The English at play
Simon Roberts’ first book Motherland, published in 2007, also by Chris Boot, won great critical acclaim and the work was widely exhibited. The book represented the fruits of a year spent travelling through Russia with his large format camera recording the varied peoples of this vast country and identifying the thing that consistently bound them: a strong sense of homeland and quiet national pride. This experience was to set him thinking about Engishness and his own attachment to England, and so began this latest project. Roberts set out with leisure as his thematic starting point: “Looking at leisure activities struck me as a thought-provoking way of exploring England’s shifting cultural and national identity. They seem to say more about who we are than, for instance, what we do in the workplace... And landscape is an intrinsic part of these leisure activities.” This excellent book deserves to be even more successful than his first.


Above: Skegness Beach, Lincolnshire, 12th August 2007. © Simon Roberts / Chris Boot Ltd