



Living Streets Aotearoa

We are an independent not-for-profit organisation, established in 2002, that advocates for improved conditions for pedestrians and walkers and promotes walking-friendly communities.

Our Vision

More people choosing to walk more often.

Our Mission

We will energetically and creatively persuade decision-makers, officials and the public of the importance and desirability of walking and attractive public spaces.

What we do

- promote walking as a healthy, accessible, cheap, sociable and environmentally-friendly means of transport and recreation.
- promote the social and economic benefits of pedestrian-friendly communities.
- work for walking-friendly communities with improved access and conditions for walkers, pedestrians and runners.
- advocate for greater representation of walker and pedestrian concerns in land use, transport planning and urban design.
- raise the profile of walking through education, debate, campaigns, publications, seminars and conferences.
- foster consideration for people with special mobility needs.

Executive Council 2007-2008

Celia Wade-Brown	(president)
Mike Mellor	(vice-president)
Andy Smith	(treasurer)
Gay Richards	(secretary)
Graeme Easte	
Daphne Bell	
Ralph Chapman	
Carina Duke	

Staff 2007-2008

Liz Thomas	Director
Lily Linton	Project Administrator
Fiona Whero	South Island Networker
Louise Cheetham	Project Officer (August – December 07)
Carol Comber	Project Officer (from March 2008)

Living Streets Aotearoa

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Note: Living Streets Aotearoa New Zealand uses 'walking' to mean to go about on foot either with or without assistance such as a wheelchair or walking stick.

President's Report 2007-8

Making towns and cities more walkable is one of the most important things we can do. It's critical to our carbon footprint and ideal for people's mental and physical health. Walking provides the social and economic glue that makes successful cities, towns and suburbs.

International context

Two years ago, Living Streets Aotearoa joined the International Federation of Pedestrians. There are now 18 members that are national organisations including Turkey, Colombia, England, the US and Bulgaria.

We share the challenges of convincing retailers that their business fortunes do not depend on a car park immediately outside their shop; convincing planners that promoting walking doesn't mean we hate cars; persuading councillors that voters care about safer streets and want an attractive public realm and that more people walking integrates benefits across social, environmental, health and economy.

Internationally, we find that "people on foot" don't identify as vocal advocates for walking. Sometimes our mode is too simple a solution and therefore overlooked. In national and international reports, far more attention is paid to food and diet than daily physical activity. Much more is spent on stadiums, elite sports and the Olympics than promoting and enabling what we evolved to do – walk! I don't disagree with organised sport; just wish we could access the same level of support and identification.

2007's IPCC 4th assessment report emphasised the threats of climate change and the urgency of action. We participated in a Climate Day of Action that followed in December and contributed to World Environment Day 2008 with its focus on "Kicking the Carbon Habit" with our walking totems.

In 2008, the price of oil rose spectacularly. This was less of a surprise to those who recognised the coincidence of increased world demand with peak production and international tensions. Electric cars can still maim people and encourage inactivity. It's great to have new technology which is less polluting locally and globally, but our public places still need to have *tamed* traffic, whatever its motive power. Since the oil prices have gone up, more people have taken to cycling – wonderful if it's not on a narrow footpath where people are already walking.



Success in New Zealand

Our director has outlined in detail many achievements and activities. Here are a few other highlights.

The Remuneration Authority has agreed to look at mileage allowances to make them more equitable – currently private motorised vehicle usage receives 70cents per km, public transport receives reimbursement of actual costs and walking or cycling receives nothing. Their 2008 determination notes “ *Furthermore, it provides an incentive for elected members to use private motor vehicles on council business at a time when many councils are encouraging greener, or generally more sustainable, transport and environmental policies.*

The Authority intends to review the basis and application of the motor vehicle allowance prior to the 2009/10 Local Government Elected Members Determination.”

More walking strategies and plans have been agreed at regional and territorial council level although monitoring of implementation is patchy.

We worked with WalkAuckland and Cycle Advocates Auckland to show Transit the strategic value from making the Harbour Bridge accessible to foot and cycle. Similar issues face us along SH2 between Hutt City and Wellington City, and the Great Harbour Way could be the capital’s answer.

The New Zealand Transition Towns movement has taken off rapidly and its interest in re-localisation creates a positive opportunity for walking promotion at a neighbourhood level.

Thanks!

The Living Streets website usage and content has continued to grow. Our voluntary Webmaster, Robert Davies, deserves considerable credit. Accessibility has always been treated with the highest importance. It includes local and international links, events, maps, suggestions of who to consult and all our minutes and reports. WalkIT will be redeveloped in a way compatible with our main website and the priorities in our Communications Strategy.

Living Streets Aotearoa’s Executive Council members have worked at a more strategic level and we’ve evaluated our performances individually. Bi-monthly phone meetings move effectively through business, including healthy discussion, and are supplemented with email communications. The face to face and advocates meetings are generating a stronger sense of a New Zealand network of people who care passionately about walking.

Our South Island networker, Fiona Whero, deserves a special thank you since she has made so many opportunities to connect people who share commitment to sustainable transport and is a fount of ideas and energy. Other staff have contributed greatly to our strategic outcomes and credibility and deserve members’ full support.

Our relationship with the Cycle Advocates’ Network continues to be supportive and complementary, strengthened by the fact that many Living Streets Aotearoa staff and members cycle as well as walk.

I would also like to thank the people we work with, particularly in central and local government, who work to make a more walkable environment and who have supported this organisation with their advice, ideas and funding.

Future outlook

The updated NZ Transport Strategy is coming out this week and rumour suggests it is an improvement, with the Government Policy Statement set to direct more sustainable transport funding allocations. Continuing road capacity increases are not generally helpful for walkers since they induce traffic. However, some safety programmes within the roading budget have very positive benefits so not all road spending is inimical to people choosing to walk more often. We look forward to the New Zealand Transport Agency taking a holistic view of transport, including health, safety, economics and sustainability and welcome leadership rather than reaction in framing a sustainable future.

Later this year we will be contacting candidates and all political parties to ensure that they understand the importance of walking.

In 2009, we will need to extend that understanding of walking's importance to different sectors, especially health and the media. We will also endeavour to remind runners they have common cause while on streets and walkways.

Auckland will receive more attention this coming year, extending more activity to Manukau, Waitakere and North Shore given the health inequalities and considerable opportunities for improvement. Issues of different cultural attitudes towards walking must be explored.

Finally, it is six years since we incorporated. I look forward to a new Living Streets Aotearoa president being elected in 2008 or 2009 and encourage people to contribute to the governance for our important voice for walkers.

Tread lightly on the planet – walk more!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Celia Wade-Brown'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Celia Wade-Brown

Living Streets Aotearoa Activities

The year has been busy for Living Streets Aotearoa. The organisation has consolidated and developed its internal capabilities, as well as its ability to support the growing number of local Walking User Groups around the country.

There have been a number of major changes this year. In 2006-7 our major funding came from contracts with the Health Sponsorship Council. When they decided to change focus, Living Streets entered negotiations with Land Transport New Zealand for direct funding. In July 2007 we signed a three year contract, with yearly reviews, for the National Networking programme.

Also in July we moved from our office at the Health Sponsorship Council to larger premises in Willis Street. We continue to have a close relationship with the Cycling Advocates' network (CAN) with whom we have a Memorandum of Understanding and share office space and equipment in Wellington and Christchurch. Being in the same office is an effective use of resources for both organisations, and also enables us to share information easily and to work together on projects.

In addition to the Director and part-time Project Administrator, we now employ a Project Officer and a half-time Networker in the South Island, who also works half-time for CAN.

Over the year the organisation has been working in the key areas laid out in the Strategic Plan http://www.livingstreets.org.nz/strat_plan.htm

Raising the profile of walking

Living Streets has worked to raise awareness of the importance of walking amongst transport planners, local body politicians, health and recreation planners, and the general public. Although almost everybody walks, from the very young to the very old, and walking is the beginning and end of all public transport trips, walking still remains very much the "invisible mode".

Local Walking Advocacy Groups

Living Streets supports a network of groups around the country, who do the essential work on the ground at the local level. During the year two new groups have been set up, Living Streets Dunedin and Walk Nelson/Tasman, and we have started working with Bike Walk Marlborough. We are currently meeting with key people in a number of other areas to help set up walking advocacy groups, including the West Coast, Southland, New Plymouth, Manukau and Waitakere.

The existing groups, Walk Auckland, Walk Taupo, Living Streets Hamilton, Living Streets Wellington, and Living Streets Canterbury have all been active during the year running events, making submissions and working with their local Councils and other agencies. Living Streets Hamilton received the 2007 Kowhai Community Group award, sponsored by Hamilton City Council, which recognises the contribution that local community environmental groups make to the city. This was a great achievement for a relatively new group.

Living Streets has supported the walking advocacy groups in a variety of ways including running an advocates training day, visiting each group at least once during the year, phoning and emailing, helping them develop stakeholder lists and organise public meetings, and producing the Making Submissions and Using the Media resource kits. We ensured that all groups received a copy of the new Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide.

Walk 2 Work day

Living Streets ran a pilot Walk 2 Work day in March. Over 250 people who had walked all or part of the way to work attended the breakfast event, which was well reported in Wellington newspapers and radio stations. The Minister of Transport and three other MPs attended the event, along with City and Regional Councillors, SPARC and health organisations. Living Streets also supported Capital and Coast DHB to run Walk 2 Work incentives for staff walkers at their three hospital locations. Living Streets will roll out the Walk 2 Work event to other regions in 2009, and plans to make it a national event the following year.

International Walking Charter

Living Streets has been promoting the International Walking Charter, first launched by Walk21 at the 2006 international walking conference in Melbourne. The Minister of Transport signed the charter at the 2006 NZ Walking Conference. Living Streets sent a letter and the charter to all Councils, and it has been signed by a number of mayors, councils and council staff around the country. It has been promoted at events and through other organisations, and has proved to be an excellent tool for raising awareness of the importance of walking and the breadth of issues involved in making walkable urban areas.

World Environment Day

Living Streets Wellington members supported a very visible and creative World Environment Day project in the capital involving the installation around the city of seventeen walking poles with shoes attached, with messages urging people to “Kick the Carbon habit” by walking. We were assisted with corporate sponsorship from ANZ in the form of a team of their staff who helped decorate and install the poles.

Media and publications

Our media strategy has ensured that Living Streets has sent out press releases on key issues relating to walking, with a number of these being taken up by the media. Our newsletter “Footprints” has been expanded and is sent out to members and published on the website quarterly. We are regular contributors to Walking New Zealand magazine, and were heartened when the Automobile Association contacted the president to interview her for their “Directions” magazine, saying that for the walking angle, Living Streets was the obvious organisation to approach. Living Streets has established its place as the voice for walkers, and this voice will be heard more in the future when our new communications strategy is finalised and implemented.

Conferences and seminars

Living Streets is gaining in credibility as the organisation which speaks for walkers' interests, as evidenced by invitations to address groups, contribute to seminars and comment on walking issues. In July 2007 the President delivered a paper on "Walking, the Invisible Mode" at the International Transport Conference in Christchurch, and in October the Director attended the international Walk21 conference in Toronto and presented a paper on "Developing Walking Maps".

Living Streets held a seminar day in October at the Waitakere City Council, including a critical and illuminating walk around Henderson led by a Waitakere City Councillor, a talk by the Auckland City Council Urban Design manager, and a session on mapping and GIS. During the year we were also organising the NZ Walking Conference, to be held in Auckland in August.

Working with key stakeholders and decision makers

We have developed good working relationships with key government departments, government ministers, and spokespeople from other political parties on transport, health and recreation. Our work on banning cell phone use while driving, which included discussions with the Minister of Transport Safety, contributed significantly to the recent decision to consult on banning drivers from using hand held cell phones in cars.

We have been participating in the "Getting There – on foot, by cycle" strategy and implementation, though this has been progressing more slowly than we would have liked, due to changes in the transport sector. However, we are pleased that the Ministry of Transport has heeded our calls for an update of the Pedestrian Profile.

Living Streets worked with CAN to develop a resource for surveying local body candidates, and this was adapted by several of the local groups for use in their own areas. Information for newly elected councillors was sent to groups for them to use when they met their local councillors. The results of the survey were published on the Living Streets web site.

We have been actively involved with Regional Active Transport Forums in Auckland, Nelson/Tasman and Canterbury, and are working with organisations in other areas where there is interest in setting up similar forums.

Sharing Information

Living Streets has continued to maintain the walking resources database WalkIT, and is working on a plan to integrate this information with information on the Living Streets web site when it is upgraded.

Our contacts, currently held on several databases and spreadsheets, are being consolidated into a Customer Relationship Management system which will allow us to manage them more easily and to communicate and share information more widely with targeted groups.

Submissions

Living Streets has made submissions nationally on a number of key documents including the Update of the NZ Transport Strategy, the Land Transport Management Amendment Bill, and the Public Health Bill. Local groups submitted on a myriad of issues, from parking on footpaths to Regional Land Transport strategies and Council Annual Plans.

Report on the Obesity Inquiry

Living Streets commissioned John White to write a report “A Back Seat for Physical Activity” which examined the submissions to the Parliamentary Health Select Committee Inquiry into Obesity and Type Two Diabetes, and analysed the submissions which addressed physical activity. It highlighted how the effects of physical activity on obesity had been downplayed compared to nutrition’s role. The report was launched at a very successful function attended by over sixty people from the health and other sectors. It was an excellent forum for raising awareness of the importance of walking as the most accessible way to increase physical activity on a regular basis. The report is on our web site.

Community Partnership Programme

This is a small funding programme which gives grants of up to \$1000 for small walking and cycling projects. Living Streets administered the programme for both walking and cycling. Over twenty organisations, including schools, health organisations, sports trusts, walking groups and community centres received funding for walking or joint walking/cycling initiatives. The funding enabled many groups and organisations to access small amounts of money through a simple, accountable mechanism, and resulted in many small local walking initiatives taking place.

Walking Maps

Edition two of the Newtown Berhampore Walking Map is under production at present, and some local groups have developed or assisted with walking maps in their areas. These include Walk Auckland’s Western Bays Map, the Way to Go walking map in Richmond, Let’s Walk Kaipoi, and the walking map of the Hamilton CBD presently in production.

Nationally, Living Streets has had discussions about a potential partnership with the Government Walk the Talk programme to encourage walking between Government departments.

Walk Wellington

Walk Wellington, which runs guided walks for visitors, became part of Living Streets in 2005. They now have over twenty five volunteer guides who receive on-going training, and who lead daily walks as well as personalised walks for school and corporate groups and cruise ship passengers. This year has been very successful, with an increase of over 50% in the number of walkers.