



# Hove Beach Croquet Club

Hove Beach Croquet Club was established in 2010, at a time when there was a lot of talk of the 'big society'!

We came up with a model for a club run by a small group for the benefit of the whole community.

Our aim was to create a relaxed and friendly environment where anyone could come along, take a deckchair, chat to members and watch, learn or play croquet.

Last year, a local reporter wrote about her experience of the club: '... Throughout August and September, I discovered a little oasis of lazy days, easy laughs, curious people, interesting conversation, scrabble (not sure about that one), oh and croquet!'



# Charities and Local Groups

Over the last few years, we have been running regular events for local charities like MIND, the Corner House and East Sussex Association for the Blind.

They bring groups down and we set out the deckchairs and pitches and give them whatever coaching they need to get started. Sometimes we lay on a light lunch and they make a day of it.

Since the game itself is fun, social and interactive the feedback has been fantastic. One lady who came along with a group from MIND last year and who suffered with severe anxiety said that she hadn't had so much fun in years.

This year, we would like to extend our offer to other local charities and community groups.

Our aim is to make the Croquet Club available to people in our community who will benefit and enjoy it most and we can promise that cost will not be an issue.

One local charity play on Wednesday mornings and since they want to contribute, they pay £5 each for the morning. Another local charity also play regularly, but since their funding is precarious and their clients are on benefits, they pay nothing.

If you have a local group who would like to give it a try, get in touch.



# The Game of Croquet

Croquet arrived in England from Ireland in the 1850s.

At the end of the 19th century, it was more popular than tennis. Tennis eventually came out on top, largely because of croquet's unsavoury reputation.

In America it became associated with gambling, drinking and philandering to such an extent that it was once banned in Boston as an immoral practice.

Herbert Swope, the American newspaperman, on whose estate Groucho Marx and Dorothy Parker were said to have played with unsportsmanlike rivalry, said, "croquet gives release to all the mischief in you. It makes you want to do bad things... it is a great game".

Croquet has been played on Hove Lawns for over a hundred years now and we try to keep the spirit alive. The motto of our club is 'to cause mistrust and resentment among even the best of friends'!



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