

▶ FAIR ACCESS POLICY

POLICY NUMBER:	95 (C)
NAME OF POLICY:	FAIR ACCESS POLICY
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	June 2028
DATE APPROVED:	June 2024
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Sport and Recreation Officer
REFERENCES:	Gender Equality Act 2020 Local Government Act 2020 Public Health and Well Being Act 2008 Hepburn Shire Council Plan and Vision (2021 – 2025) – incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Hepburn Shire Active Women and Girls Strategy 2019

INTRODUCTION

The Fair Access Policy (the Policy) seeks to address known barriers experienced by women, girls, trans and gender diverse people in accessing and using community sports infrastructure. The Policy aims to progressively build capacity and capabilities of Hepburn Shire Council in the identification and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications and delivery of services in relation to community sports infrastructure.

Hepburn Shire Council will undertake the necessary and proportionate steps towards implementation of the Fair Access Policy.

BACKGROUND

Sport is a highly visible and valued feature of Hepburn Shire Council's culture and identity. The sport and recreation sector provides opportunities for enriching our communities through the promotion of respect and fair mindedness for all people, while also supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of all Victorians. Hepburn Shire Council is well positioned to design and implement place-based, integrated action plans that progress gender equality in community sport.

The Victorian Government is committed to developing an environment for all Victorians to live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources and opportunities, and are treated with dignity, respect and fairness. A reform agenda has been developed to change the systems that have perpetuated gender inequality by designing an enduring structure that requires implementation and tracking of progress over time.

This reform agenda includes addressing the traditional structures and way community sport and recreation organisations operate through the implementation all nine (9) recommendations from the 2015 Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation. This includes recommendation six (6):

“...encourage facility owners and managers to review access and usage policies to ensure women and girls have a fair share of access to the highest quality facilities at the best and most popular times.”

and

“facilitating a universal adoption of policies, strategies and audit tools that will drive change further.”

As a defined entity of the Gender Equality Act 2020, Hepburn Shire Council will be required from 31 March 2021 to conduct Gender Impact Assessments (GIA) on all new policies, programs, communications and services, including those up for review, which directly and significantly impact the public (Gender Equality Act 2020). The access and use of community sports infrastructure is an example of policy that has a direct and significant impact on the public.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This Statement of Intent establishes the expectation that gender equality is considered and prioritised in all current and future Hepburn Shire Council's planning, policy, service delivery and practice as they relate to community sports infrastructure.

- a. Hepburn Shire Council recognises that gender equality is the attainment of equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men, trans and gender diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men, trans and gender diverse people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on their gender.
- b. Hepburn Shire Council recognises that gender equity is the provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities based on gender. The concept recognises that people may have different needs and power related to their gender and these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies gender related imbalances.

SCOPE

The Policy enables effective and efficient integration of the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* and other legislative frameworks.

The scope of the Policy is to support Hepburn Shire Council to take positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and usage of community sports infrastructure. This complies with the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and aligns with Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans or Council Strategies:

Reform Agenda	Objectives
<p>To support Hepburn Shire Council to take positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and use of community sports infrastructure</p>	<p>To build capacity and capabilities of Hepburn Shire Council in the identification and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications and delivery of services in relation to community sport and recreation.</p> <p>To ensure an effective place-based response for the gender equitable use and access of community sports infrastructure.</p> <p>To promote gender equality through an intersectional lens in policies, programs, communications and services as they relate to community sports infrastructure.</p>

For Hepburn Shire Council, the Policy applies to the following community sports infrastructure owned and/or managed by Council:

	Facility	Location
1	Daylesford Olympic Swimming Pool	Daylesford
2	Trentham Swimming Pool	Trentham
3	Clunes Swimming Pool	Clunes
4	Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve	Creswick
5	Victoria Park, Daylesford	Daylesford
6	Victoria Park, Clunes (Clunes Recreation Reserve)	Clunes
7	Hammon Park	Creswick
8	Creswick Trails	Creswick
9	Newlyn Recreation Reserve	Newlyn
10	Daylesford Speedway	Daylesford

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11	Trentham Tennis Courts	Trentham
12	Drummond Tennis Courts	Drummond
13	Glenlyon Recreation Reserve	Glenlyon
14	Daylesford Arts, Recreation and Cultural Centre (ARC)	Daylesford
15	Allendale Reserve	Allendale
16	Smeaton Bowling Club	Smeaton
17	Mt Prospect Tennis Facility	Creswick
18	Dean Recreation Reserve	Dean
19	Hepburn Recreation Reserve Netball Facility	Hepburn

Recognising that several private and Victorian Government owned and managed community sport organisations sports facilities are located within the Hepburn Shire and provide a diversity of sports participation opportunities to the community. The Hepburn Shire Council Fair Access Policy practices and principles will assist officers to inform any planning and delivery of future development and external funding opportunities at the following facilities:

	Facility	Location
1	Hepburn Recreation Reserve – sports oval and pavilion.	Hepburn
2	Trentham Sportsground Reserve	Trentham
3	Clunes Bowls Club	Clunes
4	Trentham Bowls Club	Trentham
5	Daylesford Bowls Club	Daylesford
6	Clunes Golf Club	Clunes
7	Hepburn Springs Golf Club	Hepburn Springs
8	Trentham Golf Club	Trentham
9	Daylesford Lawn Tennis Club	Daylesford

Policy Framework

The Policy is designed to comply with the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and the wider Victorian Government gender equality strategy.

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges:

- a. the disadvantaged position some individuals have had in the sport and recreation sector because of their gender; and
- b. that achieving gender equality will require diverse approaches for women, men, trans, non-binary, and gender diverse people to achieve similar outcomes for people of all genders.

Hepburn Shire Council will:

1. engage fairly and equitably with all staff, governance working groups, state sporting organisations, regional sport assemblies (where applicable) and members of our sport and recreation community, regardless of gender, cultural background and ability in a positive, respectful and constructive manner; and
2. engage in the process of gender impact assessments through an intersectional lens to assess any planned actions, including policies and communications. This is a strategy for making all voices, concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation and monitoring of policies and programs.

Fair Access Principles

The Fair Access Principles have been developed by the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth, in consultation from government and the state sport and recreation sector. This Policy and any resultant action plan are based on six (6) principles of inclusivity, full participation, equal representation, encouraging and supporting user groups and prioritising user groups committed to equality.

Hepburn Shire Council considers that these principles provide clear direction, while also enabling adaption to the specific environment of Hepburn Shire Council's area.

- 1) Community sports infrastructure and environments are genuinely welcoming, safe and inclusive.
- 2) Women, girls, trans, non-binary and gender diverse people can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator.

- 3) Women, girls, trans, gender diverse and non binary people will have equitable access to and use of community sport infrastructure:
 - a. Of the highest quality available and most convenient.
 - b. At the best and most popular competition and training times and locations.
 - c. To support existing and new participation opportunities, and a variety of sports.
- 4) Women, girls, trans, non-binary and gender diverse people should be equitably represented in leadership and governance roles.
- 5) Encourage and support all user groups who access and use community sport infrastructure to understand, adopt and implement gender equitable access and use practices.
- 6) Prioritise access, use and support to all user groups who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to gender equitable access and use of allocated community sport infrastructure.

Compliance and Monitoring

a. Actions

Hepburn Shire Council commits to undertake a GIA on all current community sports infrastructure access and use policies and processes, and to consider opportunities to strengthen gender equitable access and use of community sports facilities in alignment with the Fair Access Principles.

If the process of assessing current policies and processes identifies opportunities to develop or strengthen gender equitable access and use of community sports facilities in alignment with the Fair Access Principles, Hepburn Shire Council commits to developing and adopting a locally relevant Fair Access Policy and action plan by 1 July 2024.

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges that the requirement to have a gender equitable access and use policy and action plan (or equivalent) in place, and the ability to demonstrate progress against that policy and action plan (or equivalent), will form part of the eligibility criteria for Victorian Government funding programs relating to community sports infrastructure from 1 July 2024.

b. Responsibility

Management personnel, staff, volunteers and stakeholders at Hepburn Shire Council have a shared responsibility to support the policy, as outlined in the Fair Access Action Plan below:

Item number	Action Item	Fair Access Principle Addressed	Implementation
1	Councillors and staff to promote a gender-aware and gender-responsive culture and community and champion the Fair Access Policy.	All	July 2024 – June 2028
2	Audit existing community sport and recreation infrastructure to identify gaps in the provision of women, girls, trans non-binary and gender diverse people friendly facilities. <i>Action implementation is subject to achieving external funding.</i>	All	By June 2028
3	Continually share upskilling opportunities with sport and recreation clubs through networks as they arise.	All	July 2024 – June 2028
4	Encourage implementation of Fair Access practices and principles by sports infrastructure users when considering or reviewing access agreements.	All	July 2024 – June 2028
5	Councils grants program embed Fair access principles in the guidelines for Community Grants and Quick Response grants.	All	Complete June 2024
6	Monitor Fair Access Policy compliance	All	July annually 4 year policy review and

			renewal in June 2028
7	Relevant Council staff attend sector training and awareness programs	All	July 2024 – June 2028
8	Collect annual gender diverse participation data from Hepburn Shire sport and recreation clubs, including officials, players, committee members and members.	All	July annually
9	Undertake regular promotion of sport and recreation participation opportunities for women, girls, trans, non-binary and gender diverse people.	All	July 2024-June 2028
10	Promote and encourage committees to aim for a gendered balanced committee	All	July 2024 to June 2028

Key Measures of Success

1. 100% of existing community sport and recreation infrastructure audited to identify gaps in the provision of women, girls, trans non-binary and gender diverse people friendly facilities by June 2028. Subject to achieving external funding to undertake Action 2 of the Policy.
2. Annual participation data collected from 100% of local sport and recreation clubs.
3. The annual sport and recreation participation data identifies an up to 5% increase in women, girls, trans, non-binary and gender diverse people participating in club operations and/or activities.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms are referred to in the policy.

Term	Definition
Council	Hepburn Shire Council
Council Staff	Includes permanent and temporary full-time and part-time council employees, and contractors and consultants while engaged by Council.
The Act	<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
User Groups	Formal and informal users of sport and recreation facilities within the Hepburn Shire Council area, including women, girls, trans, non-binary and gender diverse people.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Any enquiries about the Fair Access Policy should be directed to Hepburn Shire Council's Sport and Recreation Officer.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Hepburn Shire Council's Fair Access Policy will be undertaken by the Hepburn Shire Council's Sport and Recreation Team through the following avenues, however not limited to:

- Direct engagement with Local, State and National sport and recreation clubs and organisations.
- Direct engagement with Council's Gender Equity, Disability, LGBTIQ+ and Reconciliation Advisory Committees.
- Direct engagement with Hepburn Shire Council's internal services responsible for implementation of the Fair Access Policy principles and actions.
- Whole of community communications through local and social media networks, Hepburn Shire Council websites and community newsletters.
- Review by Victorian Government agencies such as the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation and Sport and Recreation Victoria.

REVIEW

The Fair Access Policy will be reviewed every four (4) years or sooner if required by legislation or organisational changes.

The officer responsible for the review of this policy is Hepburn Shire Council's Sport and Recreation Officer.