



Merri-bek City Council

# Implementing Fair Access What we've learnt

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# Sport in Merri-bek



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70 sports clubs (4 NPL clubs and 1 VFL club)

23 sports clubs' leases

54 sports fields

3 synthetic pitches

3 Indoor stadiums

15,000+ people (adult and children) registered to play sport in 2023/2024

Recreation team has 5 staff



# Timeline of Policy



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2009 - Allocation of Council facilities will only be given to clubs with Junior sides, and Girls or women participating in either competitive and/ or non-competitive physical activities.

2009 - Active Women and Girls Strategy introduced

2012 - Allocation policy Included lease clubs

2016 – Clubs needed to register at least one full female team/side in a registered competition, 3 seasons to achieve this.

2019 - Final season to achieve the Policy.

2022 - Allocations Policy Review adoption

2023-2024- Active Women and Girls strategy Review and Advancing Women in Sport network introduced

2024 - Refreshed Allocation Policy was Adopted with the main change being 50% or above representation of women, girls, or gender diverse people on Committee/Board and/or Leadership roles, and at least one being an elected office-bearer position (20%)

# What we heard from clubs



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*Clubs globally are struggling to recruit and retain volunteers, including Committee members.*

*Concerns that forcing women and girls onto Committees may set them up to fail if they don't have the appropriate support/mentorship.*

*Review the concept of supporting women and girls in leadership positions with the end goal of more women and girls on Committees – but work needs to be done before they can succeed on Committees.*

*Define leadership positions – Committee roles, Coordinators, Coaches, Team Managers, Trainers, etc.*

*Clubs support having women and girls in leadership positions but struggling with the how. Suggestion for Council to help support clubs with upskilling women and girls so they are more confident stepping into leadership roles*

*Our Facilities are not good enough*

*Continue to help us do this, we have a lot on our plates*

# Facilities



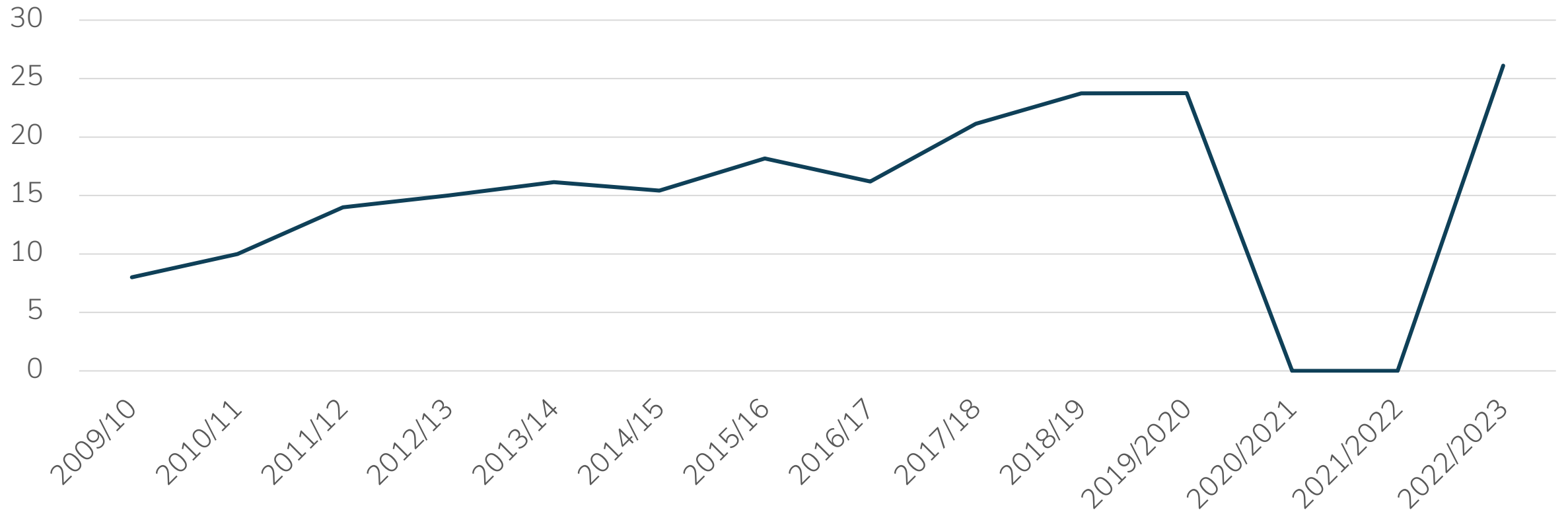
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# Impact



% of female sports ground users



# What we've learnt



- Leadership – Councillors / Key decision makers as Champions of Change
- Communication - Pivotal between Council and Clubs- Female participation officer
- Shared goals, remove barriers
- Seek to understand
- Have an endorsed implementation plan
  
- Take small steps, make small moves
- How do we keep it moving and check in?



# What are we doing now



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- Allocation Policy Independent review
- Baseline survey to community and clubs
- Active Women and Girls Strategy - integrated into the Recreation Strategy 2025
- Advancing Women in Sport and Participation Network
- International Womens Day event/this girl can
- Women in Sport coaching development series
- Sports Growth and inclusion Officer

**Help us understand the experiences of women, girls, and gender-diverse people in sports and recreation in Merri-bek!**

Survey closes on Monday, 17 March 2025





Join us for a special International Women's Day event:

## **Equal opportunities for women in sport: A conversation with Chyloe Kurdas**

**Wednesday 5 March  
6pm - 8pm  
Coburg Town Hall**

**Register for this free event**



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# SURVEY

## FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



Please drop this survey in the white box.

Hey there!

We need your help with a fun project!

We want to know what it's like for you to play and be active in Merri-bek.

Do you love playing sports, running, riding your bike, or trying other fun activities? Tell us what you think! How can we make sports and play even better and more fun for everyone?

Fill out this survey to win a family pass to one of Merri-bek's leisure and aquatic centers and ask your parent/carer to provide their email address so we can let you know if you win!

We can't wait to hear your ideas!

Thanks! 😊

### About you

My first name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm \_\_\_\_\_ years old.

My gender is \_\_\_\_\_

I live in \_\_\_\_\_



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# Some questions about sport and exercise in Merri-bek

Do you play sports or do fun activities like running, playing games, or riding bikes in parks or ovals in Merri-bek?  
If yes, what do you like to do?

Is there anything that makes it hard for you to play sports or exercise in Merri-bek? If yes, what makes it hard?



Design your runners.  
Be creative as possible!

Do you think everyone has the same chance to play sports or exercise?

Why do you think that?

How do you think we can make sports and fun activities easy and welcoming for everyone?

Write the names of the sports shown.



# Key Takeaways



- Leadership and Communication
- Develop a clear and achievable Implementation plan
- Seek to understand and be creative
- Be consistent and persistent and support them to change and evolve
- Celebrate the successes together
- Progress is continuous