



Welcome to the October 2023 eBulletin from Living Streets Aotearoa

*This is a summary of events and stories of us striving to **get 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, exploration, for leisure or for pleasure.*

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“Buses are like pedestrian fountains” – and other quotable quotes



“There is a fundamental truth that everyone is a pedestrian at some point on the transport network, no matter what mode they are on,” says Holly Smith from Auckland Transport.

Holly was a speaker at Living Streets Aotearoa’s 2023 Walking Summit. Her presentation about *Walking and Public Transport: The First and Final Leg* provided some wonderful insights. She told us why transport planners, like her, care about pedestrians, and what they are doing to make public transport more accessible for pedestrians. “Public transport is an extension of the walking trip,” she says.

A 2022 study in Auckland found that most rapid transit stations (bus, train and ferry) scored poorly for pedestrians, with only 14 out of 60 stations scoring more than 60% for walking. The aim is to get scores of 80-100%. Panmure station was showcased as an example of how patronage at the station increased sharply when improvements were made.

Following on from this study, Auckland Transport trialled a computer programme to virtually walk through a street view and see things like surface problems, obstacles on paths and missing curb ramps. This was used to assess potential access issues for users.

Holly also shared a colourful analogy of how “buses are like pedestrian fountains, throwing people out into the city centre.” To find out what this means [watch the video of Holly’s presentation](#) (13 mins). We highly recommend you do!

Bumping places and gathering spaces in neighbourhoods



Professor Simon Kingham from the University of Canterbury has seen first-hand how having a gathering space in a community increases social interaction. His street in Christchurch was closed to through traffic for a while and the community revelled in the walkable space.

Simon gave an engaging presentation at Living Streets Aotearoa’s 2023 Walking Summit on community, traffic and walkable neighbourhoods, using examples from Christchurch and Barcelona.

In particular, he talked about a study into which areas of Christchurch recovered better and faster after the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes. One of the features of these areas was having places where people could bump into each other when they were walking. Not something that generally happens when driving or biking.

He described these accidental bumping places and intentional gathering spaces and their value to communities. This included increasing social interaction, creating a sense of belonging, and promoting health and wellbeing.

You can learn more about walkable communities, including the ‘superblocks’ of Barcelona in [Simon Kingham’s presentation video “The potential for walkable street spaces to enhance wellbeing](#) (10 mins). It’s a great watch!

A demo showing the impact of parking on the footpath



Ellen Blake from the Living Streets Aotearoa executive recently visited New Plymouth to encourage people to establish a local branch in Taranaki.

As part of the pitch, she set up a demo of parking on the footpath and the impact on pedestrians. The action, and the inconvenience, was captured on [video by Bryan Vickery Media Taranaki](#) and posted on Facebook. It generated many comments in support of safer footpaths.

If you are in Taranaki and would like to set up a Living Streets Aotearoa group, please get in touch. Email: president@livingstreets.org.nz

Introducing our two new contract staff

Living Streets Aotearoa has recently hired two part-time staff members to help with our administration, communications and campaign work. We warmly welcome them on board.



Sally Pearce, administrator. The admin role will manage the day-to-day support for members and get our web systems working well. Sally has worked as a coordinator for many years in the community environmental space. She is especially interested in protecting native biodiversity, reducing waste, and promoting sustainable transport. Based in Palmerston North and the Rangitikei, Sally loves to work in the garden and bush and to explore some of the amazing natural places we have in the lower North Island and beyond.



Philippa Sargent, communications and campaigns assistant. This new role will help develop and champion the cause of Living Streets Aotearoa through best practice communications. Philippa has enjoyed a long career in communications work and has a strong interest in walking, tramping and sustainable transport. Aside from everyday walking, she loves long distance hikes and has walked the Christchurch 360 trail, Camino de Frances in Spain, Inca Trail and South Island leg of Te Araroa.

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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](#)

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