

British Cycling Federation – Supplementary written evidence (NPS0165)

British Cycling's Response to NPS0121

Firstly, we would like to thank you for providing British Cycling the opportunity to respond to the criticisms within NPS0121. We will address each concern which relates to British Cycling in turn.

Paragraph 20 provides 'But tacitly this NGB permits attendance, with no questions asked, by any males -not just those with a gender recognition certificate. These are any males who want to be in an all-female activity based on their say-so alone, no questions asked (British Cycling stated that it considered making any enquiries of such males to be "an overreach")'

The response refers to a female only activity which British Cycling runs as the HSBC UK Breeze Rides ('The Breeze Programme'). The Breeze programme is a women's only programme with the intention to encourage women to start cycling and to cycle more often. This includes those who are living their life as a woman, irrespective of their birth gender.

To confirm, British Cycling do consider that questioning a participant's decision or requesting documentation as to the individual's gender is overreaching for the purposes of recreational activity. However, if a Breeze Champion had any concerns regarding a particular participant we would invite these concerns to be reported to the British Cycling Compliance department where they can be looked in to in a confidential and sensitive manner.

Paragraph 21 provides 'At least four women activity leaders have expressed their concerns about this non-transparent policy to British Cycling's Head of Ethics. As the NGB has no authority to which it is ultimately answerable its CEO and its Chief Ethics Officer have casually dismissed all concerns, refused to answer questions and responded that all concerns 'must' be motivated only by bigotry. Despite this dismissal British Cycling has subsequently removed references to 'female only' from its advertising for these 'women only' rides.'

British Cycling has considered all enquiries we have received regarding the Breeze Programme, drawing on expertise from our Recreational team as well as our Compliance department. British Cycling have not dismissed any complaints without them being considered in full.

Ms McInnes first raised her concerns with our Compliance department in April 2020. This was handled under the British Cycling Complaints Process and was escalated to me as the Integrity & Compliance Director. We are aware that Sport England have also since reviewed the correspondence between both parties, and the process, which was followed, and have not taken any further action.

To ensure our Transgender and Non-Binary Participation Policy ('the Policy') considers all views in this area, British Cycling have recently undertaken an open consultation regarding the Policy, to which we received over 600 responses.

Finally, no references of 'female only' have intentionally been removed from British Cycling's Breeze Programme's information, following the publication of the Policy.

Paragraph 22 provides 'This is not equality. This NGB's hostile dismissal of women's concerns has already resulted in some women self-excluding from these activities, which are expressed to be 'for women'. This is bitterly disappointing. The public cannot rely on NGBs to uphold fairness and equal opportunities, to create female-orientated opportunities. They are not fit for purpose. This particular NGB tolerates women because women bring Govt funding. In reality it upholds a covertly and overtly female hostile culture.'

British Cycling continuously strive to increase female participation in the Sport, which is evidenced by our 'One in a Million' campaign. This was a target we set as an Organisation, and achieved, to get one million more women cycling. To confirm, British Cycling does not receive funding due to achieving milestones like this. British Cycling organises programmes which aim to increase female participation in the sport.

British Cycling's commitment to increasing female participation, as well as making the sport more diverse, is evidenced by our external Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group. Members of this group have been appointed due to their expertise and experience in this field, and provide guidance to the Organisation in this area, including our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

We are not currently aware of a female participant excluding themselves from a ride due to a transgender participant joining or of anyone, who does not in reality live their everyday life as a woman, seeking to participate in the ride as a transgender woman. British Cycling have invited Ms McInnes to raise any specific incidences of this with our Compliance department. Finally, there is no evidence that British Cycling operates a 'female hostile culture'.

Once again, we would like to thank you for bringing this to our attention and should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Rod Findlay
Business Services Director/ Company Secretary

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