



Living Streets Aotearoa

Welcome to the February 2024 eBulletin from Living Streets Aotearoa

We want more people walking and enjoying public spaces be they young or old, fast or slow, whether walking, sitting, commuting, shopping, between appointments, or out on the streets for exercise, for leisure or for pleasure.

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Save the date: Walk2Work Day - 13 March 2024



Our national Walk2Work Day, celebrating walking to everyday activities, is happening on Wednesday 13 March 2024.

This year our theme is *Move Your Mood*.

- Walking improves mental health and physical wellbeing.
- Walking is good for you, and it's good for the environment.
- You can move your mood with a walk in the fresh air.

Check this page to see what is happening in your area: www.walk2work.org.nz or [download a poster](#) to share with your community or workmates.

Or you could share your photos with us on the day at: email walk2workday@livingstreets.org.nz / or [Facebook](#) /or [Instagram](#).

Here are some suggestions for taking part:

- Walk all or part of the way to work.
- Join others in walking to work - your neighbours, family, flatmates, friends, workmates, coffee crew.
- Working from home? - schedule a walk and leave your desk for a break.
- Leave the car at home – walk to the train station.
- Jump off the bus a couple of stops earlier and walk the last part to work.
- If you're a regular walker, take a different route.

How to run successful weekly lunchtime walks



Weekly lunchtime walks have been happening in Wellington for more than 20 years, with workers and retired people enjoying the wide variety of walks on offer.

The Tuesday Lunchtime Civic Walks are run by Ron Ross, with a team of five enthusiastic guides leading the walks.

Ron says the walks were started by former mayor (and new MP) Celia Wade-

Brown as a way to get people out walking in their lunchtimes. He picked up the organiser's reins in 2006.

“We keep each walk to less than one hour so workers can fit it into their schedule. They were originally designed mostly for workers to get out in the fresh air, but these days we have a lot of retired people who join us too.

“It's a great way to discover the many alleyways and short cuts around the city, and interesting streets, as well as get some exercise and socialise.”

Each walk has an interesting destination or theme, often based around local history. They include the maritime walk, the bronze pigeon walk (commemorating significant events), motorway secrets, the ‘measuring a chain walk’, and lots more, with 46 walks in total. Once a month, there is a walk that involves catching a bus or the cable car, to get further out, and then walking back to the starting point which is always Plimmer Steps in central Wellington.

Ron sends out an email reminder about the walk each week to a distribution list of interested walkers. He says the walks happen in all weathers. The walk programme is also advertised on the [Living Streets Aotearoa website](#).

Would you like to set up a group in your town or city? Here is Ron's advice on how to get started:

- Identify short-cuts and alleyways that others might not know about.
- Find a local historian and others to suggest places of interest to include in a walk.
- Try to develop 10-20 walks for starters.
- Limit each walk to one hour.
- Have an interesting title, theme or destination for each walk.
- Grade the walks – easy, moderate, hard.
- Invite some keen people to lead the walks.
- Promote the walks e.g. community Facebook pages, local council website/newsletter.
- [Join Living Streets Aotearoa](#) to find walking enthusiasts in your area!

Photo caption: Tuesday Lunchtime Civic Walks group, with Ron Ross in the blue jacket, centre front.

Living Streets Aotearoa's pedestrian concerns outlined to new Minister of Transport



In November, Living Streets Aotearoa sent a letter to the new Minister of Transport, Hon Simeon Brown, congratulating him on his appointment and outlining the issues we see pedestrians currently facing. We included some suggested actions and asked to meet with him. We are very keen to have this conversation and are awaiting his reply.

Here is a summary of the topics we raised for discussion.

Encouraging more children walking to school. We would like to discuss how successful measures and programmes could be extended further for school-aged children.

Solutions for reducing obstructions on footpaths. Obstructions include parked motor vehicles and micro-mobility devices, commercial signs, construction materials and fences, rubbish bins, advertising boards etc. We have proposals involving the use of modern technology plus indexing penalties to maintain their effectiveness.

Addressing the safety of moving vehicles on footpaths. We have suggestions to address problems caused by e-scooter use, while retaining them as a part of the transport system.

Separating walking and cycling, with separate funding. We believe there is a need for separate walking and cycling classes in the National Land Transport Fund with funding specifically allocated to each class. This would overcome previous inequitable funding, where most of the combined class has been used to fund cycling infrastructure.

Concerns about large vehicles and speed limits. Vehicles are getting larger but the space available, particularly in urban areas, is finite. We believe further regulation is required to address this. Lower speeds save lives and make our towns and cities more pleasant to live in. We would like to work with the Minister on this.

Introducing Caroline McElnay - Living Streets Aotearoa's new Executive member




Kia ora, I live in Napier with my husband Giles and am from Northern Ireland. I have three adult children. My professional background is in public health, and I've spent more than 25 years in this field in New Zealand. Most of my career was with the Hawkes Bay District Health Board, where I was Medical Officer of Health and later Director of Population Health. I had the privilege of overseeing the entire public health department, where our focus was addressing health disparities and implementing preventive measures to improve the region's health.


In 2017, I became Director of Public Health at the Ministry of Health in Wellington, and was in that role through the challenging COVID-19 pandemic. After I stepped down in April 2022, my husband and I travelled to the US and UK to reconnect with family and friends and do some hiking in 33 of the National Parks in the US.


Since our return, I've been working part-time on various public health initiatives. Additionally, I've reignited my passion for long-distance hiking and running, finding renewed joy in these outdoor activities. Life in Napier is a blend of my dedication to public health and the simple pleasures of pursuing personal interests. Hawkes Bay is a great place to live and be active. We have a great network of walking and cycle paths and the hills of Havelock North and the coastal areas provide lots of opportunity for recreational walking.


I'm keen to support more people to walk as part of their everyday lives, particularly in urban centres - whether that be walking to work where possible, walking to shops or schools or walking with friends. There are so many health benefits to walking – and it's good for our environment! ~ Caroline McElnay

Living Streets Aotearoa in the news

 On *TVNZ Breakfast Live*, 31 Jan 2024: Tragically a person using an e-scooter in Auckland died in late January. Our president Tim Jones was interviewed on TVNZ's Breakfast Live show talking about the issue of e-scooters on footpaths. The item is at 1:24:15 in the bulletin: <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/shows/breakfast/episodes/s2024-e8>

 In *The Spinoff*, 29 Jan 2024: Read about the enjoyment and history of walking shortcuts in this interesting article in *The Spinoff*, including our president Tim Jones sharing his thoughts on their value to pedestrians. [The joy and utility of pedestrian shortcuts.](#)

 On *Radio New Zealand*, 11 Dec 2023: Listen to this news report featuring Chris Teo-Sherrell from Living Streets Aotearoa commenting on safety issues with the latest super fast e-scooters. [Speedy 100kmh e-scooters can't be used on footpaths or roads.](#)

 On *NewstalkZB*, 11 Dec 2023: Listen to this 3-minute interview about very fast e-scooters with our president Tim Jones. [Advocates call for better rules amid 'over-powered' e-scooter concerns.](#)

You can connect with Living Streets Aotearoa, via these channels...

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 [X \(Twitter\)](#)

 [Instagram](#)

 [LinkedIn](#)

 [YouTube](#)

ABOUT LIVING STREETS AOTEAROA

Living Streets Aotearoa is the national organization promoting walking-friendly communities. You can find out more about us at www.livingstreets.org.nz.

We send these occasional e-bulletins to keep you informed because we understand you have an interest in walking. You can also opt out of this and ALL future emails from us: [Please don't mail me again](#)

Living Streets Aotearoa
PO Box 1579
Whangarei, NTL 0140
New Zealand

