



Welcome to the February 2025 e-Bulletin 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.

In this issue:

- Announcement of 2025 Campaign: Footpath parking
- Submit on Highway Speed Limits to Stand Up for Safer Speeds
- Chris Bishop announced as Minister of Transport
- Walk2Work Day
- Living Streets Aotearoa supports Te Ara Tipuna
- Banks Peninsula Walking Festival

Announcement of 2025 Campaign: Footpath Parking

Have you had your way blocked by people parking motor vehicles over the footpath? Have you been forced to go onto the road to get around them?

You're not alone and it isn't okay. Footpaths are for people on foot and those using mobility devices such as wheelchairs. Motor vehicles are not allowed to be parked on footpaths, not even a little bit, not even for 'just a minute'. That's the law!

The problem seems to have been getting worse in recent times, despite fines for doing so going up last October to \$70. It's especially prevalent in parts of cities where houses are being built at medium and high density. But in other places, too, some drivers are being inconsiderate and parking across footpaths. This makes it really hard for people with young children, for people using mobility devices, for older or frail people, and



especially for blind people. Even for able-bodied people it can be dangerous if they are forced to walk on the roadway to get around the vehicle.

Living Streets Aotearoa is campaigning to try to get Councils to remind drivers of the law and to more strongly enforce it, as well as for more attention to be paid to it in driver education and testing.



We know Councils generally have too few parking wardens to adequately enforce the law so we're trying to get more of them to accept photographs and details supplied by members of the public, through apps such as SnapSendSolve, as evidence on which they can base the issuing of fines.

If you'd like to help in this campaign, please get in contact with parking@livingstreets.org.nz.

And if you would like a few of our [Yellow Feet](#) which provide a gentle reminder to people that parking on the footpath is inconsiderate and illegal, please contact accounts@livingstreets.org.nz and let us know your postal address.

Submit on Highway Speed Limits to Stand Up for Safer Speeds

Despite the recent change of Minister, the Government has pushed ahead with reversing a number of speed limit reductions on state highways, and has opened public consultation on more sections.

Living Streets Aotearoa supported the road speed reductions because the evidence shows they made roads safer for pedestrians and other road users, and in our media release responding to the recent Government announcement, we are calling on our members and supporters to [Stand Up for Safer Speeds](#).

As our media release says:

"We know that reducing vehicle speeds saves lives, and increasing vehicle speeds costs lives. For example, increasing speed limits from 30 to 50 km/h makes the risk of death or serious injuries to pedestrians four times greater. That risk is even higher when it comes to children and elderly people."

"If you want to be safe crossing the road, and if you want your children and your partner and your parents to be safe, then it's time to stand up and say so."

Other groups are active on this issue too. Safe transport advocacy group Movement has launched a legal challenge to the Setting of Speed Limits Rule 2024, claiming that the decision to adopt the Rule is inconsistent with the minister's objectives under the Land Transport Act. [This Radio New Zealand article about the legal challenge](#) provides some very good examples of why increasing road speed limits is such a bad idea.

How to have your say:

Public consultation is now open on Government proposals to increase speeds on 49 sections of state highway. Before submissions close on 13 March 2025, we encourage you to submit here in favour of the existing speed reductions in your area:

www.nzta.govt.nz/speed-consultation

NZTA says:

We are consulting on 49 specific locations across 11 regions in New Zealand and the consultation survey forms ask people if they support or oppose retaining the current speed limit at those locations. This feedback will help us determine if there is public acceptance for those existing speed limits.

If you want to protect pedestrian safety, now is the time to stand up for them - please do! But don't stop there – as well as making your submission, please:

- write to your local paper in support of these speed reductions, explaining why safe speeds matter
- contact your local MP and make sure they know this matters to you and your family
- urge your local Council to stand up for speed reductions in your area.

Living Streets Aotearoa encouraged by appointment of Hon Chris Bishop as new Minister of Transport

The appointment of Hon Chris Bishop as the new Minister of Transport, replacing Hon Simeon Brown, is encouraging, said Living Streets Aotearoa President Tim Jones.

"We know that Minister Bishop has a strong interest in housing and urban development. Safe streets, safe speeds, and good footpaths help more people to walk more often and lead to better cities that more people want to live in."

Living Streets Aotearoa wants Minister Bishop to take an evidence-based approach to matters that affect walking, in particular lowering speed limits. "The evidence shows that streets and roads are much safer when vehicle speeds are lower," Tim Jones said. "So we want to see the Minister follow this evidence rather than rely on a rigid ideological framework. The same goes for issues such as obstructions on footpaths and regulating oversized vehicles, which pose a menace to pedestrians due to their size and weight."

Living Streets Aotearoa had a constructive meeting with then-Minister of Transport Simeon Brown in May 2024, and consequently the importance of walking was officially recognised in the 2024 Government Policy Statement on Land Transport. "We look forward to working with Minister Bishop to ensure that this recognition of walking is backed up with the necessary level of funding," Tim Jones concluded.

Walk2Work Day

Living Streets Aotearoa has decided not to hold a Walk to Work Day in March 2025. Instead, we will be:

- Amplifying what other organisations are doing for Walk to Work Day this year.
- Promoting a limited number of other walking-related days and weeks in 2025 - look out for more information on those!
- Working towards organising a new annual walking day or week from 2026, probably with a wider focus than walking to and from work.

The eBulletin will bring you more news in future issues.

For residents of Dunedin, Dunedin City Council is running a photo competition for Walk2Work day this year. To enter, on Walk2Work Day, Wednesday 12 March, send a photo of yourself walking with a caption to transport@dcc.govt.nz.

The photo doesn't necessarily need to be of you walking to work, but can be of you walking part of your journey, walking the kids to school, running an errand, or walking for any other reason during the day.



Photo credit: Dunedin City Council

[Find more details about the photo contest on the events page of the DCC website](#)

Living Streets Aotearoa supports Te Ara Tipuna

[Te Ara Tipuna](#) is a visionary initiative aimed at creating a public walking trail approximately 500km around the East coast of the North Island, from Gisborne to Ōpōtiki. This project celebrates the deep Māori connection to the land and environment, weaving together ancestral pathways with modern infrastructure for sustainable transport. Te Ara Tipuna, meaning "The Path of Our Ancestors," honours the ancient routes once traveled by Māori and revives them for current and future generations, fostering a sense of place and connection. The trail is proposed to be located across private land including multiple owner land blocks, along road and reserve corridors, and the coastal margin.

Living Streets Aotearoa supports Te Ara Tipuna and sees projects like these as an essential part of creating safe accessible walking opportunities that promote healthy lifestyles, connection to place, and environmental stewardship. We know about the benefits that walking brings to health and well-being and increasingly research is demonstrating the particular benefits of walking in nature. Opportunities to connect with cultural history and engage with local communities also bring many additional benefits.

Projects like Te Ara Tipuna create opportunities for communities to come together to support local initiatives, share knowledge, and enhance their environments. Living Streets Aotearoa recognises that walking infrastructure isn't just about transportation—it's about building stronger, more connected communities.

Further information can be found at the [Te Ara Tipuna](#) website. Resource consent submissions are currently being sought with a closing date of 7 February. Living Streets Aotearoa will be submitting in favour of this project. [Find out how to make a submission on the Gisborne District Council website.](#)



Banks Peninsula Walking Festival

The 12th Annual [Banks Peninsula Walking Festival](#) (BPWF) runs between February 22 and March 16, 2025. The BPWF is an annual event and is a project of the [Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust](#).

The programme for this year's festival was just released today and tickets go live tomorrow 6 February at 9 am. [You must book in advance for each walk](#).

The festival aims to promote the healthy activity of walking and in Banks Peninsula in particular as a walking destination. BPWF offers walks guided by volunteers with local knowledge of the areas where the walks take place. The walks vary from short strolls in urban areas to full-day tramps to more remote locations.



Ways to connect with Living Streets Aotearoa



ABOUT LIVING STREETS AOTEAROA

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

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