

Consultation on Future Access to the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds

Summary Report

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The City of London Corporation conducted a public consultation between 30 September and 25 November 2025 to gather views on future access arrangements at the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds. The consultation focused on possible changes at the Highgate Men's Pond and Kenwood Ladies' Pond following the 2025 Supreme Court judgment in *For Women Scotland v The Scottish Ministers*, which clarified the legal meanings of 'man', 'woman', and 'sex' under the Equality Act 2010.

The consultation presented six options for consideration: strictly single-sex facilities based on biological sex; continuation of current trans-inclusive arrangements; trans-inclusive access based on how people have decided to live their lives; trans-inclusive pond access with separate changing facilities; a hybrid approach with trans-inclusive and single-sex sessions at different times; and mixed-sex facilities open to all.

TONIC, an independent social research organisation, was commissioned to analyse all responses using quantitative analysis for closed questions and thematic analysis for open questions.

Response Profile

The consultation received 38,445 responses, predominantly from members of the public (37,506 responses). The majority of respondents (74%) lived in London, and 84% had swum at the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds. Two-thirds of those who had used the ponds had done so within the previous three months. Among pond users, 66% had swum at Kenwood Ladies' Pond, 49% at Hampstead Mixed Pond, and 22% at Highgate Men's Pond. Half of respondents had been swimming at the ponds for four years or less, whilst 20% had been using them for more than ten years.

Summary of Findings

Question 1(a): Strictly single-sex facilities

The majority (86%) of respondents disagreed with making the ponds strictly single-sex facilities accessible only to biological men and biological women respectively. 13% agreed with this option. The remaining respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Those who agreed emphasised the value of single-sex spaces for women, raised safety concerns, cited legal compliance following the Supreme Court ruling, and argued that biological sex rather than gender identity should determine access. They also raised concerns about the exclusion of women from religious and cultural backgrounds who would self-exclude from trans-inclusive spaces, and suggested the mixed pond provided an alternative for trans swimmers.

Those who disagreed emphasised trans identity and rights, argued that trans people needed safe spaces and that exclusion would cause harm, raised concerns about

fairness and equal access, and argued that enforcement of biological sex-based access would be impractical and invasive. They highlighted the positive culture and community at the ponds under current arrangements and cited legal arguments supporting inclusion.

Question 1(b): Continue current trans-inclusive arrangements

The majority (86%) of respondents agreed that the ponds should continue to operate as trans-inclusive spaces, with trans men using the Men's Pond and trans women using the Ladies' Pond. 13% disagreed with this option. The remaining respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Those who agreed emphasised trans identity, rights and dignity, argued the current system worked well without problems, described positive experiences at the ponds, and argued that trans people did not pose safety risks. They raised concerns about how any alternative policy could be enforced and cited London's values of diversity and inclusion.

Those who disagreed cited legal arguments against inclusion, argued that biological sex should determine access, raised safety concerns, emphasised the value of single-sex spaces, and suggested the mixed pond could serve as an alternative for trans swimmers.

Question 1(c): Trans-inclusive based on how people live their lives

Views on this option were mixed, with 43% agreeing, 35% disagreeing, and 22% neutral or uncertain. The remaining respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Those who agreed supported trans identity recognition and self-determination. However, many expressed confusion about how this option differed from continuing current arrangements, raised concerns about enforcement, and noted that the option did not accommodate non-binary people.

Those who disagreed came from multiple perspectives. Some argued enforcement would be impossible, some preferred more flexible inclusion without restrictions, and some wanted access based strictly on biological sex. The wording 'decided to live their lives as' attracted criticism from multiple directions.

Those who were neutral frequently expressed confusion about what the option meant in practice, with many unable to distinguish it from the current trans-inclusive policy.

Question 1(d): Trans-inclusive but not in changing rooms

The majority (90%) of respondents disagreed with allowing trans swimmers to use gender-aligned ponds whilst requiring them to use separate accessible changing facilities. 4% agreed with this option. The remaining respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Those who agreed viewed this as a compromise balancing safety and comfort considerations, with some supporting inclusivity with boundaries around changing areas.

Those who disagreed characterised the proposal as discrimination and segregation, arguing it would single out and stigmatise trans people. Many expressed concern about increased risk of harassment, argued the proposal contradicted the aim of inclusion, and raised concerns about misuse of accessible facilities intended for disabled users. Opposition came from both those who supported full trans inclusion and those who wanted biological sex-based access throughout.

Question 1(e): Hybrid approach with timetabled sessions

The majority (90%) of respondents disagreed with a hybrid approach offering trans-inclusive sessions at some times and strictly single-sex sessions at others. 4% agreed with this option. The remaining respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Those who agreed viewed this as a compromise that could preserve single-sex spaces whilst ensuring trans access, offering flexibility and choice for different users.

Those who disagreed characterised the proposal as discrimination and segregation, argued that inclusion must be unconditional, expressed concern about dehumanisation and stigmatisation of trans people, and argued enforcement would be impossible. Many raised concerns about safety risks to trans people from designated 'trans times' that could make them visible and vulnerable. Some disagreed because they wanted biological sex-based access at all times.

Question 1(f): Mixed-sex spaces

A majority (66%) of respondents disagreed with making both ponds mixed-sex facilities open to everyone regardless of sex or gender. 16% agreed with the option and 18% The remaining respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Those who agreed argued for trans and non-binary inclusion, equality and universal access, and characterised sex segregation as outdated.

Those who disagreed argued the current trans-inclusive system worked well, emphasised the ladies' pond as a sanctuary, supported trans-inclusive gendered spaces, and expressed concerns about cisgender men as a safety risk. Many valued the preservation of historic tradition and same-gender comfort and privacy. Opposition came predominantly from those who wanted to maintain gendered ponds whilst supporting trans inclusion within those spaces.

Question 1(g): Other suggestions

When invited to suggest other options, the most common themes were maintaining the current trans-inclusive policy, describing the ponds as inclusive spaces, raising concerns about anti-trans rhetoric in the consultation, and refuting safety concerns about trans people. Others argued the ponds should be single-sex based on biological sex, called for infrastructure improvements such as private changing facilities, and emphasised respect and kindness for all users.

Question 2: Additional comments

The most commonly raised additional themes were concerns about segregation and discrimination, arguments that the current policy worked well, descriptions of the impact on trans people, and emphasis on the ponds' history of inclusivity. Others argued the ponds should be single-sex, raised concerns about the consultation process, and expressed emotional attachment to the ponds.

Question 5: Reasons for not using the ponds

Among those who did not use the ponds, the most common reasons were location and distance, preference for biological sex-based spaces, time and life constraints, and trans-related safety concerns. Some expressed ethical and political stances, whilst others cited practical barriers such as booking difficulties, health and mobility issues, or simply not having gotten around to visiting.

Question 9: Reasons for using single-sex ponds

When asked about reasons for using the single-sex ponds rather than the mixed pond, the most common closed-question responses were privacy and dignity (56%), safety (15%), cultural reasons (10%), and religious reasons (1%).

In open responses, the most common themes were community and culture, atmosphere and emotional quality, safety from cisgender men, and practical and spatial factors. Many expressed support for trans-inclusive gendered spaces, valued the inclusivity and welcoming atmosphere, and highlighted the ponds' significance for LGBTQIA+ communities.

Question 10: Experiences of swimming with trans people

The majority (81%) of respondents reported positive experiences of the current trans-inclusive policy. 10% reported negative experiences and two per cent reported mixed experiences.

Those with positive experiences reported no problems and that the policy worked well, described an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere, noted that trans inclusion aligned with their values, and characterised trans presence as unremarkable and normal. Many affirmed that trans women were women and trans men were men.

Those with negative experiences argued that biological women needed their own spaces, expressed preference for biological sex-based access, described negative personal experiences or general discomfort, and reported self-excluding from the ponds due to the trans-inclusive policy. Those with mixed or neutral experiences included people who had no strong opinion, had not noticed trans swimmers, had no relevant experience, or held balanced views acknowledging complexity.

Nuances in the Consultation Responses

While the quantitative results set out above show clear majorities for several of the options presented, the qualitative analysis of respondent's reasons behind their preferences reveals a much more complex landscape of views. Across the free-text

responses, participants expressed strong and often polarised positions, with many offering detailed reasoning, personal experiences, and values-based arguments that do not map neatly onto the closed-question results. In particular, Options 1(c) and 1(d) generated notable confusion, with substantial numbers of respondents unclear about how these options differed from current arrangements or how they would operate in practice. Additionally, a significant minority of respondents across multiple questions provided *conditional* or *qualified* support, i.e. agreeing with an option only if specific safeguards, interpretations, or implementation arrangements were in place. This complexity is reflected in the more detailed thematic analysis set out in findings section of this report.

Focus Group Findings

The Centre for Consultation (an independent not for profit organisation specialising in public consultations) ran six focus groups on behalf of the City of London Corporation with 33 pond users. These focus groups explored three of the options in depth:

Option 1(a) Strictly single-sex access received very little support, with most participants feeling it would damage the inclusive atmosphere, require intrusive identity checks, and create tensions.

Option 1(b) Continuing to be trans-inclusive spaces as currently operated received the broadest support, with participants feeling it maintained the welcoming character of the ponds and reflected decades of safe practice.

Option 1(f) Making the ponds mixed-sex spaces was the least preferred option, with participants feeling it would fundamentally change what made the ponds special.

Participants emphasised that future decisions should be based on evidence and real experiences, protect the atmosphere of calm and acceptance, treat all users with dignity, and recognise the ponds' long history including the presence of trans and gender-diverse swimmers.

1. Introduction

The City of London Corporation ran a public consultation between 30 September and 25 November 2025 to gather views on the future access arrangements at the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds. The consultation focused particularly on possible changes at the Highgate Men's Pond and the Kenwood Ladies' Pond, following the 2025 Supreme Court judgment in *For Women Scotland v The Scottish Ministers*. This ruling clarified the legal meanings of 'man', 'woman', and 'sex' under the Equality Act 2010, and required service providers to review existing policies. In response, the City Corporation sought feedback to inform any future decisions while meeting its legal, equality, safeguarding, and financial duties.

An independent consultancy ran the consultation and carried out the analysis, supported by a social enterprise specialising in engagement. The approach ensured neutrality and transparency throughout. The consultation invited people to comment on a range of options for how the facilities might operate in future, from maintaining current arrangements to adopting strictly single-sex access, introducing time-based or facility-based hybrid models, or redesigning eligibility criteria. Paper and online formats were made available to encourage wide participation. All responses were anonymised and handled in line with data protection requirements. This summary report is due to be published on the City Corporation's website and will be considered by the relevant committees as part of the decision-making process.

Options for Consideration

The consultation sought views on the following options for the future operation of the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds and in particular the Highgate Men's Pond and the Kenwood Ladies' Pond:

- **That they should be strictly single-sex facilities** - Under this option the Highgate Men's Pond would only be accessible to biological men and the Kenwood Ladies' Pond would only be accessible to biological women.
- **That they should continue to be trans-inclusive spaces as currently operated** - Under this option the Highgate Men's Pond would be accessible to all biological men and trans men and the Kenwood Ladies' Pond would be accessible to all biological women and trans women as at present.
- **That they should be trans-inclusive spaces based on how people have decided to live their lives** - Under this option the Highgate Men's Pond would only be accessible to people who have decided to live their lives as men (including trans men but excluding trans women) and the Kenwood Ladies' Pond would only be accessible to people who have decided to live their lives as women (including trans women but excluding trans men).
- **That they should be trans-inclusive spaces but that the communal toilets and changing rooms should not** - Under this option trans men would have access to the Highgate Men's Pond and trans women would have access to the Kenwood Ladies' Pond and Meadow but would be required to use the separate accessible toilet, shower and changing room at each facility.
- A hybrid approach where they are trans-inclusive spaces at stated times but are operated as strictly single-sex facilities at other times - Under this option, the Highgate Men's Pond and the Kenwood Ladies' Pond would continue to

be trans-inclusive spaces at certain specified times, but there would be other advertised sessions/times when these facilities would be operated as strictly single-sex spaces.

- **That they should be mixed-sex spaces** - Under this option both the Highgate Men's Pond and the Kenwood Ladies' Pond would be accessible to everyone regardless of sex or gender. The City of London Corporation does not currently favour this option, as it is believed that it would be unpopular with most users, due to the unique nature and historic significance of these Bathing Ponds. However, it has been included as an option for completeness and to evaluate support for it. This will be considered alongside other options.

2. Methodology

Disclaimer

This report conveys the key messages arising from the analysis of the consultation responses. The report uses the language and terminology used by respondents in order to provide the most reliable summary of these responses. We have illustrated some themes identified through the analysis with direct quotations from the response data. It intentionally does not provide challenge or critique on the key messages, for example by checking of links to published data as part of responses provided. Therefore, the views expressed, and language used in the report, do not represent the views of TONIC nor the City of London Corporation, but are a faithful summary of the response data.

2.1 Analysis Methodology

The City of London Corporation commissioned TONIC, an independent social research organisation specialising in public consultations, to produce a summary of responses to the consultation. To achieve this, TONIC conducted a quantitative analysis for all responses to the closed (multiple choice) questions and used thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) to summarise the written responses to the open (free text) questions.

Thematic analysis is a widely used method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within text data. TONIC chose this approach as it provides a way to summarise themes in a large body of data, highlights similarities and differences across the dataset, and can generate unanticipated insights. The process facilitates the organisation and description of the dataset in detail and interprets various aspects of the research topic. Our analysts followed the six steps involved in this process:

- A detailed reading of the data to become familiar with the text.
- Initial codes are manually ascribed to the data and organised into meaningful groups relevant to consultation questions.
- Codes conceptually related to one another are grouped together and identified as themes
- Themes are reviewed to determine whether they are internally coherent and distinct from each other.
- Defining and naming themes and subthemes, which provide structure to the analysis.
- Writing up results, providing a narrative summary of the relationship between codes, subthemes and themes, including examples from the data to illustrate the essence of each theme.

2.2 Quality Assurance

TONIC is committed to developing and maintaining the highest standards of quality assurance at every stage of our research. Our quality assurance mechanisms for this project were:

- **Sampling:** Our senior analyst conducts regular testing of a representative sample of coded responses by all analysts to ensure quality and accuracy of the analysis completed.
- **Inter-rater reliability:** All analysts receive training and guidance for each analysis project. Results for different analysts analysing similar data sets were compared to guarantee reliability and consistency between different analysts and across the various questions.
- **Controlling for bias:** We put in place a number of research processes to control for and minimise bias in our analysis:
 - Our analysts are qualified to a minimum of degree level in a relevant discipline, and receive regular training in thematic analysis, research methods and unconscious bias.
 - Our analysis process follows the six steps of thematic analysis, ensuring in our coding practice that each individual response is fully considered in isolation.
 - Multiple analysts conducted the analysis, and we conducted tests for inter-rater reliability.
 - The draft code frames produced are peer reviewed as part of our quality assurance process, which includes controlling for bias through reflexive practice and group discussions.
 - Quoted excerpts from responses used in the report were selected by the lead analyst as being typical examples of the responses containing the specific theme.

These processes combine to create a systematic approach to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings and to ensure that there is no bias in our findings. This is underpinned by the fact that TONIC are an independent research organisation operating to guiding principles from the British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Conduct (2021).

2.3 Data Quality and Cleaning

Prior to analysis taking place, a data cleansing process was carried out in Microsoft Excel which resulted in the final number of 38,445 responses that were analysed for this report.

Removal of incomplete responses

The raw dataset was reviewed to identify responses that did not contain substantive contributions to the consultation. This review identified 267 responses where respondents had provided some demographic information but had not answered any of the consultation questions. These responses, along with a further 22 fully blank responses, were removed prior to analysis, as they contained no data relevant to the consultation's substantive questions. In total, 289 responses were deleted through this initial cleaning process.

Content-free qualitative answers consisting entirely of comments such as “I don’t know”, “no comment”, “n/a”, “yes”/“no”, or simple hyphens or dots were removed and are not included in the figures illustrating response rates.

Duplicate response IDs

The Commonplace consultation platform (which hosted the online survey for the consultation) assigns unique response IDs to each submission. Analysis of these IDs identified 138 that appeared more than once. Of these, 134 had two associated responses, two had three responses, and two had four responses. Each set of multiple responses was manually reviewed to determine whether they represented genuine duplicates or distinct submissions. Seven sets of paired responses were identified as identical submissions (five containing only closed-question responses and two also containing identical qualitative responses) and were removed. Following this cleaning, 132 response IDs with multiple associated responses remained. As the Commonplace platform allows a single account to be used by multiple members of a household, and examination of these remaining responses showed differences in either qualitative or quantitative data, these were treated as legitimate separate submissions. No respondents were blocked for unusual responding activity during the consultation period.

Safeguards against automated and fraudulent responses

The Commonplace platform (which hosted the online consultation) incorporates multiple safeguards designed to prevent automated bot submissions and fraudulent gaming of consultation responses:

- User fingerprinting: The platform collects user 'fingerprints' combining multiple data points including device information and IP address to identify individual users, independent of any email address supplied.
- Pattern detection: Automated processes check for identical answers within the same project to identify suspicious patterns across multiple users.
- Bot blocking: The platform uses the Web Application Firewall provided by Amazon Web Services (AWS) for bot blocking and fraud detection.
- Response speed monitoring: Logged-in users answering questions too quickly, which may indicate automated bot activity, are tracked and blocked automatically.
- Email provider restrictions: Temporary email providers are blocked, making it more difficult for individuals to submit multiple responses using different email addresses.

These safeguards provide confidence that the responses analysed represent genuine submissions from real individuals.

Duplicate qualitative content

Beyond technical duplicate detection, qualitative responses were examined for identical or near-identical wording. Only 26 responses were exact duplicates of at least one other response to open questions across Options 1(a-f). Given the small number relative to the overall dataset, these duplicates were retained. These

duplicates refer to identical wording rather than duplicated submissions by the same individual.

The analysis noted that many responses shared common arguments, phrases, or framing on both sides of the debate, which is typical of consultations on contentious topics where campaign groups and advocacy organisations provide suggested wording. However, the vast majority of responses were personalised, adapted, or elaborated upon by individual respondents and were not consistently duplicated across questions. Therefore, these were not treated as co-ordinated campaign submissions requiring removal.

Approach to analysis

All remaining responses were retained to ensure that all voices were heard and represented. Frequency counts presented alongside each theme give a sense of how regularly particular arguments appeared across responses. These figures are provided for transparency and should not be interpreted as indicating that any single theme is more important than another; rather, they demonstrate that all responses were read, coded, and considered in the analysis.

2.4 Notes on Reading the Consultation Analysis Report

Participation in the consultation was on a self-selecting basis. The findings in the report, therefore, carry the unavoidable risk of self-selection bias and are, therefore, not generalisable to the overall population. Results for each of the consultation questions have been reported in line with the consultation headings used in the materials available to respondents. The order of themes has been determined by the number of respondents coded under each coding theme. Themes with the highest number of respondents have been reported first, with all the others in descending order. Individual open ended responses often have more than one theme allocated to them, therefore the total number of themes per question often exceeds the number of respondents who provided text in the open ended questions. While some themes recur across questions, they are defined and coded separately within each question and should not be read as directly comparable.

It is worth noting that the quantitative results presented in this report should be considered in the context of the accompanying qualitative response themes and explanations, and that the figures, in and of themselves, do not provide a complete picture.

It is also worth noting that the number of respondents raising a theme does not necessarily correspond to the importance of the issues being put forward. Response frequencies, therefore, are included solely as a guide, not as an indication of priority. Unless displayed otherwise percentage figures are rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore may not always add up to 100%.

3. Who Responded to the Consultation

This section of the report sets out a summary of the demographic information provided by respondents. The consultation received 38,445 responses, of which:

- 37,506 were from members of the public
- 35 were on behalf of a business or organisation
- 208 were from “other” respondent types
- 696 did not provide details for their respondent type (i.e. left it blank)

Area of Residence

Respondents provided details of which area they lived in, 74% (n=28,265) lived in London. Other regions of the UK where respondents lived were:

- 4% (n=1710) South East
- 2% (n=944) East of England
- 2% (n=658) South West
- 1% (n=424) North West
- 1% (n=384) Yorkshire and the Humber
- 1% (n=337) Scotland
- 1% (n=210) East Midlands

Less than 1% were from other regions, including 0.5% (n=184) from the North East, 0.4% (n=154) from Wales, 0.05% (n=20) from Northern Ireland and 0.03% (n=10) Channel Islands & Isle of Man. 13% (n=4,853) provided details but we were unable to match this to a region of the UK as they were either incomplete or incorrect.

Use of the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds

Respondents were asked about their use of the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds:

- 84% (n=31,296) of those who responded to this question said that they had swum at the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds.
- 67% (n=20,821) of this group had swum there within the last three months.
- 66% (n=20,769) of this group had swum at Kenwood Ladies' Pond, 22% (n=6,841) had swum at Highgate Men's Pond, and 49% (n=15,250) had swum at Hampstead Mixed Pond.
- 30,734 respondents gave information about how long they had been swimming at the ponds, with 51% (n=15,823) doing so for between 0 – 4 years, 29% (n=8,774) for 5-10 years, 12% (n=2,658) for 11-20 years, and 8% (n=2,479) for more than 20 years.
- 30,860 respondents provided information about how often they swam at the ponds, with 1% (n=294) swimming there on a daily basis, 8% (n=2,370) weekly, 22% (n=6,710) monthly, and 70% (n=21,486) swimming there less often than monthly.

When asked why people chose to swim in either the men's or ladies' ponds as opposed to using the mixed pond, the following reasons were given by the 28,654

respondents who provided an answer to this question (Note: respondents were able to give multiple responses if they chose):

- Privacy and dignity - 36% (n=10,224)
- Safety - 25% (n=7,048)
- Cultural reasons - 12% (n=3,418)
- Religious reasons - 2% (n=462)
- Other reasons - 37% (n=10,547)
- Preferred not to give a reason - 6% (n=1,794)

20% (n=5,716) said that this was not relevant to them.

Demographics of respondents

Age: Around 10% of respondents were aged under 25 years old, 49% were aged 25-34, 20% aged 35-44, 10% aged 45-54, and 10% aged 55 or over.

Ethnicity: 72% of respondents who provided details of their ethnicity described themselves as White; 2.3% as Asian or Asian British; 1.1% as Black, Black British, Caribbean or African – African; 0.4% as Arab; 1.2% as Latin American; 4.7% as being from Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Backgrounds; and 11% from Other Ethnic Backgrounds. A further 1% preferred to self-describe their ethnicity rather than use one of the given categories, with 5.5% preferring not to say.

Sex: 70% of respondents were female, 23% male and 7% preferred not to say.

Gender: 64% of respondents described their gender as woman, 22% as man, 7% as non-binary and 4% preferred not to say. A further 2.5% said they used another term to describe their gender.

Identifying as Trans: 6% of respondents identified as trans, with a further 1.3% unsure and nearly 5% preferring not to say. 88% of respondents stated they did not identify as trans.

Sexuality: 38.5% of respondents identified as heterosexual / straight, 23% identified as bisexual or pansexual, 13% identified as Queer, 11% identified as gay, 9.5% identified as lesbian, with 4% preferring to self-describe their sexuality.

Disability, Impairment or Long Term Condition: 22% of respondents stated that they had a disability, impairment or long term condition, with 4% preferring not to say. The remaining 73% stated that they did not have a disability, impairment or long term condition.

Caring Responsibilities: 14% of respondents stated that they had caring responsibilities, with a further 4% preferring not to say. 82% said they did not have caring responsibilities.

Religion: 12% of respondents stated that their religion was Christian, 3.3% were Jewish, 0.9% were Buddhist, 0.8% were Muslim, 0.4% were Hindu and 0.1% were

Sikh. 3% preferred to self-describe their religion. 67% stated that they did not have a religion and a further 12.5% preferred not to say.

4. Summary of Consultation Responses

Question 1(a). They should be strictly single-sex facilities

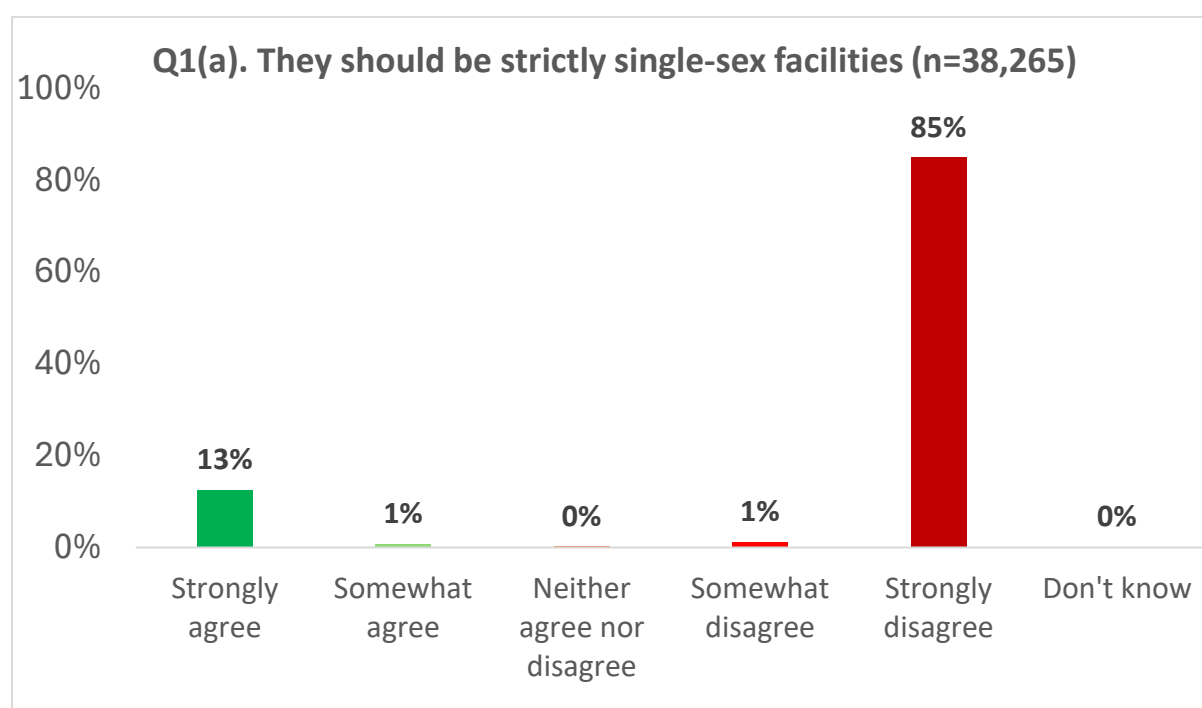
This question asked for views on whether the Highgate Men's Pond should only be accessible to biological men and the Kenwood Ladies' Pond only to biological women. It explored support for returning the ponds to strictly single-sex use, without access for trans people.

Closed question

The majority (86%) of respondents disagreed with the option to make the Highgate Men's Pond only accessible to biological men and the Kenwood Ladies' Pond only to biological women. 13% agreed with this option, with a further 0.4% stating they either didn't know or neither agreed nor disagreed with this option.

This view was also held by the majority of the different groups based on details of their swimming behaviours and where people lived. This included those who use the Hampstead Heath bathing ponds and those who live in London.

Chart A. Q1(a). They should be strictly single-sex facilities



Reasons for those who agreed

This section presents a summary of responses from individuals who agreed with the proposal that access to the ponds should be on the basis of the sex a person was registered as at birth, as recorded on their original birth certificate. All respondents in this dataset supported biological sex-based access to the ponds and opposed trans-inclusive policies.

Summary of themes

Value of single-sex spaces for women (2,523 responses)

Safety concerns (1,690)

Legal compliance (1,389)

Biological sex versus gender identity (935)

Exclusion and self-exclusion of women (809)

Mixed pond as alternative (679)

Women's rights (654)

Negative personal experiences (179)

Enforcement difficulties (106)

Safeguarding children and young people (71)

Historical and traditional significance (67)

Value of single-sex spaces for women

The value of single-sex spaces for women was the largest theme among those who agreed, appearing in over half of all responses. Respondents emphasised the fundamental importance of single-sex spaces for women, particularly in contexts involving undressing, bathing, or physical vulnerability. They discussed the comfort, freedom, safety, privacy, dignity, and psychological benefits that single-sex spaces provided. Respondents stated that women needed and deserved single-sex spaces and argued that privacy and dignity required freedom from the opposite sex. They emphasised the ability to relax and feel comfortable without male presence and stated that single-sex spaces enabled full participation for many women. Respondents highlighted that religious and cultural requirements necessitated single-sex provision and argued that rare and precious spaces should be protected. They stated that women had fought hard for these rights and spaces, and emphasised freedom from the male gaze in vulnerable situations. Respondents highlighted the psychological comfort and sense of security that single-sex environments provided.

Safety concerns

Safety concerns represented another major theme among those who agreed. Respondents expressed concerns about the safety, privacy, comfort, and vulnerability of women and girls in spaces where they undressed or were in stages of undress. They discussed the broader context of male violence against women, the specific vulnerabilities created by changing rooms and swimming facilities, and the need for protection from predatory behaviour. These responses often emphasised that safety concerns were not about transgender individuals themselves but about maintaining boundaries that protected vulnerable populations. Respondents stated that women who had been victims of male violence might not wish to share spaces with biological males and described living in a world where violence against women was constant and increasing. They emphasised that male violence against women and girls was ever increasing, and that women deserved the legal right to safe single-sex spaces. Respondents stated that crimes against women and girls, specifically assaults and voyeurism, happened more often in mixed-sex spaces, and expressed concern that males would exploit accessibility to gain access to women at their most vulnerable. They argued that both men and women should have safe spaces, especially when in a state of undress. Respondents stated that the large majority of trans women kept their male genitals, which would make many women and girls feel uncomfortable, unsafe, and unwelcome, and expressed not wanting to see men's genitals in showers or changing rooms.

Legal compliance

A significant number of respondents argued that strictly single-sex facilities were required by law. These respondents cited the Supreme Court ruling in the *For Women Scotland* case from April 2025, the Equality Act 2010, and legal definitions of sex as biological sex. They emphasised that the law had clarified that 'sex' meant biological sex rather than gender identity, and that public bodies should comply with this legal standard. Respondents stated that the Supreme Court ruling had clarified that single-sex meant biological sex and emphasised that the Equality Act 2010 defined sex as biological reality. They argued that the *For Women Scotland* judgement provided legal clarity and stated that public bodies must comply with the law. Respondents asserted that the current trans-inclusive policy was unlawful and highlighted that sex was a protected characteristic under the Equality Act. They emphasised that legal compliance was mandatory rather than optional.

Biological sex versus gender identity

Respondents asserted that biological sex, not gender identity, should determine access to single-sex facilities. They emphasised that sex was fixed, observable, and material, whilst gender identity was subjective and changeable. These responses often stated explicitly that trans women were male and trans men were female, regardless of identification. Respondents stated that sex was biological reality whilst gender identity was subjective feeling and asserted that biological sex could not be changed. They stated that trans women were male and trans men were female and argued that males remained male throughout life regardless of identification. Respondents emphasised that access should be based on observable, material reality, meaning sex, rather than internal feeling, meaning gender identity.

Exclusion and self-exclusion of women

Respondents argued that trans-inclusive policies resulted in the exclusion or self-exclusion of women who could not or would not use facilities where biological males were present. They identified specific groups who were excluded, including women of certain faiths such as Muslim and Jewish women, survivors of male violence, and women with strong preferences for single-sex spaces. These responses framed trans-inclusive policy as discriminatory against these groups. Respondents stated that Muslim and Jewish women could not use mixed-sex facilities due to religious requirements and argued that survivors of sexual violence self-excluded when males were present. They asserted that trans-inclusive policy discriminated against women with legitimate needs for single-sex spaces and stated that many women had already stopped using the ponds due to the current policy. Respondents argued that the current policy prioritised one group's inclusion over another's exclusion.

Mixed pond as alternative

Respondents pointed to the existence of the mixed pond as evidence that inclusive provision already existed, making changes to single-sex ponds unnecessary. They argued that trans individuals could use either the mixed pond or the pond corresponding to their biological sex, meaning no one was truly excluded. These responses often framed the debate as being about fairness in access distribution. Respondents stated that the mixed pond already provided a trans-inclusive option and argued that three ponds gave everyone at least two options, being their biological sex pond plus the mixed pond. They asserted that no one was excluded if the mixed pond was available and stated that trans people demanding access to all ponds was unfair. Respondents proposed that the current policy gave some people access to all three ponds whilst women lost their single-sex space and suggested that the mixed pond could be kept open year-round to increase access.

Women's rights

Respondents argued that women's rights were being eroded, women's needs deprioritised, and women's legal rights ignored. These responses framed the issue as a women's rights matter. Respondents stated that women's rights were being eroded and argued that women's legal rights to single-sex spaces were being ignored. They questioned why women's safety mattered less than a man's desire to be affirmed and stated that consent could not be removed from women as a class. Respondents emphasised that women had fought hard for these rights and spaces.

Negative personal experiences

Respondents described specific negative personal experiences at the ponds involving biological males. These firsthand accounts described feeling violated, sexually harassed, triggered, or uncomfortable due to encounters with males in changing rooms or pond areas. Respondents described physical and emotional reactions including trauma responses. They described personal experiences of feeling violated or sexually harassed, and recounted encounters with visibly male individuals in changing rooms. Respondents reported trauma responses triggered by male presence, including freeze, flight, and fight responses, and described feeling

intimidated and unable to speak up. They stated that these experiences had a permanent impact on their ability to use the facility.

Enforcement difficulties

Respondents raised concerns about how trans-inclusive policies could be enforced, expressing difficulty in distinguishing genuine trans people from bad actors, and noting that self-identification made enforcement impossible. They stated that it would be difficult to enforce allowing trans people to use the space over any man or woman who dressed as the opposite biological sex to gain entry. Respondents expressed concern that males would exploit such accessibility and questioned how staff could verify whether someone was trans versus exploiting the policy. They argued that self-identification made it impossible to distinguish between genuine trans people and those with malicious intent.

Safeguarding children and young people

Respondents focused specifically on the safeguarding and protection of children and young people, particularly girls. They expressed concerns about exposing young people to adult male bodies, protecting them from potential harm or inappropriate attention, and maintaining child-appropriate boundaries in changing and swimming areas. Respondents stated that young girls should not be exposed to adult male bodies and emphasised that safeguarding duties required protecting vulnerable young users. They highlighted that girls aged 16 and over might use ponds independently and needed protection and argued that parents' concerns about children's safety were legitimate. Respondents stated that young women were particularly vulnerable to male attention.

Historical and traditional significance

Respondents made arguments about the historical and traditional role of single-sex ponds, emphasising the importance of preserving heritage and maintaining what had always been established practice. They stated that the ponds had historical significance and emphasised traditional single-sex provision. Respondents argued that heritage should be preserved and stated that the ponds had always operated in this way and should continue to do so.

Reasons for those who disagreed

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who disagreed with the proposal that access to the ponds should be on the basis of the sex a person was registered as at birth, as recorded on their original birth certificate. All respondents in this dataset opposed biological sex-based access to the ponds and supported trans-inclusive policies.

Summary of themes

Trans identity and rights (14,128 responses)

Safety and harm to trans people (7,487)

Fairness and equal access (4,824)

Enforcement impractical and invasive (4,133)

Pond culture and community (3,987)

Practicality and service functioning (678)

Alternative proposals (651)

London and public values (594)

Legal arguments supporting inclusion (546)

Trans identity and rights

Trans identity and rights was the largest theme among those who disagreed. Respondents centred transgender identity, experiences, rights, and dignity. They emphasised that trans women were women and trans men were men, discussed the importance of respecting gender identity, highlighted trans people as a marginalised minority deserving inclusion and protection, and framed exclusion as discriminatory and unjust. Respondents explicitly stated that trans women were women and trans men were men and should be treated as such in all contexts including access to facilities. They argued that gender identity should take precedence over biological sex in determining access to facilities and expressed that sex could not be reduced to a simple binary concept but existed on a spectrum with multiple biological components. Respondents stated that trans people should not be excluded from public spaces and argued that exclusionary policies would contribute to the historical pattern of trans people being rejected and marginalised by society. They expressed fear that trans people would be forced to self-declare or 'out' themselves as transgender in order to access appropriate facilities and suggested the policy would represent regression in trans rights and broader equality progress. Respondents framed trans inclusion as a matter of fundamental rights, equality, justice, and human dignity, and explicitly supported continued trans-inclusive policies at the ponds.

Safety and harm to trans people

Respondents challenged the framing of trans people as safety threats and instead emphasised the harms that would be caused by exclusionary policies. They argued that trans people did not pose safety risks, that male violence could not be addressed by excluding vulnerable minorities, and that strictly single-sex policies would actually increase harm to trans people through stigmatisation, marginalisation, and exposure to violence. Respondents stated that exclusionary policies would put trans women at risk of harassment in men's spaces, and argued that trans people were a vulnerable, marginalised minority rather than a threat to others. They emphasised that cisgender men, particularly those known to victims, were the primary perpetrators of violence against women and girls, not trans women. Respondents stated that there was no evidence that trans people posed threats in single-sex spaces or at the ponds specifically and argued that trans people had used the ponds for years without incident. They criticised what they characterised as transphobia and argued that exclusionary rhetoric itself caused harm by propagating harmful narratives about trans people.

Fairness and equal access

Respondents emphasised fairness, equality, and equal access to public facilities. They argued that trans people deserved equal access to facilities aligned with their gender identity, that exclusion was inherently unfair and discriminatory, and that public amenities must not exclude minorities. Respondents argued that trans people had a fundamental right to access appropriate facilities and that equal access was a human right. They framed exclusion from public spaces as inherently unfair and unjust, and argued that exclusionary policies would constitute discrimination and treat trans people as second-class citizens.

Enforcement impractical and invasive

Respondents emphasised the practical impossibility and invasiveness of enforcing biological sex-based access policies. They raised questions about how biological sex would be determined, expressed concern about the humiliation and trauma of enforcement mechanisms, and argued that enforcement would require intrusive policing that harmed everyone, including cisgender people who did not conform to gender stereotypes. Respondents expressed fear that biological females or males who did not conform to expected gender presentations would be challenged, questioned, or asked to prove their sex. They questioned whether enforcement would require invasive body searches, genital inspections, or intimate physical checks to determine biological sex, and whether enforcement would require individuals to carry and present documentation such as birth certificates, passports, or medical records. Respondents discussed what the policy would mean for intersex individuals who had both male and female biological characteristics, and argued that enforcement would be practically impossible, subjective, discriminatory, and would create a 'gender police' atmosphere.

Pond culture and community

Respondents emphasised the ponds' character as inclusive, welcoming community spaces and argued that exclusionary policies would fundamentally change their nature. They described the ponds as places of sanctuary, community, peaceful enjoyment, and historical inclusivity, with trans inclusion consistent with longstanding values. Respondents expressed concern that exclusionary policies would undermine the welcoming, inclusive community spirit that defined the ponds, and described the ponds as places of sanctuary, refuge, and peaceful enjoyment characterised by an absence of policing and regulation. They noted that trans people had always been part of the pond community without causing issues, arguing this demonstrated inclusion worked well. Respondents drew on personal positive experiences swimming alongside trans people at the ponds to argue against exclusionary policies and noted that pond users had already voted in favour of trans inclusivity. They discussed the practical reality that trans men who might have male physical characteristics would be forced into women's spaces under biological sex policies and indicated that some respondents would stop using the ponds if they became non-inclusive spaces.

Practicality and service functioning

Respondents emphasised that strictly single-sex policies would create practical problems for service delivery and staff operations. They argued that enforcement would be impossible, staff would be placed in untenable positions, resources would be wasted on policing, and the policy would be unworkable in practice. Respondents argued that biological sex-based policies would be completely impractical and impossible to enforce effectively and expressed concern that staff would be placed in untenable positions trying to enforce unenforceable policies. They argued that enforcement would waste time, money, and resources that could be better spent elsewhere, and noted that the current trans-inclusive approach functioned well without problems, so there was no practical reason to change it. Respondents argued that enforcement would destroy the relaxed, peaceful atmosphere and fundamentally change how the ponds operated.

Alternative proposals

Respondents suggested alternative approaches, critiqued specific aspects of the strictly single-sex proposal or discussed unintended consequences. Some suggested keeping the mixed pond open year-round, others proposed self-identification approaches, and some suggested making all facilities gender-neutral. Respondents suggested that the mixed pond should be kept open year-round to provide alternative access for trans and non-binary people and proposed that self-identification of gender was the appropriate approach rather than biological sex determination. They suggested that making all spaces gender-neutral or providing additional gender-neutral options would be a better solution and argued that 'biological sex' itself was an undefined, problematic, or oversimplified term. Respondents discussed unintended consequences of biological sex policies, particularly forcing trans men into women's spaces, and argued that alternative approaches could meet everyone's needs better than exclusionary policies.

London and public values

Respondents positioned the decision within the broader context of London as a diverse, progressive, inclusive city. They argued that public facilities in London should reflect values of diversity, equality, and inclusion, and that exclusionary policies would be inconsistent with London's character. Respondents suggested that exclusionary policies would not reflect London's diversity and would be out of step with the city's character and indicated that public bodies like the City of London Corporation had legal and ethical obligations to uphold diversity, equality and inclusion principles.

Legal arguments supporting inclusion

Respondents argued that strictly single-sex policies would be illegal, discriminatory, or legally problematic. They cited the Equality Act 2010, human rights frameworks, and the protected characteristic of gender reassignment, arguing that blanket exclusion would fail legal tests of proportionality and necessity. Respondents discussed how changing the policy would breach the Equality Act 2010 and constitute unlawful discrimination against people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment and argued that exclusionary policies would contravene human rights conventions and international legal frameworks. They noted that the Supreme Court ruling indicated services 'could' exclude trans people in certain circumstances, not that they 'must' do so, and argued that blanket exclusion would not meet legal tests of being a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Respondents noted that it was illegal under gender recognition law to ask for proof of gender recognition certificate for purposes of exclusion.

Reasons for those who neither agreed nor disagreed / didn't know

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who indicated they were neutral, uncertain, or held balanced views regarding the proposal that access to the ponds should be on the basis of the sex a person was registered as at birth, as recorded on their original birth certificate.

Summary of themes

Inclination towards trans-inclusive policy (83 responses)

Inclination against trans-inclusive policy (25)

Community and atmosphere concerns (13)

Uncertainty and lack of strong opinion (9)

Alternative suggestions and solutions (3)

Inclination towards trans-inclusive policy

The largest group of neutral respondents leaned towards supporting trans-inclusive policies at the ponds, though they expressed this with some hesitation or qualification. These respondents generally favoured inclusion but acknowledged complexity or understood opposing views. They discussed the practical difficulty and challenges of policing single-sex spaces, including concerns about how staff would enforce biological sex-based policies. Respondents expressed the view that ponds should be accessible and inclusive spaces for everyone, regardless of gender identity or biological sex, and indicated concern about the potential for discrimination and exclusion if spaces were not trans-inclusive. They stated they personally would be comfortable with trans-inclusive policies but recognised and understood why others might feel uncomfortable or have different views. Respondents aligned with transgender experience and rights, stating that trans women were women and trans men were men, or indicating that gender should be prioritised over biological sex. They expressed concern that binary policies excluded non-binary individuals and expressed personal indifference about sharing spaces with trans people or demonstrated a high level of personal tolerance. Respondents argued that the focus should be on addressing inappropriate behaviour rather than gender identity, emphasising that harassment could occur regardless of gender.

Inclination against trans-inclusive policy

Other neutral respondents leaned towards supporting restrictions on trans inclusion or expressed reservations about full trans-inclusive policies. These respondents supported alternative solutions such as directing trans people to the mixed pond or expressed concerns about biological sex-based access rights. They suggested that the mixed pond should be used as the appropriate trans-inclusive space, implying single-sex ponds should remain based on biological sex. Respondents expressed the view that biological females and males deserved their own spaces for safety, privacy, dignity, and comfort reasons, particularly emphasising women's need for single-sex spaces.

Community and atmosphere concerns

Some neutral respondents focused on the impact of policy decisions on the pond community, atmosphere, and social dynamics rather than taking strong stances on trans inclusion itself. They expressed concern about how policy changes might affect the community feel, atmosphere, or social dynamics at the ponds. Respondents emphasised the importance of respectful behaviour and privacy considerations for all pond users regardless of their position on trans inclusion.

Uncertainty and lack of strong opinion

Some respondents expressed genuine uncertainty, admitted to lack of knowledge or expertise, indicated no strong preference, acknowledged complexity, or demonstrated confusion about the issues. These respondents found it difficult to take a clear position. They indicated being unsure, questioning what the best approach was, or expressing genuine uncertainty about the right course of action. Respondents stated they did not feel knowledgeable enough about the subject to

have an opinion or that they needed more information to form a view. They expressed no strong preference, indicated ambivalence, or stated they did not mind either approach. Respondents acknowledged that the subject was too complex to come to a simple conclusion, recognising multiple valid concerns or expressing difficulty reconciling competing values. They discussed transitioning as a process and indicated comfort might depend on stage of transition or physical presentation, suggesting some trans people might be acceptable in single-sex spaces whilst others might not be. Respondents expressed confusion or concern about terminology, definitions of biological sex versus gender, or how terms should be understood and applied.

Alternative suggestions and solutions

A small number of respondents proposed alternative approaches or compromise solutions beyond simple trans-inclusion or trans-exclusion. These included temporal solutions such as specific times, spatial solutions such as separate facilities, or policy variations between ponds. They approved of or suggested having specific times and dates that were trans-inclusive alongside times that were single-sex based on biological sex. Respondents discussed changing rooms specifically and suggested separate, private, or individual changing spaces to address privacy concerns whilst maintaining inclusive swimming access. They suggested that different policies might be appropriate or necessary for the men's pond versus the ladies' pond, recognising different concerns or preferences between the two communities. Respondents proposed additional options beyond the single-sex and mixed ponds, such as additional gender-neutral facilities.

Question 1(b). They should continue to be trans-inclusive spaces as currently operated

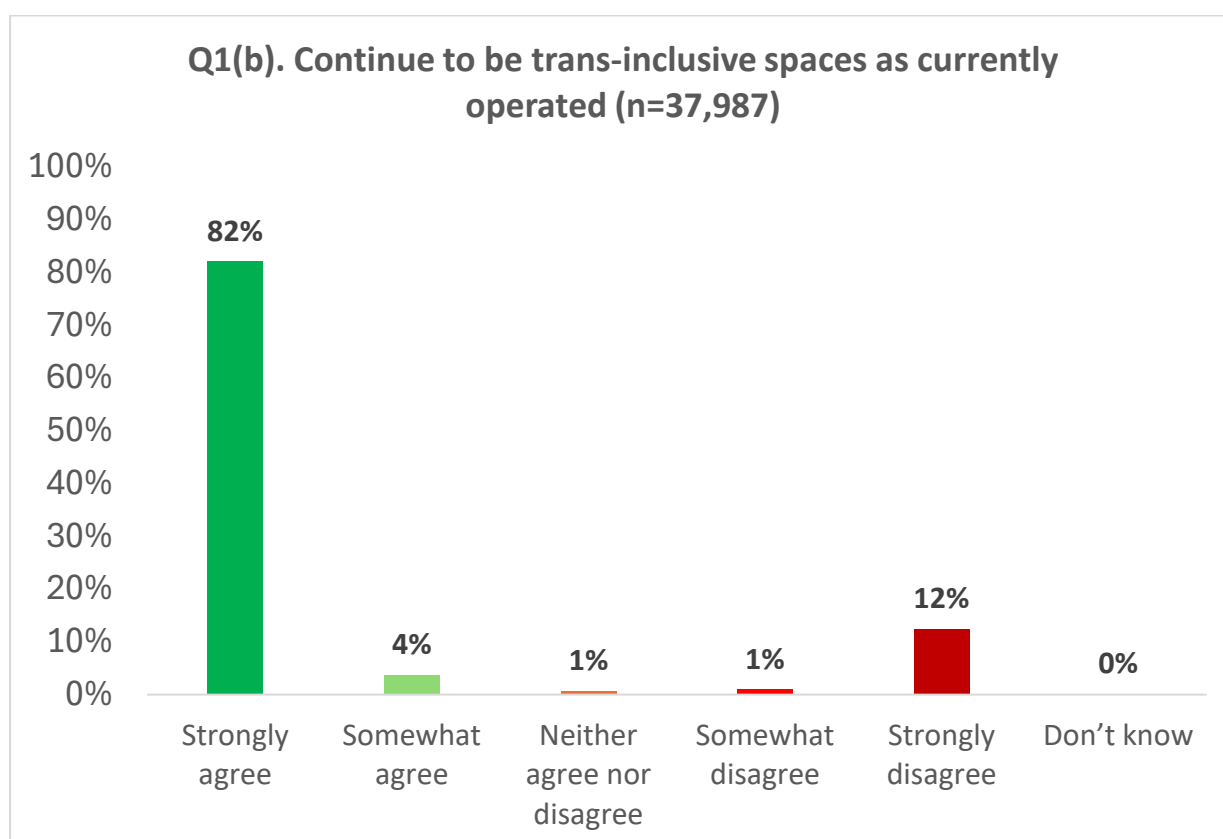
This question examined whether people supported keeping the existing arrangements, where the Men's Pond included biological men and trans men, and the Ladies' Pond included biological women and trans women.

Closed question

The majority (86%) of respondents agreed with the option to keep the existing arrangements, where the Men's Pond included biological men and trans men, and the Ladies' Pond included biological women and trans women. 13% disagreed with this option, with a further 1% stating that they either didn't know or neither agreed nor disagreed.

This view was also held by the majority of the different groups based on details of their swimming behaviours and where people lived. This included those who use the Hampstead Heath bathing ponds and those who live in London.

Chart B. Q1(b). Continue to be trans-inclusive spaces as currently operated



Reasons for those who agreed

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who agreed with the proposal that the ponds should continue to operate as they currently do, with trans-inclusive policies in place. All respondents in this dataset supported maintaining the existing arrangements whereby trans women could use the ladies' pond and trans men could use the men's pond.

Summary of themes

Trans identity, rights and dignity (8,856 responses)

Current system works well (6,267)

Positive pond experiences (4,857)

Safety arguments supporting inclusion (3,683)

Enforcement concerns (823)

London, diversity and public values (523)

Legal arguments supporting inclusion (286)

Trans identity, rights and dignity

Trans identity, rights and dignity was the largest theme among those who agreed. Respondents centred the rights, dignity, wellbeing, and inclusion of transgender people. They emphasised that trans men were men and trans women were women, discussed the importance of treating trans people with respect and dignity, and highlighted the vulnerability and marginalisation of the trans community. These responses framed inclusion as a matter of basic fairness, human rights, and social justice. Respondents explicitly affirmed that trans people were the gender they identified as and belonged in corresponding spaces and discussed different stages of transition and how trans people should be able to make the best choice for themselves depending on identity and stage of transition. They emphasised that trans people deserved the same level of respect, dignity, and access to spaces as cisgender people, and expressed concern that non-trans-inclusive policies would exclude trans people from accessing ponds and constitute discrimination. Respondents noted that trans people made up a small minority of the population and questioned the real impact of trans people using facilities aligned with their gender. They framed access to appropriate facilities as a basic human right and matter of fundamental dignity and expressed concern that exclusionary policies aligned with or enabled far-right, anti-trans ideologies and represented regression in human rights. Respondents noted the ponds' historic tradition of welcoming marginalised genders and LGBTQ+ communities and emphasised the importance of trans people's mental and physical wellbeing, and how exclusionary policies would harm their health and wellbeing.

Current system works well

Respondents asserted that the current trans-inclusive policy was functioning effectively without significant problems. They argued there was no need to change something that was not broken, emphasising the absence of genuine issues or complaints from regular pond users prior to external campaigning. These responses highlighted successful operation for many years and questioned why changes were being considered when there were no real problems. Respondents emphasised that the existing trans-inclusive system had operated without issues and there was no reason to change it. They noted that objections came from external campaigners and agitators rather than regular pond users, and that the pond community itself supported trans inclusion. Respondents emphasised that trans people had used the ponds for decades without incident, establishing historical precedent for trans inclusion.

Positive pond experiences

Respondents drew on personal experiences and knowledge of the ponds' history and community. They described positive experiences with trans-inclusive spaces, emphasised the welcoming and inclusive culture of the ponds, and noted that the community itself, through democratic processes, had supported continuing trans-inclusive arrangements. These responses often contrasted the peaceful reality of pond life with external campaigning. Respondents discussed the value of the ponds being diverse and inclusive spaces, and how this diversity enhanced the experience. They recounted positive personal experiences with trans-inclusive spaces, emphasising that they had never felt unsafe or uncomfortable, and described the atmosphere as welcoming, inclusive, and free from judgement or policing. Respondents emphasised the historic and cultural importance of the ponds for the LGBTQ+ community and described the ponds as sanctuaries and refuges characterised by peace, respect for all, and absence of policing. They argued that trans-inclusive arrangements were the best option that allowed everyone to swim where they felt most comfortable, and noted that the pond community itself, through surveys and votes, had supported trans-inclusive arrangements.

Safety arguments supporting inclusion

Respondents challenged the narrative that trans people posed safety risks to other pond users. They asserted that trans people had never posed a threat at the ponds, refuted claims about male violence being relevant to trans women and emphasised that trans-inclusive spaces remained safe spaces. These responses often characterised safety concerns as unfounded, ideologically motivated, or based on misconceptions about trans people. Respondents emphasised that trans people needed safe spaces to swim without harassment, and that forcing them to use facilities not aligned with their gender identity created safety risks for trans people themselves. They highlighted the need to address individual inappropriate behaviour rather than excluding an entire demographic and asserted that trans people had never posed safety threats at the ponds and there was no evidence they were dangerous to other users. Respondents criticised transphobia and argued that the consultation focused on a problem that did not exist. They identified cisgender men, particularly those with relationships to victims, as primary perpetrators of violence against women and girls rather than trans women and indicated there was a lack of

evidence that trans people posed threats or negatively impacted cisgender people's experiences in single-sex spaces. Respondents expressed concerns about media rhetoric around trans people and its negative impact, arguing media had manufactured a crisis where none existed.

Enforcement concerns

Respondents expressed concerns about the practical and ethical implications of enforcing sex-based access policies. They raised questions about how biological sex would be verified, expressed discomfort with surveillance and 'gender police' monitoring bodies, and emphasised the importance of self-determination. These responses highlighted that enforcement would be intrusive, impractical, and would negatively impact not just trans people but also gender non-conforming cisgender people. Respondents shared concerns that non-trans-inclusive policies could lead to individuals taking it upon themselves to police others' gender, creating a hostile environment. They questioned how biological sex would be verified without invasive checks, expressing concern about surveillance and monitoring of bodies. Respondents discussed the impact on intersex people and noted that biological sex was more complex than simple binary categories, and emphasised that ponds should remain free from judgement, policing, and surveillance of bodies or identities.

London, diversity and public values

Respondents positioned the decision within the context of London as a diverse, progressive, and inclusive city. They argued that London should set an example of inclusivity, resist regressive pressures, and reflect the values of its diverse population. These responses emphasised London's leadership role in promoting equality and the ponds' place in London's character. Respondents suggested that trans-inclusive policy aligned with and reflected London's diversity and character as an inclusive city and indicated that the City of London Corporation had a legal and ethical obligation to uphold diversity, equality and inclusion principles. They argued that London should lead on inclusivity and resist external regressive pressures.

Legal arguments supporting inclusion

Respondents cited legal frameworks and argued that trans-inclusive policy was consistent with the law. They referenced the Equality Act 2010, Gender Recognition Act 2004, EHRC guidance, and human rights principles. These responses emphasised that the Supreme Court ruling did not require exclusion, as it permitted but did not mandate it, and that exclusion could expose the Corporation to legal challenges. Respondents discussed how trans-inclusive policy adhered to the Equality Act and protections against discrimination on grounds of gender reassignment. They noted that the Supreme Court ruling allowed but did not require exclusion and criticised the ruling itself. Respondents argued that exclusionary policies could expose the Corporation to legal challenges and discrimination lawsuits.

Reasons for those who disagreed

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who disagreed with the proposal that the ponds should continue to operate as they currently do with trans-inclusive policies in place. All respondents in this dataset opposed maintaining the existing arrangements and favoured implementing restrictions based on biological sex.

Summary of themes

Legal arguments against inclusion (1,270 responses)

Biological sex versus gender identity (1,216)

Safety concerns (858)

Value of single-sex spaces (838)

Mixed pond as alternative (771)

Exclusion of women (418)

Enforcement concerns (68)

Negative personal experiences (62)

Child protection (10)

Legal arguments against inclusion

Legal arguments were the largest theme among those who disagreed. Respondents cited legal frameworks, particularly the Equality Act 2010 and the Supreme Court ruling, as justification for single-sex policies based on biological sex. They argued that the law supported or required biological sex-based access, that sex was a protected characteristic, and that single-sex services were legally permissible where they protected privacy, dignity, and safety. Respondents mentioned the Equality Act 2010 and the Supreme Court ruling as legal basis for why ponds should not be trans-inclusive, arguing the law required biological sex-based access. They highlighted that sex was a protected characteristic under the Equality Act and argued this protection applied to biological sex, not gender identity. Respondents asserted that women had a legal right to single-sex spaces and that removing this right would be discriminatory or illegal.

Biological sex versus gender identity

Respondents argued that biological sex, not gender identity, should determine access to single-sex spaces. They emphasised that sex was immutable and distinct from gender identity, that trans women were male and trans men were female, and

that self-identification was too subjective to be used as basis for access. Respondents identified that biological sex should be the determiner for single-sex spaces rather than gender identity. They did not accept transgender as a valid experience or stated that transgender women were still men, and transgender men were still women. Respondents highlighted that sex was a protected characteristic under the Equality Act and argued this referred to immutable biological sex, not changeable gender identity. They expressed concern about the lack of a clear, objective definition of who qualified as transgender and how this would be determined or verified.

Safety concerns

Respondents expressed safety concerns about allowing biological males into women's spaces, ranging from general discomfort to specific fears about violence, voyeurism, and exploitation. They cited statistics about male violence, personal experiences of trauma, concerns about states of vulnerability, and fears that trans-inclusive policies created safety risks for women and girls. Respondents disclosed personal or general female experiences of male-perpetrated abuse, violence and trauma as reasoning for not feeling safe around biological males and described fear of or concern about risk of violence against women and girls, often citing statistics or general patterns of male violence. They discussed anxiety around voyeurism, sexual excitement, or inappropriate sexual behaviour from biological males accessing female spaces, and expressed general concern about safety in ponds, changing rooms, and surrounding areas. Respondents discussed perceptions of crime perpetrated by trans-identified people and expressed concern that cisgender men might exploit the concept of being transgender to access female-only spaces for predatory purposes. They expressed concern that some biological males used trans identity to engage with fetishes or sexual paraphilias in women's spaces, and highlighted being in states of undress as creating particular vulnerability and need for single-sex spaces. Respondents expressed worry or anxiety about seeing or being exposed to male genitalia in women's spaces.

Value of single-sex spaces

Respondents emphasised the importance and value of single-sex spaces for women, discussing benefits such as connection, bonding, ability to relax, privacy, dignity, and freedom from the male gaze. They argued that women-only spaces served important functions that were lost when biological males were present, and that these spaces were rare and should be preserved. Respondents identified single-sex spaces as important opportunities for connection and building relationships amongst women and discussed the importance of being able to relax in single-sex spaces without self-consciousness or concern about male attention. They discussed the importance of privacy and dignity in single-sex spaces, including in relation to physical illness, trauma, self-consciousness about bodies, and surgery. Respondents discussed consent and what women were or were not consenting to by entering a female-only space, arguing consent was violated by male presence. They argued that single-sex spaces were rare and increasingly difficult to find, making their preservation important.

Mixed pond as alternative

Respondents discussed the three-pond system and argued that the existence of a mixed pond provided an inclusive option, making trans-inclusive policies for single-sex ponds unnecessary. They often argued that trans-inclusive single-sex ponds effectively made all three ponds mixed, giving trans people access to all three whilst women lost access to any female-only space. Respondents identified the mixed pond or the existence of multiple ponds as evidence that inclusive options already existed without making single-sex ponds trans-inclusive. They indicated that trans-inclusive single-sex ponds would mean all three ponds effectively became mixed or expressed perceived unfairness of access distribution. Respondents suggested that keeping the mixed pond open year-round would provide trans people with year-round access whilst preserving single-sex ponds.

Exclusion of women

Respondents argued that trans-inclusive policies resulted in exclusion of women, particularly women from certain religious or cultural backgrounds and survivors of male violence. They contended that prioritising trans inclusion created exclusion for other women who would self-exclude from spaces they no longer considered safe or appropriate. Respondents discussed how religion and culture prevented some women from using facilities alongside biological males, arguing trans-inclusive policy excluded these women. They expressed that trans-inclusive spaces would result in women choosing to exclude themselves because they did not feel comfortable or safe, and expressed that trans-inclusive policy prioritised needs of trans people over needs of women.

Enforcement concerns

Respondents discussed practical concerns about enforcement of either trans-inclusive or trans-exclusive policies, including challenges of determining who was transgender, concerns about inconsistent application, and questions about how policies would work in practice. They raised practical questions about how policies would be enforced and by whom, and expressed personal discomfort, unease, or distress at the prospect of sharing spaces with biological males, without necessarily specifying particular safety concerns.

Negative personal experiences

Respondents described negative personal experiences at the ponds, including encounters with biological males in women's spaces that caused discomfort, distress, or fear. They described incidents they witnessed or experienced and complaints they made to staff or management. Respondents described negative experiences such as harassment or feeling uncomfortable as a result of biological males at the ponds and described having made complaints or reported inappropriate behaviour from biological men at the ponds, often expressing frustration with the response. They described staff as facilitating or not preventing incidents or failing to take women's concerns seriously.

Child protection

Respondents expressed particular concern about protecting children and young people, especially girls, from exposure to male bodies, the male gaze, or potential harm. They emphasised safeguarding duties towards young people and argued that children should not be exposed to opposite-sex bodies in changing areas.

Respondents expressed concern about young girls being put at risk of harm or exposed to male bodies and the male gaze and identified particular concern for teenage girls being put at risk of harm or exposed to male bodies and male attention. They emphasised that the Corporation had particular safeguarding duties towards children and young people using the facilities.

Reasons for those who neither agreed nor disagreed / didn't know

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who indicated they were neutral, uncertain, or held balanced views regarding the proposal that the ponds should continue to operate as they currently do with trans-inclusive policies in place.

Summary of themes

Support for trans people's rights and safety (168 responses)

Critique of consultation process (88)

Support for inclusion but non-binary excluded (20)

Enforcement and verification concerns (20)

Preference for alternative approaches (13)

Confusion about policy wording or distinctions (11)

Genuine ambivalence or insufficient knowledge (7)

Seeing merit in both positions (7)

Conditional support dependent on implementation (7)

Asymmetric views on trans women versus trans men (5)

Support for trans people's rights and safety

The largest group of neutral respondents expressed support for trans people's rights, safety, and access whilst being coded as neutral. They affirmed trans people's right to use ponds aligned with their gender identity and emphasised that trans people themselves faced safety concerns and needed safe spaces. Respondents asserted that trans people did not pose danger to others and that concerns about them were unfounded, and criticised anti-trans rhetoric, fear-mongering, or what they characterised as manufactured moral panic.

Critique of consultation process

A significant number of respondents criticised the consultation itself, questioning why it was being conducted, who initiated it, or whether it represented capitulation to external pressure. These respondents viewed the consultation process itself as problematic regardless of their views on the substantive policy questions. They questioned why the consultation was necessary if the current system worked well and expressed concern that the consultation was driven by external campaigners rather than genuine user concerns. Respondents viewed the consultation as giving platform to discriminatory views and criticised the framing or structure of the consultation questions.

Support for inclusion but non-binary excluded

Some respondents supported the current trans-inclusive policy but explicitly noted that it did not adequately address non-binary and gender non-conforming people. These respondents wanted more comprehensive inclusion beyond the binary trans framework and questioned whether the current policy truly included all gender-diverse people. They noted that trans-inclusive policy still excluded non-binary, intersex, and gender non-conforming people who did not fit into the male or female binary and supported trans inclusion but wanted policy to go further to encompass all gender identities and expressions.

Enforcement and verification concerns

Respondents raised questions about how any policy, whether trans-inclusive or otherwise, would be enforced, who would determine eligibility, and what verification processes would be used. These respondents were concerned about practical implementation regardless of their position on inclusion itself. They questioned how trans identity would be verified or determined and raised concerns about potential for invasive questioning or checks. Respondents expressed concern about staff being placed in difficult positions and questioned practical enforceability of any policy.

Preference for alternative approaches

Some respondents suggested alternative models beyond the binary trans-inclusive or single-sex framing, such as making all ponds mixed or gender-neutral, implementing time-based sessions, creating a third facility, or hybrid approaches. These respondents thought better solutions existed outside the options presented. They suggested that all three ponds should be accessible to everyone regardless of

sex or gender, removing sex or gender designations entirely, and proposed implementing specific times or sessions for different groups as a compromise solution. Respondents suggested hybrid models, additional facilities, or mixed approaches that provided options for different groups, and questioned whether sex or gender-based segregation was appropriate or necessary in the modern context.

Confusion about policy wording or distinctions

Some respondents indicated uncertainty about what the policy actually meant, how it differed from other options, or what terms like 'trans-inclusive as currently operated' entailed in practice. These represented genuine confusion rather than substantive positions. They expressed uncertainty about what 'as currently operated' meant in practice and how the policy was actually implemented and were unable to distinguish between this option and other policy choices presented in the consultation. Respondents found the policy description itself confusing, poorly worded, or unnecessarily complicated.

Genuine ambivalence or insufficient knowledge

Some respondents acknowledged that they lacked knowledge, understanding, or strong feelings about the issue and therefore could not take a clear position. These represented genuine 'don't know' responses rather than nuanced middle positions. They explicitly stated lack of knowledge about trans issues, pond operations, or relevant considerations, and indicated they did not use the ponds or lacked direct experience, making them feel unqualified to comment. Respondents expressed genuine ambivalence or indifference rather than an active neutral position.

Seeing merit in both positions

Some respondents acknowledged validity in both pro-inclusion and pro-restriction arguments, attempting to balance competing concerns without firmly committing to either position. These respondents recognised complexity and understood multiple perspectives whilst struggling to reach definitive conclusion. They recognised valid concerns on both sides of the debate and attempted to balance trans people's needs with women's concerns. Respondents acknowledged the issue was complex with no easy answers and expressed difficulty reconciling competing values or priorities.

Conditional support dependent on implementation

Some respondents supported trans-inclusive policy in principle but expressed concerns about specific implementation details, enforcement mechanisms, changing room arrangements, or other practical aspects. These respondents wanted inclusion but with particular safeguards or conditions in place. They expressed support contingent on proper safeguards being in place and raised concerns about changing room privacy and suggested individual changing facilities. Respondents discussed the importance of clear policies and staff training and wanted mechanisms for addressing inappropriate behaviour regardless of who engaged in it.

Asymmetric views on trans women versus trans men

Some respondents expressed different views about trans women in women's spaces compared to trans men in men's spaces. These respondents did not hold consistent positions across both scenarios, often being more comfortable with one than the other. They expressed being more comfortable with trans men in men's spaces than trans women in women's spaces and suggested different policies might be appropriate for the men's pond versus the ladies' pond. Respondents indicated that safety concerns were asymmetric, with greater concerns for women's spaces.

Question 1(c). They should be trans-inclusive spaces based on how people have decided to live their lives

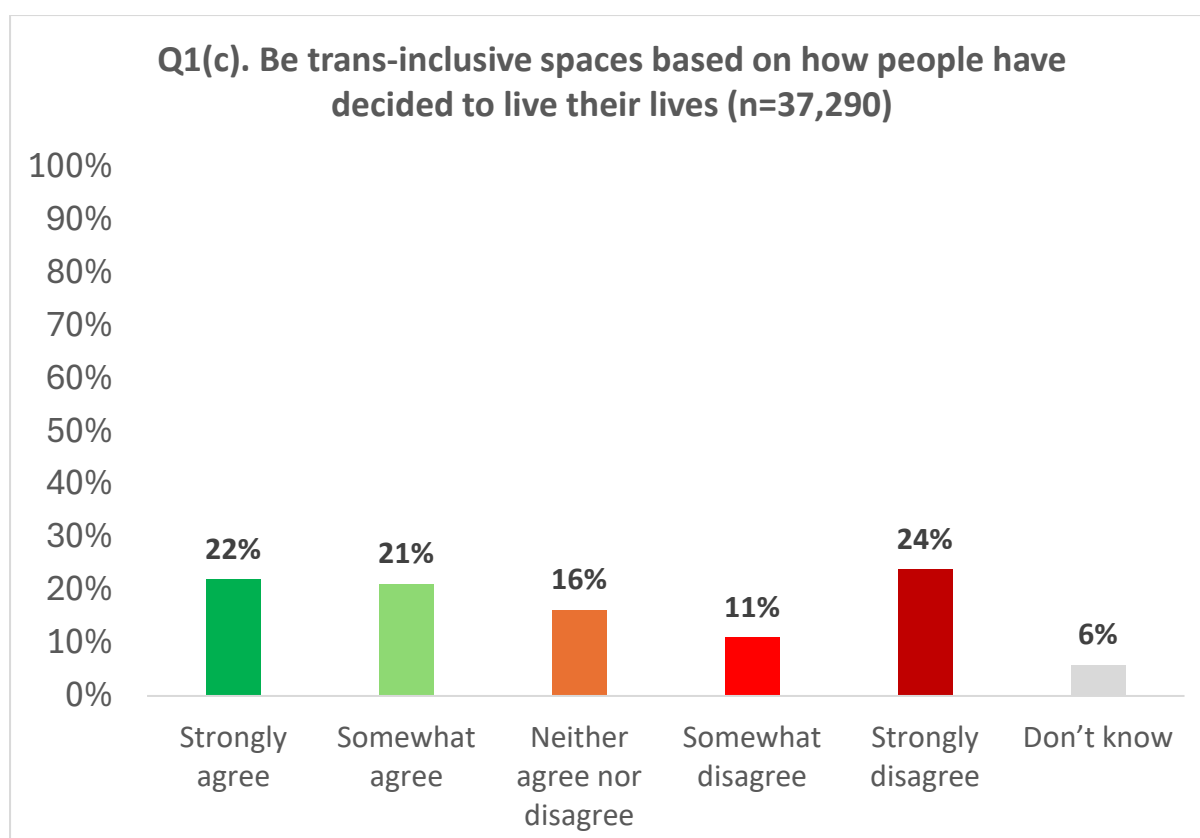
This question invited views on a different model of inclusion. Under this approach, access would be based on how a person lived their life rather than their biological sex. The Men's Pond would be open to those living as men (including trans men), and the Ladies' Pond to those living as women (including trans women). It tested support for identity-based access rules.

Closed question

There were mixed views on the option to make the ponds trans-inclusive spaces based on how people have decided to live their lives. 43% agreed with this option, 35% disagreed, and a further 22% stating that they either didn't know or neither agreed nor disagreed.

A similar mixed view was also held by the different groups based on details of their swimming behaviours and where people lived. This included those who use the Hampstead Heath bathing ponds and those who live in London.

Chart C. Q1(c). Be trans-inclusive spaces based on how people have decided to live their lives



Reasons for those who agreed

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who agreed with the proposal that the Men's Pond should be accessible to people who have decided to live their lives as men (including trans men but excluding trans women), and the Ladies' Pond should be accessible to people who have decided to live their lives as women (including trans women but excluding trans men).

Summary of themes

Trans identity recognition (2,046 responses)

Safety arguments (1,041)

Self-determination (883)

Confusion with Option B (876)

Enforcement concerns (825)

Non-binary exclusion (629)

Early transition concerns (359)

Pond culture and inclusion (351)

Reasonable compromise (332)

Preference for status quo (299)

Gender-segregated not sex-segregated spaces (292)

Pragmatic implementation (242)

Critique of wording (200)

Legal compliance (53)

Trans identity recognition

Trans identity recognition was the largest theme among those who agreed. Respondents affirmed that trans women were women and trans men were men, supporting their access to facilities aligned with their gender identity. These responses emphasised respect, dignity, inclusion, treating trans people as their authentic selves, and recognising gender identity over biological sex. Respondents explicitly stated that trans people were the gender they identified as and should use facilities aligned with their gender identity, and argued that gender identity, not biological sex, should determine access to gendered spaces. They framed trans

inclusion as a matter of fundamental human rights, dignity, and autonomy, and emphasised trans people's vulnerability and argued they deserved protection and inclusion. Respondents emphasised the importance of respecting how people lived their lives and their lived truth about their gender.

Safety arguments

Respondents discussed safety considerations, both for trans people and for all pond users. These included arguments that trans people did not pose safety risks, concerns about cisgender men exploiting policies, and calls for anti-discrimination and safeguarding policies rather than exclusion. Respondents emphasised that policy should create safety for all users including trans people, and argued trans people were not dangerous and did not pose threats to other pond users. They discussed and usually refuted concerns about cisgender men exploiting trans identities to access women's spaces and argued for comprehensive anti-discrimination and safeguarding policies rather than exclusion. Respondents noted that trans people experienced higher rates of victimisation than cisgender people.

Self-determination

Respondents emphasised that trans and gender non-conforming people should have agency to choose which spaces they felt safest in, rather than being assigned or restricted. These responses focused on safety, comfort, and self-determination as core principles. Respondents argued trans people should have agency to choose spaces based on their own assessment of safety and comfort and emphasised that individual comfort and personal choice should be the priority. They framed self-determination as essential for safety and participation in public life.

Confusion with Option 1(b)

Respondents expressed uncertainty or confusion about how this option differed from the previous option of continuing trans-inclusive operations as currently operated. Many noted these seemed functionally identical or questioned what distinction was being made. Respondents noted that in practice, this option appeared to be the same as continuing current operations and questioned what the phrase 'decided to live their lives as' added or meant beyond simply being trans-inclusive. They questioned why this distinction was being made or what problem it was meant to solve.

Enforcement concerns

Respondents raised concerns about how this policy would be enforced in practice, who would make determinations, what evidence would be required, and whether enforcement would involve invasive questioning or policing of trans people. Even many supporters expressed concern about implementation. Respondents questioned how determination would be made about whether someone had 'decided to live their life' as a particular gender, and expressed concern that enforcement could involve invasive questioning, surveillance, or policing of people's gender identity or appearance. They emphasised that any implementation must not involve questioning or requiring proof of gender at entry and argued this policy would be

impossible to enforce without problematic measures. Respondents expressed concern about the burden placed on staff to make subjective judgements or enforce unenforceable policies.

Non-binary exclusion

Respondents noted that this option did not clearly accommodate non-binary, gender non-conforming, agender, genderfluid, or intersex people. This was one of the most common concerns even amongst supporters, representing a perceived limitation of the binary framework. Respondents questioned where non-binary and gender non-conforming people would swim under this policy and argued that binary male or female framing did not accommodate the spectrum of gender identities. They suggested non-binary people should have access to either or both gendered spaces and noted that intersex people were excluded or unaccounted for in the binary framing.

Early transition concerns

Respondents expressed concern that this option might create difficulties for people in early stages of transition, those who did not 'pass', those whose gender presentation might not align with societal expectations, or those unable to medically transition. They noted that people in early stages of transition might face challenges or feel unsafe under this policy and worried this could exclude people based on whether they 'passed' or matched gender stereotypes. Respondents noted that not everyone could afford or access medical transition, and social transition was valid. They argued people should be able to self-determine regardless of where they were in the transition process.

Pond culture and inclusion

Respondents discussed the ponds' character as inclusive, diverse, welcoming spaces and argued this option maintained that culture whilst recognising gender identity. These responses emphasised preserving the inclusive ethos. Respondents emphasised the ponds' tradition of being inclusive and welcoming diverse communities and noted the absence of problems under current inclusive arrangements. They celebrated diversity and argued it enhanced the pond community.

Reasonable compromise

Respondents viewed this option as a reasonable compromise or middle position that maintained gender segregation whilst including trans people. Some saw it as balancing competing concerns and being more socially acceptable than alternatives. Respondents characterised this as a fair middle ground and saw this as an improvement over strictly biological sex-based exclusion. They argued this option balanced the needs of different groups.

Preference for status quo

Respondents indicated preference for continuing current arrangements rather than changing to this option. Some saw this as unnecessary change, potentially more restrictive than current policy, or creating problems where none existed. Respondents argued the current system worked well and should not be changed, and framed this as acceptable if change was necessary, but maintained that change was not necessary. They worried this represented a weakening or complicating of the current inclusive policy.

Gender-segregated not sex-segregated spaces

Respondents supported the maintenance of separate men's and women's spaces, but defining these by gender identity rather than biological sex. These respondents valued gender segregation but were inclusive of trans people. Respondents argued there was value in maintaining men's and women's spaces defined by gender, and argued this maintained the unique character and value of gendered spaces.

Pragmatic implementation

Respondents acknowledged practical realities, noting that trans women were unlikely to want to use men's facilities and vice versa, so this option was functionally similar to other trans-inclusive options in practice. These responses took a pragmatic view of how the policy would actually work. Respondents noted trans people would naturally choose facilities aligned with their gender presentation and viewed this as formalising what already happened in practice. They valued the formal recognition of commitment to living in a particular gender.

Critique of wording

Respondents criticised the phrasing of the option, particularly 'decided to live their lives as' which some viewed as implying choice, trivialising trans identity, or being intentionally confusing. This represented significant concern about the language used. Respondents argued that 'decided to live their lives as' incorrectly implied gender was a choice, and found the phrasing confusing, unclear, or potentially misleading. They suggested better or clearer ways to phrase the policy.

Legal compliance

Respondents discussed legal compliance, whether this option was permissible under the Supreme Court ruling, protection of trans people under the Equality Act 2010 and Gender Recognition Act 2004, and legal risks of different approaches. Respondents argued this option complied with Equality Act protections and cited the Gender Recognition Act requirement to treat trans people as their acquired gender. They argued this option avoided discriminating directly on the basis of biological sex, and noted this option was permissible, though not required, under the Supreme Court ruling.

Reasons for those who disagreed

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who disagreed with the proposal that the Men's Pond should be accessible to people who have decided to live their lives as men (including trans men but excluding trans women), and the Ladies' Pond should be accessible to people who have decided to live their lives as women (including trans women but excluding trans men).

Summary of themes

Enforcement impossible (2,177 responses)

Preference for more flexible inclusion (1,996)

Support for biological sex access (1,735)

Non-binary exclusion (1,355)

Critique of language (910)

Safety concerns from women (855)

Trans people's safety (817)

Legal arguments (677)

Prefer current policy (507)

Transition stage concerns (490)

Definition and standards unclear (349)

Religious and cultural exclusion (59)

Consultation process critique (29)

Enforcement impossible

Enforcement was the largest theme among those who disagreed. Respondents questioned how 'decided to live their lives as' would be determined, verified, or enforced in practice. This concern united respondents who saw implementation as impossible or requiring unacceptable intrusions. Respondents questioned the fundamental mechanics of determining whether someone had 'decided to live their life' as a particular gender and expressed concern that enforcement would require staff to interrogate, question, or demand documentation from pond users. They raised concerns about judgements based on whether people 'looked' male or female enough, affecting trans and cisgender people alike, and asserted this was fundamentally unworkable regardless of ideology. Respondents noted that gender policing would disproportionately affect Black women, women of colour, and those who did not fit Western femininity standards.

Preference for more flexible inclusion

Respondents who supported trans inclusion, but preferred continued trans-inclusive operations or even more open access disagreed because the option was too restrictive. These respondents wanted trans people to have choice and self-determination rather than restrictions. They emphasised trans people's agency to choose spaces based on their own assessment of safety and comfort and preferred the current trans-inclusive approach rather than this more constrained version. Respondents noted people at different stages of transition needed flexibility to choose spaces where they felt comfortable and emphasised that trans and gender non-conforming people faced threats and should choose spaces where they felt safest. They worried this option discriminated against or excluded trans people unnecessarily.

Support for biological sex access

Respondents who wanted less trans inclusion, preferring strictly biological sex-based access, disagreed because the option was too permissive, still allowing males into female spaces. They argued biological sex, not gender identity, should determine which pond people used, and did not accept transgender identity as valid or asserted trans women were men and trans men were women biologically. Some argued this option still permitted males access to female spaces, defeating the purpose, and argued the mixed pond served trans and non-binary people, so single-sex ponds should remain sex-based.

Non-binary exclusion

Respondents noted that this option did not accommodate non-binary, genderfluid, agender, intersex, or gender non-conforming people who did not fit neatly into binary categories. This concern appeared across the ideological spectrum. Respondents questioned what non-binary people would do under this policy, and noted intersex people were also excluded by the binary framework. They argued gender existed on a spectrum and binary framing was inadequate and noted that gender non-conforming cisgender people were also affected by binary restrictions.

Critique of language

Respondents criticised the phrasing and concept of 'decided to live their lives as' a particular gender. This criticism came from a range of respondents for different reasons: some argued it implied choice or performance, whilst others argued it was meaningless without stereotypes. Some argued the language suggested gender was a choice rather than an identity, and respondents from both camps argued the concept depended on sexist stereotypes about how men and women dressed or behaved. Respondents from a pragmatic perspective argued the terminology was too vague to be operationalised.

Safety concerns from women

Respondents expressed safety concerns, arguing biological males posed risks in female spaces. These included history of male violence, voyeurism fears, and exploitation concerns. Respondents cited personal or general female experiences of male violence as a reason for single-sex spaces and emphasised the necessity of genuinely single-sex biological spaces for women's safety. They expressed concern about voyeurism or sexual fetishism from biological males in female spaces and expressed concern that predatory cisgender men would exploit trans identity concepts to access women's spaces. Respondents emphasised the importance of privacy and dignity, particularly for women in states of undress.

Trans people's safety

Respondents emphasised that trans people themselves needed safe spaces and faced harassment and violence. This represented an opposite safety framing, where trans people were characterised as a vulnerable population needing protection. Respondents argued trans people needed spaces where they could swim safely without abuse and emphasised trans people's right to dignity and equal treatment.

Legal arguments

Respondents discussed legal compliance, but arguments were made from both directions. Some argued biological sex was legally required, whilst others argued trans inclusion was legally protected. Legal arguments were used to support opposite positions. Some responses cited the Supreme Court ruling as requiring biological sex-based access, and some respondents argued the Equality Act permitted or required single-sex provisions based on biological sex. Other responses argued this violated Equality Act protection for trans people, and some argued enforcement would breach Article 8 privacy rights. Others noted 'decided to live their lives' had no legal status or definition.

Prefer current policy

Respondents expressed satisfaction with current arrangements and argued they should not be changed. This appeared across the spectrum, with some preferring current trans inclusion whilst others noted the current approach had worked historically. Respondents noted current arrangements functioned effectively, and argued change would create problems where none currently existed. They indicated preference for different policy options.

Transition stage concerns

Respondents emphasised that transition was a process taking years, and people at different stages had different needs and comfort levels. This option did not account for the complexity of transitioning. Respondents noted the lengthy timeline and complexity of transition and expressed concern about people early in transition who might not be accepted or feel comfortable. They noted financial barriers to medical transition and argued social transition was valid and expressed concern the policy could force premature disclosure.

Definition and standards unclear

Respondents questioned what standards or criteria would define 'living as' a particular gender, and concerns about who would decide. These came from both those worried about policing and those arguing it was meaningless. Respondents questioned what constituted 'living as' a man or woman and argued any definition would rely on stereotypical ideas about male or female behaviour or appearance. They questioned who would make determinations and on what basis.

Religious and cultural exclusion

Respondents discussed how religious and cultural requirements for single-sex spaces would exclude some women if spaces became trans-inclusive. This argument came primarily from the perspective that women's needs should be prioritised. Respondents noted religious and cultural prohibitions against sharing intimate spaces with biological males and argued some women would stop using facilities if they included biological males.

Consultation process critique

Respondents critiqued how the consultation was conducted, question framing, or suggested an agenda behind the questions. These critiques came from various perspectives. Respondents suggested the consultation had a particular agenda and noted limitations or problems with survey design.

Reasons for those who neither agreed nor disagreed / didn't know

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal that the Men's Pond should be accessible to people who have decided to live their lives as men (including trans men but excluding trans women), and the Ladies' Pond should be accessible to people who have decided to live their lives as women (including trans women but excluding trans men).

Summary of themes

Confusion about meaning (1,326 responses)

Enforcement concerns (721)

Trans people should choose (560)

Non-binary exclusion (462)

Ideological positions (449)

Preference for status quo (366)

Safety and comfort (362)

Unnecessarily complicated (306)

Transition stage concerns (176)

Self-sorting observation (117)

Acceptable compromise (116)

Confusion About What This Option Means

Confusion about what this option meant was the largest theme among neutral respondents. They expressed confusion, uncertainty, or an inability to understand what this option meant or how it differed from continued trans-inclusive operations. This represented an unprecedented level of confusion across all consultation datasets analysed. Respondents expressed a fundamental inability to comprehend what the option meant and specifically questioned the distinction between this option and trans-inclusive arrangements as currently operated. They questioned the unclear terminology and phrasing, particularly 'decided to live their lives', and noted questions should have been clearer or criticised the survey design.

Enforcement concerns

Respondents questioned how the option would be implemented, verified, or enforced in practice. Even those who might otherwise be sympathetic could not see a workable implementation path. Respondents questioned the mechanics of determining whether someone had 'decided to live their life' as a particular gender,

and noted verification would require unacceptable invasions of privacy. They expressed concern about placing an unfair burden on staff to make gender determinations, and worried enforcement would lead to discrimination and harassment.

Trans people should choose

Respondents emphasised that trans people themselves should decide which space they used, or that the trans community should be consulted about policy. These responses recognised that cisgender people might not be best positioned to make these decisions. Respondents emphasised individual trans people's agency and self-determination and argued the trans community should be consulted or their recommendations followed. They acknowledged the speaker did not have sufficient knowledge or was not the right person to comment.

Non-binary exclusion

Respondents noted this option did not clearly accommodate non-binary, genderfluid, or gender non-conforming people. The binary framing was seen as an exclusionary limitation. Respondents questioned what non-binary people would do under this policy and argued the binary male or female framework was insufficient.

Ideological positions

Respondents expressed broader ideological stances on trans inclusion, either supportive or focused on behaviour rather than identity. They expressed general support for trans people and inclusion and argued the focus should be on behaviour rather than identity.

Preference for status quo

Respondents preferred to maintain current arrangements rather than changing to this option, viewing it as an unnecessary complication. They argued the current system worked fine and viewed this option as adding complexity without benefit.

Safety and comfort

Respondents discussed safety and comfort needs for various pond users, from multiple perspectives. They noted trans people needed to feel safe and mentioned women's needs for safety and comfort. Respondents emphasised the importance of privacy and dignity for all users.

Unnecessarily complicated

Respondents viewed this option as adding unnecessary complexity, restrictions, or complications without clear benefit. They argued this made things more complex than needed and viewed this as adding restrictions without justification.

Transition stage concerns

Respondents noted people at different stages of transition had different needs and comfort levels, and this option did not account for that complexity. They emphasised transition took time and people had varying needs and questioned at what point in transition someone would change which pond they used. Respondents noted people early in transition might not feel accepted or comfortable.

Self-sorting observation

Respondents noted that in practice, trans people would naturally use facilities aligned with their gender presentation, making formal rules unnecessary or redundant. They noted people would self-sort without needing formal policy and questioned the need for policy when behaviour occurred naturally.

Acceptable compromise

Respondents viewed this as potentially acceptable or a reasonable compromise but not the best option. They saw this as an acceptable fallback but not first choice, and noted the concept was acceptable but implementation was problematic.

Question 1(d). They should be trans-inclusive spaces, but the communal changing rooms and toilets should not

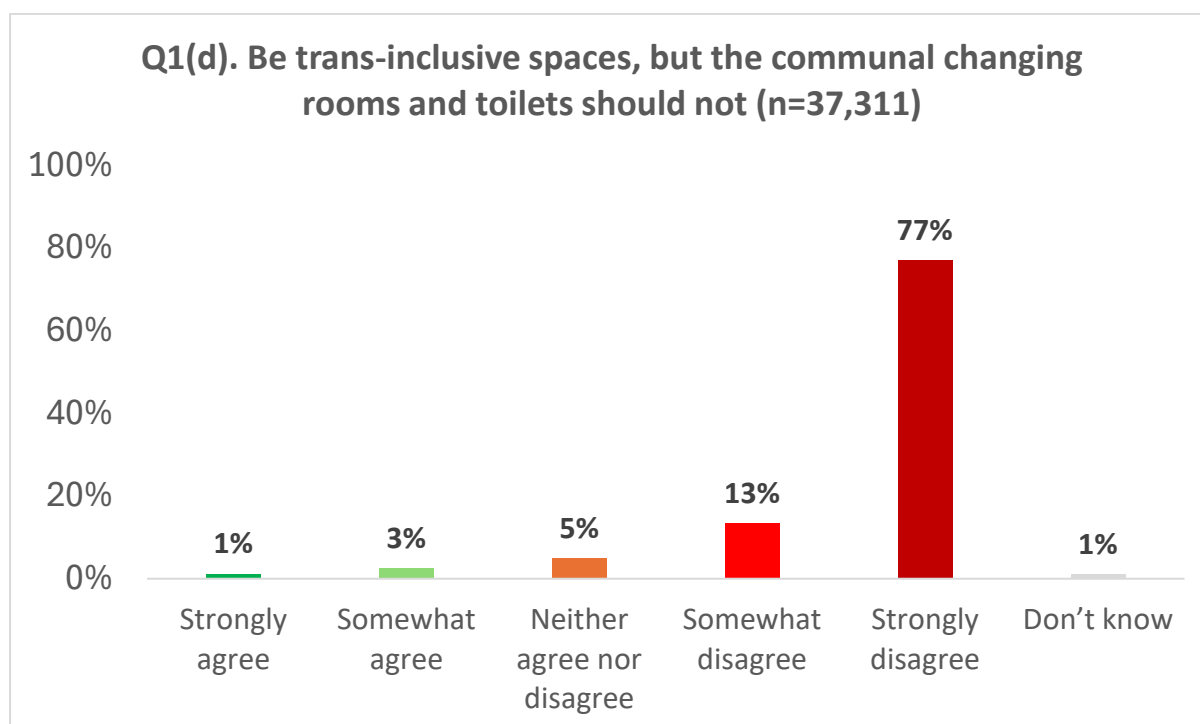
This question explored a partially inclusive approach. Trans men and trans women would continue to swim at the Men's and Ladies' Ponds respectively, but they would be required to use separate accessible changing and toilet facilities. The question tested whether people supported this separation of swimming access from shared indoor spaces.

Closed question

The majority (90%) of respondents disagreed with the option to make the ponds trans-inclusive spaces, but the communal changing rooms and toilets should not be trans-inclusive. 4% agreed with this option, with a further 6% stating that they either didn't know or neither agreed nor disagreed.

This view was also held by the majority of the different groups based on details of their swimming behaviours and where people lived. This included those who use the Hampstead Heath bathing ponds and those who live in London.

Chart D. Q1(d). Be trans-inclusive spaces, but the communal changing rooms and toilets should not



Reasons for those who agreed

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who agreed with the proposal that trans men could access the Highgate Men's Pond and trans women could access the Kenwood Ladies' Pond and Meadow, but that trans people would be required to use separate accessible toilet, shower, and changing room facilities at each location.

Summary of themes

Safety and comfort (210 responses)

Compromise and pragmatism (174)

Inclusivity with boundaries (94)

Concerns about othering (87)

Alternative solutions (65)

Privacy, dignity and modesty (64)

Trans identity affirmation (39)

Quality of separate facilities (21)

Enforcement concerns (21)

Transition status distinctions (14)

Behavioural approach (12)

Current practice considerations (9)

Intersectionality (5)

Safety and comfort

Safety and comfort was the largest theme among those who agreed. Respondents emphasised safety and comfort for various pond users, including both trans people and cisgender women. There was focus on creating an environment where all users felt safe and comfortable. Respondents emphasised safety for everyone using ponds and facilities and emphasised the importance of women feeling safe and comfortable, particularly in changing areas. They recognised that trans people needed safe spaces and protection from harassment, and made references to trauma or potential for triggering, particularly for women who had experienced abuse. Respondents expressed concerns about potential for voyeurism or predatory behaviour in facilities.

Compromise and pragmatism

Respondents framed this proposal as an acceptable or workable balance between competing interests. These included viewing it as a reasonable middle ground, reluctant acceptance as better than alternatives, and conditional support based on how it would be implemented. There was emphasis on finding practical solutions that accommodated multiple perspectives. Respondents viewed this as a reasonable balance between different needs and interests, and gave support conditionally or reluctantly, viewing this as not ideal but better than alternatives. They emphasised practicality and finding solutions that worked in real-world settings.

Inclusivity with boundaries

Respondents supported trans inclusion in pond swimming whilst maintaining boundaries around changing rooms and toilets. These responses emphasised enabling trans participation whilst respecting privacy needs and maintaining some level of sex segregation for intimate facilities. Respondents agreed that trans people should have access to ponds aligned with their gender identity and viewed separation for changing areas as appropriate whilst supporting pond inclusion. They emphasised accommodating multiple groups' needs simultaneously.

Concerns about othering

Respondents expressed concerns that this policy inappropriately separated, stigmatised, or 'othered' trans people. There was worry about singling out trans people or treating them as different or problematic. Respondents expressed concern that separate facilities singled out and stigmatised trans people and raised objections to requiring trans people to use facilities designated for disabled people. They viewed the policy as discriminating against trans people or accommodating prejudice and expressed concerns about treating trans people fairly and with dignity.

Alternative solutions

Respondents offered suggestions for alternative approaches or improvements to the proposal, often arguing for more flexible or inclusive solutions. They suggested that private cubicles should be available for anyone wanting privacy, and suggested gender-neutral facilities as an additional option. Respondents argued that separate facilities should be an optional choice, not a mandatory requirement, and called for trans voices to be centred in decision-making and policy development.

Privacy, dignity and modesty

Respondents emphasised the importance of privacy and dignity, particularly regarding nudity in changing areas. There was recognition that changing rooms were different from swimming spaces due to nudity and the enclosed nature of the facilities. Respondents made a distinction between comfort sharing swimming spaces versus changing spaces with nudity, and emphasised privacy as important for various users for various reasons. They specifically mentioned religious and cultural requirements for privacy and single-sex spaces.

Trans identity affirmation

Respondents affirmed trans people's gender identity and argued for equality and non-discrimination. There was emphasis on treating trans people as the gender they were. Respondents affirmed that trans people were the gender they identified as and recognised trans people as a vulnerable population facing discrimination. They appealed to equality principles and opposing discrimination and argued against biology as the sole determinant of access.

Quality of separate facilities

Respondents gave conditional support based on ensuring separate accessible facilities were of high quality, dignified, accessible, and not stigmatising. This was a major theme emphasising that implementation quality determined whether the policy was acceptable. Respondents emphasised separate facilities being adequately resourced and maintained, and expressed concern that separate facilities should not be second-class or create stigma. They gave specific emphasis on accessibility and whether facilities met accessibility needs.

Enforcement concerns

Respondents raised concerns about feasibility, logistics, implementation, and how the policy would actually work in practice. These included questions about who would decide, how it would be verified, staffing requirements, and practical challenges. Respondents raised general concerns about feasibility and practical challenges and expressed concerns about who would make determinations and how trans identity would be verified. They raised concerns about the burden on staff to make determinations or enforce the policy.

Transition status distinctions

Respondents made distinctions based on stage of transition or surgery status. These responses referred to being 'fully transitioned' or having completed surgery, treating transition as having clear stages or completion points.

Behavioural approach

Respondents argued that the focus should be on behaviour rather than identity, and that this was not really a problem requiring a policy solution. They emphasised addressing actual problematic behaviour rather than excluding based on identity and viewed this as not a real problem requiring separation.

Current practice considerations

Respondents made references to specific current practices at the ponds and facility-specific considerations that affected how the policy would work. They discussed physical capacity considerations at pond facilities and made references to women sunbathing topless at the ponds and how this affected comfort.

Intersectionality

Respondents recognised how the policy affected other groups and intersecting identities beyond a simple trans or cisgender binary. They expressed concern that the policy did not address non-binary people's needs and raised consideration of families and children's needs. Respondents recognised other groups who needed accessible facilities.

Reasons for those who disagreed

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who disagreed with the proposal that trans men could access the Highgate Men's Pond and trans women could access the Kenwood Ladies' Pond and Meadow, but that trans people would be required to use separate accessible toilet, shower, and changing room facilities at each location.

Summary of themes

Discrimination and segregation (5,348 responses)

Othering and exclusion (4,760)

Harassment and danger risk (2,603)

Trans identities valid (2,146)

Comfortable sharing with trans people (2,080)

Transphobic (1,928)

Enforcement impossible (1,858)

Hostile environment (1,720)

Contradicts inclusion (1,643)

Biological sex should determine all access (1,521)

Inferior separate facilities (1,493)

Alternative solutions (1,190)

Diversity and inclusion values (1,019)

Misuse of accessible facilities (1,014)

Legal and rights arguments (971)

Current system works (838)

Harms gender non-conforming people (802)

Practical concerns (591)

Behaviour not identity (480)

Trust and respect (226)

Toilets already private (122)

Discrimination and segregation

Discrimination and segregation was the largest theme among those who disagreed. Respondents viewed this policy as fundamentally discriminatory, akin to segregation, and ethically wrong. Some responses made comparisons to historical segregation of other marginalised groups. Respondents explicitly framed this as segregation similar to racial or other historical segregation and characterised this as fundamentally discriminatory. They argued the policy prioritised cisgender comfort over trans rights and safety.

Othering and exclusion

Respondents expressed concern that requiring trans people to use separate changing, toilets, or showers marked them out as different, singled them out, reinforced stigma, or excluded them socially. This was seen as unfair, humiliating, and making trans people feel unwelcome. Respondents expressed concern this policy singled out trans people and treated them as 'other', and worried that separation perpetuated stigma and harmful stereotypes about trans people. They expressed worry this excluded trans people from community belonging and fellowship and expressed concern this created uncomfortable confrontations and exposed trans people.

Harassment and danger risk

Respondents expressed belief that separating facilities exposed trans people to hostility, harassment, violence, or direct danger. These included fears that the policy 'outed' trans people making them vulnerable to transphobic aggression. Respondents expressed concern that separate facilities requirements forced trans people to out themselves, and expressed fear that visibility led to violence or harassment. They recognised that trans people already faced higher rates of violence and discrimination.

Trans identities valid

Respondents objected based on the principle that trans women were women, trans men were men and should use facilities aligned with their gender identity. The policy was seen as denying gender recognition and equality. Respondents affirmed trans people's gender identity as valid and real, and argued trans people should use

spaces aligned with their gender identity, not separate facilities. They emphasised equality and anti-discrimination principles.

Comfortable sharing with trans people

Cisgender respondents stated they had no problem sharing facilities with trans people and did not think separation was necessary. Responses included personal statements of comfort from cisgender respondents and rejected the idea that trans people posed danger or created problems.

Transphobic

Respondents directly characterised the policy as transphobic, motivated by or resulting in transphobia.

Enforcement impossible

Respondents expressed concerns that the policy would be impossible to enforce without invasive, offensive, or inappropriate policing of people's bodies or gender identity. They argued determining who was trans was impossible or inappropriate, and expressed concern that enforcement required unacceptable invasion of privacy. Respondents expressed concern about the burden on staff and appropriateness of their role and expressed fear that the policy invited the public to police each other's gender.

Hostile environment

Respondents argued this would create an unwelcoming and hostile environment for trans people, discourage them from using the ponds, and make them feel unwelcome and uncomfortable. They expressed concern about the psychological and social environment created and expressed fear the policy would drive trans people away from the ponds. Respondents recognised the psychological harm.

Contradicts inclusion

Respondents viewed the policy as inherently contradictory, claiming to be trans-inclusive whilst segregating facilities. This was seen as hypocrisy of an 'inclusive' label whilst maintaining separation. Respondents argued this was not real inclusion and criticised allowing trans people in ponds but segregating facilities. They characterised the policy as fundamentally hypocritical.

Biological sex should determine all access

Some respondents opposed this policy because it allowed trans people access to the ponds at all, arguing that biological sex should determine access to both ponds and facilities. They argued even pond access should be biological sex-based, and argued the mixed pond was sufficient for trans people.

Inferior separate facilities

Respondents expressed concern that separate accessible facilities were inferior, less private, limited, inadequate, or not equivalent in dignity or quality to main facilities. They worried that separate facilities would be worse quality or stigmatising, and expressed concern that accessible facilities meant for disabled people were being misappropriated. Respondents raised practical concerns about physical limitations of separate facilities.

Alternative solutions

Respondents offered suggestions for better approaches including private cubicles for anyone wanting privacy, gender-neutral facilities, or multiple options available to all. They suggested universal private changing options and supported an additional gender-neutral option. Respondents emphasised letting trans people decide what was most comfortable for them.

Diversity and inclusion values

Respondents called for embracing diversity, being on the right side of history, and creating an accepting and inclusive community. Exclusion was never the right policy. They made moral appeals to historical progress, and argued diversity was a valued aspect of the pond community. Respondents characterised the ponds as a special place that should welcome all.

Misuse of accessible facilities

Respondents expressed concern that this inappropriately used accessible facilities meant for disabled people, took resources from those who needed them, and created wasteful bureaucracy. They expressed concern about impact on disabled people who needed accessible facilities and viewed this as an inefficient use of resources.

Legal and rights arguments

Respondents discussed legal requirements, human rights, and court decisions in relation to trans inclusion. They made mentions of the Supreme Court ruling and made appeals to rights and equality frameworks.

Current system works

Respondents argued current inclusive arrangements worked perfectly well and no change was needed. The system was not broken and should not be fixed. They expressed satisfaction with the status quo and viewed the issue as being created where none existed. Respondents noted that private facilities already existed for anyone who wanted them.

Harms gender non-conforming people

Respondents argued the policy harmed not just trans people but also gender non-conforming cisgender people, masculine women, feminine men, and others who did not fit stereotypes. They expressed concern that gender non-conforming cisgender people would be targeted and recognised that policing appearance harmed many people. Respondents expressed concern about forced outing harming stealth trans people.

Practical concerns

Respondents raised practical concerns about how the policy would work, including confusion, unworkability, and logistical problems. They worried about confusion in implementation, and expressed concern about demands on staff.

Behaviour not identity

Respondents argued the issue was being misidentified, noting that trans people were not the problem or danger. Individual people who behaved badly, regardless of gender or sex, were the issue. Trans people were being punished for unrelated problems. Respondents emphasised addressing specific bad behaviour rather than excluding based on identity and recognised that gender did not determine behaviour. They argued trans people were unfairly blamed for broader issues and suggested positive safety measures rather than exclusion.

Trust and respect

Respondents argued people using the ponds were respectful, open-minded adults who would give each other the space and privacy needed. There was emphasis on trusting people and personal responsibility. They called for trusting people to behave appropriately and emphasised individual responsibility and respect.

Toilets already private

Respondents argued toilet cubicles were private enclosed spaces regardless, so regulating who used which toilet was pointless.

Reasons for those who neither agreed nor disagreed / didn't know

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal that trans men could access the Highgate Men's Pond and trans women could access the Kenwood Ladies' Pond and Meadow, but that trans people would be required to use separate accessible toilet, shower, and changing room facilities at each location.

Summary of themes

Privacy and facility solutions (239 responses)

Opposition to othering (210)

Support for trans inclusion (200)

Safety for all (184)

Proposal unnecessary or problematic (179)

Balancing conflicting considerations (164)

Trans autonomy (82)

Biological sex versus gender identity (76)

Gender policing concerns (54)

No strong opinion (53)

Impact on disabled access (49)

Confusion and need for information (47)

Desire for simplicity (20)

Body diversity (17)

Non-binary and intersex exclusion (8)

Defer to authorities (4)

Privacy and facility solutions

Privacy and facility solutions was the largest theme among neutral respondents. Respondents emphasised choice over compulsion, arguing that individuals should decide the privacy level they wanted. There was recognition of the universal benefit of private cubicles or gender-neutral options helping everyone. Respondents suggested practical facility-based solutions rather than identity-based restrictions. They argued individuals should decide what was comfortable for them, and noted

private cubicles helped all users not just trans people. Respondents suggested adjusting facilities rather than imposing restrictions.

Opposition to othering

Respondents expressed concerns that requiring separate facilities outed trans people, endangered them through forced visibility, symbolically reinforced them as 'other', and undermined dignity and equality. They expressed fear that separate facilities requirements forced trans people to out themselves and expressed concern that separation symbolically reinforced trans people as different. Respondents recognised that visibility increased danger.

Support for trans inclusion

Respondents expressed support for trans inclusion, trans rights as human rights, universal belonging, and equality as non-negotiable, even whilst remaining neutral on the specific proposal. They emphasised that ponds belonged to everyone, and framed inclusion as a fundamental rights issue. Respondents opposed barriers based on others' comfort or medical status.

Safety for all

Respondents emphasised ensuring safety for all pond users, including trans people, cisgender women, and everyone. There was recognition that trans people faced disproportionate risks. Respondents desired all users to feel safe and have privacy options. They recognised trans people's vulnerability and safety needs and emphasised that safety meant all users feeling secure. Respondents expressed a desire for all people to have options if they needed privacy and focused on creating safer spaces through facilities not exclusion.

Proposal unnecessary or problematic

Respondents viewed the proposal as unnecessary intervention, a solution in search of a problem, complicated, impractical, or pandering to transphobia. These responses noted the proposal was informed by fear rather than data. Respondents perceived the proposal as solving a non-existent problem and viewed the plan as cumbersome and misdirected. They perceived the proposal was based on prejudice not real needs.

Balancing conflicting considerations

Respondents saw valid points on multiple sides and remained neutral because they could not prioritise one concern over another. These responses acknowledged competing needs, including trans inclusion, cisgender women's comfort, safety for all, privacy concerns, and dignity, without a clear way to resolve tensions. Respondents recognised that multiple perspectives had merit and expressed a desire to balance empathy for all groups without restricting anyone. They acknowledged discomfort from various sources and showed a tendency to support inclusion whilst recognising complexity.

Trans autonomy

Respondents argued trans people should choose where they felt safe and comfortable. Trans voices should lead policy and not be spoken for. There was recognition of agency and deference to lived experience. Respondents argued trans people should set their own boundaries and make their own decisions, and argued trans voices should lead policy. They moved away from paternalistic decision-making.

Biological sex versus gender identity

Some neutral respondents referenced the biological sex versus gender identity distinction in their considerations.

Gender policing concerns

Respondents expressed worry about how gender would be determined, verified, or policed. There were concerns about the invasiveness of any enforcement activities or how difficult this would be in practice.

No strong opinion

Some respondents did not feel strongly either way, did not see the issue as personally relevant, or had limited emotional investment. Neutrality came from not having a preference rather than balancing views. They expressed genuine indifference or lack of strong feeling and noted the issue did not affect them directly. Respondents cited lack of familiarity with ponds or facilities.

Impact on disabled access

Respondents expressed concern that using accessible facilities for trans people impacted disabled people who needed those facilities and that there should be priority use for those with disabilities.

Confusion and need for information

Respondents expressed that neutrality stemmed from uncertainty about the proposal, unclear question wording, lack of detail, or need for more information about implementation and impacts before forming a view. They found the question or proposal unclear or hard to interpret and wanted additional detail before forming an opinion. Respondents expressed uncertainty about how the policy would function.

Desire for simplicity

Respondents perceived the existing system already worked, expressing resistance to further regulation and a wish to strip away politics, viewing it as 'just swimming' not a cultural battlefield. There was a desire not to overcomplicate things. They expressed confidence current arrangements functioned well and did not want more policy or bureaucracy. Respondents expressed a wish to depoliticise the ponds.

Body diversity

Respondents rejected equating gender identity with anatomy. There was recognition that bodies varied widely across gender identities and life experiences. They argued genitalia or surgical status should not determine access. Respondents acknowledged that bodies varied widely, and argued genitalia should not determine access or identity. They called for de-sensationalising bodies and shared space.

Non-binary and intersex exclusion

Respondents recognised the proposal focused on a binary framework, erasing experiences beyond male or female. Non-binary and intersex people were left out. There was intersectional awareness of how gender, disability, and appearance intersected. Respondents noted the current framing erased experiences beyond male or female, and recognised intersecting identities and experiences. They noted the impact of invisibility on marginalised groups.

Defer to authorities

Some respondents expressed neutrality based on confidence that ponds' managers or authorities should make the decision. They felt they were not personally qualified to judge and expressed trust in those running the ponds to decide. Respondents expressed they lacked expertise or position to decide.

Question 1(e). A hybrid approach where the bathing ponds are trans-inclusive at stated times but strictly single-sex at others

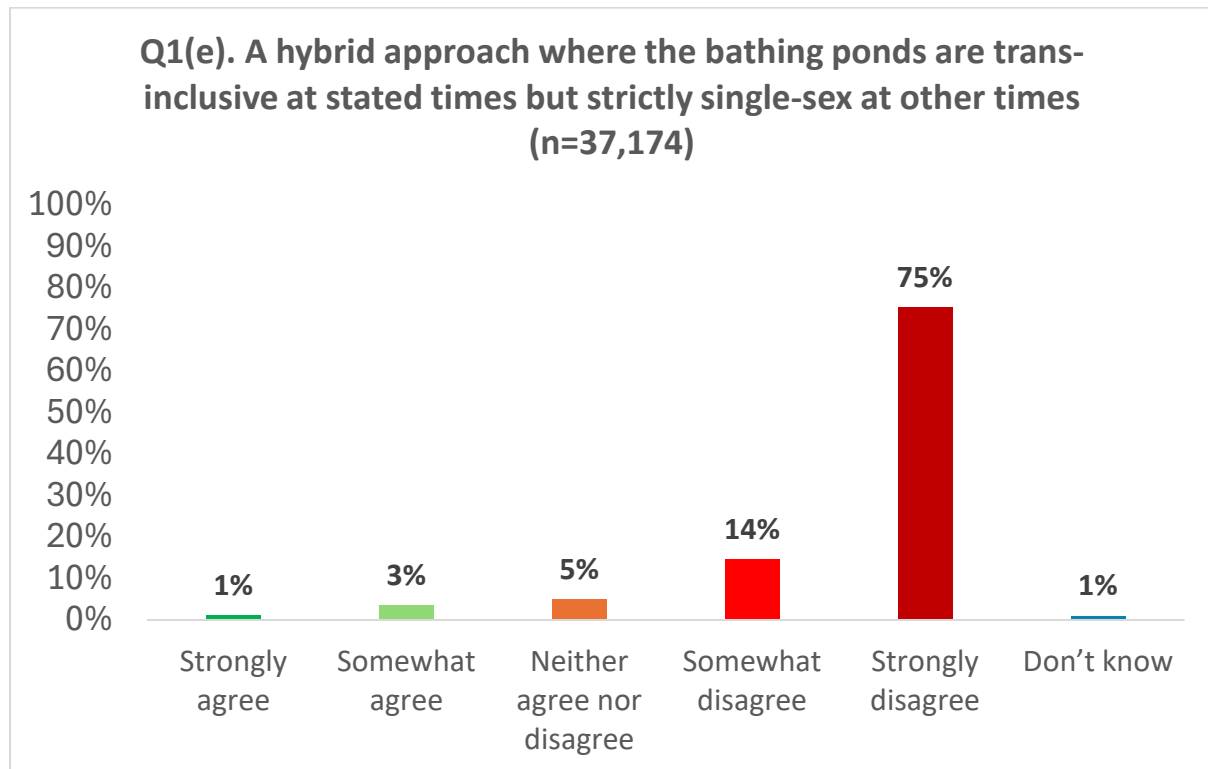
This question asked whether respondents supported a timetable-based model. The ponds would operate as trans-inclusive during some sessions and as strictly single-sex during others. It aimed to understand whether time-segmented access could balance different user preferences.

Closed question

The majority (90%) of respondents disagreed with the option to make the ponds a hybrid approach where they are trans-inclusive at stated times but strictly single-sex at others. 4% agreed with this option, with a further 6% stating that they either didn't know or neither agreed nor disagreed.

This view was also held by the majority of the different groups based on details of their swimming behaviours and where people lived. This included those who use the Hampstead Heath bathing ponds and those who live in London.

Chart E. Q1(e). A hybrid approach where the bathing ponds are trans-inclusive at stated times but strictly single-sex at other times



Reasons for those who agreed

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who agreed with a hybrid time-based approach where the ponds would be operated trans-inclusively at certain specified times and on a strictly biological sex basis at other advertised times, with both session types clearly advertised and scheduled. Most respondents saw this as a compromise balancing competing needs, with support coming from multiple perspectives with different priorities. Agreement was often conditional on fair implementation and clear communication, with a tension between pragmatic acceptance and ethical concerns, and a focus on choice and flexibility for all users.

Summary of themes

Compromise and balance (373 responses)

Preservation of single-sex spaces (233)

Ensuring trans access (230)

Flexibility and choice (113)

Ethical concerns (78)

Reducing tension and conflict (75)

Complexity and practicality concerns (55)

Fairness in implementation (54)

Conditional support (21)

Legal reservations (8)

Community and atmosphere (6)

Clear communication (6)

Compromise and balance

Compromise and balance was the largest theme among those who agreed. Respondents viewed this as a pragmatic solution that neither side loved but everyone could live with. There was emphasis on finding middle ground between inclusion and exclusion, treating everyone fairly, and creating a solution that respected all needs without creating conflict. Respondents recognised compromise as necessary in contested spaces. They endorsed the idea of practical compromise that functioned in reality, and emphasised attempts to respect everyone's needs simultaneously. Respondents emphasised fairness across different constituencies and supported testing the hybrid model before permanent commitment.

Preservation of single-sex spaces

Respondents argued that some users required single-sex sessions for reasons of faith, modesty, safety, or past trauma. These responses framed separation not as exclusion but as necessary protection or respect for personal boundaries. There was recognition of legitimate needs for biological sex-based spaces. Respondents emphasised respecting faith-based requirements for single-sex environments and emphasised the importance of women-only spaces for those with trauma histories. They noted general desire for physical and psychological security in sex-specific settings and expressed legal or principled commitment to maintaining sex-based access.

Ensuring trans access

Respondents expressed agreement based on ensuring trans people still had meaningful, scheduled access to the ponds. There was emphasis on equal access and belonging, protecting trans users' rights to dignity and safety, and avoiding total exclusion. Respondents emphasised trans swimmers had meaningful access to desired ponds, and argued trans users should enjoy the ponds as freely as anyone else. They suggested inclusive sessions helped normalise trans participation, and noted inclusive hours provided a buffer from harassment. Respondents acknowledged that designated times could feel patronising.

Flexibility and choice

Respondents expressed support stemming from belief that the hybrid model allowed different groups to use the ponds in ways that suited them. People could choose sessions that aligned with their comfort or identity. There was emphasis on user agency and self-determination. Respondents noted everyone could select times that worked for them and recognised diverse user requirements. They emphasised people making their own choices about comfort.

Ethical concerns

Respondents addressed the moral and cultural meaning of the proposal. Some saw it as a flawed but necessary compromise; others feared it sent the wrong signal about trans equality or entrenched segregation. There was tension between practical acceptance and ethical discomfort. Respondents expressed acceptance tinged with discomfort or guilt and expressed concern that separating groups reinforced discrimination. They recognised that gender expression varied across contexts, and worried about the gap between good intentions and actual effects.

Reducing tension and conflict

Respondents expressed agreement because the hybrid system was perceived to lessen conflict between groups by giving each dedicated times. There was emphasis on keeping peace, avoiding hostility, and maintaining civility and goodwill in the community. Respondents suggested structured compromise could ease tensions and expressed hope for maintaining a harmonious atmosphere. They noted different groups each got some of what they needed.

Complexity and practicality concerns

Despite agreement, respondents expressed doubts about whether the proposed model could function smoothly. There were worries about bureaucratic confusion, complicated bookings, disruption to established routines, and whether the theoretically fair idea would actually work in practice. Respondents expressed fear that new scheduling systems complicated operations, and anticipated resistance from regular users whose habits might be disturbed. They expressed scepticism about functioning in practice versus theory and raised concerns about how times would be allocated fairly.

Fairness in implementation

Respondents emphasised transparent scheduling and equal treatment. There was insistence that trans-inclusive hours should not be tokenistic or relegated to inconvenient times. Respondents argued fairness must be visible and measurable in practice, not just in principle. They argued trans-inclusive hours should equal or exceed single-sex ones, and insisted inclusive sessions must be at practical, desirable times. Respondents emphasised clarity in how times were assigned and communicated and called for monitoring to ensure equity was maintained.

Conditional support

Respondents expressed that agreement depended on specific conditions being met, including good communication, fair allocation, proper enforcement, and adequate resources. Support was not unconditional but contingent on the quality of implementation. Respondents noted quality of implementation determined success, and insisted rules must be applied equitably and predictably. They emphasised sufficient investment in making it work.

Legal reservations

Some respondents supported the hybrid idea whilst expressing uncertainty about its legality or alignment with wider policy but still felt it was the most workable option despite reservations. They raised questions about whether the hybrid model was legal and viewed it as the most workable option even if imperfect legally or ethically.

Community and atmosphere

Respondents focused on preserving harmony, tolerance, and the distinctive social character of the ponds. They cared most about coexistence, ensuring whatever system emerged fostered goodwill rather than division. There was focus on protecting pond community and culture. Respondents emphasised maintaining positive social atmosphere and argued all groups should find emotional and social comfort. They emphasised protecting the historic communal spirit amid change and expressed belief that the majority were comfortable with trans inclusion.

Clear communication

Respondents viewed the model as easier to manage, explain, and implement as long as times were clearly advertised and communicated. There was emphasis on clarity, signage, communication, and operational simplicity once the system was established. Respondents noted straightforward scheduling made it workable, and emphasised information must be visible and accessible. They noted adequate resources to manage transitions.

Reasons for those who disagreed

This section presents analysis of responses from those who disagreed with a hybrid time-based approach where the ponds would be operated trans-inclusively at certain specified times and on a strictly biological sex basis at other advertised times.

Summary of themes

Discrimination and segregation (8,921 responses)

Inclusion must be unconditional (3,232)

Dehumanisation (2,348)

Enforcement impossible (2,279)

Exclusionary and stigmatising (2,215)

Trans identity affirmation (1,939)

Safety risk to trans people (1,374)

Biological sex should determine all access (1,298)

Critique of motivations (1,247)

Emotional impact (991)

Scheduling impractical (982)

Weak compromise (890)

Current system works (819)

Resource waste (278)

Reversal of progress (248)

Time-based segregation outdated (120)

Religious and trauma considerations (114)

Discrimination and segregation

Discrimination and segregation was the largest theme among those who disagreed. Respondents framed the proposal as active discrimination reviving segregation logic. Some responses made comparisons to historical racial segregation. These responses viewed the proposal as creating second-class citizenship violating ethics and law. Respondents made explicit comparisons to historical segregation and characterised the policy as discriminating based on trans status. They argued trans people were positioned as socially and institutionally inferior and referenced the Equality Act and human rights frameworks.

Inclusion must be unconditional

Respondents rejected time-limited equality. Conditional inclusion was not viewed as real inclusion. Fairness must be constant not conditional. Respondents argued inclusion could not be restricted to certain times, and characterised designated times as tokenism not real inclusion. They argued selective inclusion undermined community.

Dehumanisation

Respondents argued the proposal made trans people feel excluded and dehumanised. It further enforced negative and false stereotypes and treated trans people as potential threats undermining their humanity. Respondents argued the policy treated trans people as less than human, and argued the proposal reinforced negative stereotypes. They expressed ethical responsibility to resist and called for compassion and empathy.

Enforcement impossible

Respondents argued implementation was impossible and invasive. Policing gender at the door was viewed as absurd, unworkable, and violating privacy. There was no way to determine who attended which times. Respondents argued it was impossible to determine who qualified for which sessions and argued enforcement would require inappropriate questioning or surveillance. They suggested self-determination was safer and simpler, and noted staff were put in an impossible position. Respondents noted added complexity, cost, and confusion.

Exclusionary and stigmatising

Respondents expressed strong belief that scheduled 'single-sex' times effectively excluded or singled out trans people, reinforcing stigma. This created windows of exclusion rather than meaningful access. Respondents argued time-restricted access was exclusion, and argued the policy singled out and stigmatised trans people.

Trans identity affirmation

Respondents asserted that trans people's gender identities were legitimate and should be respected without conditions or restrictions. Their access and belonging

should not be qualified or limited. Respondents affirmed trans people's gender identities as real and valid, and argued trans people deserved equal access without qualification. They emphasised trans people were a normal part of society.

Safety risk to trans people

Respondents argued splitting times increased risk for trans and gender-nonconforming people by outing them or giving transphobes a timetable for hate. Fixed 'trans times' signalled when to target individuals. Respondents argued designated inclusive times told transphobes when to harass people and expressed that the requirement to attend at certain times outed people. They noted not just trans people, but gender-nonconforming cisgender people would be affected.

Biological sex should determine all access

A small number of responses came from those wanting strictly biological sex-based access all the time. These respondents disagreed because the policy was too inclusive rather than too exclusive.

Critique of motivations

Respondents viewed the proposal as appeasing hate groups rather than protecting anyone, rewarding prejudice. Those opposing trans inclusion would not be satisfied regardless of compromise. Respondents characterised the proposal as yielding to prejudice not principle and argued those opposing inclusion were never satisfied. They argued the policy legitimised discrimination.

Emotional impact

Respondents argued the policy created psychological distress, alienation, humiliation, and anxiety for trans people. It undermined solidarity and mutual respect. Respondents noted emotional harm to trans individuals and argued temporal restrictions undermined belonging. They noted the policy undermined solidarity among pond users and expressed concern for trans people from cisgender allies.

Scheduling impractical

Respondents argued scheduled sessions would not align with users' availability or needs. Times would not suit people making the system impractical and unfair in reality. Respondents argued scheduling did not match how people used the ponds, and noted fair allocation of times was impossible. They argued overcomplicated rules reduced use.

Weak compromise

Respondents argued the proposal avoided the real question about inclusion. It was viewed as an unnecessary compromise satisfying no one. Respondents argued the proposal did not address the fundamental inclusion issue and characterised it as a

weak or failed compromise that satisfied nobody. They noted logical contradictions within the proposal.

Current system works

Respondents argued the existing trans-inclusive arrangement was proven functional and peaceful. There was no evidence of issues that would justify revision. Respondents noted the current system worked well, and argued there was no evidence of problems. They noted the ponds' historical significance to the LGBTQIA+ community.

Resource waste

Respondents raised practical objections to the sheer hassle, cost, and confusion this created for no clear gain. There were concerns about administrative complexity, financial inefficiency, and operational disruption. Respondents noted managing restricted hours confused staff and users, and argued systems became needlessly complicated. They argued resources were spent for no measurable gain.

Reversal of progress

Respondents argued the policy represented a reversal of social and cultural advancement toward equality. It was viewed as an erosion of progress. Respondents characterised the policy as backward movement on equality, and argued the policy signalled trans presence required management. They noted trans people had always been part of the community.

Time-based segregation outdated

Respondents viewed the notion of dividing time into strictly gendered slots as outdated, discriminatory, and incompatible with modern understandings of gender. Respondents argued scheduling by gender was outdated and wrong, and emphasised contemporary views recognised gender complexity.

Religious and trauma considerations

A small number of respondents acknowledged religious modesty or trauma-based needs but argued these should not justify excluding trans people. These responses recognised concerns but prioritised trans inclusion. Respondents recognised religious or trauma needs but not at the expense of trans inclusion and expressed conditional or minimal support as a lesser evil. They suggested context-specific accommodation without excluding trans people.

Reasons for those who neither agreed nor disagreed / didn't know

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who neither agreed nor disagreed with a hybrid time-based approach where the ponds would be operated trans-inclusively at certain specified times and on a strictly biological sex basis at other advertised times.

Summary of themes

Trans inclusivity considerations (489 responses)

Fairness and discrimination concerns (370)

Mixed feelings (289)

Unnecessary and divisive (267)

Views on single-sex spaces (178)

Safety for multiple groups (166)

Conditional acceptance (152)

Enforcement concerns (100)

Complexity concerns (65)

Practicality uncertainty (44)

Need more information (37)

Limited personal stake (30)

Trans inclusivity considerations

Trans inclusivity considerations was the largest theme among neutral respondents. Respondents expressed views on trans inclusion ranging from it should be the default or priority to the need to consult the trans community. There was recognition of the importance of trans inclusion even within neutrality. Respondents argued the baseline should be inclusive, and emphasised trans voices were essential in decision-making. They expressed worry about effects on trans people's sense of self.

Fairness and discrimination concerns

Respondents expressed worries about whether the approach was fair or could enable discrimination. There were questions about equitable treatment and potential for prejudice. Respondents worried this might enable or institutionalise discrimination and questioned whether the approach was equitable. They raised specific concerns about fair distribution of times.

Mixed feelings

Neutrality arose from seeing merits and drawbacks in the hybrid model without a clear preference. Respondents could understand multiple perspectives and were not sure it was the right balance. They recognised the model had both positive and negative aspects and were able to appreciate different viewpoints without taking a side. Respondents expressed uncertainty about whether this was the optimal solution.

Unnecessary and divisive

Respondents viewed the change as unnecessary and potentially creating division where none existed. There was questioning of the need for policy change. Respondents argued there was no need for this alteration, and expressed concern it might create conflict or division.

Views on single-sex spaces

Respondents expressed a range of views on single-sex spaces from support to opposition, reflecting different perspectives within neutral responses. They expressed support for single-sex spaces and expressed opposition to single-sex spaces. Respondents acknowledged different requirements.

Safety for multiple groups

Respondents recognised safety concerns for various users. There was both potential for increased safety and concerns about safety, for both trans people and cisgender people. Respondents noted potential for increased safety for trans people and noted potential for increased safety for cisgender people. They expressed worries about safety for various reasons.

Conditional acceptance

Respondents neither committed to support nor opposition. The approach could work if carefully designed, depending on scheduling, communication, fairness, and execution. Success depended on the specifics of how it was done. Respondents noted it depended on the quality of implementation, and emphasised scheduling must be equitable. They stressed it must be well advertised and transparent and argued implementation must be equitable.

Enforcement concerns

Respondents expressed worries about how the policy would be enforced, who would police it, and privacy or dignity implications of enforcement. They raised questions about enforcement mechanisms and expressed concerns about invasiveness of policing. Respondents noted the impact on employees and users.

Complexity concerns

Respondents expressed worries about administrative complexity, confusion, and operational challenges of the hybrid system. They argued the system would be too complicated to manage and noted potential for confusion amongst users and staff. Respondents raised management and resource challenges.

Practicality uncertainty

Respondents questioned whether the hybrid approach would function smoothly in reality but did not strongly oppose or support it. There were practical concerns without a firm position. They expressed doubt about whether it would work in practice and noted operations and management would determine success. Respondents looked at similar systems elsewhere.

Need more information

Neutrality was driven by feeling the proposal was unclear, ambiguous, or lacking detail. Respondents needed more information to form an opinion. They expressed difficulty understanding what was proposed and noted they could not decide without additional detail. Respondents emphasised specific operational details mattered.

Limited personal stake

Respondents were unable to take a strong view because they did not use the ponds often, had limited familiarity, felt the issue did not affect them directly, or lacked sufficient knowledge. They noted the issue did not affect the respondent and expressed they did not know the facilities well enough. Respondents noted they simply did not know enough or had no view.

Question 1(f). They should be mixed-sex spaces

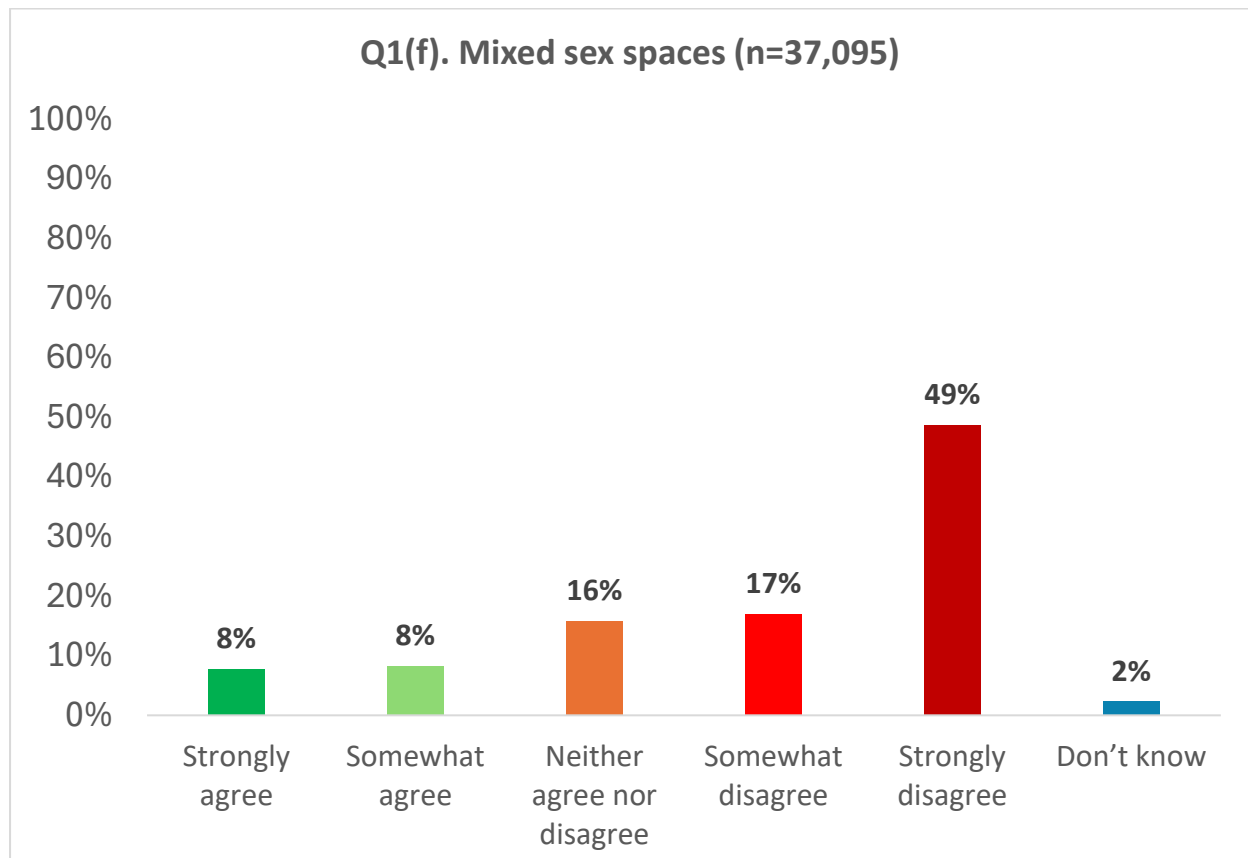
This question tested support for turning both the Men's and Ladies' Ponds into mixed-sex facilities open to everyone. Although the City of London Corporation did not favour this option, it included the question to assess public appetite for fully open access.

Closed question

The majority (66%) of respondents disagreed with the option to make the ponds mixed-sex spaces. 16% agreed with this option, with a further 18% stating that they either didn't know or neither agreed nor disagreed.

This view was also held by the majority of the different groups based on details of their swimming behaviours and where people lived. This included those who use the Hampstead Heath bathing ponds and those who live in London.

Chart F. Q1(f). Mixed sex spaces



Reasons for those who agreed

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who agreed that both Highgate Men's Pond and Kenwood Ladies' Pond should be accessible to everyone regardless of sex or gender.

Summary of themes

Trans and non-binary inclusion (895 responses)

Equality and universal access (689)

Sex segregation outdated (492)

Anti-exclusion sentiment (463)

History versus modernisation (355)

Social cohesion (238)

Personal preference for mixed (220)

Safety concerns about cisgender men (201)

Practicality and simplicity (151)

Legal and social progress (137)

Mixed as compromise (108)

Just a pond (106)

Anticipation of backlash (91)

Infrastructure and privacy needs (89)

Gradual transition (49)

Alternative zoning (6)

Trans and non-binary inclusion

Trans and non-binary inclusion was the largest theme among those who agreed. Respondents recognised that current systems excluded or restricted non-binary and trans people. Mixed or inclusive spaces were seen to reduce discrimination, harassment, and 'gender policing'. These would improve wellbeing, dignity and ease of access. Respondents noted the current system excluded non-binary people, and argued mixed spaces reduced trans discrimination and gender policing. They argued inclusive spaces improved trans wellbeing and dignity and framed trans rights as human rights.

Equality and universal access

Respondents expressed support grounded in belief that all facilities should be equally available to everyone regardless of sex or gender. Mixed-sex access was framed as fair, modern, and inclusive. Equal access to quality spaces was framed as a justice issue. Respondents argued everyone should have access to all facilities and argued all users should have the same options. They noted the Men's Pond was seen as superior in size and amenities, which was viewed as inequitable.

Sex segregation outdated

Respondents expressed the general sentiment that dividing ponds by sex or gender was unnecessary, outdated, antiquated, arbitrary, dehumanising, or inconsistent with other public swim spaces. Segregation was seen as socially regressive. Respondents viewed sex or gender division as serving no modern purpose, and noted ponds were out of step with general UK public swimming practice. They argued separation reinforced or perpetuated unnecessary social divisions and made comparisons to other historical segregation.

Anti-exclusion sentiment

Respondents included explicit statements that excluding trans people would be harmful, unjust, discriminatory, and socially regressive. Trans inclusion was viewed as ethically non-negotiable. Respondents characterised trans exclusion as harmful and unjust, and expressed explicit opposition to exclusionary beliefs. They viewed standing against prejudice as having positive impact.

History versus modernisation

Respondents expressed tension between honouring the long-standing tradition of segregated ponds and adopting contemporary, inclusive norms. Some said history mattered; others characterised it as outdated or a shield for exclusion. Respondents acknowledged the significance of pond history, and argued tradition and progress were compatible. They expressed concern that nostalgia was being used as a shield for exclusion.

Social cohesion

Respondents noted people wanted to swim with partners, friends, and children. There was value in socialising across genders. Mixed spaces were seen as normal. This kept families, couples and friend groups together. Respondents noted mixed spaces allowed group swimming, and argued mixed environments promoted interaction. They noted this aligned with general public leisure culture.

Personal preference for mixed

For some respondents, mixed-sex facilities were simply normal, comfortable, or preferable based on their own experience of swimming spaces elsewhere. There was personal comfort with mixed environments. Respondents expressed personal preference for mixed spaces, and noted this was standard in other pools they used.

Safety concerns about cisgender men

Respondents specifically expressed fear of harm from cisgender men in mixed spaces. There was a parallel argument that this did not justify excluding trans women. There was desire for safe spaces without resorting to gender segregation. Respondents expressed concern about male violence in mixed spaces, and argued fear of cisgender men was different from trans inclusion. They expressed wanting safety through other means.

Practicality and simplicity

Respondents viewed mixed-sex ponds as a straightforward, easy-to-operate system that removed complexity and confusion created by multiple rules or schedules. This reduced administrative hassle and 'gender policing'. Respondents noted this eliminated the complexity of other options, and argued there was less management overhead. They noted there was no need to verify identity or enforce categories.

Legal and social progress

Respondents made comparisons to segregation in other domains. These argued inclusive policy aligned with equality law, human rights, social progress, and London's reputation. There were references to moral and legal imperatives. Respondents argued the legal framework supported inclusion and emphasised progressive direction. They expressed concern about the city's reputation being at stake, and characterised concerns about trans people as artificial moral panic.

Mixed as compromise

Respondents included arguments supporting mixed pond as a compromise or recommending multiple types, such as mixed plus inclusive gendered options, or gendered names without enforcement. This might not have been ideal preference but was acceptable fallback. Respondents viewed mixed as a middle ground solution and suggested offering various options. They suggested gendered names without enforcement, meaning labels but no policing, and viewed this as an acceptable alternative.

Just a pond

Respondents stated it was 'just a pond' and should not become an ideological battleground. There was a sense that the debate was disproportionate to the stakes. There was desire to keep the experience simple, accessible, and drama-free. Respondents viewed the issue as overblown and emphasised keeping it simple. They suggested avoiding making it political.

Anticipation of a backlash

Respondents showed awareness that change might be unpopular or might lose some swimmers, even if respondents personally supported inclusion. There was anticipation of public resistance or controversy. Respondents anticipated change

would face opposition and noted some swimmers might withdraw. They weighed trade-offs.

Infrastructure and privacy needs

Respondents argued if ponds became fully inclusive, they needed proper facilities including changing, privacy, and monitoring to ensure comfort and safety. Infrastructure must reflect the shift toward mixed use. Respondents argued private changing was essential for mixed spaces, and noted active oversight was required. They noted facilities must be designed for the new model.

Gradual transition

Respondents offered suggestions for slow introduction, allocated mixed days, rotation systems, or structured reviews to gather user feedback. Phased introduction allowed adjustment and assessment. Respondents suggested gradual implementation to reduce shock and suggested trying before full commitment. They suggested structured schedule during change period and emphasised gathering input during the process was essential.

Alternative zoning

Respondents offered creative suggestions to divide ponds by use or atmosphere rather than gender, such as 'quiet pond', 'social pond', or 'large pond'. This reframed ponds as functional rather than identity-based spaces. Respondents suggested dividing by atmosphere or activity, by function and not identity, and suggested dividing by size or features. They suggested creating functional not identity-based spaces.

Reasons for those who disagreed

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who disagreed with the proposal that both Highgate Men's Pond and Kenwood Ladies' Pond should be accessible to everyone regardless of sex or gender. The majority of responses expressed desire to maintain gendered spaces whilst supporting trans inclusion within those gendered spaces (trans women in the ladies' pond, trans men in the men's pond).

Summary of themes

Current system works (3,233 responses)

Women's-only sanctuary (2,976)

Trans-inclusive gendered spaces (2,136)

Cisgender men as safety risk (1,863)

Preserve historic tradition (1,808)

Same-gender comfort and privacy (1,610)

Value of multiple options (1,113)

Trans inclusion non-negotiable (618)

Rights and legal considerations (605)

Avoiding culture war (243)

Fear of conflict (138)

Prioritising active users (75)

Non-binary and intersex needs (49)

Current system works

Current system works was the largest theme among those who disagreed. Respondents expressed that the current setup already worked and did not need alteration. There was no evidence of problems under existing arrangements. The proposal was seen as unnecessary interference. Respondents noted current arrangements were working effectively, and argued there was no demonstrated issue requiring change. They viewed change as meddling in a functional system and noted those who wanted mixed swimming already had that choice.

Women's-only sanctuary

Respondents treated the ladies' pond like a sanctuary people did not want disrupted. It was seen as restorative and protective. There was shared comfort and solidarity among cisgender and trans women. There was worry that opening it up would destroy its function. Respondents viewed the ladies' pond as a special significance environment and valued the community of women including trans women. They expressed worry that opening to men would destroy its function and expressed deeply felt connection to women-only space.

Trans-inclusive gendered spaces

Respondents expressed desire for gendered ponds to remain, but wanted them to be trans-inclusive, not exclusionary. There was support for trans women in the ladies' pond and trans men in the men's pond. There was rejection of transphobic rhetoric. Gendered spaces should remain inclusive. Respondents expressed trans people belonged in gender-aligned spaces and rejected transphobic rhetoric. They expressed belief that inclusion worked within gender-separated spaces.

Cisgender men as safety risk

Respondents viewed cisgender men as the group most likely to make others unsafe. There was fear of objectification, harassment and discomfort from cisgender men. Safety concerns drove desire to maintain women-only space. Trans women were explicitly welcomed in these responses. Respondents expressed specific concern about cisgender men and expressed fear of objectification and harassment. They noted safety concerns drove desire for separation and made clear distinction between cisgender men and trans women.

Preserve historic tradition

Respondents expressed strong attachment to the long-standing identity and heritage of men's and ladies' ponds as single-sex spaces. There was feeling that mixed-sex access would undermine unique cultural and historical value. The ponds' identity was seen as tied to their gendered nature. Respondents valued long-standing gendered tradition, and noted heritage was tied to LGBTQIA+ and community identity. They expressed fear of losing what made the ponds unique.

Same-gender comfort and privacy

Respondents noted some users preferred single-gender spaces for reasons such as religion, personal preference, modesty, and privacy. There was comfort around one's own gender identity and value in single-sex environments. Respondents noted faith-based need for single-sex spaces and expressed individual preference for same-gender environment. They noted particular concern in changing areas.

Value of multiple options

Respondents valued having options rather than one option forced upon them. There was support for keeping gendered and mixed ponds. There was fear that mixing everything reduced choice. Respondents argued variety served different needs and suggested occasional mixed days as compromise. They expressed fear of eliminating gendered options removing freedom, and noted different users had different needs.

Trans inclusion non-negotiable

Respondents insisted trans inclusion was non-negotiable even if compromises were needed. Trans people were not viewed as the problem; transphobia was. Gendered spaces should remain inclusive, not bow to anti-trans pressure. Respondents stated trans inclusion was non-negotiable, and argued the issue was bigotry not trans people. They urged resisting transphobic demands, and stated if forced to choose, they would prefer mixed to excluding trans people.

Rights and legal considerations

Some respondents focused on the legal and ethical side of access. There was awareness of legal obligations like the Equality Act. There was desire to avoid discrimination and balance rights across groups. Respondents noted legal framework considerations and expressed desire to avoid discrimination. They noted different groups had different needs and expressed specific concern about women losing protections.

Avoiding culture war

Respondents expressed that users did not want ponds turned into a symbol or platform for transphobic debates. There was fear of the ponds becoming an ideological battleground. There was frustration that a small vocal minority was having disproportionate influence. Respondents believed decisions should reflect actual ponds users rather than political agendas, with some responses distinguishing between regular swimmers and political activists.

Fear of conflict

Some respondents expressed belief that mixed-sex ponds would lead to discomfort, complaints, or conflict between users, reducing enjoyment and community harmony. Tension and uncomfortable atmosphere were feared. Respondents anticipated disagreements and disputes and argued the environment would become unpleasant. They noted the swimming experience would be degraded.

Prioritising active users

Respondents expressed belief that regular swimmers' commitment should matter in decision-making. Active users wanted lived experience respected. There was fear of losing regular users if all ponds became mixed. There was concern about damage to community culture. Respondents argued regular swimmers' experience counted and

expressed concern changes might drive away established users. They noted social bonds were at risk, and argued policy should consider regular swimmers' needs.

Non-binary and intersex needs

Respondents expressed concern for gender non-conforming users being overlooked or uncared for. Non-binary needs were seen as under-explored. There was need for specific consultation. There was recognition that gender non-conforming users did not fit current categories. Respondents noted more consideration was needed and argued consultation with non-binary and intersex people was essential. They noted the current system was inadequate for non-binary people and referenced FLINTA space considerations.

Reasons for those who neither agreed nor disagreed / didn't know

This section presents the analysis of responses from individuals who neither agreed nor disagreed that both Highgate Men's Pond and Kenwood Ladies' Pond should be accessible to everyone regardless of sex or gender. This neutral dataset showed substantive engagement similar to other neutral datasets.

Summary of themes

Preference for status quo (740 responses)

Trans inclusion non-negotiable (733)

Genuine uncertainty (597)

Safety about cisgender men not trans women (349)

Maintain gendered but trans-inclusive (203)

Over-complication (116)

Cultural modernisation (112)

Conditional support for mixed (103)

Frustration with transphobic influence (97)

Non-binary inclusion (95)

Practical concerns (53)

Religious and cultural needs (38)

Critique of consultation (30)

Trials and evidence (7)

Preference for status quo

Preference for status quo was the largest theme among neutral respondents. Respondents expressed preference for maintaining the current arrangement where gendered ponds were trans-inclusive, viewing it as already functional and culturally significant. They noted deep cultural meaning and heritage of gendered ponds, and argued the current arrangements already functioned smoothly and inclusively. Respondents expressed fear that removing gendered ponds would erode unique communities.

Trans inclusion non-negotiable

Respondents emphasised that whatever option was chosen, trans inclusion must be maintained. Trans exclusion was not acceptable even if respondents were unsure about mixed versus gendered spaces. Respondents argued any future arrangement must avoid discrimination and rejected gender policing or proof-of-gender rules. They stated mixed ponds were preferred over any scenario that marginalised trans users.

Genuine uncertainty

Respondents showed genuine uncertainty, seeing merit in multiple options, or not having strong feelings. This represented genuine neutrality rather than strategic positioning. They expressed genuine uncertainty about the best arrangement and recognised both benefits and drawbacks in every option. Respondents expressed conditional acceptance depending on safety, comfort, and implementation, and expressed lack of strong opinion or personal stake. They showed openness to change but were not fully committed.

Safety about cisgender men not trans women

Respondents expressed concerns about safety and comfort in mixed spaces, with consistent emphasis that concerns were about cisgender men not trans women. Many explicitly supported trans inclusion while having reservations about mixed-sex spaces. Respondents noted the need for women-only environments for safety and peace and expressed discomfort with cisgender men specifically in vulnerable spaces. They recognised that danger was linked to behaviour, not trans presence.

Maintain gendered but trans-inclusive

Respondents expressed preference for keeping gendered ponds, both men's and ladies', but ensuring they remained fully trans-inclusive with self-selection based on identity. They argued for keeping gendered but trans-inclusive ponds as the core model and expressed support for self-selection based on identity and comfort. Respondents suggested gender-focused or traditionally aligned spaces without gatekeeping.

Over-complication

Respondents expressed perception that the proposal unnecessarily complicated a functioning system, possibly driven by bureaucratic motives rather than genuine need. They characterised this as attempting to fix what was not broken and expressed suspicion that the mixed-only option was a pre-decided bureaucratic shortcut. Respondents noted the conversation was made unnecessarily complex.

Cultural modernisation

Respondents viewed complete desegregation as reflecting evolving understanding of gender and representing progress. Gender segregation was seen as outdated. They argued gender segregation was outdated in contemporary society and noted recognition of evolving understandings of gender identity. Respondents expressed openness to experimenting with access and exploring previously restricted spaces.

Conditional support for mixed

Respondents expressed support or openness to mixed-sex spaces contingent on specific conditions being met, particularly around facilities and privacy infrastructure. They viewed full mixing as the most universally inclusive option and expressed hope that mixed spaces could reduce stigma and fear. Respondents noted this better served non-binary and gender-nonconforming people, and emphasised support was conditional on improved facilities for privacy and safety.

Frustration with transphobic influence

Respondents expressed anger that reactionary groups and misinformation about trans people were driving the consultation and debate. There was frustration that anti-trans sentiment was shaping policy. They expressed anger at reactionary groups shaping public policy, and expressed belief that fear of trans people was rooted in misinformation. Respondents argued affected groups, including trans women and non-binary people, should lead decisions.

Non-binary inclusion

Respondents gave specific attention to needs of non-binary, genderqueer, and gender-nonconforming people who did not fit into a binary system. They noted the current binary system excluded non-binary people, and argued mixed spaces better served gender-diverse users. Respondents referenced FLINTA spaces as an alternative and emphasised the need to consult non-binary and intersex users specifically.

Practical concerns

Respondents raised practical questions and concerns about facilities, particularly changing rooms, toilets, and privacy infrastructure in any reorganisation. They expressed anxiety over changing rooms, toilets, and showers, and expressed acceptance of mixed water if changing areas remained gendered or private.

Respondents rejected systems requiring body surveillance or genital policing and expressed uncertainty about how mixed spaces would work in practice.

Religious and cultural needs

Respondents recognised that some users had religious or cultural needs for gender-segregated spaces, and this should be accommodated alongside other needs. They expressed desire to preserve options that accommodated religious modesty and recognised varied personal comfort levels tied to identity or belief. Respondents argued differentiated spaces offered flexibility for diverse communities.

Critique of consultation

Respondents criticised how the consultation was structured, questions were worded, or issues were framed. There were methodological concerns about the consultation itself. They argued questions were leading or poorly designed and expressed concern the consultation was influenced by anti-trans campaigning. Respondents noted the process lacked proper community engagement.

Trials and evidence

Respondents expressed preference for data-driven decisions through time-limited trials rather than permanent changes based on speculation. They wanted to see how it worked in practice. Respondents suggested time-limited pilots to gauge real impact and expressed desire for decisions based on actual user experience, not speculation. They expressed concern that consultation materials biased responses.

Question 1(g). Are there any other options that should be considered?

This question provided space for respondents to propose their own ideas for access arrangements. It sought suggestions beyond the formal list of options, allowing users to highlight alternative models or nuances not covered elsewhere.

Other options put forward

This section presents the analysis of responses to an open-ended question inviting respondents to suggest alternative options or approaches not covered in Q1(a) through Q1(f).

Summary of themes

Maintain current trans-inclusive policy (2,412 responses)

Ponds as inclusive spaces (1,908)

Brief responses (1,389)

Anti-trans rhetoric concerns (1,285)

Refuting safety concerns (1,174)

Legal requirements (992)

Ponds should be single-sex (871)

Safety concerns for women (562)

Infrastructure improvements (525)

Respect and kindness (501)

Anti-harassment policies (446)

Multiple options (322)

Mixed pond year-round (201)

Alternative operational models (166)

Education and dialogue (143)

Evidence-based decision making (109)

Maintain current trans-inclusive policy

Maintain current trans-inclusive policy was the largest theme. Respondents made direct statements that ponds should retain the existing trans-inclusive policy, with trans people swimming in their identified gender's pond. This was a status quo preference from an inclusion perspective. Respondents argued for retaining the current trans-inclusive system, and noted consideration for non-binary, intersex, and gender-fluid people. They framed trans inclusion as a human right and emphasised the importance of choice and self-selection. Respondents noted transgender people as a minority experiencing disproportionate reaction.

Ponds as inclusive spaces

Respondents emphasised positive aspects of the current inclusive policy, citing the ponds' history of diversity, welcoming atmosphere, and lack of problems with trans inclusion. They noted ponds were inclusive and diverse spaces and noted no previous issues with the trans-inclusive policy. Respondents highlighted the strong LGBTQIA+ pond community and noted the difficulty policing a non-trans-inclusive policy.

Anti-trans rhetoric concerns

Respondents provided critiques of the consultation process, concerns about organised anti-trans responses, disappointment that the consultation was happening at all, and calls for the trans community to be properly consulted. They expressed concerns about anti-trans rhetoric influencing the consultation and raised concern about disproportionate responses from anti-trans campaigners. Respondents expressed disappointment and anger that the consultation was happening and called for specific consultation with the trans community.

Refuting safety concerns

Respondents provided direct counter-arguments to safety concerns, asserting that trans people posed no threat, that trans exclusion did not increase safety, and that trans people were being unfairly characterised. They argued trans people were not a threat to women's safety, and argued trans women were being unfairly characterised.

Legal requirements

Respondents made appeals to legal frameworks, particularly Supreme Court rulings and the Equality Act. These were primarily used by respondents arguing for restriction of trans access, claiming that trans inclusion was unlawful or that only biological sex-based access complied with law.

Ponds should be single-sex

Respondents presented arguments that ponds should operate on a biological sex basis, excluding trans people from gender-aligned spaces. This was framed as returning to the original purpose or protecting women's rights. Respondents argued for return to single-sex facilities based on biological sex and expressed fear of erosion of women's rights. They noted religious and cultural needs for single-sex spaces.

Safety concerns for women

Respondents expressed concern that trans inclusion posed safety risks to women and girls, with calls to ban or restrict trans access to protect female users.

Infrastructure improvements

Respondents offered practical suggestions for improving facilities to better serve all users, particularly focused on changing areas, toilets, and privacy provisions. These were generally presented as solutions that could reduce conflict. Respondents called for further investment and facility improvements, and suggested gender-neutral changing spaces. They suggested private changing and privacy provisions.

Respect and kindness

Respondents made appeals for treating all users with dignity and respect, emphasising shared humanity and kindness. These were often explicitly supportive of trans inclusion but framed in terms of universal values. Respondents emphasised universal human dignity and respect, and urged focus on what unites not divides.

Anti-harassment policies

Respondents called for stronger policies prohibiting discrimination and harassment against trans people, with emphasis on behaviour management rather than identity exclusion. They called for anti-discrimination and anti-harassment rules and suggested proper etiquette and behaviour rules.

Multiple options

Respondents suggested maintaining multiple options, both gendered and mixed spaces, to accommodate diverse needs. This could be framed from either inclusive or restrictive perspectives. Respondents suggested multiple options to serve a diverse community from an inclusive framing and suggested retaining single-sex and mixed provision from a restrictive framing.

Mixed pond year-round

Respondents made the specific suggestion to keep the mixed pond open throughout the year as an inclusive option, modelled on the 'third space' approach used for toilets in some organisations.

Alternative operational models

Respondents offered suggestions for different scheduling, timing, or operational approaches that did not fit into other categories. These were pragmatic rather than ideological. They suggested alternative scheduling or timing arrangements, and suggested booking systems or reservation approaches.

Education and dialogue

Respondents offered suggestions for education, awareness-raising, and dialogue to address misconceptions and build understanding, particularly around trans issues. They suggested education about trans people and issues, and suggested dialogue and community building.

Evidence-based decision making

Respondents made requests for decisions based on data, legal advice, risk assessments, and user research rather than ideology or emotion. They emphasised the need for data and evidence and called for user research and consultation.

Question 2. Additional comments

Respondents were invited to share any wider comments about the consultation, access to the Bathing Ponds, or how the proposed changes might affect them. This open question allowed people to provide context, personal experiences, or reflections that did not fit within the fixed response options.

Other comments

This section presents the analysis of responses to an open-ended question inviting general comments about the consultation, access to the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds, and how the proposals might affect respondents.

Summary of themes

Segregation and discrimination (4,695 responses)

Current policy works well (3,215)

Impact on trans people (2,479)

Ponds historically inclusive (1,455)

Consultation process concerns (1,317)

Ponds should be single-sex (1,191)

Brief responses (1,173)

Legal requirements contested (1,027)

Personal identity and experience (865)

Cisgender men as safety concern (426)

Emotional attachment (334)

Division and conflict concerns (325)

Facilities and infrastructure (149)

Operational suggestions (133)

Tradition and heritage (27)

Environmental concerns (17)

Segregation and discrimination

Segregation and discrimination was the largest theme. Respondents argued that restricting trans access constituted discrimination and segregation, with historical parallels and concerns about creating a hostile environment. They argued segregation on the basis of trans status was discriminatory and made historical parallels to other forms of segregation. Respondents expressed rejection of anti-trans rhetoric and noted transgender people as a minority experiencing disproportionate reaction.

Current policy works well

Respondents made direct statements that the current policy was functioning well with no problems, questioning why change was needed. There was emphasis on lack of actual issues. Respondents expressed belief that current policy worked well and caused no harm, and raised concern about challenges to gender non-conforming people, including cisgender women. They included threats to boycott if ponds were no longer trans-inclusive, and framed inclusion as a human right. Respondents noted difficulty policing single-sex spaces, and suggested prioritising investment over policy change.

Impact on trans people

Respondents provided direct statements from trans people or allies about how exclusion would affect the trans community, emphasising the need for safe inclusive spaces and harms of exclusion. They described personal impact of exclusion on trans individuals, and emphasised the importance of inclusive, safe spaces for trans people. Respondents argued trans people needed access to safe single-gender spaces.

Ponds historically inclusive

Respondents emphasised the ponds' history of inclusivity and welcome for diverse communities, including LGBTQIA+ people. Trans inclusion was framed as consistent with this tradition, not a departure from it. They noted ponds were historically inclusive and welcoming, and expressed need to preserve the spirit of openness and respect. Respondents highlighted the strong LGBTQIA+ pond community.

Consultation process concerns

Respondents provided critiques of how the consultation was conducted, who was responding, impact on trans people, and the need for proper trans community consultation. There was strong dissatisfaction with the process itself. They expressed frustration that the consultation was considering changing the trans-inclusive policy and raised concern over the impact on transgender people. Respondents called for specific consultation with the transgender community and emphasised the importance of considering views of actual pond users.

Ponds should be single-sex

Respondents presented arguments for operating ponds on a biological sex basis, excluding trans people from gender-aligned spaces. There was emphasis on women's safety, rights, and availability of the mixed pond as an alternative. They expressed concerns about women's safety and noted existence of the mixed pond as an inclusive alternative. Respondents expressed fear of erosion of women's rights and included threats to boycott if ponds remained trans-inclusive.

Legal requirements contested

Respondents made appeals to legal frameworks with competing interpretations. Some respondents claimed the Equality Act or Supreme Court required exclusion, whilst others cited EHRC guidance and equality obligations supporting inclusion. Some responses argued the Equality Act and Supreme Court ruling required exclusion on biological sex basis, whilst other responses cited EHRC guidance arguing obligations under ECHR to protect trans people and support inclusion.

Personal identity and experience

Respondents included statements of personal identity, whether cisgender, trans, non-binary, or gender non-conforming, and how that shaped perspective on the proposals. There was direct expression of lived experience. Respondents expressed cisgender women's perspectives, trans and non-binary perspectives, and male perspectives.

Cisgender men as safety concern

Respondents argued that safety concerns should focus on cisgender men not trans women. Trans women were presented as needing protection from cisgender men, not as a threat to cisgender women. They argued cisgender men were the actual safety concern, and argued trans women needed protection from cisgender men.

Emotional attachment

Respondents expressed deep emotional connection, belonging, nostalgia, and love for the ponds. These could lean in either direction depending on whether change or inclusion was the concern. They expressed love and appreciation for the ponds and expressed anxiety about changes. Respondents noted personal wellbeing impact.

Division and conflict concerns

Respondents expressed worry that the debate itself was causing community division and polarisation. This was expressed from both perspectives, with some blaming exclusionary policies and others blaming inclusion debates. They noted the debate was causing community division and expressed desire for community harmony.

Facilities and infrastructure

Respondents offered suggestions for improving physical facilities, changing rooms, toilets, privacy provisions, and general pond infrastructure. These were presented as practical solutions that could reduce conflict. They suggested better changing rooms and privacy provisions, and suggested gender-neutral or flexible facilities. Respondents called for general facility upgrades and maintenance.

Operational suggestions

Respondents provided comments about booking systems, pricing, signage, communication, staffing, timetabling, or other operational matters not directly related to the trans inclusion debate. They addressed booking, pricing, and access systems, and suggested improvements to communication and staff training.

Tradition and heritage

Respondents emphasised the ponds' historic identity as single-sex spaces and the importance of preserving longstanding cultural values and traditions. They highlighted the historic single-sex identity of the ponds, and emphasised preservation of longstanding cultural values.

Environmental concerns

Respondents provided comments about water quality, wildlife impacts, overcrowding, maintenance, or general Heath management separate from the trans inclusion debate. They addressed water quality and environmental issues and raised overcrowding and capacity issues.

5. Questions on past swimming activity

Question 5. Reasons for not swimming at Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds

This section presents the analysis of responses from members of the public responding as individuals who had not swum at the Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds, or had not swum recently, explaining their reasons.

Summary of themes

Location and distance (3,314 responses)

Preference for biological sex spaces (1,415)

Time and life constraints (949)

Trans-related safety concerns (712)

General safety (526)

Haven't gotten around to it (494)

Booking and crowding (443)

Health and mobility (424)

Ethical and political stances (407)

Allyship and solidarity (311)

Support trans-inclusive gendered spaces (294)

Water and environment (289)

No interest (197)

Preference for other locations (180)

Lack of confidence (176)

Weather and seasonal (168)

Awareness and visibility (110)

Atmosphere and rules (81)

Cost and affordability (63)

Class and social environment (29)

Personal phobias (23)

Location and distance

Location and distance was the largest theme. Respondents identified geographic barriers created by distance from home, inconvenient travel routes, living too far away, or poor transport connections making visits infeasible. They noted distance from home and noted poor transport links. Respondents noted living in another part of the city or region.

Preference for biological sex spaces

Respondents expressed desire for single-sex spaces defined strictly by biological sex, sometimes linked to personal comfort, trauma histories, or feelings of exclusion by current trans-inclusive policies. These respondents were not using the ponds or had stopped using them because they were trans-inclusive. They expressed preference for biological-sex-only spaces and expressed feelings of exclusion by current trans-inclusive policies. Respondents noted trauma-related needs for single-sex environments.

Time and life constraints

Respondents identified life circumstances such as work, busy schedules, personal commitments, travel, or life phases that left no time or opportunity for pond swimming. They noted busy work or personal schedules and noted not currently being available due to travel or life phases. Respondents noted waiting until ready or able to swim again.

Trans-related safety concerns

Respondents expressed concerns about discrimination against trans people, fear of misgendering or scrutiny, avoidance due to anti-trans hostility, or desire for clearly inclusive policies. These respondents were not using the ponds or had stopped using them due to anti-trans environment. They expressed fear of misgendering or scrutiny and noted avoidance due to anti-trans hostility or rhetoric. Respondents expressed desire for clearly inclusive and safe policies.

General safety

Respondents expressed personal safety worries unrelated to gender politics, including concerns about open water swimming safety, drowning risk, lack of confidence in swimming ability, or general anxiety about outdoor swimming. They noted lack of swimming confidence and noted open water safety concerns. Respondents noted personal visibility or body image issues and noted social anxiety in public spaces.

Haven't gotten around to it

Respondents simply had not tried pond swimming yet or had not had the chance, with no underlying barrier. These respondents were interested but had not yet

visited. They noted never having got around to it and were not sure how to book or access. Respondents noted being new to the area or having recently learned about the ponds.

Booking and crowding

Respondents expressed frustration with the booking system, overcrowding during peak times, long queues, difficulty getting slots, and logistical inconvenience of access. They noted overcomplicated booking system and noted lack of available slots at peak times. Respondents noted long queues and overcrowding.

Health and mobility

Respondents identified health conditions, injuries, mobility issues, age-related limitations, chronic conditions, or temporary health problems that made visiting difficult or impossible. They noted mobility limitations and noted chronic or temporary health issues. Respondents noted older age considerations.

Ethical and political stances

Respondents indicated choices about whether to attend based on broader moral or political commitments to LGBTQIA+ rights, opposition to discriminatory policies, support for boycotts, or seeing the issue as part of wider struggles. They expressed opposition to discriminatory policy and expressed support for boycotts or collective action. Respondents saw the issue as part of wider LGBTQIA+ rights struggles.

Allyship and solidarity

Respondents who did not visit the ponds participated in the consultation to support friends, advocate for inclusive practice, or express political positions. These were responding on behalf of others or for solidarity reasons. They came from those responding on behalf of friends and spoke up for trans-inclusive policies despite not personally using the ponds. Respondents expressed ethical support for marginalised communities.

Support trans-inclusive gendered spaces

Respondents expressed support for gendered spaces that explicitly included trans and non-binary people. They emphasised they wanted trans-inclusive ladies' or men's ponds, with certainty about recognition and welcome. Respondents expressed support for trans-inclusive ladies' or men's ponds and expressed desire for certainty about welcome and recognition. They expressed need for gendered spaces that included non-binary and trans people.

Water and environment

Respondents expressed discomfort with water quality, cold temperatures, natural debris such as mud and leaves, wildlife including frogs and insects, depth, or sensory aspects of the pond environment. They noted water quality and hygiene

concerns and noted temperature and depth discomfort. Respondents noted natural elements such as mud, leaves, insects, and frogs.

No interest in swimming or the ponds

Respondents indicated simply no interest in swimming, pond swimming, or outdoor activities. There was no barrier as such, just not an activity that they wanted to do. They noted no interest in swimming and noted no interest in outdoor or natural swimming. These respondents noted general lack of interest in the ponds specifically.

Preference for other locations

Respondents preferred indoor pools, gyms, sea swimming, or other exercise environments. These respondents were not opposed to the ponds but had preferred alternatives. They noted preference for indoor pools or gyms and noted preference for sea or other outdoor swimming. Respondents noted other forms of exercise were preferred.

Lack of confidence

Respondents expressed anxiety about cold water, open water swimming, being inexperienced, not being a strong swimmer, or nervousness about pond swimming specifically. They noted not being a strong or confident swimmer and noted unfamiliarity with open water swimming. Respondents noted cold water anxiety.

Weather and seasonal

Respondents noted pond swimming was perceived as too seasonal, too cold except in summer, weather-dependent making planning difficult, or respondents were put off by cold weather. They noted only being warm enough in summer and noted weather dependency made planning difficult. Respondents noted cold weather put off use.

Awareness and visibility

Respondents identified lack of awareness as a barrier, including people who did not know the ponds existed, only recently learned about them, or felt they were not widely publicised. They noted never having heard of the ponds before and noted only learning about them through the consultation. Respondents noted unclear public visibility or promotion.

Atmosphere and rules

Respondents expressed feelings that the ponds were overregulated, overly policed, unclear in policies, had too many rules, lacked clarity on inclusivity practices, or had lost their sanctuary feeling. They noted overly controlled or monitored spaces and noted excessive or unclear rules. Respondents noted lack of clarity on inclusivity practices and noted mixed pond quality and design issues.

Cost and affordability

Respondents identified financial obstacles such as high ticket prices, frustration over paid access as ponds used to be free, affordability concerns, or financial accessibility issues. They noted ticket prices were too high, and expressed frustration that ponds were no longer free. Respondents raised financial accessibility concerns.

Class and social environment

Respondents expressed perceptions that the ponds catered to particular social classes or cultural demographics that felt exclusionary, uncomfortable experiences due to social atmosphere, or feeling unwelcome due to cultural or socioeconomic cues. They noted perceived class divide or elitism and noted social atmosphere differing from other outdoor swim spaces. Respondents noted feeling unwelcome due to cultural or socioeconomic cues.

Personal phobias

Respondents expressed individual aversions or fears that made natural swimming environments unappealing, including phobias of frogs, wildlife, insects, leaves, or general discomfort with outdoor or cold-water swimming. They noted phobia of frogs or wildlife and noted aversion to natural debris. Respondents noted general discomfort with outdoor or cold-water swimming.

Question 9. Reasons for choosing a single-sex pond

Closed Question

Respondents who had used one of the single-sex ponds were asked to state the reasons why they had chosen to use this pond instead of the mixed-sex pond. 36% of those respondents said this was because of privacy and dignity, 25% said it was because of safety, 12% said it was due to cultural reasons and 2% stated religious reasons. 37% stated this was due to other reasons. 20% said this was not relevant to them and 6% preferred not to say.

Comments

This section presents the analysis of responses from users of the Highgate Men's Pond or Kenwood Ladies' Pond explaining why they preferred these facilities over the Hampstead Mixed Pond.

Summary of themes

Community and culture (3,228 responses)

Atmosphere and emotional quality (2,991)

Safety from cisgender men (2,209)

Practical and spatial factors (2,190)

Support trans-inclusive gendered spaces (1,124)

Habit and personal preference (1,109)

Inclusivity and welcoming (866)

Comparison and flexibility (724)

Body confidence (565)

LGBTQIA+ significance (460)

Mixed pond positive but not preferred (302)

Tradition and heritage (204)

Trans inclusion enhances safety (125)

Functional variety (92)

Preference for status quo (25)

Religious and cultural modesty (24)

Community and culture

Community and culture was the largest theme. Respondents indicated people valued a strong sense of community, connection, friendship, belonging, and social bonds that developed in gendered pond spaces. These were beloved social hubs, not just swimming facilities. They noted strong sense of community, and noted ponds were a good place to meet people, feel welcome, and have fun. Respondents noted attachment to unique vibe and atmosphere.

Atmosphere and emotional quality

Respondents indicated users appreciated the ponds' beauty, tranquillity, distinctive emotional atmosphere, aesthetic appeal, and environmental qualities. Different gendered ponds offered different aesthetic experiences. They noted aesthetic appeal of gendered ponds and noted emotional refuge and tranquillity. Respondents noted distinctive vibe and identity.

Safety from cisgender men

Respondents indicated users chose gendered ponds to feel safe and comfortable away from cisgender male presence, male gaze, male attention, and potential harassment from men. Trans women were explicitly included as part of the women's community. They noted privacy needs and freedom from male gaze and noted safety from trauma and male violence. Respondents noted comfort and relaxation without cisgender male presence.

Practical and spatial factors

Respondents indicated preferences shaped by physical layout, features, facilities, size, sun exposure, accessibility, and crowding levels. The men's pond was appreciated for sun, booking ease, size, and diving board. The ladies' pond was appreciated for meadow, scenery, and wildlife. They noted physical features and layout and noted accessibility and crowding. Respondents noted functional swimming needs.

Support trans-inclusive gendered spaces

Respondents expressed support for keeping gendered ponds fully trans-inclusive. They wanted ladies' pond that included trans women, and men's pond that included trans men. Trans inclusion was seen as central to fairness, safety, and community. Respondents expressed affirmation and belonging for trans people and expressed rejection of trans exclusion. They expressed trust in the current trans-inclusive policy.

Habit and personal preference

Some respondents simply indicated preference for gendered ponds without deeper reasoning, including always going there, friends going there, enjoying the routine, or just liking it better. They noted habit and routine and noted social connections. Respondents noted simple personal preference.

Inclusivity and welcoming

Respondents noted that the ponds were welcoming, inclusive spaces where diversity strengthened safety and atmosphere. There was emphasis on creating spaces safe and welcoming for all, including trans and non-binary people. They encouraged inclusivity and diversity and aimed to be welcoming and safe for all. Respondents noted provision needed for non-binary, intersex, and gender non-conforming people.

Comparison and flexibility

Respondents indicated users liked to make use of both gendered and mixed ponds, comparing atmospheres and facilities, and choosing different ponds for different purposes or companions. They noted trying ponds out of curiosity and noted comparing options for different experiences. Respondents noted usefulness of mixed pond for groups and families.

Body confidence

Respondents indicated people felt less judged, less exposed, and more comfortable in their bodies in gendered environments. They could relax without worrying about how they looked. Respondents noted being more comfortable in body in gendered space and noted avoiding male gaze and objectification. They noted comfort for diverse bodies and ages.

LGBTQIA+ significance

Respondents indicated the ponds served as important, affirming spaces for LGBTQIA+ people, rooted in ongoing and historical communities. Both men's and ladies' ponds had strong LGBTQIA+ cultures. They noted historical LGBTQIA+ significance and noted gender-affirming environments for LGBTQIA+ people. Respondents valued LGBTQIA+ culture in gendered ponds.

Mixed pond positive but not preferred

Respondents acknowledged the mixed pond as useful and appreciated for its inclusivity, but generally saw it as less comfortable, more crowded, lower quality, and not first choice for many users. They noted the mixed pond had practical utility and noted lower desirability than gendered ponds. Respondents viewed it as a functional compromise or fallback option.

Tradition and heritage

Respondents indicated attachment to the historic role of men's and ladies' ponds and desire to keep them functioning as they had, trans-inclusively, for decades. Heritage and tradition were valued. They noted historic value and heritage and expressed desire for continuity. Respondents framed trans inclusion as part of the tradition.

Trans inclusion enhances safety

Respondents indicated users believed excluding trans women would make ponds feel less safe, not more. Exclusion would undermine trust and the inclusive atmosphere that currently protected people. Trans inclusion was seen as enhancing safety. They noted exclusion would reduce emotional trust and safety, and argued inclusivity and safety were linked. Respondents expressed fear that anti-trans arguments would harm atmosphere.

Functional variety

Respondents indicated different ponds supported different purposes and activities, including swimming, socialising, reading, picnicking, sunbathing, and relaxing. Users chose based on what activities they wanted to do. They noted social space and picnicking, and noted relaxation uses beyond swimming. Respondents noted activity flexibility and varied uses.

Preference for status quo

Respondents indicated users were committed to keeping the current trans-inclusive gendered structure, believing it worked and should not be altered. There was attachment to the status quo, stability, and continuity. They noted stability and trust, as people already liked how it was, and expressed opposition to changing the current system. Respondents valued legacy and continuity.

Religious and cultural modesty

Respondents indicated the ladies' pond supported comfort for women from diverse religious traditions, offering space where modesty and cultural boundaries felt respected. This was essential for some users. They noted accommodation of religious modesty needs and noted comfort across different cultural backgrounds. Respondents noted ease created by women-only environments for modesty.

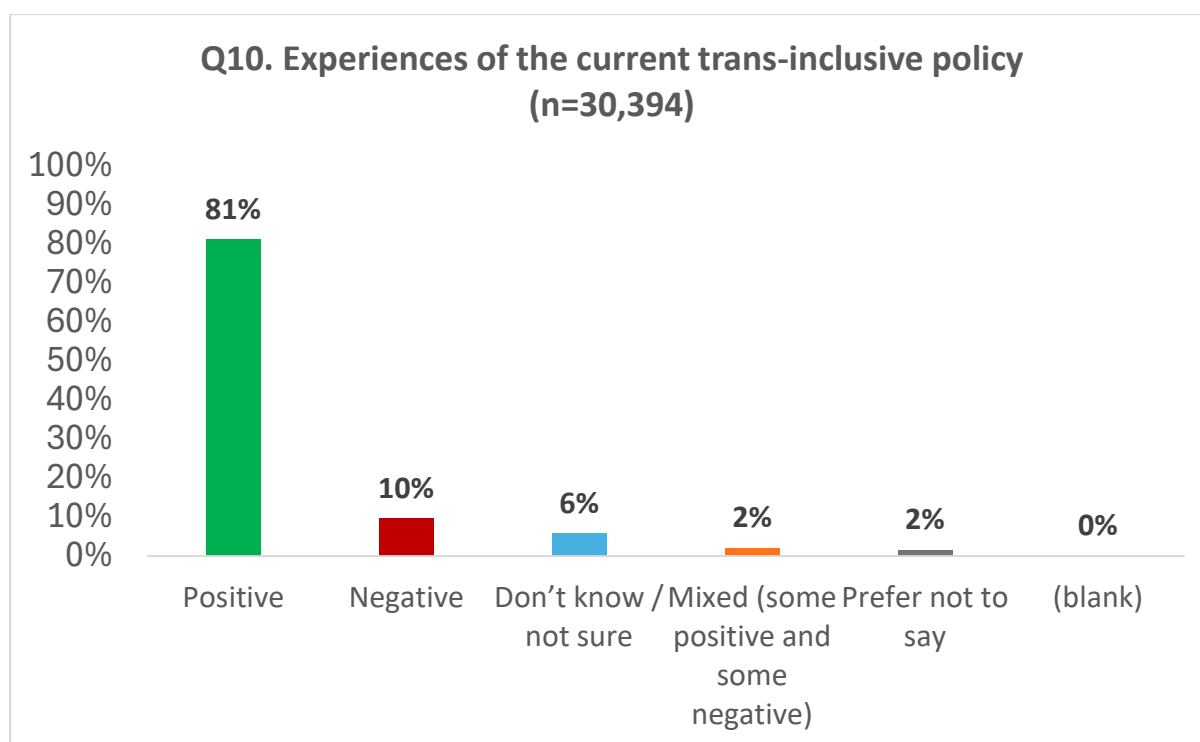
Question 10. Experiences of the current trans-inclusive policy

This question asked for views on the existing policy allowing trans men to use the Men's Pond and trans women to use the Ladies' Pond, including a free-text space for personal reflections.

Closed question

The majority of respondents (81%) said they had positive experiences of using the ponds with the current policy of allowing trans men to use the Men's Pond and trans women to use the Ladies' Pond. 10% had negative experience and 2% had mixed experiences, with a further 6% saying they didn't know and 2% preferred not to say.

Chart G. Q10. Experiences of the current trans-inclusive policy



NOTE: Open ended responses for this question were coded to in accordance with how people answered the closed question about their experiences of the current policy, even where they raised issues that were more mixed.

Positive experiences

This section presents the analysis of positive responses regarding experiences with the current policy of allowing trans men to swim in the Highgate Men's Pond and trans women to swim in the Kenwood Ladies' Pond.

Summary of themes

No problems, policy works (3,668 responses)

Inclusive welcoming atmosphere (3,052)

Alignment with values (1,025)

Normalisation unremarkable (910)

Trans women are women (829)

Focus on swimming not identity (784)

Safe haven for trans people (731)

Swimming with trans friends (644)

Trans people respectful (485)

Trans inclusion enhances safety (478)

Policy should not change (345)

Would stop if exclusionary (235)

No problems, policy works

No problems, policy works was the largest theme among positive experiences. Respondents reported never experiencing problems under the current policy. Interactions felt respectful, normal, and uneventful. The policy worked smoothly. They noted never having had bad encounters, no issues, and nothing noticeable. Respondents noted the policy worked fine with no problems whatsoever and noted this had been a non-issue.

Inclusive welcoming atmosphere

Respondents indicated the current policy created a warm, safe, inclusive, welcoming, and comfortable atmosphere for all. Trans inclusion was part of what made the environment positive. They noted an inclusive environment that was welcoming and comfortable for everyone, and noted the environment was enhanced by inclusivity. Respondents noted a lovely, warm, friendly, and safe environment.

Alignment with values

Respondents indicated the current policy reflected their personal values around equality, inclusion, community, and human rights. It was important that policy matched values. They noted the policy matched their values and felt right and noted the importance of being inclusive. Respondents noted trans inclusion made the space align more with their values.

Normalisation unremarkable

Respondents indicated trans inclusion was seen as normal, unremarkable, and just part of everyday pond life. There was nothing negative or disruptive. Respondents had not noticed anything unusual. They noted trans inclusion was unremarkable and just part of the space, and noted it was normal with no impact. Respondents noted trans women had been swimming for many years without incident.

Trans women are women

Respondents indicated affirmation of trans identities. Trans women were women and belonged in women's spaces. Trans men were men and belonged in men's spaces. There was rejection of exclusion. They affirmed trans women were women, and affirmed trans men were men. Respondents noted trans people belonged in their gender-aligned spaces and expressed opposition to trans-exclusionary policies.

Focus on swimming not identity

Respondents emphasised the pond experience, including swimming, enjoying nature, and relaxing. Others' identities were not a relevant concern. They noted being there to swim and enjoy nature and noted focusing on swimming not other people. Respondents noted the orientation of other swimmers was the least of their concerns, and noted everyone just wanted to swim.

Safe haven for trans people

Respondents indicated the ponds were safe environments specifically for transgender swimmers. It was important that trans people had a safe place to go. They noted the ponds were a safe place for trans swimmers and noted the ladies' pond should be a safe and welcome place for trans women. Respondents noted it was important to know that trans people had a safe place to go.

Swimming with trans friends

Respondents indicated positive personal connections. They enjoyed swimming with trans friends and were able to attend with trans loved ones. Respondents noted enjoying joining trans friends at the ponds and noted being able to go with trans friends. They noted personal connections to trans individuals.

Trans people respectful

Respondents described trans swimmers as polite, respectful, and well-behaved. They were not a threat to anyone and were just there to swim like everyone else. Respondents noted trans swimmers were respectful and polite and had encountered trans people at the ponds and found them polite and respectful. They noted trans people were not a threat to anyone.

Trans inclusion enhances safety

Respondents indicated they felt safer swimming with trans people. The trans community was not threatening. Diversity and inclusion created safety. They noted feeling safer around the transgender community, and valued diverse, welcoming, inclusive spaces as these made them feel safer. Respondents noted trans inclusion was part of what made the space safe.

Policy should not change

Respondents indicated current policies were appropriate and working well. There was no need to change. Things should be kept as they were. They noted loving the ponds as they were and thinking policy changes were unnecessary, and noted the policy worked just fine and should not be changed. Respondents noted the current approach was right.

Would stop if exclusionary

Respondents indicated strong commitment to inclusion, stating they would boycott the ponds if trans people were excluded. They would not support transphobic policies. Respondents noted they would not want to go to the ponds if they were exclusionary and noted they would no longer come to the ponds if they became a transphobic place. They noted they would not attend if trans people were banned.

Negative experiences

This section presents the analysis of negative responses regarding experiences with the current policy of allowing trans men to swim in the Highgate Men's Pond and trans women to swim in the Kenwood Ladies' Pond.

Summary of themes

Biological women need own spaces (536 responses)

Only biological sex allowed (425)

Negative personal experiences (288)

Self-exclusion (278)

General discomfort (195)

Erosion of women's rights (184)

Trans women characterised as threatening (133)

Changing room privacy invasion (97)

Legal objections (92)

Uncomfortable with anatomy (84)

Policy discriminates against women (82)

Trans should use mixed pond (61)

Trauma triggered (46)

Biological women need own spaces

Biological women need own spaces was the largest theme among negative experiences. Respondents expressed the belief that biological women should have their own spaces, that gender-exclusive spaces were especially important for women, and that trans people should not be allowed in them. They argued gender-exclusive spaces were especially important for women and argued there must be investment in more safe spaces for biological women. Respondents expressed feeling less safe.

Only biological sex allowed

Respondents made the argument that people should only swim in same-sex ponds which corresponded with their biological sex. Spaces should be based on sex assigned at birth. They argued all facilities should be according to biological sex

only, and argued women needed privacy, safety, and dignity. Respondents argued only biological sex should determine access.

Negative personal experiences

Some respondents recalled negative experiences with a trans person that left them feeling uncomfortable, vulnerable, watched, or intimidated. They reported feeling unable to change in communal facilities, and reported feeling watched or intimidated. Respondents reported uncomfortable experiences with transgender swimmers.

Self-exclusion

Respondents who stopped attending or would not attend the ponds whilst trans people were allowed chose not to use the facility due to the trans-inclusive policy. They indicated they would self-exclude from the pond for as long as trans women were allowed, and noted they stopped coming as they felt excluded. Respondents indicated they would not use the facility under the current policy.

General discomfort

Respondents expressed general feelings of discomfort, unease, or not being comfortable. These were unpleasant experiences without specific detail about the type of discomfort. They expressed feeling really uncomfortable and reported not feeling comfortable. Respondents noted general discomfort and unpleasant experiences.

Erosion of women's rights

Respondents expressed the belief that not having biological female-only spaces was against women's rights, eroded women's rights, or resulted in women losing spaces. There were arguments that women's rights were being sacrificed. They expressed fury that women's rights were being eroded, and argued the current policy ignored women's legal rights. Respondents characterised the policy as exclusionary of the very people it was meant to serve.

Trans women characterised as threatening

Some respondents characterised trans women as predatory, fetishistic, voyeurs, or having ulterior motives for accessing women's spaces. These characterisations suggested trans women posed a threat. They characterised trans women as fetishists or predators and suggested ulterior motives for accessing women's spaces. Respondents characterised trans women as voyeurs.

Changing room privacy invasion

Respondents expressed not feeling safe in changing rooms if biological men were allowed, characterising this as a violation of privacy, an invasion of privacy, or a loss of single-sex space and privacy. They expressed not feeling safe in changing rooms if biological men were allowed to enter and characterised the changing room as violating when what they considered a safe space was not safe. Respondents

expressed being always on edge, in case what they characterised as a man came in. They wanted single-sex spaces only for privacy, cultural reasons, dignity, and respect.

Legal objections

Respondents made claims that the policy should be changed in line with the Supreme Court ruling, violated the Equality Act 2010, or was unlawful. There were arguments that the definition of 'woman' referred to biological sex does not gender identity. They argued the policy was wrong and should be changed in line with the Supreme Court ruling, and argued the decision was made legally and the law must be observed. Respondents argued the policy was in breach of the Equality Act.

Uncomfortable with anatomy

Some respondents expressed discomfort seeing what they characterised as male genitalia at the ladies' pond. They described this as exhibitionism or sexually intimidating. Respondents characterised seeing what they described as intact male genitalia in communal changing spaces as exhibitionism and reported finding what they characterised as male genitalia sexually intimidating.

Policy discriminates against women

Respondents expressed the view that the policy was discriminatory against biological women, excluded women, or was unfair to female swimmers. They argued the policy was discriminatory against biological women, and argued women were being excluded from spaces intended for them. Respondents argued the policy was unfair to female swimmers.

Trans should use mixed pond

Respondents expressed the belief that trans people should not be allowed in single-sex ponds but instead should use the mixed pond that was available and open to all. They expressed being shocked to find what they characterised as a man in the ladies' pond, and argued the mixed pond catered for all. Respondents argued the ponds had become mixed by stealth.

Trauma triggered

Some respondents who were sexual assault survivors reported finding trans people's presence upsetting, triggering, or traumatic. Seeing what they characterised as male physiques triggered trauma. Sexual assault survivors reported finding it traumatic to come across what they characterised as visibly male physiques unexpectedly. Respondents who were victims of rape and domestic violence reported finding what they characterised as men's bodies triggering.

Mixed experiences

This section presents the analysis of neutral, mixed, uncertain, or ambivalent responses regarding experiences with the current policy of allowing trans men to swim in the Highgate Men's Pond and trans women to swim in the Kenwood Ladies' Pond.

Summary of themes

No opinion neutral (206 responses)

Not aware of trans swimmers (194)

No experience (182)

Trans people welcome (122)

Would be uncomfortable (64)

Harassment by other users (61)

Support single-sex exclusion (54)

Concern for trans safety (52)

Focus on behaviour not biology (31)

Complexity acknowledged (27)

Opposition to the consultation being held (24)

Concerns about policy misuse (24)

Positive with reservations (13)

Privacy and dignity (10)

Need clear policies (7)

No opinion neutral

No opinion or neutral was the largest theme among mixed or neutral experiences. Respondents did not have strong feelings either way, had not thought about it, did not care, or for them the topic never crossed their mind. These respondents were genuinely neutral. They noted it had never crossed their mind to have an opinion, and noted trans people existed in the space and it did not bother them. Respondents noted they would literally never notice or care.

Not aware of trans swimmers

Respondents did not believe they had seen or swum with trans people, had not noticed, could not identify trans swimmers, or lacked awareness. They noted never knowingly having seen a trans person at the ponds and noted never having noticed and doubting the vast majority of swimmers paid close attention to others' gender identities. Respondents noted being unable to identify trans swimmers.

No experience

Respondents had not had relevant experiences, had not swum in a single-sex pond recently, swam at the mixed pond instead, or did not have enough experience to comment. They noted not having had any relevant experiences and noted not having swum there recently enough to know. Respondents noted having no personal experience of swimming in the single-sex pond.

Trans people welcome

Respondents expressed the importance of trans people feeling accepted and welcome, hoped they felt welcome, would not mind trans people being included, or were supportive of inclusion. They expressed hope that trans people felt welcome and noted they would not mind having trans people included. Respondents noted general acceptance of trans people.

Would be uncomfortable

Respondents expressed the belief that sharing ponds with trans people would have negative impacts, would be unsettling, would spoil the experience, or resulted in feeling uncomfortable. Some expressed concerns about trauma or safety. They noted never having come across trans people but would be very unsettled if they did and noted it would spoil the experience. Respondents expressed feeling uncomfortable.

Harassment by other users

Some respondents reported harassment or negativity from other users, not from trans people but from anti-trans users, conflict between users, or atmosphere affected by debates. They reported negative experiences or harassment by other pond users and noted conflict and tension between users. Respondents noted anti-trans harassment had been witnessed, and noted the debate was creating division.

Support single-sex exclusion

Respondents expressed support for maintaining single-sex spaces, the belief that trans people should be excluded, or preference for biological sex-based access. They expressed support for single-sex spaces and expressed preference for biological sex basis. Respondents noted the need for women-only spaces.

Concern for trans safety

Respondents expressed concerns for the safety of trans people who used the ponds, worried for trans friends, noted trans people were already terrified and excluded, or characterised the consultation as a blow to trans safety. They expressed worry for trans friends who were already terrified for their safety and characterised the consultation as a blow to trans and LGBTQIA+ safety and equality. Respondents expressed concern about the safety of trans people exposed to the general public.

Focus on behaviour not biology

Respondents expressed the belief that focus should be on individuals' behaviour rather than biology or trans identity. Conduct mattered, not identity categories. They argued people should stand up against terrible behaviour, not against different body types, and argued it was only inappropriate behaviour that should be seen as a problem, not identity. Respondents emphasised focus on individual behaviour, not identity.

Complexity acknowledged

Respondents acknowledged the complexity of the issue, recognised multiple perspectives, noted difficulty balancing different needs, or expressed genuine uncertainty. They noted mixed feelings, and noted this was a complicated issue. Respondents noted it was hard to balance needs.

Opposition to the consultation being held

Respondents expressed the belief that this topic was not relevant for discussion, wished the topic did not have to be discussed, noted the ponds had always been trans-inclusive, or characterised the consultation itself as problematic. They expressed wishing this did not have to be discussed and noted the ponds had always been trans-inclusive and questioned why this must change. Respondents noted this was not a topic for the vast majority of pond users.

Concerns about policy misuse

Respondents expressed concerns about predatory behaviour, men misusing policies, worry about bad actors, or men claiming to be trans to access women's spaces. They expressed concerns about predatory behaviour and expressed worry about bad faith actors. Respondents expressed concern that the policy could be exploited.

Positive with reservations

Respondents supported inclusion but noted practical or cultural frictions, occasional tensions or concerns, or were mostly positive but acknowledged some issues. They noted not feeling unsafe with trans women, and noted inclusion mattered but expressed some reservations. Respondents noted mostly positive experiences.

Privacy and dignity

Respondents emphasised privacy needs, dignity for all, respect, ensuring everyone's comfort, or balancing different needs. They emphasised privacy and dignity, and noted everyone deserved respect. Respondents noted the need to balance different needs.

Need clear policies

Respondents called for clearer policies, better enforcement, more specific rules, or expressed the need for clarity about how the policy worked. They called for clear policies and enforcement and wanted better rules. Respondents noted practical solutions were needed.

6. Summary of Focus Group Findings

The Centre for Consultation (a social enterprise dedicated to raising the standard of consultation and engagement across the UK and internationally) conducted six focus groups on behalf of the City of London Corporation as part of the wider consultation exercise. The following text is the executive summary taken directly from their full report, which is available as Annex A to this document. These findings reflect the views of focus group participants only and should be read alongside, not as a substitute for, the consultation data.”

Introduction

The Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds are much-loved spaces where many swimmers find peace, community, and a strong sense of belonging. As part of the City of London Corporation’s consultation on future access arrangements, the Centre for Consultation ran six focus groups with 33 pond users to understand how different access options might affect their experience of using the Ponds. The groups explored three main options presented in the consultation:

- Option 1(a) – Strictly single-sex access
- Option 1(b) – Continuing to be trans-inclusive spaces as currently operated
- Option 1(f) – Making all ponds mixed-sex spaces

Participants were also invited to reflect on practical issues relevant to other consultation options, such as improvements to changing facilities and the idea of time-based access. Although these were not discussed as full options in their own right, they were explored through prompts to ensure their implications were understood.

Across all groups, people spoke with deep affection about what the Ponds mean to them. Many described them as places of sanctuary, emotional refuge, and calm. The Ladies’ Pond, in particular, was spoken about as a rare space where people feel able to be themselves without judgement.

Views on the Options

Option 1(a) Strictly single-sex access received very little support. Most felt it would damage the inclusive atmosphere of the Ponds, require intrusive or impractical identity checks, create tensions between users, and undermine the sense of safety for both trans and cisgender swimmers. A small minority of cisgender women favoured this option because they felt it best protected privacy and women-only space.

Option 1(b) Continuing to be trans-inclusive spaces as currently operated received the broadest support. Many felt it keeps the Ponds welcoming, reflects decades of safe practice, and focuses attention on behaviour rather than on people’s bodies. Some participants suggested small improvements such as clearer privacy options in changing areas to help support the needs and comfort of all users.

Option 1(f) Making the ponds mixed-sex spaces was the least preferred option.

Participants felt that removing the single-sex ponds would fundamentally change what makes the Ponds special, particularly the calming and restorative atmosphere that the Ladies' Ponds offer. Some also feared this option might be used as a compromise if the debate between Options 1(a) and 1(b) became too polarised.

Other Insights

People also shared their views on related issues in the consultation:

- Many felt changing facilities could be improved sensitively, without forcing anyone into separate spaces.
- Time-based or rotational access was generally seen as unworkable, confusing, and potentially unsafe, particularly for trans users who could become more visible or exposed to hostility.

Principles for Decision-Making

Across the groups, several shared principles emerged. Participants felt that future decisions should:

- Be based on evidence and real experiences, not assumptions or national debates.
- Protect the atmosphere of calm, refuge and acceptance that the Ponds are known for.
- Treat all users with dignity, kindness, and respect.
- Ensure any new rules are practical, fair and safe for both swimmers and staff.
- Recognise the Ponds' long history, including the long presence of trans and gender-diverse swimmers.

Overall

Most participants favoured continuing the current trans-inclusive model, with thoughtful changes to support privacy and comfort for all users. They expressed hope that future decisions will preserve what makes the Ponds unique and avoid unnecessary division.

Above all, participants emphasised that the Ponds are more than just swimming facilities: they are places of community, wellbeing, and emotional significance, and should be protected with care.