

Living Streets Aotearoa



www.livingstreets.org.nz

PO Box 25 - 424
Panama Street
Wellington 6146

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Footpaths are under threat from vehicle-aggodon. The most recent NZTA decision to declare e-scooters to not be motor-vehicles will allow these small wheelers, that can travel up to 27km hour, to be ridden on our footpaths. They join a growing number of vehicles stealthily getting official approval to use on our footpaths. Meanwhile government says it is moving in the opposite direction to get safety and wellbeing at the centre of transport policy, but perhaps not for pedestrians.

Gay Richards from Living Streets Aotearoa says, "We want to see these motorised vehicles rolled back off footpaths, let's keep the footpaths safe for feet. Footpaths are the only place many of us can get around and they need to be pleasant and feel safe for all of us pedestrians. E-scooters travelling at speed can cause serious pedestrian injuries."

Conditions apply to escooter users on the footpath and they must:

- ! operate the device in a careful and considerate manner
- ! operate the device at a speed that does not put other footpath users at risk
- ! give way to both pedestrians and drivers of mobility devices.

However back in the real world this is ambiguous at best, and does not provide any comfort to those confronted with speedsters. Richards says, "It is too much to expect a child or frail older person, or any pedestrian, to have to stick up for themselves with the all too frequent inconsiderate footpath vehicle user."

Enforcement of e-scooter conditions will prove a headache for Police, who already struggle to identify motor capacity on other low powered machines like e-bikes.

The number of crashes on footpaths will increase as this increase in legalised vehicles on footpaths join the illegal ones there already. The latest data, that record hospital admissions only to 2014, show that for the 5 year period, 260 pedestrians were injured by vehicles on footpaths. Richards says "That may be a small number of people but this is the footpath where pedestrians have every right to expect to be safe from all vehicle crashes. Footpath crashes impact younger and older people more often with serious consequences. And it simply puts people off walking."

For more information contact
Gay Richards
Executive, [Living Streets Aotearoa](http://www.livingstreets.org.nz)
Phone 021 1747066