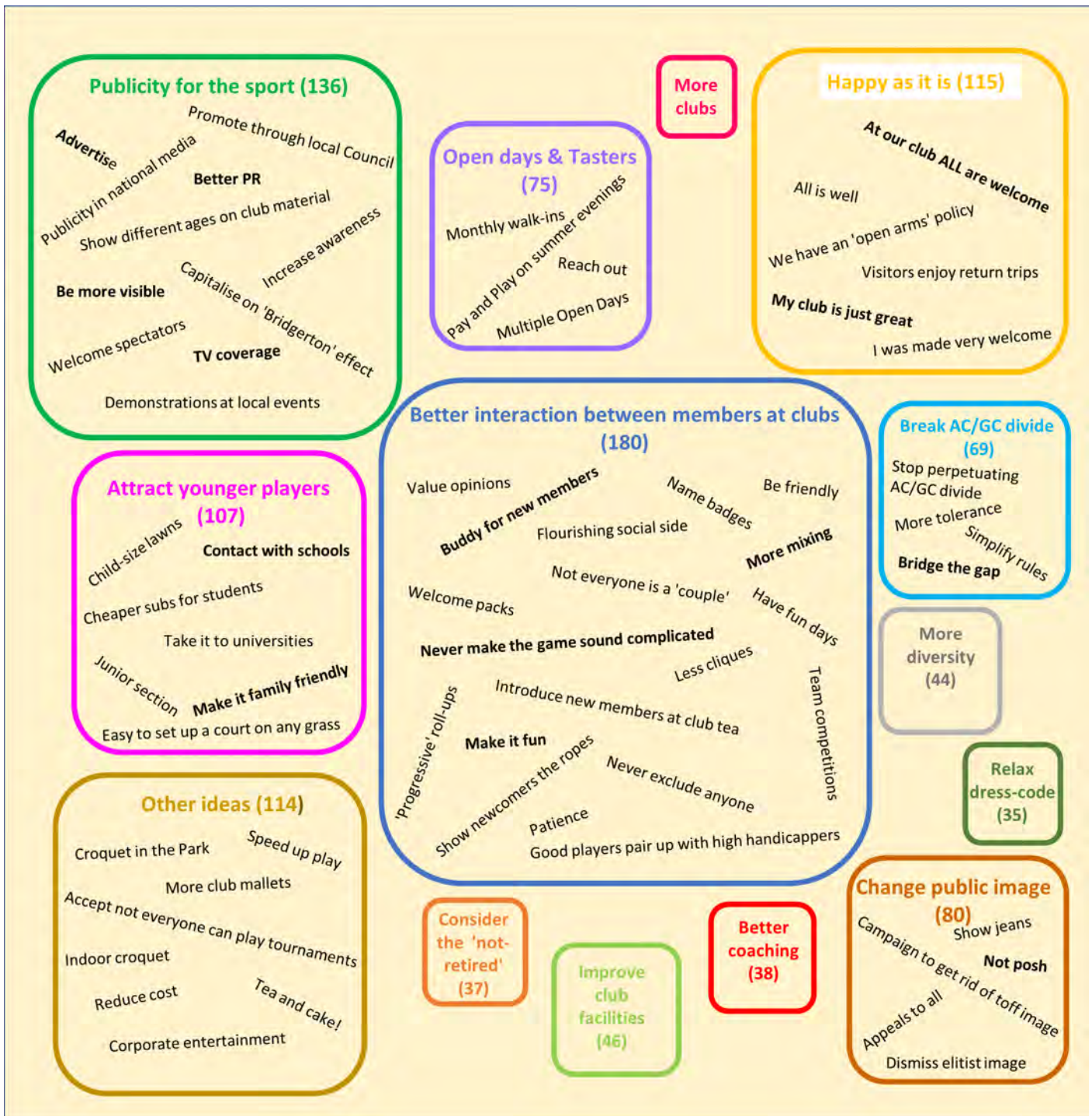
### 7.4. What would make croquet more welcoming?

The final question in this section of the survey asked respondents if they could suggest any one thing that they thought could be done to make croquet feel more welcoming.

1121 suggestions were received. Answers have been categorised under 15 headings and are presented in the following diagram with the size of the box representing how many comments there were in each category. The number in each category is shown in brackets. Many comments were very similar, so the quotes in each box are representative of those received.

'I don't know' and 'I can't think of anything' have been excluded.

**'If there were one thing you think could be done to make croquet more welcoming, what would it be?'**



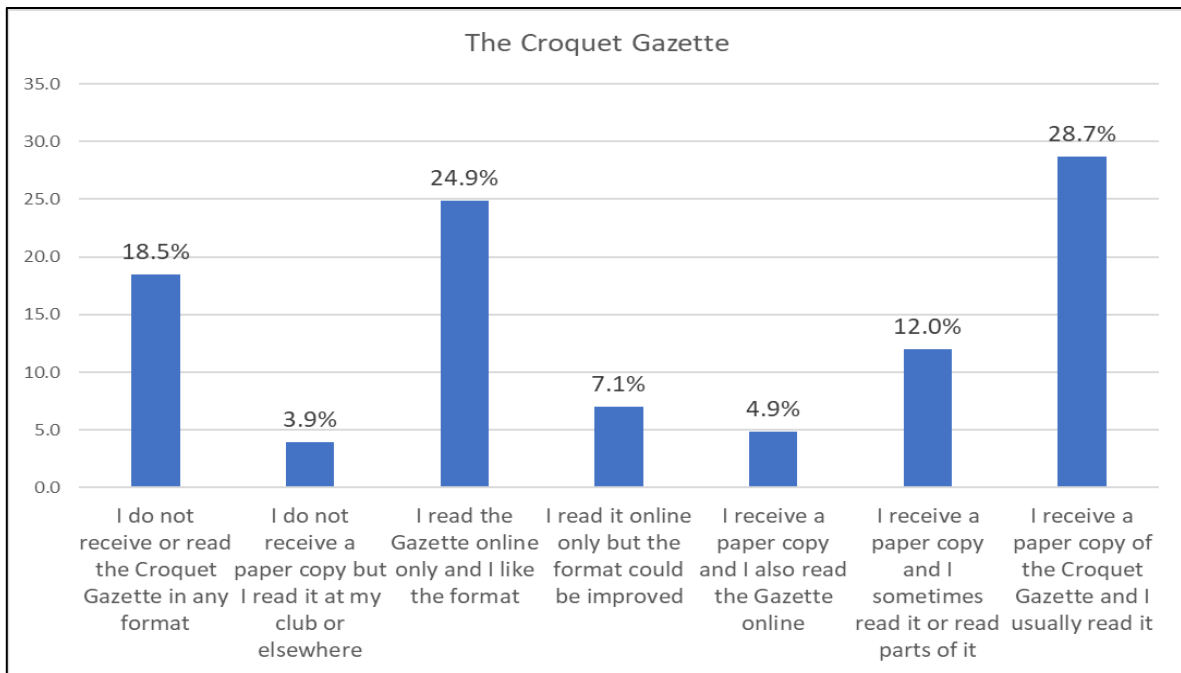


## 8. Communication

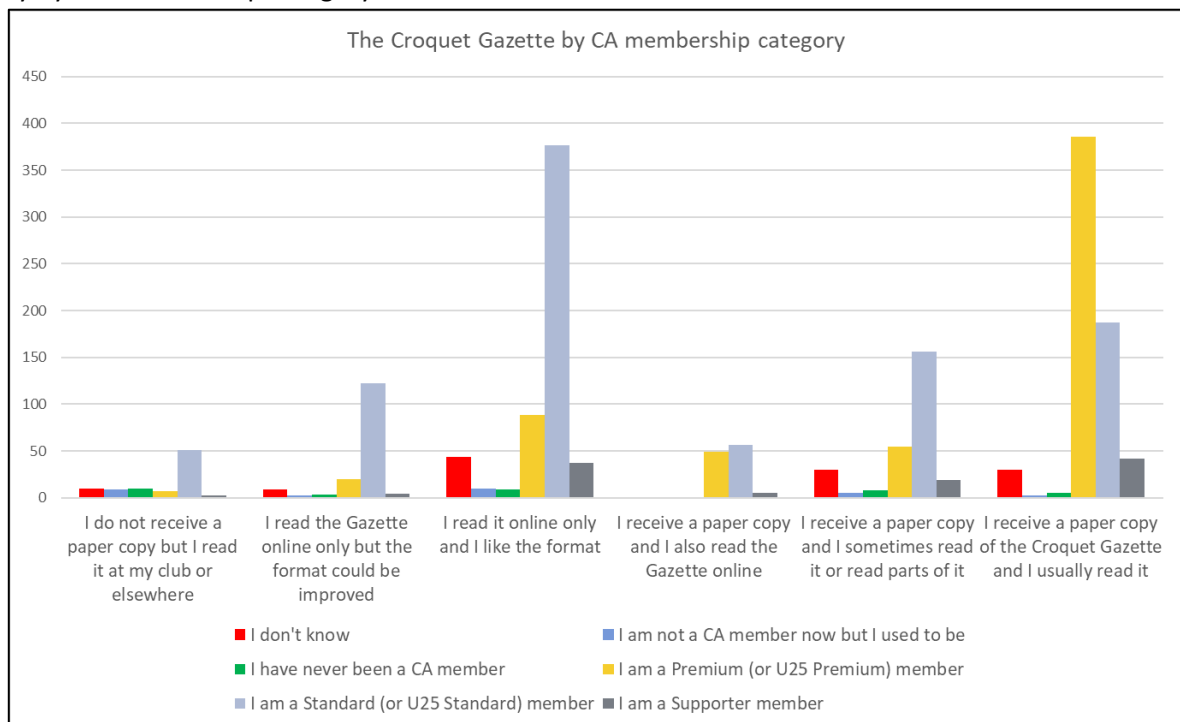
### 8.1. The Croquet Gazette

A hard copy of the Croquet Gazette magazine is sent to all Premium, Overseas and Supporter Members of the CA unless they choose a 'paperless' subscription in which case they can read it online only. Standard members receive a paper copy for their first year and they then have access to the online version.

The survey asked which was the most applicable statement regarding the Croquet Gazette:



The number who do not receive a copy of the Gazette in any format is far higher than the number who said they were not members of the CA. To investigate why this is, the responses were broken down firstly by CA membership category.



Looking at this in tabular form, it can be seen that those who do not receive the Gazette are predominantly either Standard members or are not members of the CA.

CA membership	I do not receive a paper copy but I read it at my club or elsewhere	I do not receive or read the Croquet Gazette in any format	I read the Gazette online only but the format could be improved	I read the it online only and I like the format	I receive a paper copy and I also read the Gazette online	I receive a paper copy and I sometimes read it or read parts of it	I receive a paper copy of the Croquet Gazette and I usually read it	Total
I don't know	10	108	9	44	1	30	30	<b>232</b>
I am not a CA member now but I used to be	9	21	2	10	0	5	2	<b>49</b>
I have never been a CA member	10	137	3	9	0	8	5	<b>172</b>
I am a Premium (or U25 Premium) member	7	18	20	88	49	55	386	<b>623</b>
I am a Standard (or U25 Standard) member	51	126	122	377	56	156	187	<b>1075</b>
I am a Supporter member	2	9	4	37	5	19	42	<b>118</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>2269</b>

Standard members receive a paper copy for their first 12 months of CA membership. After that they no longer receive a paper copy but are able to access it online.

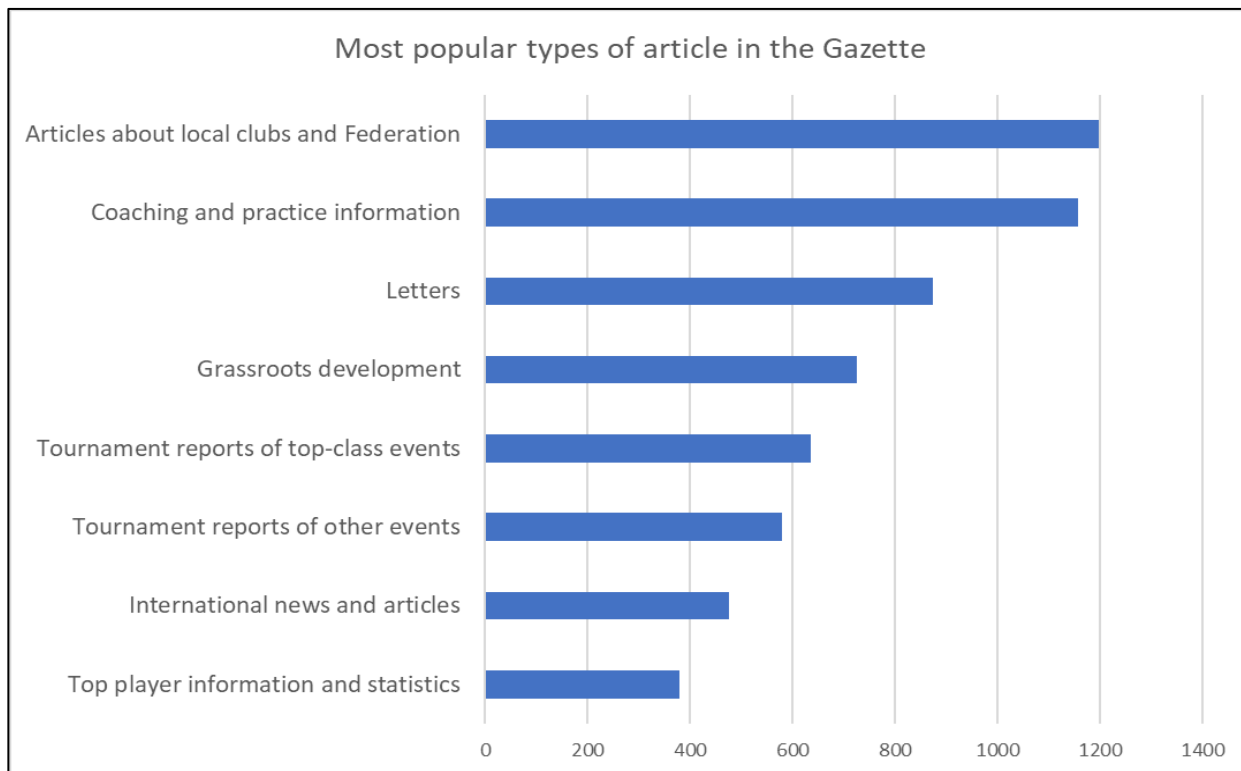
There are some discrepancies in this table regarding non-CA members. 20 non-members say they receive a paper copy of the Gazette. Either they have ticked the wrong box when answering this question, or it arrives in their household but is actually addressed to someone who is a CA member, or they are identified in the CA database as members when they are not. This is a possibility for those who are no longer CA members but is impossible for those who have never been a member. The 24 non-members who say they read the Gazette on-line are presumably reading earlier issues since the most recent issue is only accessible by CA members.

As discussed later (section 7.2) the people who do not know if they are or are not CA members are probably split roughly equally into non-members and standard members.

The survey also asked what sort of articles people particularly liked to read in the Gazette. The graph below shows the results.

In a free text box, respondents were asked if there were items, other than the choice given, they particularly liked or if they had any other comments such as suggestions for future articles. Some examples of the latter include:

- advice on lawn maintenance and equipment,
- past players and history of the game,
- law/rules commentaries,
- inclusivity, development and recruitment advice for clubs,
- croquet game scenarios and puzzles,
- how clubs can raise funds,
- articles aimed at beginners.



## 8.2. e-Newsletter

The e-Newsletter has become one of the most important means of communication with members so knowing who is receiving it and whether they are reading it, is important. It is sent out monthly to all members whose details are on the CA database. A total of 1606 respondents said they received it.

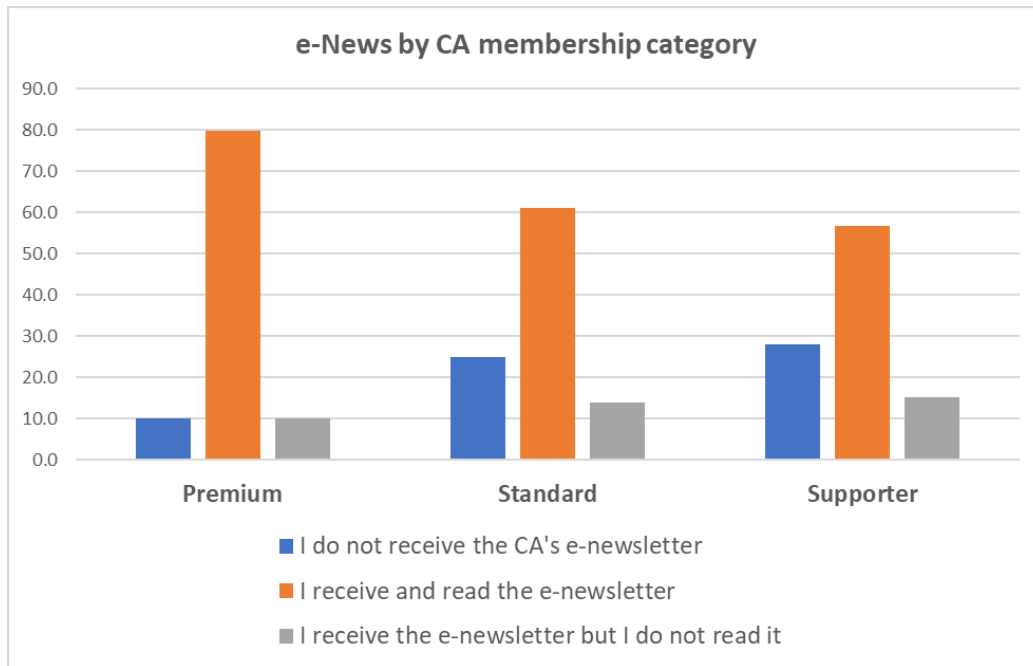


81.6% of those who receive the e-News say they read it, with the remaining 18.4% saying they do not read it.

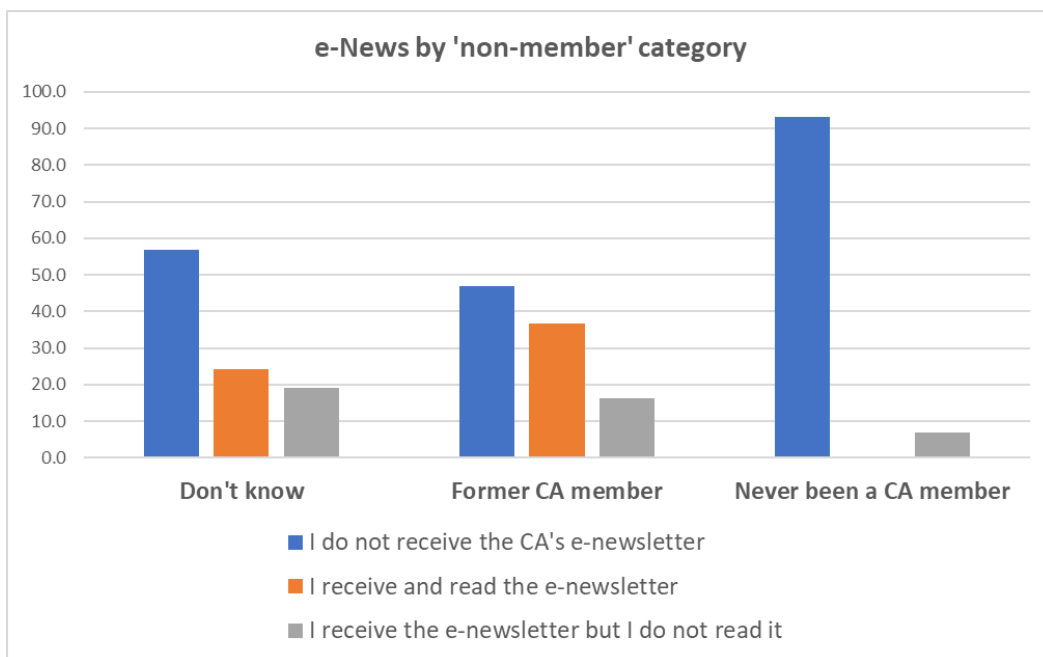
Premium, Standard and Supporter members should all receive the e-News unless they have either chosen not to share their contact details or they have specifically opted out of receiving the e-News.

Anyone who does not fall into either of these categories should check their contact details on the CA database.

Perhaps unsurprisingly the Premium members are the ones who are most likely to read their e-News.



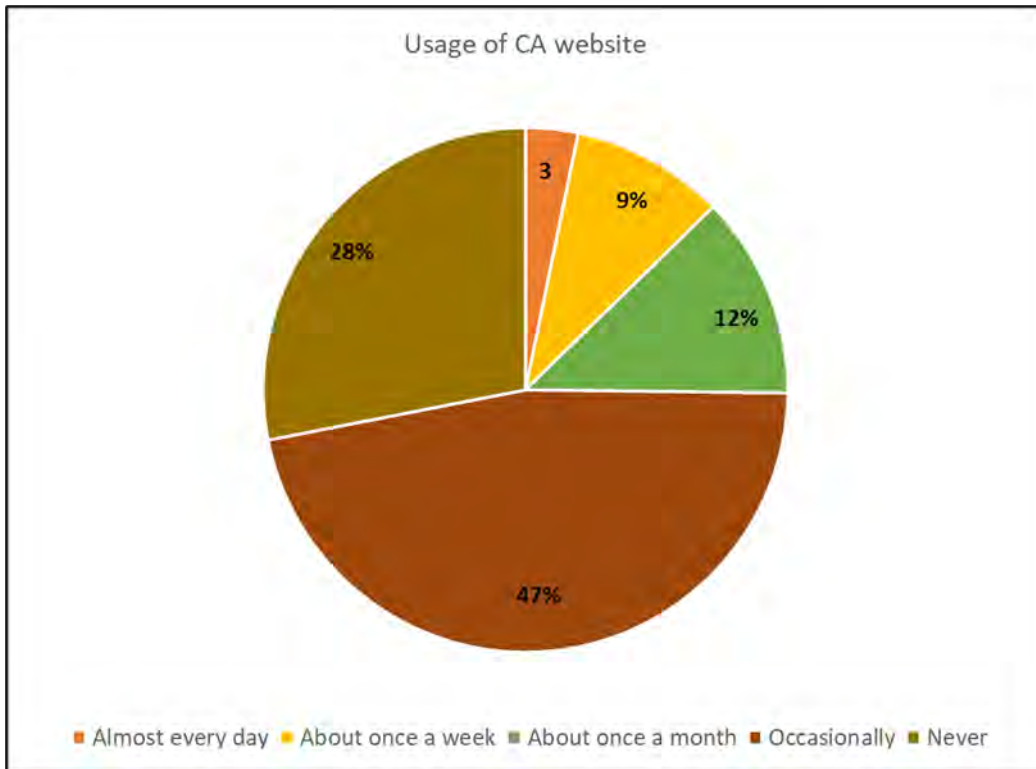
Looking at the other respondents:



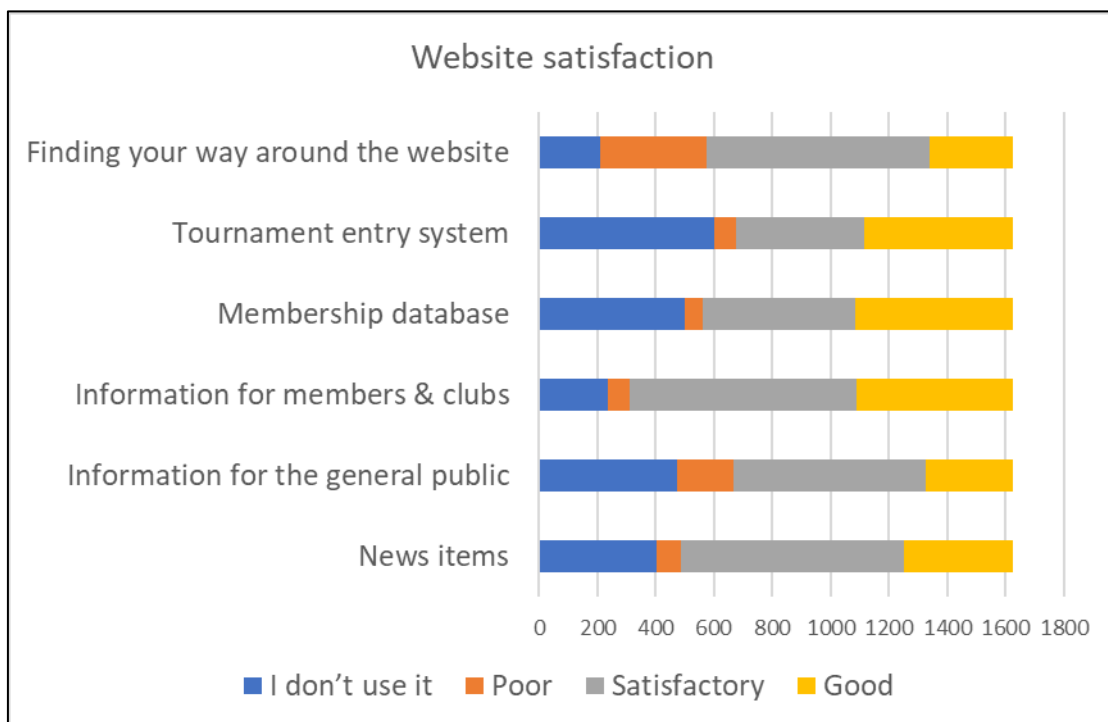
The 'don't knows' are interesting. These are the 10% of respondents (232 individuals) who do not know if they are members of the CA or not. Those who receive the e-News (100) must be members and, since they are presumably not paying a subscription, they can be assumed to be Standard members. The remaining 132 are probably not members of the CA, although some of them may be Standard members who have withheld their contact details.

### 8.3. CA website

Respondents were asked how frequently they used the CA website. More than a quarter never use it at all and just under half only use it occasionally.

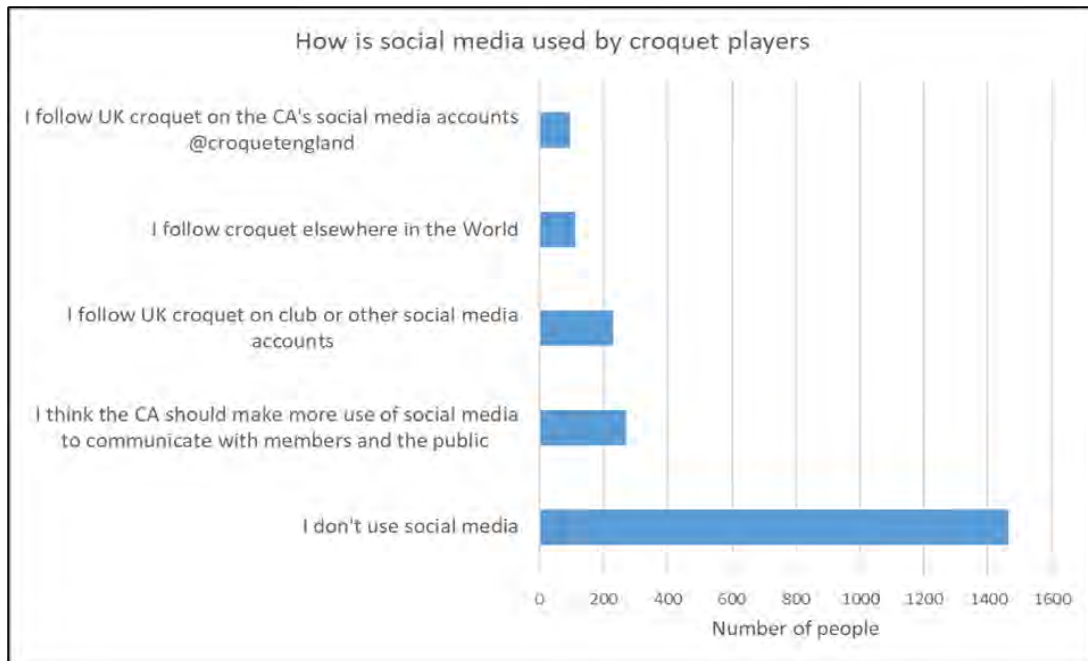


Satisfaction levels with the website have been assessed by asking those who said they used the site to give each category a poor, satisfactory or good rating. If they didn't use that particular part of the website then they could specify that.

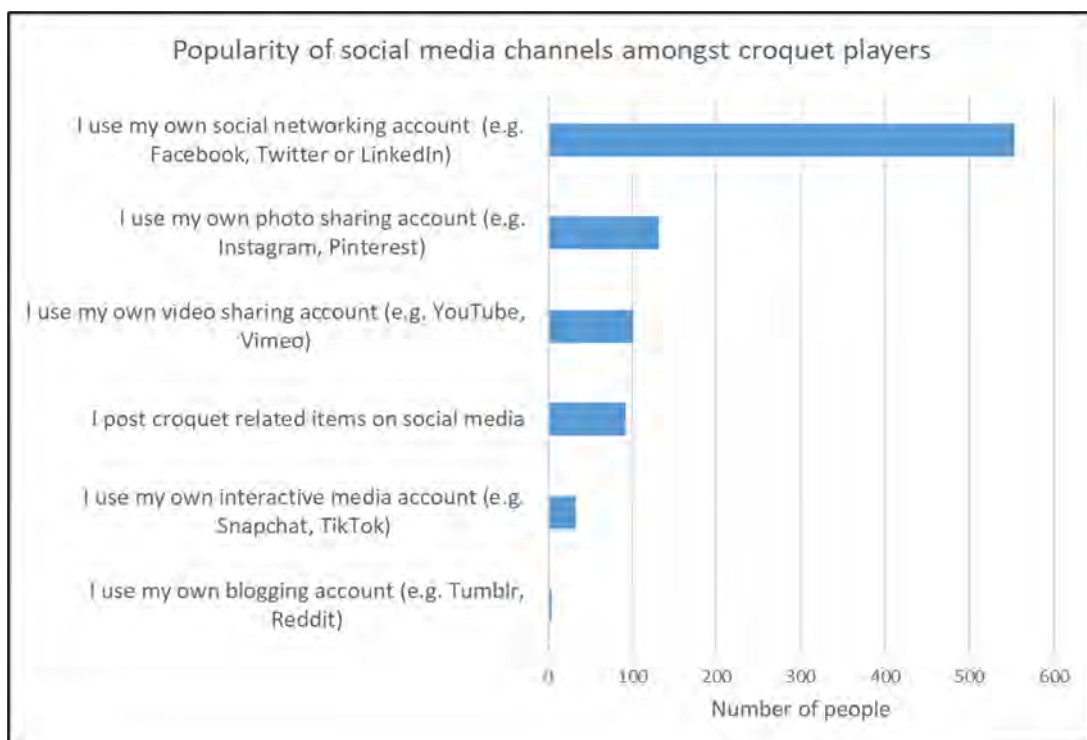


## 8.4. Social media

With social media becoming more and more important for engaging with new audiences, the survey investigated how much croquet players are using it. It may be surprising that nearly two-thirds (64.5%) do not use social media, although given the age profile perhaps it is to be expected. However, even amongst them, there was a recognition that the CA could make more use of social media to communicate with the public and other members.



The popularity of different types of social media channels used by croquet players are shown below. The intention of this question was to find out in general what social media channels are used. However, some people interpreted this as what channels they use for croquet purposes. It is possible, therefore, that this under-represents usage, particularly by some younger croquet players.



## 9. About You (Part 2)

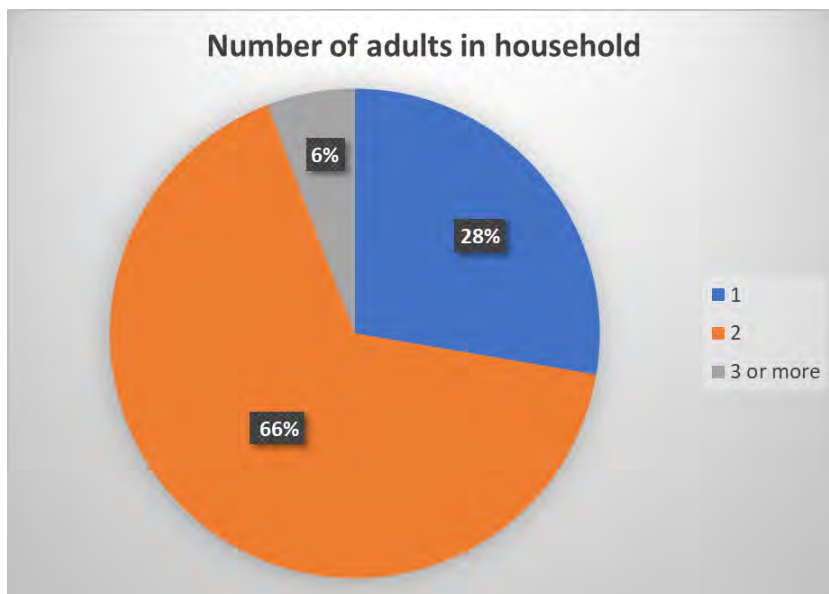
The second part of the 'About You' part of the survey was prefixed with:

*The following questions are all optional but by answering them you will be providing the useful 'profiling' data that helps persuade advertisers and sponsors to support croquet. You can answer or skip any of these questions.*

Despite this there were a lot of complaints about these questions in the free-text at the end of the survey. Maybe this is proof of the adage that croquet payers do not read notices!

### 9.1. Numbers in household

Over a quarter (27.7%) of the adult respondents live alone. This is a significant number when considering the importance of the social interaction of playing croquet, as well as the long-term effects of social isolation caused by the pandemic. Loneliness gives rise to many mental and physical health conditions and becomes increasingly common in older people and those who live alone. Providing a welcoming and sociable environment at croquet clubs not only leads to more croquet players but, more importantly, leads to happy croquet players.

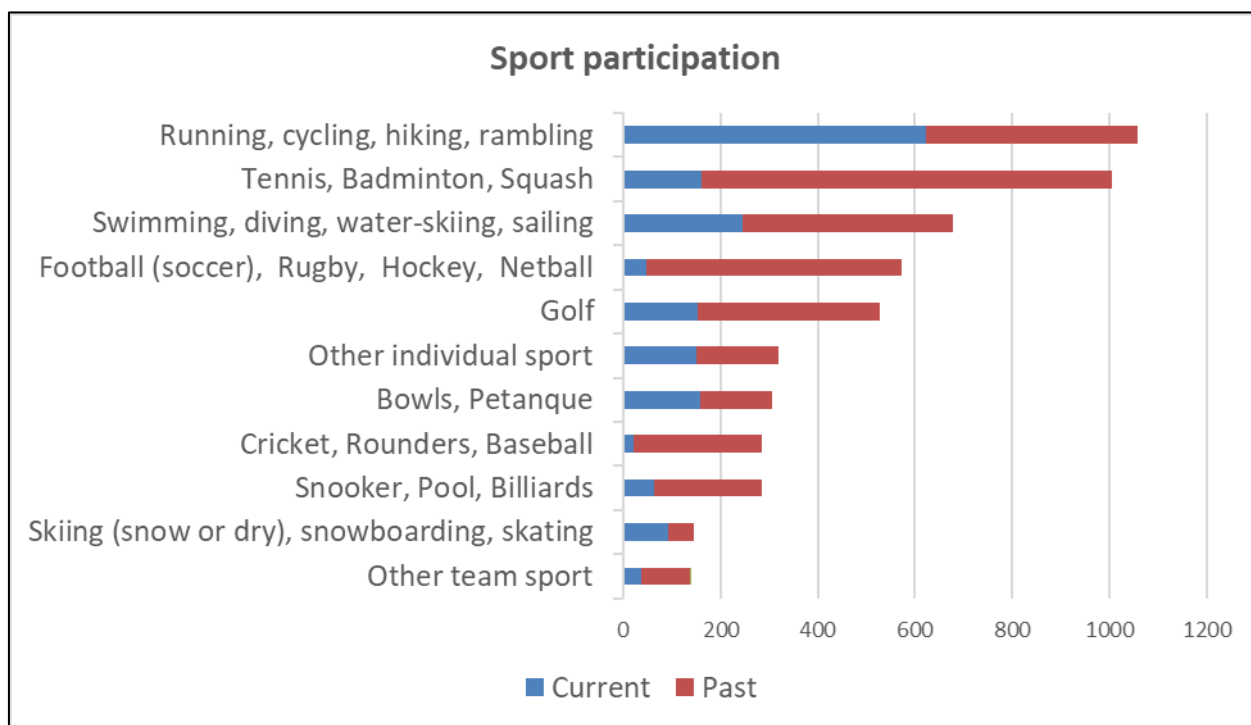


Just 3.2% of respondents have children under the age of 18 living at home.

### 9.2. What do croquet players like doing when they are not on the lawns?

#### 9.2.1. Current and past participation in other sports

The 2269 respondents were asked to say what other sports they currently play or what they have played in the past. Whilst running, cycling, hiking and rambling are the most popular current activities with croquet players, tennis, badminton and squash are the sports that the greatest number of respondents have played previously. In general, individual sports are, and have been, more popular amongst croquet players than team sports.

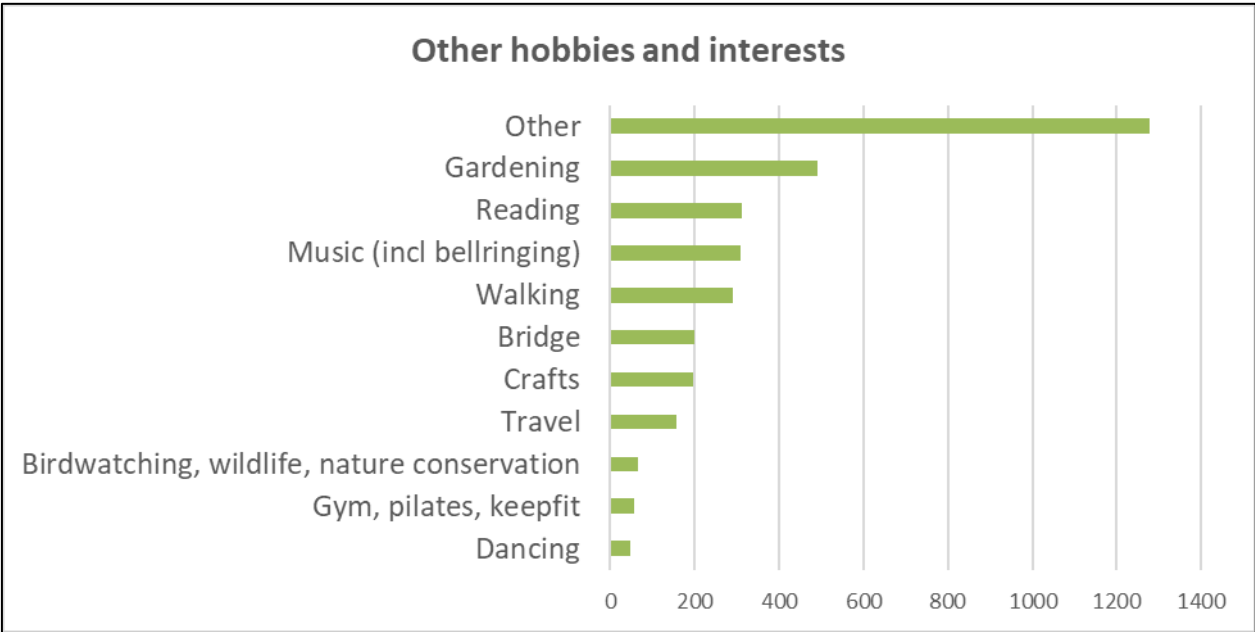


### 9.2.2. Hobbies and other interests

Croquet players have a wide range of hobbies and other interests. Gardening, including allotments, is mentioned by nearly a quarter of all respondents. Other hobbies or interests mentioned by many people are shown in the table below. The 'other' category includes diverse activities from astronomy and bee-keeping to writing and youth work. Although there was no question about what other groups our respondents were members of, many mentioned U3A, WI, Rotary, Probus, Oddfellows, Freemasons, Guides and Scouts, along with church groups, book clubs and language classes.

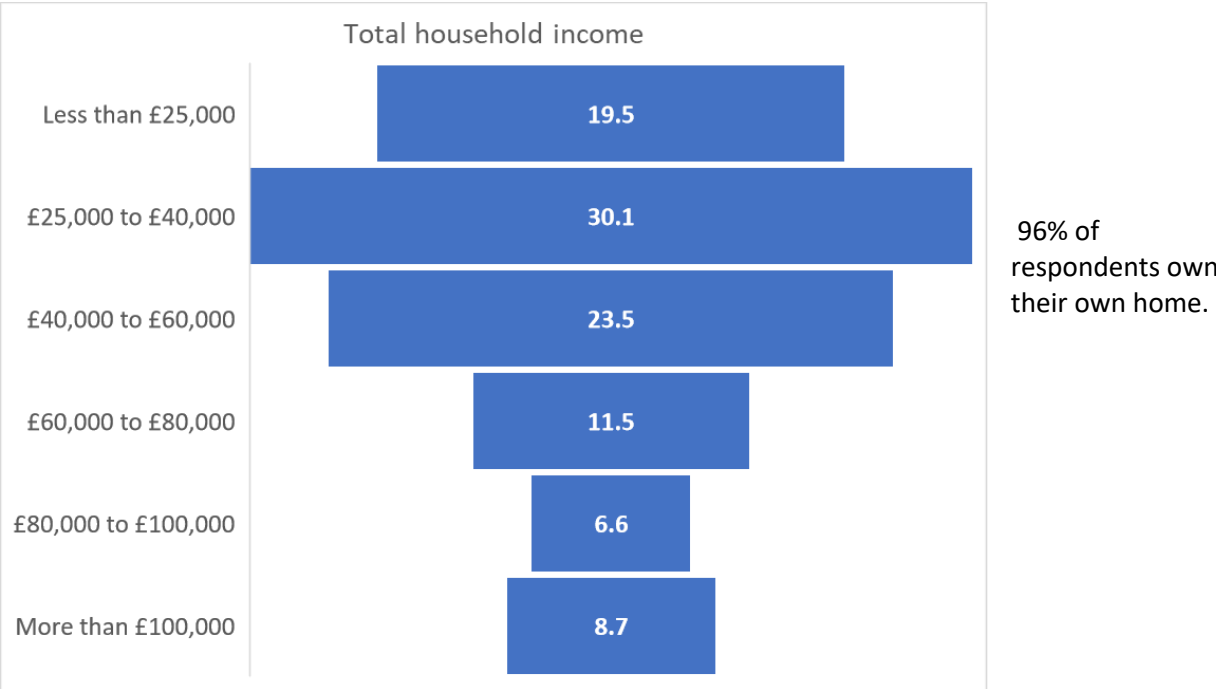
These questions about sports, hobbies and other interests were designed to help clubs identify social activities likely to appeal to their members; to give guidance to places where it may be useful to try and recruit new members; and to provide useful statistics to help with local advertising or requests for sponsorship.





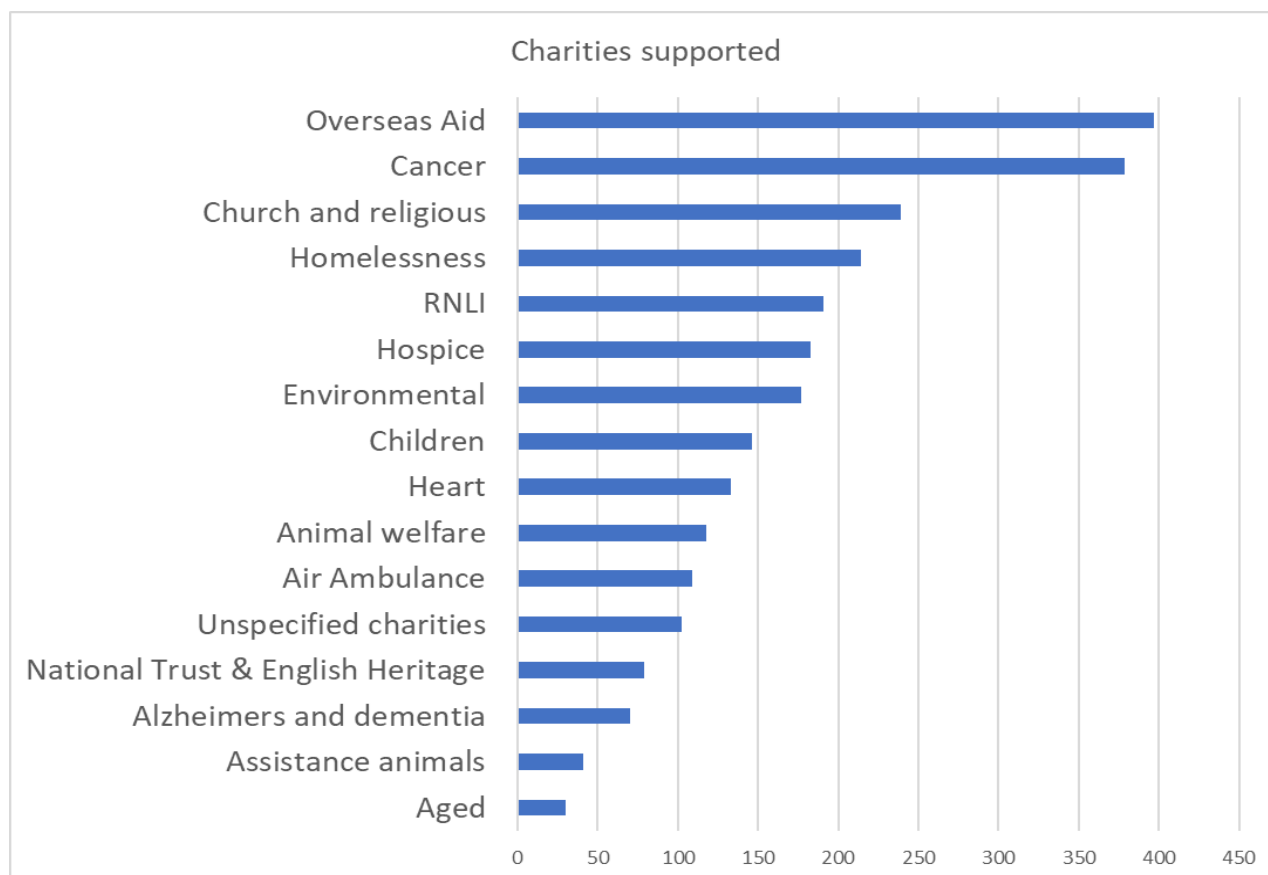
**9.3. Income and house ownership**

People with a total household income below the national median of £31,000 have been identified nationally as the ones who will face the biggest problems with the rising cost of living. The income question in the survey was not mandatory but 1913 chose to answer it. The graph below shows the percentage in each income bracket. Somewhat surprisingly, 19.5% stated they have a total household income of less than £25,000 per year. Cross-checking with their other answers suggests some of these responses seem unlikely. Looking at the single-person, pensioner households, 10.4% have an income below £25,000, which is perhaps a more believable figure.



## 9.4. Support for charities

1472 of respondents said that they supported charities. The remainder either said they did not support charities or chose not to answer this question. Those who answered yes to this question were asked to name up to 4 of the ones that were most important to them. As you would expect, the range of charities was enormous, but these were assigned to different categories as follows:



## 9.5. Legacy

The final question of the survey asked if the respondent had considered leaving a legacy in his/her will to the sport. 3.3% said they had already made provision for leaving a legacy to a club and/or the CA. A further 6% said they had not done so yet but were considering it.

There is an important consideration here with regard to the changeover, expected at some point in 2023, from The Croquet Association to the Charitable Incorporated Organisation of Croquet England. Wills and legacies that have already been written leaving a legacy to the CA will need to be checked and possibly changed. They, and anyone else considering leaving a legacy, will benefit from the tax advantages of leaving money to a charity, once Croquet England is established.

## 10. Any other comments

At the end of the survey all respondents were asked if they had any thoughts, ideas or other feedback on any of the topics covered in the questionnaire or any other croquet related matter.


969 comments were received which have been sorted into 9 categories as follows

- Clubs
- Diversity and inclusivity
- The CA
- AC/GC
- Rules/Laws
- Comms/website/publicity
- Coaching and handicaps
- General comments
- The survey

The first eight are provided 'verbatim' in Appendix 5. The comments about the survey were very largely addressed in the 'Frequently Asked Questions' so have not been included.

## Appendix 1 – The Survey Questions

The survey was provided as an online Google form, which gave the ability to direct people to different questions depending upon previous answers. This is difficult to include in a written report so below is the version that was sent out to those requesting a paper copy.



## 2022 Survey of Croquet Players

**Instructions for completing this survey**

There are 7 sections to this survey:

1. Your Croquet
2. Cost of Croquet
3. Your Game
4. How welcoming is croquet?
5. Communication
6. About You
7. Any other comments.

All responses are anonymous. The information provided will be used to compile statistical analysis and to produce reports. You will not be identifiable.

It should take you about 25 minutes to complete.

Throughout this survey Association Croquet is referred to as AC and Golf Croquet is referred to as GC.

When you have finished, please return the entire survey in the envelope provided or post to:

Data Controller  
The Croquet Association  
Old Bath Road  
Cheltenham  
GL53 7DF

**Thank you very much – all your answers are important to us.**

---

For Office Use Only:

Date received:

Data input:



### Section 1: Your croquet

In this section we look at why you play croquet, how you got into the sport, what keeps you interested, how involved you are, and what effect the pandemic has had on your croquet.

- 1 *In what year did you first play croquet? This may have been in the garden or at a club. Please give an approximate year if you can't remember*

.....

- 2 *Which of the following influenced you to take up croquet? Please tick all that apply and underline the ONE that was most important*

- Family member or friend encouraged me
- Played for fun at home or elsewhere
- Available at school, university or work
- Saw it being played locally and enquired or went in
- Read about it in the press, a leaflet, poster or social media
- Attended an Open Day
- Went along with an organised group e.g. WI, Scout
- Demonstration from a local club at school, shopping centre, village fete, function etc.
- Looking for a sport after retiring from another sport
- Looking for a social activity
- Wanted to play a sport but not interested in team sport

Other:.....

- 3 *What aspects of croquet are important to you now? Please tick all that you consider important*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good company and/or meeting up with friend | <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxation                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly competition                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Learning new skills                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fresh air and gentle exercise              | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental well-being                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tournaments and/or matches                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfying your competitive instinct |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting new people and/or making friends   | <input type="checkbox"/> Continually striving to improve      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keeping body and/or mind flexible          | <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual challenge               |

Other:.....

- 4 *What effect has the Covid-19 pandemic had on your croquet activity? Please tick one option*

- My croquet activity has not been affected by the pandemic
- I have played more croquet than before the pandemic
- I started playing croquet during the pandemic
- I have played less because I am anxious about mixing
- I have played less because I am not as fit as I was
- I have played less because my friends don't want to play
- I have played less because I have found other things to do
- I have played less because access to my club has been restricted
- I have played less because there have been fewer events



## Section 2: The Cost of Croquet

STANDARD members of the Croquet Association (CA) do not pay any subscription but they must be members of a club and be registered by that club. They can enter tournaments and access the Gazette online, hold coaching and refereeing qualifications, vote in CA elections and be eligible for selection.

PREMIUM members of the CA pay an annual subscription for which they get all the above, plus discounted entry to tournaments and courses, and a paper Gazette or online access.

SUPPORTER members of the CA pay a smaller annual subscription and receive the same benefits as standard members plus a paper copy of the Gazette.

5 Are you a member of the Croquet Association (CA)?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I am a Premium (or U25 Premium) member   | <input type="checkbox"/> No, I am not now but I used to be a member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I am a Standard (or U25 Standard) member | <input type="checkbox"/> No, I have never been a member             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I am a Supporter member                  | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know                               |

6 What will you pay for your 2022 annual club subscription of your main club (or croquet section of a multi-sport club)?

£.....

7 How do you pay the annual club subscription of your main club?

- My subscription is paid as a lump sum  
 My subscription is paid in instalments  
 I pay a lump sum but if I had the option I would prefer to pay by instalments

8 Apart from your annual subscription do you pay for any of the following at your club?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No extra fees               | <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching fees                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance fee or green fee | <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment hire                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Club competition entry fees | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional membership fee in a multi-sport club |

Other .....

9 In which year did you first join a croquet club? Please give an approximate year if you can't remember.

.....

10 At how many croquet clubs are you a member? Include any category of membership

.....


11 How far do you travel from home to your main club?

.....

## Appendix 2 – Advance notification

**Article in Croquet Gazette – February 2022 Issue 395**

# 2022 SURVEY OF CROQUET PLAYERS



**E**very croquet player is different – we play for different reasons, we play in different places, we have different goals, and we have different opinions. Some of us have been playing for a few weeks, others for a few decades, some only play at one place, and others travel across the World. Whatever sort of croquet player you are, you matter when it comes to shaping the future of our sport and the Croquet Association would like to understand you and what you want from the game. Every 5 years, since 2002, the CA has conducted a survey of croquet players. This is not just an anonymous survey of CA members but of ALL club members and, if we can reach them, croquet players who are not within the formal structure of the game. Every player is an essential part of the whole croquet scene. In order to try and reach those outside the CA and affiliated clubs, if you know of any groups who play regularly, either at a club that is not connected to a Federation, or elsewhere, please would you send details of a contact person as soon as possible to: [croquet@croquet.org.uk](mailto:croquet@croquet.org.uk) and we will do our best to include them. Further details of the survey will be sent directly to all CA members and to other club members via their club secretary in mid-March. With all the upheaval in the last couple of years this is an important time for croquet. We have seen an upsurge in interest and we really want to make sure we are going in the right direction. Your answers will be completely anonymous but they will help guide the CA and clubs. So, we are hoping for a huge response to this survey!

2 | [www.croquet.org.uk](http://www.croquet.org.uk)

### **Letter sent to all Federation Secretaries, Chairs and Development Officers – 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

Dear ....

Every 5 years the CA conducts an anonymous survey of croquet players and the next one will commence on March 22nd this year. Members of the CA and all the members of affiliated clubs will all be invited to take part. The responses help to guide future initiatives on recruitment, club development, marketing, sponsorship and many other aspects of croquet.

The reason for my email to you is that we really want to get feedback from ALL croquet players and not just those who are members of affiliated clubs or the CA. The problem with only reaching those people who are already 'inside' is that we don't find out anything about the large number of croquet players who we know are 'outside'. We would like to make croquet attractive to them, but we need to have an understanding of who and where they are and what they get out of the game in order to do that.

We would really appreciate your help identifying clubs or groups of players within your region who we could invite to take part in the survey to get the 'outsiders' view. There may be clubs who are in your Federation but not affiliated to the CA, clubs that have previously been in your Federation but are no longer, new clubs starting up, croquet sections of multi-sports clubs, private clubs in someone's garden, or regular groups of players (e.g. U3A groups) who meet at a club in your region. Any names and contact details would be very much appreciated, particularly if you can get them to me before the survey opens on March 22nd.

Thank you in advance for your assistance

Yours etc.



Whether you have only just started to learn the game or you are an international player, **YOUR OPINIONS** matter when it comes to shaping the future of our sport

**Every player is an essential part of the whole croquet scene.**

The 5-yearly survey of croquet players opens on **22<sup>nd</sup> March**. More information will be sent to all club members via their club secretary. CA members will be emailed directly.

The pandemic and its knock-on effects have resulted in an upsurge of interest and transformed croquet in many ways. Your help is needed for the CA, Federations and clubs to make the best choices going forwards.

**This is an anonymous survey of ALL croquet players, not just CA members.**

**Please take part!**



## **Letter sent to all club secretaries - 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022.**

Dear Club Secretaries,

Every five years the CA conducts an anonymous survey of croquet players. This is important since it gives us the background data that enables us to engage with all players across the country and to shape the way in which we meet their needs and expectations. The upsurge in interest we have seen in our sport through the pandemic and the changes we all see across society mean this is an important time for croquet.

### **Info/Q&A sessions for club secretaries**

We are holding two 45 minute virtual Info/Q&A sessions webinars to explain the background to the survey and the process we will follow. You are invited to join whichever is most convenient for you:

These will be held:

- 9.30am, Sunday 20th March - Zoom link provided
- 6pm, Monday 21st March - Zoom link provided

### **How can you help the CA?**

CA members will receive a direct email inviting them to participate on 22nd March. The closing date for the survey is Friday 22nd April.

We will ask you to invite all your club members to participate, even at the risk of those who are CA members being asked twice (we won't have details of your club members if they are not CA individual members, or if their contact details have not been uploaded to the CA Membership Database by your club).

The live link to the survey that you can share with your club members and others will be sent on 22nd March; meanwhile, here is a link to a series of [Frequently Asked Questions](#). You can find the results of previous surveys here: [Previous Surveys](#).

Paper copies of the survey are available from the CA office for those who cannot complete it online. Please will you ask any of your club members, who you know do not use email, to phone the CA office 01242 242318 and request a survey is posted to them.

Finally, you may also know of groups or individuals who play but are not a member of your club, for example organisations that make repeat bookings at your club; please invite them to take part as well.

### **What incentives are there to aid survey completion?**

The surveys are anonymous but respondents can opt to take part in a prize draw to win one of 4 x £150 vouchers for the CA shop – and nominate themselves or a club of their choice, should they win.

With our thanks in advance,

Samir Patel Chair of Council  
Beatrice McGlen Chair of Executive Board

**Letter sent to all members of the CA, and to all club secretaries (including non-affiliated clubs identified by Federation secretaries) asking them to forward to all their members - 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022.**

*Dear Croquet Players,*

*The Croquet Association has conducted an anonymous survey of croquet players every 5 years since 2002. The 2022 survey commences on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March and will be open until Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April.*

*We would like to hear from ALL croquet players. Whether you are a social player or an international star, a teenager or a nonagenarian, no matter how long you have been playing, what version of the game you play or where you live, you are an essential part of the whole croquet scene. YOU matter when it comes to shaping the future of our sport, so we are really keen that you take part in this survey.*

**WHY ARE WE CONDUCTING THIS SURVEY?**

*The information you provide will help us to better understand the needs and wishes of existing members; to promote croquet more effectively across our communities; to guide initiatives such as attracting younger players; and to help with advertising, sponsorship and funding applications. It will also provide valuable information to clubs and Federations and give a baseline so that we will be able to assess the effectiveness of strategies in future.*

*Please be assured that all your answers are anonymous. The data will only be used for statistical analysis and it will not be possible to trace it back to you.*

*If you would like some further details about the survey or some of the questions in it, then please have a look at [Frequently Asked Questions](#)*

*The survey can be completed on a PC, laptop or tablet (iPad). It is also compatible with a smartphone although a larger screen will make it a little easier to navigate. Please set aside about 25 minutes to complete the survey and when you are ready to begin, click on this link [2022 Survey of Croquet Players](#). You will see some straight-forward instructions at the beginning.*

*If you, or anyone else you know, cannot complete this survey on-line, then please contact the CA Office, Tel. 01242 242318 to request a paper version.*

*Finally, by completing the survey there is a chance for you or your club to win one of four £150 vouchers for the CA shop.*

*The upsurge in interest we have seen in our sport through the pandemic and the changes we see across society mean this is a particularly important time for croquet, so thank you very much for your time and assistance,*

*Samir Patel, Chair of CA Council  
Beatrice McGlen, Chair of the Executive Board.*

**Letter sent to all group leaders e.g. U3A identified by club secretaries – 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022.**

**Do you enjoy playing croquet? Will you tell us a little about yourself?**



The Croquet Association is conducting an anonymous survey of ALL croquet players and would love to find out what you like (or possibly don't like) about the sport. You are part of the whole croquet scene and so YOU matter to us.

We hold such a survey every five years and the results help us to understand the needs and wishes of existing members; to promote croquet more effectively across our communities; and to guide initiatives for recruitment, retention and attracting younger players.

The survey can be completed on a PC, laptop or tablet (iPad). It is also compatible with a smartphone although a larger screen will make it a little easier to navigate. It will take about 25 minutes to complete the survey.

If you would like some further details about the survey or some of the questions in it, then please have a look at [Frequently Asked Questions](#). Please be assured that all your answers are anonymous. The data will only be used for statistical analysis and it will not be possible to trace it back to you or your group.

We hope you will be happy to take part in our survey so, when you are ready, please click on this link [2022 Survey of Croquet Players](#). You will see some straight-forward instructions at the beginning. The survey is open from now until Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

Finally, by completing the survey there is a chance for you or the club where you play to win one of four £150 vouchers for the Croquet Shop.

The upsurge in interest we have seen in our sport through the pandemic and the changes we see across society mean this is a particularly important time for croquet, so thank you very much for your time and assistance.

Samir Patel, Chair of the Croquet Association Council  
Beatrice McGlen, Chair of the CA Executive Board.

## Appendix 3 - Frequently asked questions



### Frequently Asked Questions

We have grouped the FAQ into themes below:

#### Purpose

- What is the purpose of this survey and why are you holding it now?

A survey of croquet players has been held every 5 years since 2002, so this will be the 5th survey. It is a particularly opportune moment because many new people have been attracted to our sport during the pandemic. The aims have gradually changed from a straight-forward 'profiling for marketing purposes' in the very first one, to gaining more and more understanding of our players so that policy, direction and recruitment can be tailored accordingly.

- I have only just started playing so is there any point in me completing the survey?

Yes!

You are seeing the sport with fresh eyes. If you like what you see you will probably continue playing but if you don't then we will lose you. Retaining and developing beginners is essential for the future of the sport so your input to this survey is very important.

- Why is the CA including croquet players who aren't members of CA affiliated clubs?

It is estimated that there are about 10,000 people who play croquet in the UK who are not members of clubs. We know almost nothing about them and yet they are enjoying the same sport as us. We would like to know if their reasons for playing and needs are the same as affiliated club members, or do they have very different requirements?

- Why does the CA need to know about my protected characteristics?

Equality, diversity and inclusivity are very important in all sports. No group should be unable to participate or discriminated against because of a particular personal attribute such as age, disability, sex, gender, marriage, pregnancy, race, religion and sexual orientation. These attributes are known as 'protected characteristics'. At present we have almost no statistical information to help guide future policies or to ensure we are not inadvertently discriminating. The governance of some sports has come into serious question in recent years so we have to recognise that 'not knowing' is not an excuse for doing nothing.

- What does LGBTQ+ mean?

LGBT stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning (or Queer). The + stands for a variety of other less commonly used terms such as asexual, pangender etc.

- Why are you asking CA members if age, gender and ethnicity can be collected in future, when you have these questions in this survey?

The answers you provide in this survey are anonymous so cannot be linked to you. They will provide a snapshot in time of the sample of people who complete the survey. However, for the reasons given in the previous questions, we need basic statistical information of all our members that we do not currently hold.

The CA database is set up so there are different levels of visibility. This information would be held under the tightest security level which means it would only be visible to you and to the data controller. Anyone else within the CA would only be supplied with statistical analysis.

- Some of the questions have nothing to do with croquet – why is that?

Understanding who plays croquet and what their background, other interests and requirements are, is critical information when planning development, recruitment and marketing strategies. This is known as 'profiling'. Remember the information cannot be linked to you as an individual but it could provide the background statistics that grant providers, sponsors, advertisers or partners, at both local level and at national level, would want to know.

- The survey is quite long - couldn't you have made it shorter?

The survey is longer this year than it has been previously. This is because the data collected will help in the design of all aspects of future policy. Previously it has been largely for marketing purposes. It will take most people about 25 minutes to complete, although some people may find it takes them longer. Remember this is only 25 minutes of your time once every 5 years!

- Some of the questions ask for personal information that I do not want to give.

We are committed to widening the appeal of croquet, which is essential for it to thrive. We therefore need to find out more about existing croquet players. Most, but not all, of the questions in the 'About You' section either have a 'prefer not to say' option or the question is not mandatory. By answering these questions though you will be providing really helpful information. Remember, all the answers are anonymous so they cannot be traced back to you.

- Why does the first question ask if I am under 18?

Under 18s are directed to different questions in the survey. Please do NOT answer this section if you are over 18 since your responses will obscure the responses from those who are genuinely under 18.

## Data Privacy

- I can see my email address on the form but the data is supposed to be anonymous. Why?

This survey is being conducted using Google forms. If you have a Google account it automatically recognises that on your computer and puts your Gmail address at the top of the survey. This is only visible to you and is NOT included with your answers when they are submitted. One advantage if you do see your Gmail address is that you can stop filling in the survey at any point and, when you come back to it, all your previous answers will have been saved so you can continue where you left off. If you do not see an email address then you must complete the survey in one sitting.

- Can I be identified after I press “submit”?

No

- Can my answers be linked to my club?

No. Even if you are from a very small club all the responses are handled together for statistical analysis so your answers will not be identifiable.

- After the analysis of all the data, what will happen to the individual responses?

The individual responses will be anonymised before analysis i.e. the final section where you may have given your email address or nominated a club will be stripped out. This will all be completed within 3 weeks of the survey closing. Once that has been done, it will not be possible to link any response to the individual croquet player. GDPR rules permit the anonymised data to be retained for re-analysis in the future.

## Prize Draw

- If I give my email address to enter the prize draw, how will that be kept separate from my answers?

The prize draw is a separate section of the survey and this will be stripped out before everything else is sent for analysis. There will be no way to connect the parts together.

- Can I nominate a club that is not affiliated to the CA?

Yes, but it must be a croquet (or predominantly croquet) club and you will have to give a contact email address because we won't have any contact details.

- How will the winners be drawn?

A number will be assigned to each completed response in the order received. A random number generator will be used to pick four numbers. Winners will be notified by email, if they have given their own email address, or club secretaries will be notified if the winners nominate a club. The winners will be announced on the CA website.

## Survey results

- When will the results be available and what form will this take?

The initial results, which will be a simple analysis of each question will be available a month after the survey closes. A more detailed analysis and report will be ready by the end of the 2022 playing season.

- How will the CA share the results of the survey, and with whom will this be shared?

The results will be publicly available via the CA website. Some aspects of the survey may be of particular interest to clubs and Federations and there will be an opportunity for them to receive tailored statistical analysis, so long as the number of participants is large enough that individual responses cannot be worked out.

- Where can I find the results of previous surveys?

The previous 4 surveys (2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017) can be found on the CA website by clicking on this link [Croquet Player Surveys](#)

## Appendix 4 – The Age Issue

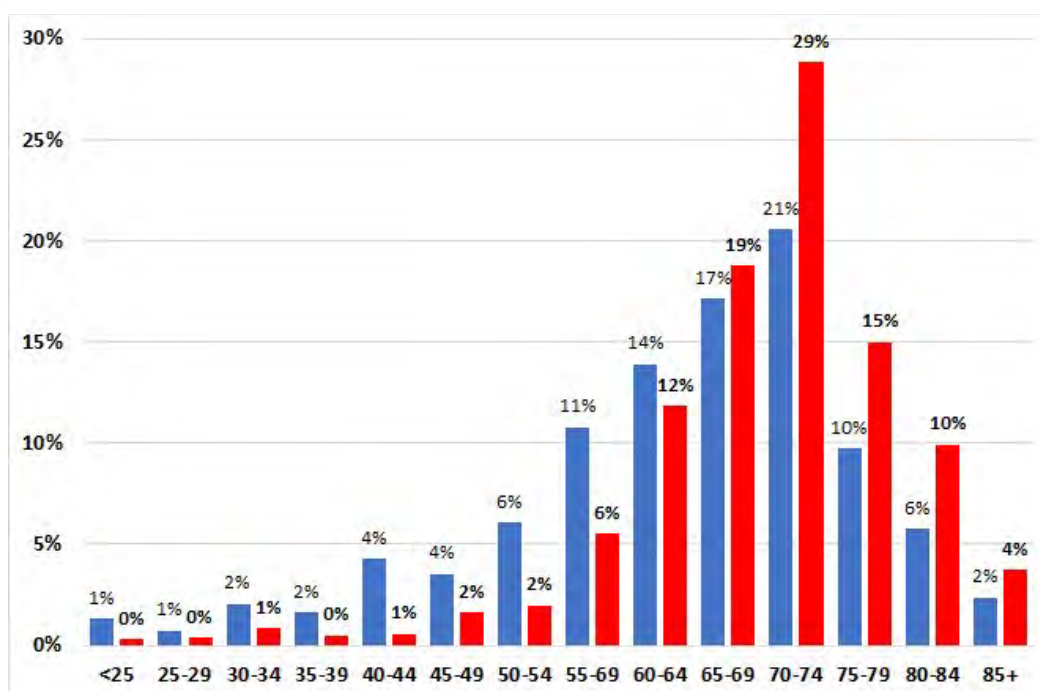
This is taken from the 2017 survey report.

The 2012 Survey revealed that croquet players were ageing: the median age had increased to 68 - up from 65 just five years before. It identified that 81% of all new recruits were over 60 and that the proportion of under-50s had dropped by a quarter and that for under-30s by a half. The CA urged clubs to concentrate their recruitment on more younger players.

In 2017, five years on, the CA was keen to see if the trend had continued or whether it had been reversed. If it was continuing we needed to understand what the implications were of this trend. Our findings show conclusively that the trend has continued - the median age is now 70 - and in many other respects it has intensified.

There are hardly any differences by gender, CA Members/non-members or AC/GC players - so, the croquet playing population now displays substantial homogeneity.

Age Profile of Croquet Players in 2002 (blue) and 2017 (red)



It is now clear that we are seeing a major demographic shift - the age distribution is shifting substantially. One could almost say that if croquet were to be likened to a business that we are moving from one 'business model' to another, as the chart above shows, by comparing results for 2002 (our first survey) and 2017.

We used to have a good mix of players between university age and middle-age, and most of these stayed in the sport for decades (most leave between 75 and 85). Just fifteen years ago we had;

- 31% of players below 60, rather than today's 11%;
- 14% were below 50, rather than today's 6%;
- 6% were below 40, rather than today's 1%.

Currently, the average new recruit is 66 and will realistically remain a committed player for about twelve years. As younger/middle-aged players age, without replacement, the age profile of all croquet players will eventually become more of a spike, with its peak at about 72 and little outside 60-80.

There is no single, identifiable reason why this substantial demographic shift is happening. Theories include:



- a) Clubs going for the 'low-hanging fruit': retired people wishing to play (mainly social) GC.
- b) Older, retired players tending to recruit others in the same mould.
- c) Inadequate promotion.
- d) The image of croquet being 'wrong' for younger people.
- e) Younger people preferring to spend their time on computer games and social networking.
- f) Fewer universities and hardly any schools producing young players.

In this report, which reports and interprets facts, not theories, all of these reasons are mentioned by respondents in their verbatim comments (Appendix C) and it would seem that all have some truth, but in what proportions they matter is difficult to say - we could not survey people who did not become croquet players!

Section 4.1 of this report is devoted to studying the impact of this strong shift. A mathematical model was built and its starting parameters were today's age profile, today's recruitment levels and distribution and an implied distribution for those leaving the game.

The current level of recruitment is a healthy 600 each year, this is comfortably ahead of leavers (2000 over the past five years) and the total number of members in our 211 clubs has risen to 7500. However, we shall still see the remainder of today's 50-65 year-olds, representing 20% of all players, working through the system over the next 15-25 years; and these are largely not being replaced.

So, with today's 'stock' of players under 60 set to leave the game in due course and only mainly older ones being recruited, the trend is set to accelerate. Our mathematical model shows that if we continue to recruit at the rate of 600 each year, in just ten years the number of leavers will have increased by 50%, to equal the rate of recruitment and so growth will cease. In fact, the model demonstrates that the net number of croquet players is highly sensitive to the recruitment rate. 600 on our base of 7500 is 8%. If recruitment can be raised to 9% of the base each year then we see healthy growth. On the other hand, if recruitment slips from 8% to 7%, or even 6%, then croquet will decline and at a quickening pace.

In some ways, the recruitment of young players (i.e. <35), as opposed to younger players (<55), is a separate issue, since the majority of our elite players who fuel the national teams emerge from the intake of young players. It has now almost dried up. Increasing the level of youngsters to, say, a couple of dozen a year would not affect the major demographics but it would have the beneficial effect of maintaining our standing in world croquet.

Besides having to run recruitment harder just to keep pace with an increasing number of leavers, there is another major impact of an ageing population. Croquet is run largely by people who have been in the game for decades and are now mostly in their 70s/80s. For instance, 58% of coaches are above 70, and it is a similar figure for referees, tournament managers and administrators.

We are moving towards a scenario in which very soon - probably within a decade - over half of the people who currently fill these roles will no longer be in the sport and very few replacements with the same level of experience will be available to take their place.

## Appendix 5 - Comments from 2022 Quinquennial survey

**At the end of the survey all respondents were asked if they had any thoughts, ideas or other feedback on any of the topics covered in the questionnaire or any other croquet related matter.**

969 comments were received which have been sorted into categories. Some comments cover more than one category so may appear more than once. Where a club or person has been identified, this has been removed.

Comments relating to the survey itself have been omitted since these were almost all answered in the FAQs

### Clubs:

I was sad to see my club be evicted from its current location due to the co-tenant tennis players looking to convert the croquet lawns to tennis courts.
More established players wanting to play with newer members
Playing croquet has been a great feature in both my wife's and my life in recent years, but now both into our 90,s we are certainly not as active as we used to be. We still try to support our excellent Purley Bury Club.
I have recently acquired a handicap (12), but there is no regular opportunity to play a handicap game. The Club roll-ups (3 per week) are non-handicap doubles.
Needs to be more local publicity in order to advertise the availability of the sport and club locally
Our Club is very very low in membership through natural wastage ie too old, too infirm, death, moving residence and of the few left 50% are over 80. We have tried mass advertising, Facebook, Offering Corporate Events, encouraging onlookers to try the game, but no new members forthcoming.
Very happy with my club
Thoroughly enjoying my participation in all activities at my club Compton Croquet Club Eastbourne
Club used to loan mallets pre Covid but no longer does so. I am not prepared to pay £250+ for a mallet so will no longer be a member of club.
My wife and I were offered a taster session thru the U3A in 2021. After a few session we enjoyed the atmosphere and the friendliness of the club that we decided to join without completing the full taster session. Our club has put it's self out to welcome us and we now feel we are a valued members. We look forward to the 2022 season when we try to improve our game both at home(in our club) and as part of an inter county team. Croquet has been a revelation and one we want to enjoy for many years to come.
I would be really happy to have a croquet club in the London Borough of Bromley
My Croquet club membership has become an important part of my sporting and social life in retirement.
My croquet club has made a real difference to my life in retirement
I am a member of a ladies group which rents time on the croquet lawns once every two weeks throughout the season. We also attend indoor croquet activities during the closed season

I am a member of a Ladies Group which rents time on the croquet lawns once every two weeks during the season. We also attend indoor croquet activities during the close season
Municipal local council level mini croquet in local green spaces for children similar to mini golf etc.
Croquet is a splendid sport, we have a super Club with excellent lawns and I wish I had started playing earlier!
I would like to stop tennis clubs from taking over croquet lawns and turning them into tennis courts. This has happened twice in the few years that I have been playing. It is totally led by greed and money making and shows no consideration of what a wonderful and all round beneficial game croquet is.
Prior to moving, I played at a club in the North West of England and was on the committee. I found the atmosphere within the club much more welcoming than my present club. One of the main issues I have with my present club is the insistence the club has on croquet players always wearing whites. This is not the case for those members who play tennis where "anything goes". I spent a sabbatical in Auckland New Zealand when I was still working. I was amazed at the numbers of clubs which the city had (I think there were 22). The atmosphere in the clubs I visited was very relaxed and I was made most welcome. I was also surprised at the number of young people who were playing, at my present club I don't know of anyone under 60! If croquet is to survive in the UK it is imperative that younger members are attracted to the game. Charging nearly £300 annual club fees is not the way that younger people will be attracted to play.

## Diversity and inclusivity:

Prior to moving to Surrey I played at a club in the North West of England and was on the committee. I found the atmosphere within the club much more welcoming than my present club. One of the main issues I have with my present club is the insistence the club has on croquet players always wearing whites. This is not the case for those members who play tennis where "anything goes". I spent a sabbatical in Auckland New Zealand when I was still working. I was amazed at the numbers of clubs which the city had (I think there were 22). The atmosphere in the clubs I visited was very relaxed and I was made most welcome. I was also surprised at the number of young people who were playing, at my present club I don't know of anyone under 60! If croquet is to survive in the UK it is imperative that younger members are attracted to the game. Charging nearly £300 annual club fees is not the way that younger people will be attracted to play.
I have a mental health condition. I have been playing short lawn with my club internally and federation matches for a few years. There is an expectation that I play 4 games in a day at the Federation matches and this has been really detrimental to my mental health. I am quite capable of playing these matches but not 4 games in a single day so I have stopped playing on a team and would like to request reasonable adjustments for my disability. I would like to be able to take part and play 2 games a day and be buddied up with another player and they play the other 2 games.
As a retired person on my own, croquet is a friendly and non-judgemental sport. Everyone is friendly, helpful and welcoming.
Very bad timing for matches for young and working person. All events in working days until 2pm, weekends worked days. For young people very difficult to do practice or play tournaments. Everything for old people and young people is forgotten. No ones care about young working person who love to played croquet.

<p>I joined alone, have no partner can't get a game without being excluded or spent too much time alone. Not continuing croquet as club members cliques. Started during pandemic can't deal with unfriendliness not positive for self esteem.</p>
<p>I loved croquet and the club and club matches as well as helping with teas and events and I was very welcome at the beginning but it has changed now and life is too short to put up with newer members who do not make you welcome. Therefore I am happy to just play with the u3a group.</p>
<p>The croquet club is an excellent way of socialising. More needs to be made of highlighting the friendships that are formed just through the act of playing a sport.</p>
<p>More clubs should reduce fees for full time workers who do not get the opportunity to play as regularly. Usually I can only play evenings and weekends. Evenings only on the summer. Also, this restricts access to playing as a team because most club matches are held during week days.</p>
<p>It took time to be accepted in my club.</p>
<p>I have just fallen in love with this beautiful game, never been good at games! Very interested in encouraging people with a disability to try it. We have a small but really friendly encouraging club which I hope will flourish when we move . I am greatly saddened by the attitude of the Sydenham Tennis club to us as it was a perfect venue which will now become yet another tennis court. Money being more important to the club than people and sport!</p>
<p>The question regarding 'how welcome are clubs' is interesting and varies enormously as I have experienced. My current club is absolutely outstanding.</p>
<p>School activity on options day - many non team players would positively respond</p>
<p>I used to be a keen ac player, enjoying club and ca tournaments, and met many nice people through croquet. As work and caring commitments increased i played less and less to the point where the £350+ subscription was not viable. My club was not willing to let me play even one game a year without paying the full subscription.so i became a non playing member to try to retain ties with croquet, but there are few occasions when i can attend the club- funeral wakes, or farewell parties! The membership and atmosphere has changed, obviously, and its probably just for sentimental reasons that i keep the connection. But i still hope to play again some time in the future</p>
<p>Becoming increasingly concerned about level of expenditure in relation to income</p>
<p>Given that most croquet clubs seem to operate during the week it is not surprising that the membership is mainly retired people. After a lifetime of working in IT with the younger generation it is a bizarre experience to be mixing again with people who have old attitudes and stereotypes. We really need to get the next generations involved to solve the inclusivity issues.</p>
<p>My club is simply wonderful, it is inclusive, friendly and welcoming.</p>
<p>I joined the Southport club in June last year with a fellow Widower, from a suggestion in a local free Paper, giving anyone a taster one Hour Lesson, progressing to 4-2 hour training sessions and then joining the club. which as for me allowed me to progress after my late Wife's passing in April 2020, and with the various Covid-19 lockdowns my mental situation was not what it had been, Croquet has helped me to slowly realise that I'am on my own, after a 50 years of marriage and rather than becoming a recluse, I'am determined to progress into an able bodied pensioner with a number of friends in different situations both male and female.</p>
<p>I have not felt so excluded or unwanted ever. Croquet is great but players cliques unfriendly and unwelcoming, the club committee included.</p>

Club used to loan mallets pre Covid but no longer does so. I am not prepared to pay £250+ for a mallet so will no longer be a member of club.
My Croquet club membership has become an important part of my sporting and social life in retirement.
I would like to expand the "disabilities" section. I have had a replacement aortic valve and suffer from mild COPD. I do tend to get breathless on a long break in CA, but I don't need any aids. Croquet is absolutely ideal for people like me and this might be emphasised.
A couple of niggles: - Your social media qu won't tease out the people who use it, but not for croquet. - As at the start, you havent explored waht brings people back to croquet after their garden playing, nor the impact golf croquet has on thier enjoyment of the game (it didn't exist when I first played). Good Luck with it all!
Some questions are completely irrelevant to encouraging anyone to play croquet!! Very disappointing to be asked such fatuous questions. Let us hope the ghasly Woke mindset leaves croquet alone.
Please don't start worrying about the amount of "diversity" (i.e. non-white people) playing Croquet. The questions about gender identity are also worrying. If clubs are welcoming to whoever wants to play then that is all that is required.
I'm passionate about playing Croquet but it really needs to work harder at grassroots and mid level to make the game more attractive to a younger and more diverse demographic. Even Under 30's are a rare sight and it is still a predominately white middle class Sport in the UK. I'd like to see more women competing at a higher level which I know is starting to be addressed.
Efforts should be made to attract younger players
Croquet is not seen by Local Councils as a popular sporting and social activity therefore they do not promote it or support small clubs. It is one of the most appropriate retirement activities but could also be introduced to young adults.
I have thoroughly enjoyed croquet as it may be played by all people regardless of gender age or disability.
I would like our club to be able to access some good 2nd hand mallets to enable us to accommodate u3a groups, schools, Duke of Edinburgh award candidates, etc. at reasonable prices. Could the CA site have an 'exchange and mart' page?
In cricket etc there are ways juniors can start, but in croquet we don't use small balls for example as cricket does.
A new lease of life could be breathed into croquet if there were more use of free-standing Montevideo hoops on artificial surfaces in schools.
Tuition and Games to encourage 30+ and young families at weekends
I feel that croquet needs to reach out more to the public and be more welcoming
I had a cartilage out 45 years ago. Croquet is the only Sport I can play
I have not seen any black players. Some clubs don't have any foreign players at all.
Carry on making croquet less cliquey. My second club is doing well and has a very mixed membership which is lovely. More younger members are needed though.
I would like to see widespread introduction and development of croquet in schools as an excellent game for equal opportunity for girls and boys.
Yes, I very much regret that Golf Croquet seems to be subsuming Association Croquet. I feel more effort should be made to promote AC.

Encourage school age children to try the sport, but no apparent marketing by CA. Make children size croquet sets more available.
I think that the image of croquet still needs to change. There are still some of the old guard left who think that AC and it's players are superior. Both AC and GC should be seen as equally important. Clubs need to do more to encourage younger people and adopt a strategy to encourage them....young members asked to blog etc.
Great Britain is different now, so clubs should treat equally ethnic minority members.
I am most concerned that croquet is mostly played by elderly people (at least in my club) and this may limit its future existence.
I think that croquet's branding - the way in which the CA has chosen to advertise it in the past - has been geared towards older people. I'm concerned that by surveying the membership again, which is older, the results could simply reinforce the factors that caused the current members to join. What is more important is why others are *not* joining. Please do look at why those of us that are younger, and those who fall into ethnic minority categories, played, and I think we can appeal to a broader audience. Young people like myself start for a bit of fun and stay when they realise the intellectual challenge. We need to target sciency children in schools like they do in New Zealand, and ideally not just private schools. From there, others will follow.
I suspect that croquet is seen by the younger generation as only applicable to us elders. Perhaps more publicity would help this perception.
As a working age player I feel I am regularly not made welcome because of the timing of competitions. For example the Champion of Champions - I won my club competition, but cannot enter CofC because it had been organised on a working day. This gives me the clear message that croquet is for old people.
Croquet needs to work towards changing image from one of middle class elitism to one of a sport accessible and welcoming to more of the community.
You need to attract younger players.  Younger Adults generally or people like me who are unable to currently participate in my usual sports and with the right into to the game I am sure they will soon get hooked on croquet.  Develop links with schools ( especially KS4 where the students choose activity options) If PE becomes a core subject as the government is suggesting perhaps could offer coaching for an hr a week during PE lessons for a half term block. Coaches or Primary teachers who play croquet could go into schools with foam mallets and hoops and offer to teach in lessons for a half term block and offer an after sch hobby which pupils have to pay for?  I am a retired PE teacher( who has taught from KS1 to KS4. I am new to croquet but would love to see the development of the game for the younger generation. I am willing to give help and ideas if required.
The sport is always thought of as "snooty" this needs to be changed, as it's not!
I wonder if the game will be modernised to encourage youngsters to play?
Yes. The perception of the general public is that Croquet is an elitist sport. To encourage more people to take up croquet that fact needs to be seriously addressed.
Repeat that whites makes sport seem stuffy and elitist

<p>University croquet clubs should be better supported, as they are a good source of young, competitive AC players. The CA should provide direct subsidies to ensure students of limited means have affordable lawns to play on, free taster sessions, and proper equipment. GC players have crowded out AC players at my home club and removed AC club days - if this pattern is repeated everywhere then AC will surely die out. I can't see any solution to that other than 'recruit fewer GC players'.</p>
<p>Croquet is a great challenge, AC or GC, once you understand the games, more taster sessions in schools, colleges and universities would be helpful in encouraging people to take up the games.</p>
<p>Croquet is a brilliant game using skills found many others, eg bowls, snooker, (even GO). It is fairly easy to get started and the basic rules, especially the GC format, are relatively simple. These sports are covered on TV and the media, but never croquet, yet It can be played and enjoyed at almost any level and affords the opportunity to play with increasing skill.</p> <p>It deserves to have wider exposure and participation and the route to this is surely introduction in schools or community groups. The equipment and space needed are not great and I would like to see the CA taking more steps to promote the sport, even at the expense of catering to existing clubs or members.</p>
<p>I would like to see more schools encouraging students to play croquet. I'm sure most Clubs would set aside some lawns each week during the day for a school. My teenage grandchildren occasionally like to play when they visit along with sailing and water sports but rugby, cricket, netball, hockey etc seem to be the only sports offered at school.</p>
<p>Some individual club members can be less than welcoming</p>
<p>The main issue holding croquet back in terms of numbers and media coverage is still its image. The CA video, while in many ways very good, does little to change people's opinions of the game. I don't know whether we should be trying to attract people from a wider, more diverse catchment, or attract greater numbers of our typical membership - or indeed both. The apparent decline in AC is a great concern.</p>
<p>Croquet has an image problem, making it difficult to attract younger players, it is conceived as being played by old and wealthy people</p>
<p>I play all my croquet at Middlesbrough CC, which is in a lower class poor conurbation, and sad to say we seem to suffer from class discrimination - the local population just aren't interested. If it were not for the likes of ICI having brought graduates to live in the area 30-40 years ago (including me) we would struggle even more to find members. Don't know how you change that perception.</p>
<p>I think that the challenge of improving diversity within the sport is extremely important. Our club is entirely made up of old white men and women. There's another world out there who we really struggle to reach.</p>
<p>Sport should not, in my opinion, get a pass on treating trans women as women. The far too common attitude, "But it won't be fair to 'real' women" is bigoted and discriminatory and should not be tolerated.</p>
<p>I put this in answer to an earlier question as well: I have a disability, a mental health condition. I have been playing short lawn with my club internally and federation matches for a few years. There is an expectation that I play 4 games in a day at the Federation matches and this has been really detrimental to my mental health. I am quite capable of playing these matches but not 4 games in a single day so I have stopped playing on a team and would like to request reasonable adjustments for my disability. I would like to be able to take part and play 2 games a day and be buddied up with another player and they play the other 2 games.</p>
<p>I would like my club to recruit younger members, but it is difficult as they only play during the working week.</p>

I believe we need to attract a new generation of working-age players - by setting up clubs and grass-roots play (local leagues etc) to fit working lifestyles, and by targeting recruitment at sectors with compatible interests
'Pop up' croquet similar to the ones on Countryfile but at local events and festivals held in local parks could make croquet seem more within the range of youngsters and ordinary working people. Just simply experiencing holding a mallet, hitting a ball, running a hoop.
Introduce taster sessions for younger people, with challenging games to spark interest and get them talking about it
Introduction of a youth policy to encourage young people as croquet is deemed to be for old people and this needs to change to continue what is a great game.
I think our main target for getting new players should focus on existing sports people i.e. tennis, squash, golf players in their 50's.
Croquet is a complacently non-diverse sport
I would love to see some attempt from my club to reach out to local schools, special schools and schools from lower income areas to offer sessions
There should have been an option to say prefer not to say for the question about ' Race ' but such an option was not available therefore my answer may not be truthful. The focus should not be on shouting look at us we're a rainbow of people, and how wonderfully welcoming we are but instead, there are no barriers or bars. For me I find that to play croquet you have to join a closed club rather than there being public clubs to join. Wherever there are bowls clubs in public parks there should be croquet clubs.
I find that playing AC croquet is very good for mental & physical health
Difficult to apply for grants because croquet is seen as a 'posh' sport
I would like to see <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* a much more user-friendly website, easy to navigate, focused as much on attracting new players as catering for the old hands</li> <li>* less emphasis on elite play and elite players, more on the grass roots</li> <li>* a specific drive to encourage and support women</li> <li>* a specific drive to recruit and retain young players</li> </ul>
It would be nice to have more Clubs open to visitors to be able to pop in to pay and play.
I think that Croquet has a reputation as being a posh/elitist sport. Whilst my own experience since joining my club shows that it is anything but that, reactions from friends etc. since beginning to play show that this view is still prevalent. My only negative feeling towards Croquet is the wearing of white clothing for matches and competitions. I find this quite antiquated and colonial.
I feel that we should do more to make croquet attractive to working age people. Obviously we can't hold all tournaments at the weekend, but working age players get the impression that croquet is run by the retired, for the retired, and feel disenfranchised when they have qualified for a tournament whose final is mid-week, so they can't play. They can't always just take a day off to play.
Schools and junior champs are a vital life line but a more regional approach would get more schools involved eg a south west day tournament could catch schools from Taunton Bristol Exeter Sherborne etc
More encouragement for young people to try croquet



<p>My club been most welcoming. Pursuing diversity as a goal is wrong. Creating demand for croquet through media stories and video must be improved - when demand for AC croquet increases, then ensuring that all are welcome can be addressed. At the moment to increase numbers it is inevitable that we will be reinforcing stereotypes because retired, near retired, time-rich people are most likely to find out about croquet.</p>
<p>Pretending that Golf Croquet will increase AC croquet players has not been demonstrated - more often GC play drives out AC play. Golf courses do not shorten holes, make holes bigger or easier to attract members. They stick to what golf is! Emphasising short croquet to reduce time commitment is better than changing the game to make it shorter - I enjoy GC but am sad that AC seems to be struggling in many clubs. The CA must strike the right balance and maintain a strong leadership and media profile for AC</p>
<p>Too much old fashioned thinking, not innovative enough to encourage younger people</p>
<p>I've heard too much nonsense about diversity and inclusivity</p>
<p>Getting younger persons interested and, thus, involved in the game should be a priority. As still a newby to the game it feels like a hobby for the active oldy.</p>
<p>The club has only white British Irish Scottish members. It struggles to recruit from other Ethnic Groups. Local schools.colleges have no time now for including croquet in their curriculum.</p>
<p>Croquet needs to shed its exclusive image - we are seen as 'posh'</p>
<p>Playing on a Crown Bowling Green adds another interesting detention,.</p>
<p>Perhaps the CA could consider introducing the sport to schools as after schools club activities in all sectors of education</p>
<p>The status of the game of Croquet needs to lose it's image of being only for 'posh old folk!'. We need to encourage more young people to play to ensure the sport survives &amp; grows in the future. The C.A. website is a nightmare to use. Staff at HQ are helpful and friendly.</p>
<p>Croquet provides the perfect social/competitive environment for retired folk</p>
<p>Yes, modernise CA equipment page remove older players wearing out fashioned kit and replace with younger players looking more 'cool'. Remember youngsters will not want to dress like their grandparents on the court. Ignore these comments at the peril of the future of the game.</p>
<p>I hope the CA does not become obsessed with 'diversity' . we should welcome anyone who expresses an interest but feel attempts to 'represent the community' would be a futile distraction .</p>
<p>In case you didn't pick it up in relation to another question, I think that U3A croquet, using half lawns, is a very good way of increasing the awareness of the game. I also think that after-school clubs could be a good way forward, but this would depend on the locality of the club. If we were staying in the UK long-term, I would approach a near-by private school to set this up. My husband and I aim to play croquet for a significant part of the year from this coming autumn in Sarasota , where they play predominantly American rules six-wicket, similar to AC in a lot of ways, but with a time limit of 75 mins per game. This is very enjoyable and challenging, but within a time scale that fits in with life outside croquet. Retired people have many interests and family responsibilities, and cannot be as dedicated to the croquet lawn as people once were.</p>
<p>Younger blood is needed but whilst activities are not compatible with working hours there won't be much younger blood. Things need to change. Also inviting youth to the club will help.</p>

<p>We need to get more young players involved. Also the playing of AC should be encouraged more. Publicise croquet more in social media, possibly aim to televise international events. this may need to be GC to start with as it is easier to follow.</p>
<p>As I suggested before, the biggest obstacle for croquet is its lingering image of Victorian quaintness. The more that can be done to eliminate that, the better the future will be for the game.</p>
<p>I really enjoy my croquet club, with its open and friendly ethos. I am no athlete, but despite being a rotten player, I am included across the board.</p>
<p>The people at my club are most welcoming and friendly but I have had a physical illness.</p>
<p>I love croquet and believe it has something to offer everyone regardless of age or ability. (I have never previously played any sport.) I wish it could shake off the image of being 'posh'.</p>
<p>On inclusivity, we try at Stourbridge to include all but can only include those who come to us! We do try to attract local people but with limited success as we are a very predominantly mono ethnic area. Also we have limited facilities and are currently at our greatest membership for some while.</p>
<p>Work to making it a truly all inclusive experience. I would be happy to help with that.</p>
<p>I wonder how best we could encourage younger people to become interested, and to maintain that interest? I am an ex-teacher and think that it would appeal . I suppose the sport has to overcome its rather stuffy image? TV coverage? Social media? I think the image is improving but the main difficulty it seems to me is the availability of lawns. My club was turned out of our place in a local prep school, and in spite of searching diligently for somewhere else , have finally amalgamated with another club, so some of my replies are "early days"!!</p>
<p>The smaller croquet clubs should make more effort to diversify and offer a wider range of social activities in order to attract a more diverse membership, including younger people. The larger clubs which offer a wider range of sports and better social facilities are often prohibitive to diversification of its membership due to much higher fees and a perception of elitism (ie. prosperous middle-class). There appear to be no competitive higher education croquet leagues, which would introduce younger people to the sport, other than from the top universities that do have facilities. The CA should actively encourage higher education establishments to install lawns.</p>
<p>If clubs want to attract younger players then they need to think about when those people can play. If everything is geared for mid-week daytime then there is nothing for players at work or school</p>
<p>I love croquet since I found it, I love it. I fear like crown green bowls if the young don't get involved it might dwindle.</p>
<p>Would like more CA tournaments for players with handicaps 10 to 18, also more short croquet. Need to encourage more school age children to join - nearly all club members 65+ currently.</p>

## The CA:

Given that most croquet clubs seem to operate during the week it is not surprising that the membership is mainly retired people. After a lifetime of working in IT with the younger generation it is a bizarre experience to be mixing again with people who have old attitudes and stereotypes. We really need to get the next generations involved to solve the inclusivity issues.

<p>I'm passionate about playing Croquet but it really needs to work harder at grassroots and mid level to make the game more attractive to a younger and more diverse demographic. Even Under 30's are a rare sight and it is still a predominately white middle class Sport in the UK. I'd like to see more women competing at a higher level which I know is starting to be addressed.</p>
<p>I would like our club to be able to access some good 2nd hand mallets to enable us to accommodate u3a groups, schools, Duke of Edinburgh award candidates, etc. at reasonable prices. Could the CA site have an 'exchange and mart' page?</p>
<p>In cricket etc there are ways juniors can start, but in croquet we don't use small balls for example as cricket does.</p>
<p>I would like to see widespread introduction and development of croquet in schools as an excellent game for equal opportunity for girls and boys.</p>
<p>Encourage school age children to try the sport, but no apparent marketing by CA. Make children size croquet sets more available.</p>
<p>I think that croquet's branding - the way in which the CA has chosen to advertise it in the past - has been geared towards older people. I'm concerned that by surveying the membership again, which is older, the results could simply reinforce the factors that caused the current members to join. What is more important is why others are *not* joining. Please do look at why those of us that are younger, and those who fall into ethnic minority categories, played, and I think we can appeal to a broader audience. Young people like myself start for a bit of fun and stay when they realise the intellectual challenge. We need to target sciency children in schools like they do in New Zealand, and ideally not just private schools. From there, others will follow.</p>
<p>As a working age player I feel I am regularly not made welcome because of the timing of competitions. For example the Champion of Champions - I won my club competition, but cannot enter CofC because it had been organised on a working day. This gives me the clear message that croquet is for old people.</p>
<p>You need to attract younger players.</p> <p>Younger Adults generally or people like me who are unable to currently participate in my usual sports and with the right into to the game I am sure they will soon get hooked on croquet.</p> <p>Develop links with schools ( especially KS4 where the students choose activity options) If PE becomes a core subject as the government is suggesting perhaps could offer coaching for an hr a week during PE lessons for a half term block.</p> <p>Coaches or Primary teachers who play croquet could go into schools with foam mallets and hoops and offer to teach in lessons for a half term block and offer an after sch hobby which pupils have to pay for?</p> <p>I am a retired PE teacher( who has taught from KS1 to KS4. I am new to croquet but would love to see the development of the game for the younger generation. I am willing to give help and ideas if required.</p>
<p>I wonder if the game will be modernised to encourage youngsters to play?</p>
<p>Repeat that whites makes sport seem stuffy and elitist</p>

<p>University croquet clubs should be better supported, as they are a good source of young, competitive AC players. The CA should provide direct subsidies to ensure students of limited means have affordable lawns to play on, free taster sessions, and proper equipment. GC players have crowded out AC players at my home club and removed AC club days - if this pattern is repeated everywhere then AC will surely die out. I can't see any solution to that other than 'recruit fewer GC players'.</p>
<p>Croquet is a brilliant game using skills found many others, eg bowls, snooker, (even GO). It is fairly easy to get started and the basic rules, especially the GC format, are relatively simple. These sports are covered on TV and the media, but never croquet, yet It can be played and enjoyed at almost any level and affords the opportunity to play with increasing skill.</p> <p>It deserves to have wider exposure and participation and the route to this is surely introduction in schools or community groups. The equipment and space needed are not great and I would like to see the CA taking more steps to promote the sport, even at the expense of catering to existing clubs or members.</p>
<p>I would like to see more schools encouraging students to play croquet. I'm sure most Clubs would set aside some lawns each week during the day for a school. My teenage grandchildren occasionally like to play when they visit along with sailing and water sports but rugby, cricket, netball, hockey etc seem to be the only sports offered at school.</p>
<p>I believe we need to attract a new generation of working-age players - by setting up clubs and grass-roots play (local leagues etc) to fit working lifestyles, and by targeting recruitment at sectors with compatible interests</p>
<p>'Pop up' croquet similar to the ones on Countryfile but at local events and festivals held in local parks could make croquet seem more within the range of youngsters and ordinary working people. Just simply experiencing holding a mallet, hitting a ball, running a hoop.</p>
<p>Introduce taster sessions for younger people, with challenging games to spark interest and get them talking about it</p>
<p>Introduction of a youth policy to encourage young people as croquet is deemed to be for old people and this needs to change to continue what is a great game.</p>
<p>I think our main target for getting new players should focus on existing sports people i.e. tennis, squash, golf players in their 50's.</p>
<p>There should have been an option to say prefer not to say for the question about ' Race ' but such an option was not available therefore my answer may not be truthful. The focus should not be on shouting look at us we're a rainbow of people, and how wonderfully welcoming we are but instead, there are no barriers or bars. For me I find that to play croquet you have to join a closed club rather than there being public clubs to join. Wherever there are bowls clubs in public parks there should be croquet clubs.</p>
<p>I feel that we should do more to make croquet attractive to working age people. Obviously we can't hold all tournaments at the weekend, but working age players get the impression that croquet is run by the retired, for the retired, and feel disenfranchised when they have qualified for a tournament whose final is mid-week, so they can't play. They can't always just take a day off to play.</p>
<p>Playing on a Crown Bowling Green adds another interesting detention,.</p>

<p>In case you didn't pick it up in relation to another question, I think that U3A croquet, using half lawns, is a very good way of increasing the awareness of the game. I also think that after-school clubs could be a good way forward, but this would depend on the locality of the club. If we were staying in the UK long-term, I would approach a near-by private school to set this up. My husband and I aim to play croquet for a significant part of the year from this coming autumn in Sarasota , where they play predominantly American rules six-wicket, similar to AC in a lot of ways, but with a time limit of 75 mins per game. This is very enjoyable and challenging, but within a time scale that fits in with life outside croquet. Retired people have many interests and family responsibilities, and cannot be as dedicated to the croquet lawn as people once were.</p>
<p>The smaller croquet clubs should make more effort to diversify and offer a wider range of social activities in order to attract a more diverse membership, including younger people. The larger clubs which offer a wider range of sports and better social facilities are often prohibitive to diversification of its membership due to much higher fees and a perception of elitism (ie. prosperous middle-class). There appear to be no competitive higher education croquet leagues, which would introduce younger people to the sport, other than from the top universities that do have facilities. The CA should actively encourage higher education establishments to install lawns.</p>
<p>Would like more CA tournaments for players with handicaps 10 to 18, also more short croquet. Need to encourage more school age children to join - nearly all club members 65+ currently.</p>
<p>I would be interested to know if the survey is able to reveal any trends relating to the length of tenure and current age of the makeup of club committees. Given that the croquet playing population appears to be ageing (at least for AC) and that the members of committees are for the most part drawn from the same population, it would seem that a club's future is more than a little dependent on ensuring that club committees are able to draw on new blood. Maybe there's scope for another questionnaire aimed at specific people, e.g. club secretaries, which looks at a club's organisation and its future prospects.</p>
<p>As a committee member of my club we need expertise to improve our marketing skills and in particular attracting younger members</p>
<p>To encourage clubs to promote more coaching to beginners</p>
<p>Reduce the cost of tournament fees for overseas players. As older members have spare bedrooms at home, offer a billeting database for tournament players even at a small cost to reduce expenses for travelers</p>
<p>CLUB IS ONLY AS GOOD as its communication. We dont get any info of Regional events. Its only friendlies and league matches. I know there is more out there.</p>
<p>Our club does not have a registered coach. It would be good if a coach could be hired from time to time from a CA list.</p>
<p>I just wish I lived nearer a bigger Croquet club where I could play and learn more with member who want to play a bit more serious croquet. I love it when I get to go play at bigger clubs. Also my currently club is quite a few miles away and I have to pay to park. Also most member of it are more interested in it just being a social club. But yes it is better than not being able to play at all So I will continue to re join.</p>
<p>I have the concern that the increasing administrative burdens being placed on the smaller club will destroy them.</p>
<p>I would like Club handicappers to be able to adjust handicaps lower than at present. As one gets older and plays less matches yet still wants to maintain a card it is almost impossible to get a higher handicap that suits one's failing game.</p>

<p>It would be helpful if a programme of measured training activities was available in each club. So, a new starter would undertake the induction training, and then a development course would be offered in the second and third season. This does not have to be accredited training, but where possible the coach should be accredited. I have found that people give up after the first year because they find it difficult to build their game and do not particularly want to go on a formal CA course. An agreed format, for the three stages, could be undertaken at the Croquet Association Council meetings and made available at club level. It should be informal but structured in application and available only to those members who want it. This way people invest in their clubs and do not feel inadequate when it comes to play.</p>
<p>We need more croquet clubs. It's 25 miles to my nearest one.</p>
<p>I'm very lucky to be a member of a well-established &amp; wealthy Club, with good staff support for its sporting activities. Nevertheless significant time needs to be spent by volunteers to keep everything going (of which I am one). I recognise that most other less fortunate clubs have to rely on significant levels of volunteer activity, without which the croquet calendar would simply not operate. Effective volunteers should continue to be well recognised. I support the CA doing more to help all clubs and I recognise that requires a more professional, properly-funded approach.</p>
<p>Despite being rather long in the tooth, and having a fairly high handicap, I am regularly disappointed by the quality of lawns, often at much larger clubs than ours. Sadly, of course, this is a question of cost, and therefore to some extent of membership. The opportunity to play on a really good and level surface is a revelation. But how to extend such provision???</p>
<p>We are a very young club and would appreciate more active and visible support from the association to be able to develop further.</p>
<p>Our Club is very very low in membership through natural wastage ie too old, too infirm, death, moving residence and of the few left 50% are over 80. We have tried mass advertising, Facebook, Offering Corporate Events, encouraging onlookers to try the game, but no new members forthcoming.</p>
<p>I would be really happy to have a croquet club in the London Borough of Bromley</p>
<p>I am a member of a ladies group which rents time on the croquet lawns once every two weeks throughout the season. We also attend indoor croquet activities during the closed season</p>
<p>I am a member of a Ladies Group which rents time on the croquet lawns once every two weeks during the season. We also attend indoor croquet activities during the close season</p>
<p>This survey is rather long; it could have been crisper. I think the CA is too bloated and self-important - lots of talking but little gets done.</p>
<p>I was unclear as to what class C, b &amp; A tournaments were so could not answer that question very well.</p>
<p>Individual members are one group of members. Is a similar exercise being carried out for clubs? You haven't asked what individual members would like the CA to do for them / their club so how do you know how to go forward and attract members other than by sleight of statistical hand?</p>
<p>Keep it simple for New Players - CA push out far to much jargon and seem just to concentrate of top class players. Suggest CA does less!</p>
<p>More work needs to be done to support croquet in the North.</p>
<p>I see my subscription to the CA more as a donation to a worthy cause than buying a service that I actually value.</p>
<p>At all levels there seems to be an attitude that appears to make the game more complicated than it needs to be. Particularly in the accessibility to coaching/referee courses and the language used.</p>

<p>Would like more to be done to make handicapping a level playing field and not allow `cheats` to play with a score somewhat higher than their standard of play.</p>
<p>Why are the finals etc of most of the major tournament based in the South. Croquet needs to 'level up'. Also without golf croquet some clubs would struggle to survive. It's time Golf Croquet was treated with equal importance to AC</p>
<p>Feel CA very AC orientated which limits the expansion of Croquet as a whole since most beginners (at least) will prefer GC. Seems CA run by AC advocates.</p>
<p>I would like to see advice for grounds maintenance and improvement available in the gazette and a regular section on the rules of golf and association croquet.</p>
<p>Thank you to all the members who help run the c.a.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am no longer a club member as majority of nearest club members are retired and therefore do not play outside working hours (eg. weekends)</li> <li>2. I have not played in any GC tournaments as there are none available to enter in the local area (North East - Durham area) - but I am interested.</li> <li>3. A majority of CA tournaments are played in the South of the UK - eg. Inter Counties, Selectors, Spencer Ell etc.</li> <li>4. Selection of players for CA tournaments appears to be biased towards those in favour with the selection committee. eg. SCA v CA</li> </ol>
<p>I would hope that in the future there would be a croquet club in every UK county. Need to get local authorities on board about providing them when developing leisure facilities. Bowling is invariably considered but do not know of any Local Authority ever including croquet. It is an inclusive game and attracts so many older, retired people as does bowling.</p>
<p>Do not believe 3's and 4's should play in the second division Level Play League in theEACF. This League was meant to be for mid rangers. We now have the situation where that League is too strong for Mid Rangers so they don't play in it and (2) the Main Open League has now nowhere enough players.</p>
<p>I support any move to making the CA and the croquet world more professional</p>
<p>I would like to have more information about the factors ( not just price) to be considered to ensure the correct mallet is purchased</p>
<p>I do not think that the CA considers the remoteness of S Wales.</p>
<p>Thank you to all the CA Office staff for all their support</p>
<p>CA is too Southern-centric. More support is needed in the North. What percentage of CA tournaments are in the North? An explanation in the Gazette of what a non-tournament player has to do to enter tournaments might boost interest. Why is the assumption made that AC is superior to GC &amp; GC players must want to progress to the superior game? Most of those I have met don't!</p>
<p>A new lease of life could be breathed into croquet if there were more use of free-standing Montevideo hoops on artificial surfaces in schools.</p>
<p>Thanks for all the work our volunteers do with the CA, you are appreciated.</p>
<p>Encourage more players to enter tournaments</p>
<p>I like the way the CA is run and think that it does an excellent job (as evidenced by this survey) and despite the fact that there may be a small minority who might find fault.</p>
<p>Thank you to the CA for organising and coordinating so many tournaments.</p>
<p>I strongly feel coaching should be delivered free of charge</p>
<p>To allow for the UK variable weather local authorities should receive some funds for lawn maintenance. Consideration should be given to providing funds for artificial lawns.</p>

I think that croquet, broadly speaking, is superbly well run - both in the UK and internationally - for what is, after all, a fairly small minority sport, and I'd like to thank all involved. Separately, a pet peeve of mine is when I hear intolerant views expressed about AC versus GC (in either direction); clearly this is only from a minority - who are entitled to their view - but I do think that the CA should strongly promote the view of 'live and let live' in this area, as bickering within a small sport does nothing to promote it and therefore puts its future at risk.
more coaches and referees required
CA has developed hugely. But sometimes less is more. Often difficult to navigate the website to find a short answer. Hard to implement initiatives in small clubs with ageing demographics.
More competitions at weekends would make it easier for working people to attend
More external promotion of the sport covering all communities and ethnicities. Many people I suspect are not even aware of the existence of the sport that is why encouraging local councils to offer grounds available to existing clubs, or potential new clubs, the number of clubs playing in public parks and spaces would give the sport a higher profile and attract people of all ages and change the concept that this is an elitist sport.
Thank for your hard work in running the CA
Because of current fuel costs national tournament should be more centralised in UK to minimise travel costs - e.g. not South Coast or Lancashire !
The CA appears to be a very large organisation with a multitude of committees. Are they all really necessary?
Allocate tournament places on a first come, first served basis to allow higher handicap players to improve by competing against better players in the A and B level tournaments.
What does our subscription to CA bring to local (small) clubs, particularly last year when we couldn't play.
Let's get into the 21 cent regarding competition clothing. There's a lot of tatty stuff being worn, including international shirts with red piping from a work clothing shop ;)
I fully support the change of the legal status of the CA from an unincorporated association to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and will arrange for a legacy to be included in my will if or when that is completed
Feel Cornwall will never be at hub of croquet matters such as tournaments and coaching.
A book or info on lawns for each month of the year and contact details of lawn managers, in other clubs.
Croquet will never be a professional sport, so more support/funding should go to strengthening club membership rather than pander to the egos of the elite few.
Can you set up a second hand mallets section for all us newbies who are unemployed and can't afford a new club? I love that chester have a load of old ones I can use but I would like a travel one as I want to play overseas in Australia where my family live and Val, one if club members has played in south Africa. I'm very interested in any international holidays you might put together. Thanks I love the magazine too but am happy just to get the online version
I think that the Croquet Association concentrates far too much on the south of England
I would like to play in worlds again soon.. either ac or gc. If it wasn't based on rankings 10 games plus. But I love everything the CA does I'm glad I have found a great mind controlled sport



Other than garden croquet as a child (70s) I only played twice on separate days in early 80s and early 00s before finding my club during lockdown. I would have joined in 2009 when I shortly after I came to the area but my initial searches proved fruitless; may have been my failure.
North Wales could do with some premier lawns for courts.
I'd like to see a national centre, perhaps indoors with retractable roof that could be used all year round and keep players fresh. Goodness knows so many sports get lottery cash for great play areas that are mostly unused throughout the year. I'd repurpose an existing vacant warehouse with parking that could accommodate lawns, training areas including swing trainers, seating for spectators, concessions, changing rooms and facilities but most important of all be set up with suitable cameras to take this exciting spectator sport to the TV. TV rights would generate revenue. Other than pot black in the 70s snooker was not broadcast until colour telly really took off then it really came into its own, I think croquet has the variety to keep viewers intrigued in the same way.
Would be nice to be included in the Olympic games.
If possible, I would like tournament entry lists to contain players AC/GC ranking grade to make allocation easier.
It may be me, but I am not really clear as to what CA membership I have and also not clear how to enter tournaments on the CA website. I think it would be better if there were no categories of CA membership and that all croquet club members automatically became members of the CA. Happy to pay for this via my club membership fee. Feels too complicated at the moment. Tournaments should be easier to enter into via CA website
Keep up the good work. Thanks to all of you at the CA.
it would be good to have some indoor croquet facilities in the UK
From my short experience of the CA it looks like the management is good and energetic - well done
CA seems very focussed on the larger clubs and major competitions. I am a member of a very small club and don't get much CA help
I would like there to be more Doubles Tournaments and, where there are, more opportunity to enter only that section, without there being the necessity to have entered the Singles section first.
We run the only croquet club in Greece. It isn't possible for our club, it would seem, to be recognise despite all the evidence I have provided over the years to the WCF etc.
Some Clubs have joined the CA but appear to have only 1 or 2 CA member players. How can the CA reach other members of those Clubs to encourage their membership participation in the CA?
Explore the possibility of televising big events in the UK

### **AC/GC:**

As a working age player I feel I am regularly not made welcome because of the timing of competitions. For example the Champion of Champions - I won my club competition, but cannot enter CofC because it had been organised on a working day. This gives me the clear message that croquet is for old people.
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<p>I feel that we should do more to make croquet attractive to working age people. Obviously we can't hold all tournaments at the weekend, but working age players get the impression that croquet is run by the retired, for the retired, and feel disenfranchised when they have qualified for a tournament whose final is mid-week, so they can't play. They can't always just take a day off to play.</p>
<p>In case you didn't pick it up in relation to another question, I think that U3A croquet, using half lawns, is a very good way of increasing the awareness of the game. I also think that after-school clubs could be a good way forward, but this would depend on the locality of the club. If we were staying in the UK long-term, I would approach a near-by private school to set this up. My husband and I aim to play croquet for a significant part of the year from this coming autumn in Sarasota , where they play predominantly American rules six-wicket, similar to AC in a lot of ways, but with a time limit of 75 mins per game. This is very enjoyable and challenging, but within a time scale that fits in with life outside croquet. Retired people have many interests and family responsibilities, and cannot be as dedicated to the croquet lawn as people once were.</p>
<p>Would like more CA tournaments for players with handicaps 10 to 18, also more short croquet. Need to encourage more school age children to join - nearly all club members 65+ currently.</p>
<p>Reduce the cost of tournament fees for overseas players. As older members have spare bedrooms at home, offer a billeting database for tournament players even at a small cost to reduce expenses for travelers</p>
<p>Why are the finals etc of most of the major tournament based in the South. Croquet needs to 'level up'. Also without golf croquet some clubs would struggle to survive. It's time Golf Croquet was treated with equal importance to AC</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am no longer a club member as majority of nearest club members are retired and therefore do not play outside working hours (eg. weekends)</li> <li>2. I have not played in any GC tournaments as there are none available to enter in the local area (North East - Durham area) - but I am interested.</li> <li>3. A majority of CA tournaments are played in the South of the UK - eg. Inter Counties, Selectors, Spencer Ell etc.</li> <li>4. Selection of players for CA tournaments appears to be biased towards those in favour with the selection committee. eg. SCA v CA</li> </ol>
<p>CA is too Southern-centric. More support is needed in the North. What percentage of CA tournaments are in the North? An explanation in the Gazette of what a non-tournament player has to do to enter tournaments might boost interest. Why is the assumption made that AC is superior to GC &amp; GC players must want to progress to the superior game? Most of those I have met don't!</p>
<p>Encourage more players to enter tournaments</p>
<p>I think that croquet, broadly speaking, is superbly well run - both in the UK and internationally - for what is, after all, a fairly small minority sport, and I'd like to thank all involved. Separately, a pet peeve of mine is when I hear intolerant views expressed about AC versus GC (in either direction); clearly this is only from a minority - who are entitled to their view - but I do think that the CA should strongly promote the view of 'live and let live' in this area, as bickering within a small sport does nothing to promote it and therefore puts its future at risk.</p>
<p>More competitions at weekends would make it easier for working people to attend</p>
<p>Allocate tournament places on a first come, first served basis to allow higher handicap players to improve by competing against better players in the A and B level tournaments.</p>
<p>I would like to play in worlds again soon.. either ac or gc. If it wasnt based on rankings 10 games plus. But i love everything the CA does im glad i have found a great mind controled sport</p>

<p>If possible, I would like tournament entry lists to contain players AC/GC ranking grade to make allocation easier.</p>
<p>I would like there to be more Doubles Tournaments and, where there are, more opportunity to enter only that section, without there being the necessity to have entered the Singles section first.</p>
<p>Very bad timing for matches for young and working person. All events in working days until 2pm, weekends worked days.</p> <p>For young people very difficult to do practice or play tournaments. Everything for old people and young people is forgotten. No ones care about young working person who love to played croquet.</p>
<p>More clubs should reduce fees for full time workers who do not get the opportunity to play as regularly. Usually I can only play evenings and weekends. Evenings only on the summer. Also, this restricts access to playing as a team because most club matches are held during week days.</p>
<p>Tuition and Games to encourage 30+ and young families at weekends</p>
<p>Yes, I very much regret that Golf Croquet seems to be subsuming Association Croquet. I feel more effort should be made to promote AC.</p>
<p>I think that the image of croquet still needs to change. There are still some of the old guard left who think that AC and it's players are superior. Both AC and GC should be seen as equally important. Clubs need to do more to encourage younger people and adopt a strategy to encourage them....young members asked to blog etc.</p>
<p>The main issue holding croquet back in terms of numbers and media coverage is still its image. The CA video, while in many ways very good, does little to change people's opinions of the game. I don't know whether we should be trying to attract people from a wider, more diverse catchment, or attract greater numbers of our typical membership - or indeed both. The apparent decline in AC is a great concern.</p>
<p>I put this in answer to an earlier question as well: I have a disability, a mental health condition. I have been playing short lawn with my club internally and federation matches for a few years. There is an expectation that I play 4 games in a day at the Federation matches and this has been really detrimental to my mental health. I am quite capable of playing these matches but not 4 games in a single day so I have stopped playing on a team and would like to request reasonable adjustments for my disability. I would like to be able to take part and play 2 games a day and be buddied up with another player and they play the other 2 games.</p>
<p>I find that playing AC croquet is very good for mental &amp; physical health</p>
<p>Shrewsbury Croquet Club have been most welcoming. Pursuing diversity as a goal is wrong. Creating demand for croquet through media stories and video must be improved - when demand for AC croquet increases, then ensuring that all are welcome can be addressed. At the moment to increase numbers it is inevitable that we will be reinforcing stereotypes because retired, near retired, time-rich people are most likely to find out about croquet.</p> <p>Pretending that Golf Croquet will increase AC croquet players has not been demonstrated - more often GC play drives out AC play. Golf courses do not shorten holes, make holes bigger or easier to attract members. They stick to what golf is! Emphasising short croquet to reduce time commitment is better than changing the game to make it shorter - I enjoy GC but am sad that AC seems to be struggling in many clubs. The CA must strike the right balance and maintain a strong leadership and media profile for AC</p>

<p>I voiced my concerns that keen, newly coached beginners find it difficult to 'take the next step' and that AC club afternoons were not welcoming and probably not appropriate. ( I was more or less told to go and practise for 2 years). My club is now starting a 16-24 club evening through the season and this should really help. I appreciate their response.</p>
<p>In my opinion, it is not reasonable to require answers to questions such as the year of my birth.</p> <p>I used to play regularly when there was a club within reach where AC was played. My interest in the game remains, but I have no opportunity to play the game that I prefer.</p>
<p>Some of the questions don't cover all options. For example, used to play AC to GB level but ceased playing it completely about 5 or 6 years ago as I had found it increasingly tiresome and dull, whereas I was greatly enjoying top-class GC</p>
<p>The section on playing AC should ask if you would play if your club had more lawns, perhaps.</p>
<p>I object to compulsory questions about ethnicity. I strongly approve the CA sending out questionnaires to ascertain members' views.</p> <p>Narrow hoop settings encourage defensive play in AC and may be contributing to its decline.</p>
<p>Handicap trials every year at the end of the season to prevent bandits winning handicap events. This would encourage entries in competitions. If you are not assessed then you can't enter. This is an issue mostly in AC where players frequently experience "step" changes.</p>
<p>More emphasis required on social and recreational aspects of the sport. More GC helps this but need to be able to attract and retain more members, and give them the opportunity to use it as a recreational sport, and have no pressure to represent club in other competitions or improve their handicap. I joined for this purpose, but then improved rapidly and was initially interested in competition, advance play etc, but now I've reached a level where I'm no longer fussed, and happy just to hack around!</p>
<p>Croquet is good fun and, for me, reasonably competitive. AC appears to be on the decline but I hope that decline can be arrested.</p>
<p>Please accept the fact that some of us just want to enjoy a socially enjoyable game and not strive to be AC champions.</p>
<p>My croquet experience as a back garden player which i have done sporadically since 1980 has been completely different to that since joining a club in 2019. It is a different game, (AC), more interesting and more entertaining. I have always played CA rules but had no knowledge of a 4 ball break etc. However I am not sure I would have joined a club earlier as I and my friends played other sports which seemed more interesting at the time. I have no regrets as I feel I still have time and ability to improve to a high level in croquet whilst my ability is probably declining in other sports.</p>
<p>Get rid of Golf it is a separate sport.</p>
<p>The ability to think appears to be fairly dominant among AC players usually linked to a high level of education.</p>
<p>I have been watching AC videos online to try and understand the game better. I know that croquet is never going to be a TV spectator sport, but the amount of time which some of the top players take between shots is frankly absurd. Have they not read law 56? Reasonable Despatch.</p>
<p>I feel AC only appeals to a particular mindset and will never be tremendously popular. But I could well be wrong! It seems to be populated by mathematicians, engineers, computer geeks, not the more artistic people. I slightly suspect we are all a bit along the autistic spectrum...</p>
<p>I do not find AC very friendly. Only 1 person on the lawn at a time.</p> <p>Why are there all sorts of AC croquet with their own different rules</p>

<p>Laws of GC and AC need further alignment and less subjectivity. i.e. accidental contact on practice swings and air shots should either be a foul in both or not a foul in both and most certainly not subject to discussion between combatants [I was double banked against a game that ended in heated argument, one player throwing the match and falling out with a friend]. Concept of self refereeing and integrity need to be strengthened and trusted. Equivalent law books should be worded the same and structured the same for both formats. It is the same court, same dimensions same equipment. Just align grammar, copy and paste; same section numbers please... no excuse it is near the beginning. Please, please please remove the use of -Rover Ball- as meaning a peg ball. Its for peg not Rover. If i relate a position to an newby and refer to my hoop 1 ball and my 4 back ball I do not mean my ball that is for hoop 2 and my ball that is for penultimate FFS!!</p>
<p>More needs to be done to promote AC. Clubs are becoming more and more GC orientated, as it is an easy option for new players and can be 'played' by new members almost immediately.</p>
<p>I play tennis 4 and sometimes 5 days each week. I only play GC and have no time for AC</p>
<p>I think the CA should lead with a greater emphasis on Association play</p>
<p>The biggest challenge seems to be one of retaining and developing AC, to avoid GC taking over.</p>
<p>Top level AC is boring and uninteractive, both as a spectator and participant. I don't know what the solution is but super-advanced rules did not solve it.</p>
<p>I'm concerned at the decline in (association) croquet the gradual loss of croquet clubs to a completely different game which ought to be have been called hoopball as Mr Mulliner once suggested.</p>
<p>I am a casual member who plays AC at medium level and very happy with this.</p>
<p>GC has been the death to AC in my club in Pasadena, California. 30 members, but only a few willing to play or even learn AC. Trying to turn that around.</p>
<p>I believe GC players should form their own administrative body and stop using the word croquet. They do not play croquet. Sadly too much space is taken up in the Gazette by GC. I repeat . . IT IS NOT CROQUET.</p>
<p>After playing GC about an hour, I find AC doubles &amp; singles very time consuming maybe 3+ hours.I am now 80.GC suits me better as I get older.</p>
<p>While I am quite positive about GC for itself, I have long feared that (rather like lawn tennis c.1880) it will eventually bring about the demise of AC, albeit unintentionally.</p>
<p>Short Croquet is a growing area within Croquet and perhaps could do with more recognition, it is proving very good in introducing AC to members.</p>
<p>The main factor that hinders the growth of Croquet is the length of typical games. For many, especially those not retired, a 3 hour AC game is just too long. Greater emphasis and opportunity for Short Croquet would bring more people into the game</p>
<p>Modernising attitudes within croquet has to happen. There are good signs at the top but very little sign of anything changing in many clubs. The hostility of many GC players towards AC is alarming, and it seems to be being instilled in people almost as soon as they first enter a croquet club. If we are not careful we will either snuff out AC altogether or end up with two separate organisations, like crown green and flat green bowls.</p>
<p>I think Inter-Club competition at a local level for the higher handicap players, should be encouraged because it would be less daunting and bring them on and help ensure they get the croquet bug. AC croquet 12h is a variant that is highly transmissible despite social distancing!!!</p>
<p>Saddened by the extent to which GC is taking over. Like draughts in a Chess club</p>

<p>1. I think a major sponsor is needed to shake up the game with the aim of televising it and making it as populate as snooker. The commentary on the U-tube video of the 2019 GC championships is superb and helped me learn a lot. However professional coverage and cameras and graphic analysis and ( eg Piero, from Ross Video ), should be the next step.</p> <p>2. The paper magazine is great, but should keep being refreshed.</p> <p>3. The CA website is functionally good but looks dated and fiddly to use.</p> <p>4. There are way too many rules in GC, and the fact they change every year is bonkers.</p> <p>5. The CA website has had the GC book as not available for months - this is poor.</p> <p>6. Overall its a fantastic game and you guys are doing a great job - but I want to see it on TV soon !</p>
<p>AC and Short I don't like sitting out and watching for an hour, whist other uses up bisques. Handicap system is flawed -based on getting round in one go ( or using bisques to get around in one go). Short / AC has a complete lack of interactive competition. Each go should be shot or time limited. To many players play too slowly. each should get 50% of game time</p>
<p>I hope some way can be found to halt the decline of AC</p>
<p>AC rules are too complicated (not easy to read or understand), have too many contradictions and support gamesmanship rather than sportsmanship</p>
<p>Apart from "push" shot, all AC faults should disappear.</p> <p>Blanket Timed GC Games should be outlawed. Individual time limits are OK to balance a playing schedule.</p> <p>When GC Tournaments are behind schedule, later "rounds" should start at 2:2 or 4:4 or whatever will get schedule back on track.</p>
<p>Worried about decline of AC numbers. Concerned that emphasis on "competitive croquet" is actually encouraging GC at expense of AC</p>
<p>I do not play AC because I hate bisques, someone misses, it should be my go but no they use a bisque and knock their ball safe. the fun does not start until all the bisques have been used up, I have lost interest by then. Bisques were invented to make the game interesting for good players unfortunately it makes it boring for this individual.</p>
<p>Change the double hit rule in GC. It causes argument and confusion.confusions allow one clean hit even if the ball does bounce back and touch the smaller. A deliberate double hit shouldnt be allowed but a proper one hit should be allowed. Arguing if the ball is too close is daft.</p>
<p>Simplify AC or its dead. Game too long &amp; boring. Make the rule book shorter than GC.</p>
<p>I don't know what the answer is, but I Agree that the decline in AC, and particularly competitive AC, is extremely concerning. I would not play or be involved in croquet if GC was all that was on offer.</p>
<p>AC alternate go doubles should be encouraged to help with social aspect and player development. There are no leagues in South West.</p>

Why not ask the same questions about GC as about AC? Why does the CA's AC bias persist, despite the growth, accessibility, and popularity of GC?
Your obsession with Golf Croquet, even to the point of a whole section of this survey clearly dedicated to finding ways of encouraging more such, is not just annoying. It is disgraceful!
I am fed up with the constant comments/nagging that GC is an inferior game and only AC is proper croquet. It is upsetting, but there is no GC only club in my area to move to.
I love playing Golf croquet but feel it is still not taken as seriously as AC. If it were not for Golf players joining clubs these days there would not be many clubs left. Once people get a feel for the game by playing GC and enjoying it there is more chance of them changing to AC. Seems to me that very few people take to Ac straight away so it makes sense to teach GC first.
I used to be uber-keen, played a lot of Tournaments and inter-club ... but for various reasons, I've cut-back to 'just friendlies' in my Club. I am content with this!
The question on social media left no space for my true answer ... which is that I reluctantly use Facebook and Twitter (as a reader, not a contributor) and WhatsApp ('family WhatsApp group') ... but I would never ever go to social media for anything Croquet-related. However, if promotion on social media is considered to be a way of turning-round the decline in AC (see below) I would applaud - but still not use it! PS: I still subscribe to the 'Notts List' for 'news', though that seems to be in relative disuse now: maybe because there's less 'news'!
Also: the decline in AC and growth of GC (linked?) is saddening ... but in common with Greater Minds Than Mine, I see no obvious way of turning this round.
I very much appreciate the hard work by many volunteers in the croquet world. I am hoping that AC survives alongside GC, they are both great games

## Rules/Laws:

AC rules are too complicated (not easy to read or understand), have too many contradictions and support gamesmanship rather than sportsmanship
Please stop fiddling with the rules!!!!
The GC rules regarding double hits are arbitrary and add nothing to my enjoyment of the game.
The rules of both games should be simplified and not written by lawyers!
CA rules keep changing, and some (eg foul strokes when balls and/or hoops are in close proximity) are very difficult to understand, apply and enforce.
Rules need rewriting in plain English.
Would like discussion of laws - clarification, changes, problems - to appear in Gazette or newsletter.
It would be useful to supplement the laws/rules with videos showing the nuances and not rely on sometimes difficult to understand wording which can also be open to interpretation.
The grass root members should have some say on the rules of the CA.
Stop changing the rules so often
The current rules for jump shots are a joke. Either ban them altogether or (preferably) remove the 30-degree aspect

The rules are unnecessarily complex. The emphasis, e.g. in the Gazette, on competition rather than fun is not helpful.

Change the double hit rule in GC. It causes argument and confusion. confusions allow one clean hit even if the ball does bounce back and touch the smaller. A deliberate double hit shouldnt be allowed but a proper one hit should be allowed. Arguing if the ball is too close is daft.

### **Comms/website/publicity:**

The new style gazette is less interesting with its concentration on tournaments. Rules need rewriting in plain English.

Prefer a monthly on-line news letter than the on-line gazette which is difficult to read in its two-page spread format. Would like discussion of laws - clarification, changes, problems - to appear in Gazette or newsletter. I'm Keith Ross.

On some of the questions 'occasional' is stated but that is open to interpretation. It would be useful to supplement the laws/rules with videos showing the nuances and not rely on sometimes difficult to understand wording which can also be open to interpretation.

Tuition and Games to encourage 30+ and young families at weekends

I think that the image of croquet still needs to change. There are still some of the old guard left who think that AC and it's players are superior. Both AC and GC should be seen as equally important. Clubs need to do more to encourage younger people and adopt a strategy to encourage them....young members asked to blog etc.

The main issue holding croquet back in terms of numbers and media coverage is still its image. The CA video, while in many ways very good, does little to change people's opinions of the game. I don't know whether we should be trying to attract people from a wider, more diverse catchment, or attract greater numbers of our typical membership - or indeed both. The apparent decline in AC is a great concern.

My Croquet Club has been most welcoming. Pursuing diversity as a goal is wrong. Creating demand for croquet through media stories and video must be improved - when demand for AC croquet increases, then ensuring that all are welcome can be addressed. At the moment to increase numbers it is inevitable that we will be reinforcing stereotypes because retired, near retired, time-rich people are most likely to find out about croquet.

Pretending that Golf Croquet will increase AC croquet players has not been demonstrated - more often GC play drives out AC play. Golf courses do not shorten holes, make holes bigger or easier to attract members. They stick to what golf is! Emphasising short croquet to reduce time commitment is better than changing the game to make it shorter - I enjoy GC but am sad that AC seems to be struggling in many clubs. The CA must strike the right balance and maintain a strong leadership and media profile for AC

Given that most croquet clubs seem to operate during the week it is not surprising that the membership is mainly retired people. After a lifetime of working in IT with the younger generation it is a bizarre experience to be mixing again with people who have old attitudes and stereotypes. We really need to get the next generations involved to solve the inclusivity issues.



1. I think a major sponsor is needed to shake up the game with the aim of televising it and making it as popular as snooker. The commentary on the U-tube video of the 2019 GC championships is superb and helped me learn a lot. However professional coverage and cameras and graphic analysis and ( eg Piero, from Ross Video ), should be the next step.
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I used to be uber-keen, played a lot of Tournaments and inter-club ... but for various reasons, I've cut-back to 'just friendlies' in my Club. I am content with this!

The question on social media left no space for my true answer ... which is that I reluctantly use Facebook and Twitter (as a reader, not a contributor) and WhatsApp ('family WhatsApp group') ... but I would never ever go to social media for anything Croquet-related. However, if promotion on social media is considered to be a way of turning-round the decline in AC (see below) I would applaud - but still not use it! PS: I still subscribe to the 'Notts List' for 'news', though that seems to be in relative disuse now: maybe because there's less 'news'!

Also: the decline in AC and growth of GC (linked?) is saddening ... but in common with Greater Minds Than Mine, I see no obvious way of turning this round.

Encourage school age children to try the sport, but no apparent marketing by CA. Make children size croquet sets more available.

I think that croquet's branding - the way in which the CA has chosen to advertise it in the past - has been geared towards older people. I'm concerned that by surveying the membership again, which is older, the results could simply reinforce the factors that caused the current members to join. What is more important is why others are \*not\* joining. Please do look at why those of us that are younger, and those who fall into ethnic minority categories, played, and I think we can appeal to a broader audience. Young people like myself start for a bit of fun and stay when they realise the intellectual challenge. We need to target sciency children in schools like they do in New Zealand, and ideally not just private schools. From there, others will follow.

I believe we need to attract a new generation of working-age players - by setting up clubs and grass-roots play (local leagues etc) to fit working lifestyles, and by targeting recruitment at sectors with compatible interests

I would like to see advice for grounds maintenance and improvement available in the gazette and a regular section on the rules of golf and association croquet.

Introduction of a youth policy to encourage young people as croquet is deemed to be for old people and this needs to change to continue what is a great game.

<p>Croquet is a brilliant game using skills found many others, eg bowls, snooker, (even GO). It is fairly easy to get started and the basic rules, especially the GC format, are relatively simple. These sports are covered on TV and the media, but never croquet, yet It can be played and enjoyed at almost any level and affords the opportunity to play with increasing skill.</p> <p>It deserves to have wider exposure and participation and the route to this is surely introduction in schools or community groups. The equipment and space needed are not great and I would like to see the CA taking more steps to promote the sport, even at the expense of catering to existing clubs or members.</p>
<p>Keep it simple for New Players - CA push out far to much jargon and seem just to concentrate of top class players. Suggest CA does less!</p>
<p>At all levels there seems to be an attitude that appears to make the game more complicated than it needs to be. Particularly in the accessibility to coaching/referee courses and the language used.</p>
<p>CA has developed hugely. But sometimes less is more.</p> <p>Often difficult to navigate the website to find a short answer. Hard to implement initiatives in small clubs with ageing demographics.</p>
<p>More external promotion of the sport covering all communities and ethnicities. Many people I suspect are not even aware of the existence of the sport that is why encouraging local councils to offer grounds available to existing clubs, or potential new clubs, the number of clubs playing in public parks and spaces would give the sport a higher profile and attract people of all ages and change the concept that this is an elitist sport.</p>
<p>A book or info on lawns for each month of the year and contact details of lawn managers, in other clubs.</p>
<p>It may be me, but I am not really clear as to what CA membership I have and also not clear how to enter tournaments on the CA website. I think it would be better if there were no categories of CA membership and that all croquet club members automatically became members of the CA. Happy to pay for this via my club membership fee. Feels too complicated at the moment. Tournaments should be easier to enter into via CA website</p>
<p>CA seems very focussed on the larger clubs and major competitions. I am a member of a very small club and don't get much CA help</p>
<p>Explore the possibility of televising big events in the UK</p>
<p>a couple of niggles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Your social media qu won't tease out the people who use it, but not for croquet.</li> <li>- As at the start, you havent explored waht brings people back to croquet after their garden playing, nor the impact golf croquet has on thier enjoyment of the game (it didn't exist when I first played).</li> </ul> <p>Good Luck with it all!</p>
<p>Croquet is not seen by Local Councils as a popular sporting and social activity therefore they do not promote it or support small clubs. It is one of the most appropriate retirement activities but could also be introduced to young adults.</p>
<p>I feel that croquet needs to reach out more to the public and be more welcoming</p>
<p>I suspect that croquet is seen by the younger generation as only applicable to us elders. Perhaps more publicity would help this perception.</p>
<p>Croquet needs to work towards changing image from one of middle class elitism to one of a sport accessible and welcoming to more of the community.</p>
<p>The sport is always thought of as "snooty" this needs to be changed, as it's not!</p>

Yes. The perception of the general public is that Croquet is an elitist sport. To encourage more people to take up croquet that fact needs to be seriously addressed.
Croquet has an image problem, making it difficult to attract younger players, it is conceived as being played by old and wealthy people
I play all my croquet at Middlesbrough CC, which is in a lower class poor conurbation, and sad to say we seem to suffer from class discrimination - the local population just aren't interested. If it were not for the likes of ICI having brought graduates to live in the area 30-40 years ago (including me) we would struggle even more to find members. Don't know how you change that perception.
I would like to see <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* a much more user-friendly website, easy to navigate, focused as much on attracting new players as catering for the old hands</li> <li>* less emphasis on elite play and elite players, more on the grass roots</li> <li>* a specific drive to encourage and support women</li> <li>* a specific drive to recruit and retain young players</li> </ul>
I think that Croquet has a reputation as being a posh/elitist sport. Whilst my own experience since joining my club shows that it is anything but that, reactions from friends etc. since beginning to play show that this view is still prevalent.
My only negative feeling towards Croquet is the wearing of white clothing for matches and competitions. I find this quite antiquated and colonial.
Too much old fashioned thinking, not innovative enough to encourage younger people
Croquet needs to shed its exclusive image - we are seen as 'posh'
The status of the game of Croquet needs to lose it's image of being only for 'posh old folk!'. We need to encourage more young people to play to ensure the sport survives & grows in the future. The C.A. website is a nightmare to use. Staff at HQ are helpful and friendly.
Yes, modernise CA equipment page remove older players wearing out fashioned kit and replace with younger players looking more 'cool'. Remember youngsters will not want to dress like their grandparents on the court. Ignore these comments at the peril of the future of the game.
We need to get more young players involved. Also the playing of AC should be encouraged more. Publicise croquet more in social media, possibly aim to televise international events. this may need to be GC to start with as it is easier to follow.
As I suggested before, the biggest obstacle for croquet is its lingering image of Victorian quaintness. The more that can be done to eliminate that, the better the future will be for the game.
I love croquet and believe it has something to offer everyone regardless of age or ability. (I have never previously played any sport.) I wish it could shake off the image of being 'posh'.
I wonder how best we could encourage younger people to become interested, and to maintain that interest? I am an ex-teacher and think that it would appeal . I suppose the sport has to overcome its rather stuffy image? TV coverage? Social media? I think the image is improving but the main difficulty it seems to me is the availability of lawns. My club was turned out of our place in a local prep school, and in spite of searching diligently for somewhere else , have finally amalgamated with another club, so some of my replies are "early days"!!
Playing at my club would be more enjoyable if the ground owners, East Lindsey District Council, would maintain the lawns as promised!

Needs to be more local publicity in order to advertise the availability of the sport and club locally
Your social media question is missing an option. I use social media, but not for accessing or posting items on croquet - this was not available to select
Better media exposure of croquet events. Good progress made recently but croquet is still hasn't completely shaken off it's posh game for the well to do/Alice in Wonderland image.
Public attitude to croquet remains poor which is such a shame!
I am competitive but see that there is little structured material on DVD or internet to improve my play. Coaching on DVD would be nice. I saw some tournaments on webcast/youtube and enjoyed them very much, especially with commentary to highlight what might be going through players minds.
Croquet training videos
The C A needs to publicise croquet far more and much better
why isn't Croquet on the " <a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/get-inspired">https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/get-inspired</a> " web site.
The whole section in this survey on the CA website and newsletter meant nothing to me. I have never been approached to see/get them by anyone in my club.
I feel the CA fails to promote croquet to the public.
Raise the profile of croquet as an outdoor sport - more publicity - more clubs needed
Sport requires greater outside publicity
Croquet, both AC & GC suffer from a lack of publicity on TV, which nowadays also means online. Putting elite tournaments on a Youtube channel would help along with links on social media. I am sure there are a lot of young people who would enjoy the sport but they don't know that. I wish I had discovered croquet a long time ago.
information of what ever nature should be distributed to ALL - members & non members. bypassing fed'ns and club secretaries - direct to participants.
The CA Magazine should pay more attention to the average player. There is an abundance of articles and reports about the achievements of the the elite players but little about the rest of us. it would be good to see occasional reports of high bisque competitions, for instance.
The Gazette is hardly at all welcoming to new members or to those in need of coaching and advice, even on simple matters such as how to most beneficially hold the mallet. Very few potential players/members will be encouraged to take the next step if they chance to look into the Gazette. The emphasis on competitions, for example, gives undue prominence to really good players and tends to confirm the widely held view, i believe, that croquet is a game for the elite and elderly few. I suppose there must be young players but I never see them.
I would appreciate access to the CA website
The website is very old fashioned and uninviting
Thank you , great work, could you just modernise the website a bit please ?
The C.A. web site is NOT at all user friendly. Our members hardly ever look at it. Admin/Committee members hate it.
I wish top croquet events UK, Europe, World championships) could be be shown on TV
Read less since magazine online, it just seems to disappear down the mailing list
I think it is a shame that the paper format of the Gazette was stopped for standard members. I do not read magazines on the computer as prefer a paper copy which for me is more user friendly and easier to transport.
Explanation of tournaments etc on CA website more easily explained

Croquet never included in ITV sports. More advertising needed. Celebs & well known sports programmes pundits promoting would be helpful. It's such a great game!
I watch & enjoy Utube during winter afternoons - CA should set up proper film unit
I am Chairman of my club and I undertake inputting details to the CA website on behalf of our secretary. I am not the secretary but just one of your website's foibles is that I have to say that I am. Sad to say, I find the members section of the website one of the most impenetrable and difficult to navigate that I have ever come across. "User-friendly" it most certainly is not.
Coaching quiz / tips in the Gazette might be good idea to increase likelihood of people subscribing.
Better search facility on CA Website.
Croquet is fun. Bridgerton publicity could be used to promote the game to larger public.
Regarding the CA Website. The functionality provided is excellent. However, the look and feel is really not good. It is extremely difficult to find your way around. It looks clunky and unprofessional and will not be attractive to new entrants to our sport or to potential sponsors.
We need to make people nationally more aware of croquet eg including it as a sport on the BBC website, frequent news bulletins.
I've used the CA website, and I can navigate it fine, and it's got some really useful functionality but I think it looks awful. I appreciate it's probably run and managed by volunteers, much like my clubs website. So I don't want to criticise but it could do with a revamp, fewer articles and words per page. etc.
I do use social media but not for news about croquet. I do use social media to arrange times to meet up with other members and play. I only look at the CA website when considering purchasing a mallet.
Add tips and coaching ideas to magazine.
The television industry has changed and if you want to make croquet a much more popular sport you need to get it on the tele. Cameras mounted on drones, and cross wire technology along with extremely high definition cameras are game changers. There would be no more long distance shots of a bloke dressed in white wandering round on a lawn it would be possible to focus in on the concentration on the face of the player and do a slowmotion shot of the mallet hitting the ball and the ball going (or not going) through the hoop. That coupled with extremely easy and cheap film editing would come together to make croquet an excellent television sport.
Croquet is virtually unheard of amongst most people - much could be done to improve this and promote croquet as a modern, challenging and enjoyable activity.
Improve the web site. More emphasis on the interested but not highly successful top players.
Would be nice if my GC and AC rankings were shown when i log onto CA website
I could not really answer the question about the Gazette correctly. I receive it on line but am not comfortable reading on line as it is a strain for my eyes.
I am not able to access your journal on line but would read a paper version if I could get one
I do think the CA website is very overwhelming and difficult to navigate in it's current form. Once you get used to it that helps, but I did need to be shown how to book tournaments, etc as it was not possible to work it out (and I am ICT literate). I do appreciate all the work that the CA Volunteers do for us.
I would like to play more but work gets in the way. I would also like to improve my croquet playing skills and be more involved with coaching when time allows.
Thank you for taking an interest in what the members want. :)
The sport in the UK needs much better coverage in the media and on TV.

At present one needs to log into CA website in order to read the Gazette, which can be inconvenient if I am using a device other than one that has saved my password (which I can never remember). It would be worth trialling a removal of the need to login.
As a premium member would appreciate a hard copy of Gazette

## Coaching and handicaps:

I'm passionate about playing Croquet but it really needs to work harder at grassroots and mid level to make the game more attractive to a younger and more diverse demographic. Even Under 30's are a rare sight and it is still a predominately white middle class Sport in the UK. I'd like to see more women competing at a higher level which I know is starting to be addressed.
Handicap trials every year at the end of the season to prevent bandits winning handicap events. This would encourage entries in competitions. If you are not assessed then you can't enter. This is an issue mostly in AC where players frequently experience "step" changes.
At all levels there seems to be an attitude that appears to make the game more complicated than it needs to be. Particularly in the accessibility to coaching/referee courses and the language used.
I joined the local croquet club last year, having played lawn croquet for many years. I had excellent coaching, and enjoyed meeting the other beginners. After this nurturing and enjoyable six week process we met the rest of the club. OMG! All sense of enjoyment evaporated, and a wave of criticism, hyper-competitiveness, rules, condescending behaviour, and endless emails ensued. With a heavy heart I have not renewed my membership for a second year because I'm too busy to add this level of complexity to my precious spare time. Its a great shame.
To encourage clubs to promote more coaching to beginners
Would like more to be done to make handicapping a level playing field and not allow `cheats` to play with a score somewhat higher than their standard of play.
I am competitive but see that there is little structured material on DVD or internet to improve my play. Coachng on DVD would be nice. I saw some tournaments on webcast/youtube and enjoyed them very much, especially with commentary to highlight what might be going through players minds.
Croquet training videos
Tuition and Games to encourage 30+ and young families at weekends
Our club does not have a registered coach. It would be good if a coach could be hired from time to time from a CA list.
Just that it is very frustrating that a CA qualified club coach is simply ignored , older club members show how well they can play to interested parties and nobody new joins the club as result.
I just wish I lived nearer a bigger Croquet club where I could play and learn more with member who want to play a bit more serious croquet. I love it when I get to go play at bigger clubs. Also my currently club is quite a few miles away and I have to pay to park. Also most member of it are more interested in it just being a social club. But yes it is better than not being able to play at all So I will continue to re join.
As a relative beginner I am still learning but it is a addictive game.
Allocate tournament places on a first come, first served basis to allow higher handicap players to improve by competing against better players in the A and B level tournaments.

<p>I would like Club handicappers to be able to adjust handicaps lower than at present. As one gets older and plays less matches yet still wants to maintain a card it is almost impossible to get a higher handicap that suits one's failing game.</p>
<p>I strongly feel coaching should be delivered free of charge</p>
<p>It is important to encourage friends and acquaintances to try the sport and help by coaching</p>
<p>You need to attract younger players.</p> <p>Younger Adults generally or people like me who are unable to currently participate in my usual sports and with the right into to the game I am sure they will soon get hooked on croquet.</p> <p>Develop links with schools ( especially KS4 where the students choose activity options) If PE becomes a core subject as the government is suggesting perhaps could offer coaching for an hr a week during PE lessons for a half term block.</p> <p>Coaches or Primary teachers who play croquet could go into schools with foam mallets and hoops and offer to teach in lessons for a half term block and offer an after sch hobby which pupils have to pay for?</p> <p>I am a retired PE teacher( who has taught from KS1 to KS4. I am new to croquet but would love to see the development of the game for the younger generation. I am willing to give help and ideas if required.</p>
<p>It would be helpful if a programme of measured training activities was available in each club. So, a new starter would undertake the induction training, and then a development course would be offered in the second and third season. This does not have to be accredited training, but where possible the coach should be accredited. I have found that people give up after the first year because they find it difficult to build their game and do not particularly want to go on a formal CA course. An agreed format, for the three stages, could be undertaken at the Croquet Association Council meetings and made available at club level. It should be informal but structured in application and available only to those members who want it. This way people invest in their clubs and do not feel inadequate when it comes to play.</p>
<p>The Gazette is hardly at all welcoming to new members or to those in need of coaching and advice, even on simple matters such as how to most beneficially hold the mallet. Very few potential players/members will be encouraged to take the next step if they chance to look into the Gazette. The emphasis on competitions, for example, gives undue prominence to really good players and tends to confirm the widely held view, i believe, that croquet is a game for the elite and elderly few. I suppose there must be young players but I never see them.</p>
<p>more coaches and referees required</p>
<p>AC and Short I don't like sitting out and watching for an hour, whilst other uses up bisques. Handicap system is flawed -based on getting round in one go (or using bisques to get around in one go). Short / AC has a complete lack of interactive competition. Each go should be shot or time limited.</p> <p>To many players play too slowly. each should get 50% of game time</p>
<p>I think Inter-Club competition at a local level for the higher handicap players, should be encouraged because it would be less daunting and bring them on and help ensure they get the croquet bug. AC croquet 12h is a variant that is highly transmissible despite social distancing!!!</p>
<p>Feel Cornwall will never be at hub of croquet matters such as tournaments and coaching.</p>

Coaching quiz / tips in the Gazette might be good idea to increase likelihood of people subscribing.
I voiced my concerns that keen, newly coached beginners find it difficult to 'take the next step' and that AC club afternoons were not welcoming and probably not appropriate. ( I was more or less told to go and practise for 2 years). My club is now starting a 16-24 club evening through the season and this should really help. I appreciate their response.
Add tips and coaching ideas to magazine.
Enjoyed my one to one Learning in York
I have recently acquired a handicap (12), but there is no regular opportunity to play a handicap game. The Club roll-ups (3 per week) are non-handicap doubles.
I love playing Golf croquet but feel it is still not taken as seriously as AC.If it were not for Golf players joining clubs these days there would not be many clubs left. Once people get a feel for the game by playing GC and enjoying it there is more chance of them changing to AC. Seems to me that very few people take to AC straight away so it makes sense to teach GC first.
I do think the CA website is very overwhelming and difficult to navigate in it's current form. Once you get used to it that helps, but I did need to be shown how to book tournaments, etc as it was not possible to work it out (and I am ICT literate). I do appreciate all the work that the CA Volunteers do for us. I would like to play more but work gets in the way. I would also like to improve my croquet playing skills and be more involved with coaching when time allows. Thank you for taking an interest in what the members want. :)
Would like more CA tournaments for players with handicaps 10 to 18, also more short croquet. Need to encourage more school age children to join - nearly all club members 65+ currently.

### General comments:

I only started playing Croquet last year and I enjoyed it and will continue to play while still playing golf
I enjoy the game and the company
keep up the good work
Hopefully my physical condition will improve to allow me to resume playing croquet more seriously at my second club at Nottingham
Croquet is a great game
The people are really nice
I thoroughly enjoy my croquet, although I am not particularly competitive but I will play in friendly matches if asked. I have made some good friends and enjoy the social side.
Greater availability of equipment. Locations to play.
GC a Great game
good luck
Am really enjoying croquet .
Croquet and my club membership has enriched my life in retirement
Due to Covid, social croquet sessions seem to be struggling. A lot of members are booking up private games and not attending the roll-up sessions. So the social aspect of the game has been diminishing.
Great sport, great organisation, much appreciated



I enjoy playing at the modest level I have achieved. I am pleased not to be put under pressure to play more than I am able. I enjoy the people and the social side of the game. I like to play as well as possible and also have a laugh.
Croquet from a makeshift lawn at work to international level has been a lifelong and fulfilling sport.
I love Croquet and will continue to play as long as I can.
I'll think of something after I've logged off.
I am a founder member of my club. I am so very proud to have had the chance to leave a legacy. Promote the idea of leaving a donation in ones will?
Carry On Croaking!
I was association croquet captain of our club for eight years during which time my club competed in the Secretary's Shield several times and once won it. I cannot now play association because a weakness in my left arm, resulting from a dislocated shoulder, means I can only play for a very short time .
I enjoyed AC but have had to limit myself to GC now
Croquet has been one of my life's most valued 'Trivial Pursuits'. It is a minority sport.
Hopefully return to my croquet club next year