

FAIR ACCESS POLICY



Directorate:	Infrastructure, Assets and Planning
Responsible Manager:	Manager Project Services and Asset Management
Review Due:	August 2028
Adoption:	Council
Date Adopted:	20 August 2024

Acknowledgement

Central Goldfields Shire Council acknowledges and extends appreciation for the Dja Dja Wurrung People, the Traditional Owners of the land that we are on.

We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture, and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung People.

1. Purpose

The Fair Access Policy (the Policy) seeks to address known barriers experienced by women and girls in accessing and using community sports infrastructure. The Policy aims to progressively build capacity and capabilities of the Central Goldfields Shire Council (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.

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

2. Background

Sport and active recreation (Sport and Recreation) are highly visible and valued features of Central Goldfields Shire Council's culture, lifestyle, and identity. The sport and recreation sector provide opportunities for enriching our communities through the promotion of respect and fair mindedness for all Victorians, while also supporting their physical and mental wellbeing. Council is well positioned to design and implement place-based, integrated actions and plans that progress gender equality in community sport.

In partnership with the Victorian Government, Council is committed to developing an environment for all 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 will drive change further.”

As a defined entity of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, Council commits to conducting 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.

3. Definitions

Voluntary Committees of Management

For the purposes of this document, refers to committees appointed by the Department of Land, Water, Environment and Planning under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* to manage recreation reserves where community sport training and games are held.

Community Sports Infrastructure

Publicly owned local, rural, regional, or state level sport and recreation infrastructure operated and maintained primarily for the purpose of facilitating community sport activities, including sporting grounds, surfaces, facilities, and pavilions.

Gender

How you understand who you are and how you interact with other people. Many people understand their gender as being a man or woman. Some people understand their gender as a mix of these or neither. A person’s gender and their expression of their gender can be shown in different ways, such as through behaviour or physical appearance.

Gender diverse

An umbrella term for a range of genders expressed in different ways. Gender diverse people use many terms to describe themselves. Language in this area is dynamic, particularly among young people, who are more likely to describe themselves as non-binary.

Gender equality

The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men and trans and gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men and trans and gender diverse

people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on their gender.

Gender equity

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.

Gender Impact Assessment, or GIA

A requirement under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* to be carried out on policies, programs and services which have a direct and significant impact on the public. The assessment must evaluate the effects that a policy, program or service may have on people of different genders.

Public land management groups

For the purposes of this document, are the Committees of Management appointed under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* and responsible for the management of recreation reserves where community sport training and games are held.

Transgender, or trans

Someone whose gender does not only align with the one assigned at birth. Not all trans people will use this term to describe themselves.

4. Policy statement

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

1. Central Goldfields 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.
2. Central Goldfields 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.

5. 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 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.

This policy aims to build capacity and capabilities of Council in the identification and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in our policies, programs, communications, and delivery of those services relating to community sport and recreation. It ensures an effective place-based response for gender equitable use and access to local community sports infrastructure.

For the Central Goldfields Shire Council, this policy applies to the community sports infrastructure that is owned or managed by Council and of which is a beneficiary of any funding managed by or provided by the Council.

Any infrastructure that is not owned or managed by Council falls outside of the scope of this policy. Council is committed to working alongside the owners and managers of any other recreational based facilities within the Central Goldfields Shire to support compliance with the Fair Access Policy Roadmap and to apply consistency for our community.

Appendix 1 sets out the infrastructure within the scope of this Policy.

6. Policy Framework

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

Central Goldfields Shire Council acknowledges:

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

Central Goldfields 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 their gender, in a positive, respectful, and constructive manner; and
2. engage in the process of gender impact assessments to assess the implications for women, men, trans and gender diverse people of any planned action, including policies and communications. This is a strategy for making all voices, concerns and experiences, an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring of policies and programs.

7. 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 with representatives from local 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,
- equitable access,
- equal representation,
- encouraging and supporting user groups, and
- prioritising user groups committed to equality.

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



8. Compliance and monitoring

8.1. Actions

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, Council commits to developing and adopting a locally relevant gender equitable access and use policy and action plan no later than 1 October 2024.

Central Goldfields 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.

Council has also identified specific actions to progress gender equitable access and use of community sports infrastructure in its Fair Access Action Plan.

8.2. Responsibility

Councils Executive Management Team, Manager Project Services and Asset Management and Coordinator Recreation and Sport is responsible for implementing Central Goldfields Shire Councils Fair Access Policy.

Management personnel, staff, volunteers, and stakeholders (for example State Sporting Associations and Regional Sports Assemblies) at Central Goldfields Shire Council have a shared responsibility to support the policy, as outlined in the table below.

Role	Responsibility
All Council personnel, volunteers and stakeholders, and community leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote a gender-aware and gender-responsive culture and community and championing the Fair Access Policy. To promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women and girls in sport and active recreation.
Council Senior Officers and relevant Council personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the review of sport and recreation policies and processes. Develop and adopt gender equitable access and use policies. To communicate policy updates to all staff and community members. To monitor compliance and issues. To promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women and girls. Support the undertaking of Gender Impact Assessment and submission of progress reports as per the <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i> obligations.
Council Senior Officers and relevant Council personnel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the review of sport and recreation policies and processes. Support the formal adoption process of a new or revised gender equitable policies.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake Gender Impact Assessment and submission of progress reports as per the Gender Equality Act 2020 obligations.
Council Senior Officers and relevant Council personnel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To communicate and educate sport and recreation infrastructure user groups and users. To partner with relevant internal and external stakeholders and community sports infrastructure users to implement the Fair Access Policy Action Plan.
Council Senior Officers and relevant Council personnel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To adhere to and communicate the policy when required. To attend training / awareness programs.

9. Review

This Policy must be reviewed a minimum of once every 4 years.

10. Human Rights Statement

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006). Central Goldfields Shire Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees.

11. Relevant Legislation and Council Policies

- Local Government Act 2020
- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Central Goldfields Shire Council Gender Equity Action Plan 2022-2025

12. Appendix 1: Relevant community sport infrastructure facilities

This policy applies to recreation facilities owned and/or managed by Central Goldfields Shire and includes but is not limited to the following:

Township	Facility Name
Alma	Alma Recreation Reserve
Carisbrook	Carisbrook Recreation Reserve
Carisbrook	Tullaroop Leisure Centre
Daisy Hill	Daisy Hill Tennis Courts
Dunolly	Dunolly Bowling Club
Dunolly	Dunolly Golf Course
Maryborough	Princes Park Recreation Reserve
Maryborough	Jubilee Oval
Maryborough	Hedges Oval
Maryborough	Jack Pascoe Reserve
Maryborough	Frank Graham Oval
Maryborough	Maryborough Netball Complex
Maryborough	Maryborough Tennis Centre
Maryborough	Maryborough Velodrome
Maryborough	Maryborough Sport Leisure Centre
Maryborough	Nolan Street Gym
Talbot	Talbot Bowling Club
Talbot	Talbot Recreation Reserve
Talbot	Talbot Leisure Centre