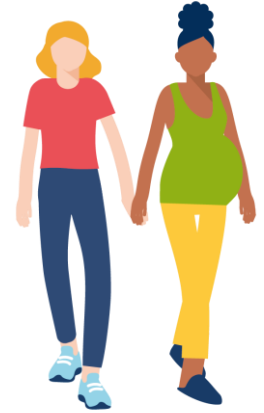




Creating safe spaces
for the LGBTQ+
community to move
more

The need for safe spaces

- Enabling people to move more in a way that works for them
- Understanding lived experience, working with others to consider how practice can be more welcoming
- Calling out discriminatory behaviour – being an active bystander



The need for safe spaces

- Hate crimes based on sexual orientation are up 112% in past 5 years
- Hate crimes against trans people are up by 186% in past 5 years
- We've seen a growth in a divisive narrative about trans people in society.
- 1 in 4 LGBT+ people do not feel welcome in community sport groups
- Just under half of trans and non-binary people faced discrimination when accessing sport or exercise activities.



Barriers to inclusion – LGBTQ+ community

Buddle (Sport England resource)

People's experiences are different, these are common barriers:

1. Negative perceptions from previous experiences of school sport
2. Lack of visibility – seeing other LGBTQ+ people participating
3. Fear of discrimination
4. Lack of appropriate changing spaces
5. Lack of awareness of inclusive opportunities

Tips:

- Inclusive governance & practice
- Celebrate diversity
- Inclusive activities
- Inclusive communications
- Inclusive facilities

Trans & Non-Binary inclusion guidance

1. Create **inclusive policies** – terms of reference and dress codes
2. **Conscious design** – changing spaces and facilitation
3. **Trans specific offers**
4. **Diversity in membership** – demographic monitoring
5. **Training** – staff and volunteers

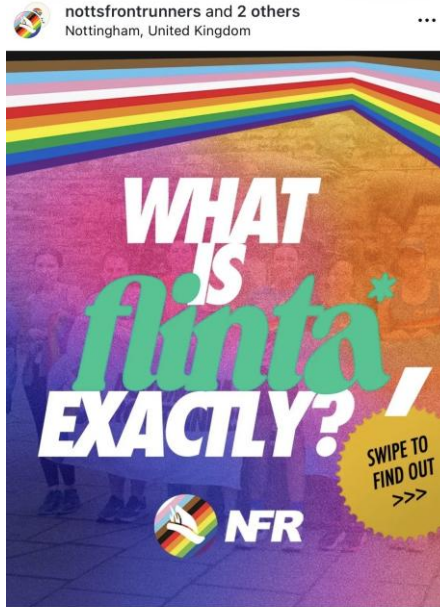


Notts Frontrunners



63 8 3

nottsfrontrunners Swipe for answers to our FAQ's



95 2 8 4

Liked by nottslgbt and others
nottsfrontrunners Swipe for the FLINTA* focus

Everyone is welcome here ... more
13 May



nottsfrontrunners I am a fighter, I ain't gon' stop

Loud, proud, bold and bright - we're here every week

NFR marked 'International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia' the only way we know how: Warming up to the absolute bop, Fighter A running playlist of IDAHoBiT themed bangers 70 of us together, stronger than ever

Huge love to our volunteers who buddy with new comers & lead from the back - you make this what it is, every single week

Same time next week? Of course!

Nottingham Frontrunners | Proudly Supported by @thespencertrust

Transgender based research

Dr Rachael Bullingham

- Body dysphoria
- Experiences of physical activity



Everyone Active

- Inclusive swimwear policy
- Lived experience groups in the workplace
- Targeted work with the community



LGBTQ+ Swim Sessions

Nottingham and Derby

What helps make it work?

- Consistent offer
- Sense of community
- Social connection
- It's fun
- Mental and physical health
- Led by lived experience

A promotional poster for a swim session. At the top, there are icons for swim goggles, a heart with a blue outline, and a teddy bear on a float. The text reads: "A splashing good time!!", "The Spencer Trust LGBTQ+ Swim Session is Back! Two swims a month commencing 2026", "FREE", "Reserve now - limited availabilities!", "10 May 2026", "12.30-14.00p.m.", "Lenton Leisure Centre", "Sign up through our Eventbrite link now", "Gender-neutral changing spaces available!", and "Fully funded by The Spencer Trust". There is also a small rainbow flag icon at the bottom left.

A promotional poster for a swim session. At the top, there is a rainbow flag and the Spencer Trust logo. The text reads: "INTRODUCING OUR FIRST DERBY SWIM AND SPLASH!", "30th May 2026", "Moorways Sports Village", "DE24 9HY", "6.30-7.30pm", and "FULLY FUNDED BY THE SPENCER TRUST". There are also two cartoon characters in the water at the bottom: a pink unicorn and a yellow bear.

Swimming - guidance

Swimming provides lots of health and wellbeing benefits for the trans community:

- Weight loss and fitness – helping particularly those opting for surgical interventions, swimming can help beforehand and aid recovery.
- Reducing high stress levels - due to the inclusive and calming nature of being in the water.
- Social connection & reducing isolation - providing an opportunity to meet similar, likeminded people in a safe environment; which for some can be very hard to achieve in everyday life.

Rainbow Bedfordshire



What makes it difficult for trans & non-binary people to use public swimming pools?

- **Anxiety** about gendered changing areas and toilet facilities. Many fear being **confronted**, feel **threatened**, and/or have experienced transphobia. In a private session, all swimmers understand that fear, but they know that they can relax. Signage can be changed, societal norms disregarded, nobody 'policing' those spaces, and everyone feels safe.
- Wearing swim attire that reduces gender body **dysphoria** could attract public attention and hostility. Someone who was born male who wears a swimming costume, or who was born female and wears swim shorts would often not be made welcome in a public swim session.

Rainbow Bedfordshire

Inclusive Swimwear

Encourage and enable people to wear appropriate, comfortable clothing in the water e.g. leggings, t-shirt, rash vest. This is about everyone feeling comfortable, including the trans customer, other centre users, and centre staff.

- **Binders** – a tight piece of material that is wrapped around the top half of the body in and compress breasts to conceal them behind clothing. This is perfectly safe to swim in and should be encouraged. Some people who were born female but now identify differently may wear binders.
- **Trans tape & top surgery** – if someone has had top surgery, they may use trans tape to flatten and cover their breasts. Some people may not want to wear anything on their top half to help identify with their new gender. This may be appropriate to allow during an LGBT+ specific session which is not overlooked by members of the general public. Otherwise, if people are attending sessions on the main swimming timetable, they should be appropriately covered up.

Rainbow Bedfordshire

Everyone Active – example of an inclusive swimwear policy

Guidance – things we can all do

- Don't make assumptions of someone's gender based on their appearance.
- If unsure use gender neutral pronouns (they/them).
- If you realise that you have used the wrong pronoun, correct yourself and move on
- When asking someone's pronouns, introduce yourself and your pronouns first.
- Enable people to wear comfortable clothing while taking part in activities – including swimming
- Have a gender neutral toilet and changing facilities
- Display posters and resources of LGBTQ+ helplines and organisations (showing that your venue is LGBTQ+ friendly)
- Training - consider organising for colleagues to raise awareness.
- Reflect on your safeguarding procedures, reminding colleagues that anyone in receipt of transphobic abuse should be supported with their safety prioritised.

Rainbow Bedfordshire

Watch the video: How to be an active bystander



Glossary

- **Cisgender or Cis:** Someone whose gender is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. For example, a cis(gender) woman is someone who was assigned female at birth and continues to live and identify as a woman.
- **Dysphoria:** a state of severe distress or unhappiness caused by feeling that one's gender identity does not match one's sex as registered at birth; gender dysphoria:
- **Gender:** A person's innate sense of being a man, woman, non-binary or another gender.
- **Gender expression:** How a person expresses their gender outwardly. This could be through cues such as clothing, haircuts and behaviour.
- **Gender identity:** A person's innate sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (non-binary) , which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.
- **Minority stress** A term for the cumulative effect of all the stressful situations and experiences someone encounters through being part of a minority group. It is usually situational, perpetual or chronically stressful, harmful to mental health. and based on a particular aspect of an individual's existence; in this case gender identity.

Glossary

- **Non-binary:** a term for people whose gender doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'.
- **Pronoun:** words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation - for example, 'he', 'she' or 'they'.
- **Top Surgery:** is performed on the chest as part of gender reassignment, especially to remove breast tissue and produce a masculine appearance of the chest in female-to-male surgery
- **Trans/Transgender:** a term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth
- **Transgender man:** a term used to describe a man who was assigned female at birth. This may be shortened to trans man, or FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male.
- **Transgender woman:** a term used to describe a woman who was assigned male at birth. This may be shortened to trans woman, or MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female.

Resources & Stories

Topic	Link
Workplace inclusion training	<u>Stonewall UK</u>
Research – LGBTQ+ people don't feel welcome playing or watching sport	<u>Stonewall UK</u>
Rainbow Laces campaign	<u>Stonewall UK</u>
Trans & Non-Binary inclusion in sports, movement	<u>LGBT Foundation & GM Moving</u>
Trans inclusive story – Hampstead Heath ponds	<u>Pink News</u>
LGBTQ+ inclusivity – tips for clubs & providers	<u>Buddle.</u>
Non-Binary people, sport & physical activity - guidance	<u>Pride Sports & Sport England</u>
LGBTQ+ friendly events in Notts	<u>Notts LGBT+ Network</u>

Active Partners Trust is one of 43 Active Partnerships working with Sport England to reduce social inequalities through increasing access to physical activity.

We partner with local and national stakeholders to create conditions within communities that support higher activity levels and lower inactivity.

In Derbyshire, we're known as Active Derbyshire, and in Notts we're called Active Notts.

For more information, visit makingourmove.org.uk

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