

At Energise Me, our mission is to create a happier, healthier, and more active Hampshire and Isle of Wight.

We are aware of the UK court ruling that legally defines "woman" as a biological category, and the subsequent eligibility changes for transgender individuals in certain sports. These developments, and the wider public conversation surrounding them, have brought to light complex and sensitive questions around participation, identity, safety, and belonging in sport and physical activity.

We recognise that people across the county will have a range of perspectives on this topic. For our trans and non-binary communities, it can feel deeply personal and marginalising, further emphasising the lack of visibility, safety, and equitable access they already face in sport and physical activity. The latest developments intensify existing barriers, such as discrimination, limited representation, and a lack of inclusive spaces, making it even harder for individuals to feel welcome, supported, or able to participate fully as themselves.

As a local charity working at the heart of our communities, we believe our responsibility is to respond with empathy, integrity, and a firm commitment to inclusion.

What This Means for Us

Curious

We begin by listening. We've listened to trans and non-binary people express distress, frustration, and the sense of being excluded from spaces that should offer support and joy.

Our role is to stay curious and to seek understanding, not certainty. We aim to engage thoughtfully, create space for conversation, and help our partners and communities explore this evolving landscape together. We are continuously learning about how these rulings affect grassroots clubs, coaches, volunteers, and participants, to better inform our support.

Open

It means recognising that identity, participation, and inclusion are not singular or simple concepts. Inclusion is not something we treat as optional; it is a principle that guides everything we do.

We are committed to ensuring that trans and non-binary people feel safe, seen, and respected in all aspects of physical activity and sport. At the same time, we acknowledge the challenges that can arise in different types of sporting contexts. There are no perfect answers, and that's okay.

Being open means creating environments where it's safe to ask questions, voice apprehension, and challenge assumptions, without shame or judgment. We encourage our partners, clubs, and communities to join us in this mindset: to act with empathy, listen with care, and remain focused on building spaces where everyone can be active on their own terms.

Bold

Energise Me will continue to lead inclusive conversations across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. We're committed to bringing together a diversity of perspectives: from participants, volunteers, coaches, and professionals, to shape practical, inclusive approaches to sport and physical activity.

We know that many people working in sport and physical activity are unsure how to respond to the current debates. They fear making mistakes or simply don't feel equipped to navigate the

subject. That's why we'll continue to advocate for everyone to have access to supportive training in the sport and physical activity context, to have safe spaces to talk, learn, and ask questions.

We will challenge harmful narratives, misinformation, or prejudice. They deserve honest leadership and solutions that reflect real lives and real people.

We know that words alone aren't enough. We are committed to holding ourselves accountable for the way we listen, learn, and lead. That means regularly reviewing our own practices, being open to feedback, and actively addressing where we fall short. Accountability, for us, is about earning trust and building change that lasts.

Creative

The current legal and policy changes will have real implications, but they also offer an opportunity to reimagine how we approach participation. Creativity, for us, is not about finding perfect solutions. It's about opening new ways forward, ways that are inclusive, adaptable, and rooted in community and individual needs.

We will support exploring alternative formats, pathways, and programmes that prioritise belonging. That might mean advocating for new types of events, creating trans-inclusive spaces for physical activity, or offering clearer guidance on how clubs can welcome all identities with respect and safety.

Being creative also means drawing on the wealth of ideas and lived experiences already present in our communities. It means not defaulting to "either/or" thinking but instead being open to "both/and" possibilities. It's about moving past polarisation and focusing on what we can build.

What's Next

We're taking active steps to support inclusive practice across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight:

- We will use our County Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group to bring organisations and individuals together for honest, respectful conversations.
- We will update and share accessible resources and guidance on transgender inclusion and gender-aware practice for grassroots providers.
- We will continue collaborating with National Governing Bodies, Sport England, and others to ensure consistent, compassionate local leadership.
- Our Safeguarding and Welfare Officers will support clubs with training and advice to help create welcoming environments for all.
- Our Culture in Common programme are supporting the delivery of Inclusive football and arts activity sessions in the New Forest.

If you want to be part of this conversation, or if you need support, please get in touch. We're listening.