

Suggestions for promoting your National Croquet Week events

Plan ahead!

Enlist your members help now

If you haven't already done so, order your NCW flyers from the CA office NOW. Ask your members to distribute flyers to other social groups, local library, community noticeboards etc., ideally by mid-April.

Make sure all members are aware of your NCW programme and are available to help.

Advertise in local free listings

Find out when the copy date is for any local magazines which offer free "What's On" listings. The May edition will probably be distributed during the second half of April with a copy date of late March/early April so make sure you don't miss their deadline.

Publicise your event in local media

Local newspapers have a shorter lead time. Send them a short press release a couple of weeks before your event and then follow up during the week preceding NCD. If your lawns are open, why not invite them to send a reporter to 'have a go' a couple of weeks beforehand so they have a first hand view of what croquet is about.

These publications are often happy to do an editorial piece on local events/activities so it's worth a phone call to discuss this with them.

Local radio

BBC local radio and your local independent radio stations are usually very happy to give events a mention and will also often offer you the opportunity to do a telephone interview to promote your event.

If you're offering tea and cakes, why not make a small charge with proceeds to a local charity and include this in your publicity?

How do I write a press release?

The cardinal rule is Keep it Simple. Introductory paragraph should summarise you event in no more than 25 words. You don't need to include a history of croquet, the full rules of both AC & GC etc.

Use the "Ws" rule: Who? What? How? Where? When? Why? You're trying to interest the media and need to pique their interest. What's different/unusual about your NCW event?

[Click on this link to see an outline Press Release which you can adapt for your event.](#)

Banners

If you have a suitable location, why not invest in a vinyl banner to catch the eye of passers by? These can be very effective and can be supplied with removable dates which can be changed for future years.

If you don't have a local company, Griffin Designs supplied all the banners for the GC Worlds sponsors at Southwick this year and provide an excellent service. Contact karen@griffindesigns.co.uk or see their YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ooc5ejc5SHA>

First impressions always count

- **Make sure visitors can find you!** Put up direction signs, balloons etc. and have a friendly volunteer at the entrance to welcome visitors, direct traffic, and point them in the right direction.
- **Be ready** Place club mallets in height order and have someone on hand to offer advice. Don't be too prescriptive on mallet grips, let people find what works for them.
- **Younger visitors** You might want to have a specific volunteer who is happy to help with younger visitors. Do you have suitable mallets? If not, why not see if you can borrow a garden croquet set or two?

- **Get people playing**

- Most clubs will have their own method for introducing novices to croquet but the most important thing is get visitors on the lawns and playing as quickly as possible.

Remember, this is just a taster - don't get bogged down in rules and tactics at this stage. Tell them about any free coaching, buddy system, new member discounts etc which you offer, as you go round.

- **Refreshments - and cake!** Ever popular and a great opportunity to mention the social side of the club, give out information about your club, coaching and beginners courses, new member discounts and so on. Make sure you get contact details.

KEEP IT SIMPLE, MAKE IT FUN!