

Living Streets Aotearoa



Media Release 13 April 2020 on Accessible Streets package. Government wants to change all footpaths into shared paths. Letting bikes, ebikes and small electric vehicles on footpaths.

Living Streets Aotearoa and the Footpaths for Feet Coalition are encouraging everyone who wants pedestrians, disabled people and riders of light individual transport devices (LITDs) to be safe and feel safe to put in a submission on the government's Accessible Streets package.

We encourage people to tell the government that they don't want footpaths turned into shared paths as is effectively being proposed by the government.

There are some really absurd proposals in there like allowing anyone, of any age, to ride an e-bike, e-scooter or bike on the footpath at up to 15 km/h, and like setting the default speed limits on shared paths at 50 or 100 km/h.

It seems NZTA has forgotten a golden rule of road safety – to not mix users capable of traveling at dramatically different speeds. And it seems to have thrown out the idea of 'safe and appropriate speeds', which it correctly argues should be what speed limits on roads are set at. Why the difference?

Although there are some good proposals included in the package, those that will affect pedestrians and people in wheelchairs are, with one exception, overwhelmingly bad.

This was such an opportunity for a great rebalancing of the transport system to be achieved. The government should follow the lead of other countries, some of which have tried and rejected the mixing of so many different types of users on the footpath, and treat cycles and powered light individual transport devices as bicycles or if capable of speeds above 30km/h then as mopeds.

The deadline for submissions remains 22 April despite requests for it to be extended on

account of the lockdown.

We have prepared a guide for writing a submission and also a pre-answered questionnaire to which people just need to add their name and contact details. These, and where to send submissions to, are on [our webpage LivingStreets.org.nz](http://ourwebpageLivingStreets.org.nz) under the Footpath for Feet section.

Ends.

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Notes to media:

Footpaths4Feet is a coalition of 13 member organisations, including Living Streets Aotearoa, Grey Power, Disabled Persons Assembly, CCS Disability Action, Alzheimers NZ, Blind and Low Vision NZ, Deaf Action NZ, Association of Blind Citizens NZ, Health Action Trust, Age Concern, Dunedin Pedestrian Network, Retina NZ, Visual Impairment Charitable Trust Aotearoa NZ.