# Women protest City of London Corporation’s trans pond policy by invading male-only pond



On Bank Holiday Monday, a protest involving approximately 30 women took place at the male pond on Hampstead Heath, London, in opposition to the City of London Corporation's policies regarding access to a nearby ladies' only pond. The protest was prompted by a recent Supreme Court ruling stipulating that the legal definition of a woman should be grounded in biological sex.

The demonstration saw participants donning false beards, wigs, and moustaches, as they sought entry to the male-only pond, proclaiming their self-identification as male for the occasion. The protestors carried placards reading messages such as "Let Women Swim" and "No Peens in our Pond," and sang a reworked chant: "The law says no. Men must go. No goolies in our poolies."

The group was met with security personnel and police, who barred their entry by locking a gate and asserting that protests in the area were prohibited. Despite their determined efforts, including shouting demands aimed at police officers — some stating, “we are men” — the protestors remained outside as they attempted to negotiate entry.

Leading the protest was Amy Desir, a prominent gender-critical campaigner, who argued that if trans women are allowed in spaces designated for women, then women identifying as men should be permitted into male spaces. "The Corporations self-identity policy is driving women away from the women's pond," she stated, emphasising the need for safe spaces for women. Desir has asserted that the City Corporation is contravening the law by permitting individuals who, in the eyes of the law, are not women to access the ladies’ pond.

Several participants breached the security barrier, with five activists jumping into the male pond despite the chilly water. They swam for about twenty minutes before celebrating their defiant act with cheers and waves to bystanders. Venice Allen, another protestor, noted that the cold water felt worthwhile, emphasising the importance of the protest for women’s rights.

Hannah Clarke, who also participated in the swimming, reiterated that the Supreme Court clarified the definition of a woman as someone born female, thus demanding that the City of London Corporation adhere to this legal interpretation.

The protest draws attention to the ongoing debate surrounding policies related to gender identity, particularly since the City of London Corporation implemented a 'self-ID' policy in 2019, allowing trans women or individuals identifying as women to use the ladies' pond. Despite the recommendations from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, which suggest that trans women should not participate in women's facilities due to the implications of the Supreme Court ruling, the Corporation has indicated that it is in the process of reviewing the judgment while awaiting further guidance.

A spokesperson for the City of London Corporation stated that claims of non-compliance with existing UK law were incorrect, affirming their adherence to legal standards while navigating this contentious issue. As protests continue to highlight the complexities surrounding gender identity and women’s spaces, the discussion remains a focal point within both legal and public spheres.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-68494843> - This article discusses the City of London Corporation's policy allowing transgender women to use the Hampstead Ladies' Pond, which has been a point of contention and protest among some women.
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/may/23/trans-women-given-formal-access-to-hampstead-heath-pond> - This piece details the formalization of transgender women's access to the Hampstead Heath ponds, highlighting the policy changes and the reactions they elicited.
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/09/03/protesters-seeking-stop-trans-women-using-hampstead-heaths-ladies/> - This article covers a protest by women opposing the inclusion of transgender women in the Hampstead Heath Ladies' Pond, emphasizing the ongoing debates over gender identity and access to single-sex spaces.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/09/debate-over-inclusion-of-trans-women-in-women-only-spaces-intensifies> - This report delves into the intensifying debate over the inclusion of transgender women in women-only spaces, including the Hampstead Heath Ladies' Pond, and the various perspectives involved.
5. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/05/23/trans-swimmers-allowed-swim-hampstead-heaths-womens-pond-sparking/> - This article discusses the decision to allow transgender women to swim in the Hampstead Heath Ladies' Pond, highlighting the policy change and the protests it sparked.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/02/22/transgender-women-ban-kenwood-ladies-pond-hampstead-heath/> - This piece reports on proposed rule changes at the Kenwood Ladies' Pond that could ban transgender women, reflecting the ongoing tensions and debates surrounding access to single-sex spaces.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14679981/women-rights-campaigners-storm-male-pond-Hampstead.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data