

# NEWTOWN NEWS

PIPIRI / JUNE 2021

YOUR FREE COMMUNITY ZINE, BY NEWTOWNERS, FOR NEWTOWN

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE NEWTOWN COMMUNITY CENTRE



WORLD BICYCLE DAY EDITION

# KIA ORA NEWTOWN

Kia ora e te whānau,

It's World Bicycle Day on the 3rd June, so this edition, we're celebrating the best invention since sliced bread - bikes! One of my earliest memories is learning to ride my bike, shaky but exhilarated to have finally found my balance. My dad ran behind me, having released the back of the bike to give me freeeeedommm! It was amazing! The wind through my helmet, the sun in my eyes. Until shortly afterwards, when I fell off and he trod on my arm, resulting in a trip to A&E. But I didn't let that put me off.

For most of my life, whether it's been my daily commute, a day-trip to the countryside, a ride along the south coast, or longer cycling and camping trips through the UK, China and Europe, bikes have taken me to some really amazing places.

More recently, my bike and I have had a tricky 6 months - first I was sick - I broke my leg back in December, which makes bike riding tricky (I actually DID try to ride my bike with a cast. Do not recommend. With a moon boot on the other hand - easy peasy!) And now my bike has been sick, so it's been in the shop for a while (I learned the hard way that electric bikes REALLY don't like being left out in a huge storm).

So I'm missing biking a lottttt. My fave thing to do is blast some tunes from my phone in the bike basket and sing along (sure, somewhat tunelessly) at the top of my lungs. It's the actual best.

If you're not yet confident to blast some tunes and bike in the city, there are some awesome orgs that can help, like Pedal Ready ([www.pedalready.org.nz](http://www.pedalready.org.nz)) who run free workshops on cycling confidence!

Ngā mihi,  
Ellie Clayton - [ellie@newtowncommunity.org.nz](mailto:ellie@newtowncommunity.org.nz)

Some trippy bicycle cover art by an anonymous participant of ART JAM - hit us up if you'd like a credit in next month's Newtown News!

**Thanks for the support of our amazing local businesses! Please support 'em back !**



*The views and opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the original authors and other contributors. They do not necessarily reflect those of the Newtown Community & Cultural Centre.*

# Notorious NEWTowner

**Ellie and Audrey Banach-Salas kōrero bikes, bikes and more bikes at Peoples.**

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Audrey was born in Wellington, went down to Christchurch and then around 7 years ago returned to the hills and wind of Te Whanganui-a-Tara - this might not be considered the best move for an avid cyclist like Audrey, but she doesn't seem to regret it. "It's a wonderful, vibrant place to be!"

She currently lives in Mount Vic, but we discuss that that's basically an extension of Newtown anyway "y'know, we share a hill". You'll find Audrey here in Newtown regularly though, whether she's op-shopping, drinking coffee at Peoples, helping people fix their bikes at free bike workshop 'Mechanical Tempest' or having a bevv at Moon after her shift there.

Audrey's bicycle trip is lifelong - she remembers learning to ride in Mount Vic "going around the block, then shooting down the hills!" and now she lives there again. She recalls attending a bicycle safety workshop as a kid and now she has run them herself! She also now fixes bikes for her paid AND volunteer mahi - with Switched On Bikes and Mechanical Tempest.



When Audrey isn't biking, she may be crocheting ("I'm crocheting a sweater vest - every second person is wearing one!"), playing a multitude of instruments or checking out live music.

Audrey is the newly elected chairperson of Mechanical Tempest (though she says "it's just an admin thing"), which is Newtown's very own: "free, anarchist, non-hierarchical, DIY bike workshop." Housed at the old Caltex petrol station on Riddiford Street, it's open to everyone. "come on down Monday - Thursday 6-8pm, find yourself a bike or get help to fix your bike. If you're able, you can give a koha of any kind - whether it's baking, money or your skills." Audrey reckons the accessible, DIY ethos is important because "it's liberating and empowering - either you learn to fix your own bike, or if you have to take it to a shop, you can be confident in what you're talking about. And you don't need to spend so much money!"

Audrey reckons more infrastructure like cycleways would make people more comfortable with cycling in Wellington - having lived in Christchurch, she can really see the difference it makes. She points out that the cycleway between Petone and Wellington has been discussed since 1901 (literally - google it!). "It's really disheartening. I'm actually constantly afraid of being knocked off my bicycle cycling in Wellington - we need bold public transport decisions!"

And despite its total lack of cycle lanes ("until you get most of the way up Constable Street"), Audrey does love Newtown - we talk about her fave spots for a while (Mechanical Tempest is number one obvs), until she laughs "I've just listed 100 places - I just love Newtown!" Her message for Newtowners is: "Thanks for being so wonderfully vibrant, and keeping it real. See ya at the Tempest sometime!"



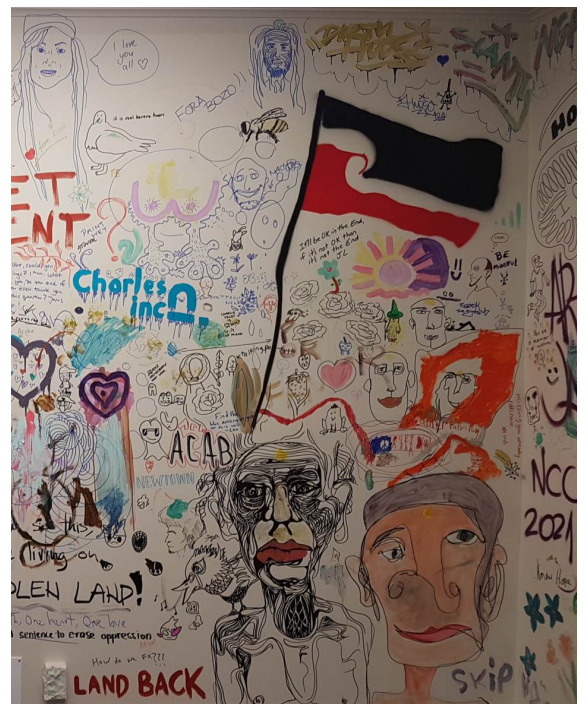
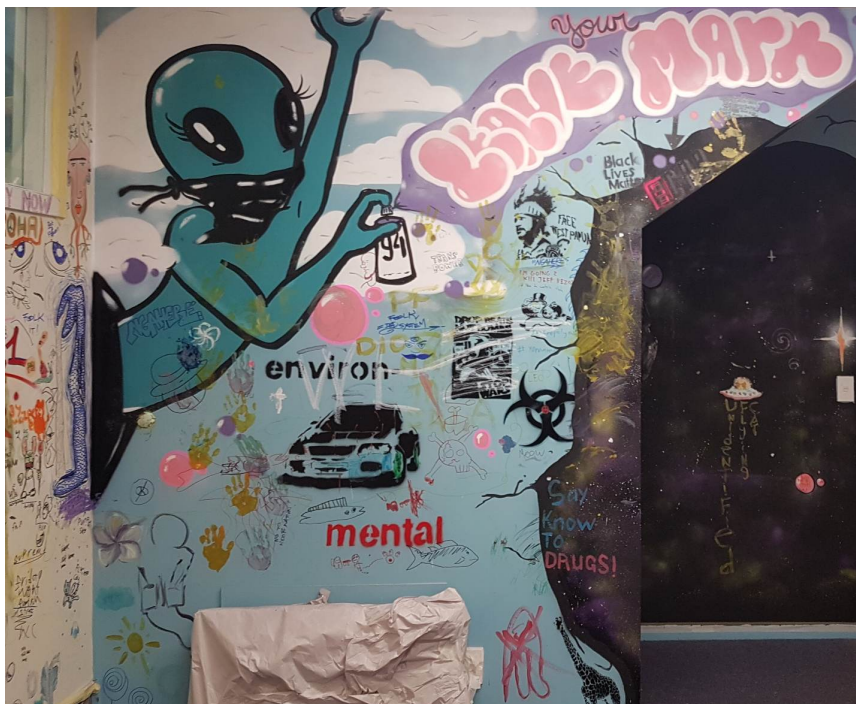
# MĀ TE WĀ / LATERZ

In mid-May 2021, we said mā te wā / see ya later to the main Community Centre on the corner of Colombo & Rintoul Streets! We went out with a BANG with Art Jam - the community centre was emptied out of tai chi classes, offices and dance rehearsals and was filled with graffiti, art pieces, installations and performances.

Thanks to the Arts Team @ Wellington City Council who supported the event and Te Āti Awa kaumātua Peter Jackson who said a karakia with us to farewell the centre.



Pics & messages from Newtowners in the 'LEAVE YOUR MARK' room where people could draw/write on the walls!





# TO THE OLD NCCC!



Bravely standing in the huge open mouth of what used to be our drop in room, check out Kaiwhakahaere / Coordinator Eryn (left) and Alana Kane (right), Wellington Timebank Coordinator. We're also saying mā te wā to Alana, who has sadly now left us to move overseas!

Overall, the weekend was a great success, from kids (and some adults) discovering teddy bear picnics, to everybody stuffing their faces with jam scones, to getting relaxed in light and music installations, to seeing things up close under a microscope, to watching music and dance performances - it was a fittingly vibrant way to say mā te wā to the old Community Centre.

Read a review of Art Jam from NZ's leading Arts press, the Big Idea: [bit.ly/2QMt5mW](http://bit.ly/2QMt5mW) And check out the full album of pics here: [bit.ly/3fMZW3z](http://bit.ly/3fMZW3z)

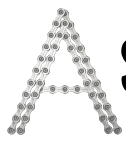
# ...AND HELLO TO THE NEW!



While the Community Centre gets renovated, we're in a new space, above the old ANZ bank. Level 2, 2a Green Street.

We've got spaces to hire, a drop-in room where you can come and have a free cuppa and get outta the weather. We've got a community pantry and fridge where you can give what you can and take what you need.

**Come up and say kia ora!**



# SPARK OF JOY IN THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT ABYSS

BY ANKA KUEPPER

In the midst of the challenging abyss that is Wellington public transport are the occasional bright sparks of fun and joy. No wait – hear me out. The constant fight for space on the road car, bus and bike all squeezing and competing for breathing space. Fleeting individual moments – if perfectly aligned – are cause of surprising hilarity. Picture this: it is Thursday afternoon, the weekend is within grasp, you have trotted to your mid CBD bus stop. You are early – because you don't want to have to chance getting on the bus. Or having the usual 5.30pm cancelled. Or both.

You are basking in the low winter sun closing your eyes and tilting your head up when ... toot! ... jaywalkers running between the doughnut shop and the gym across 5 lines of traffic. Shaking your head both the irony and senseless stupidity you notice the sidewalk filling up with other commuters. Absentmindedly you fumble for your mask and snapper card in your backpack's side pocket. You glance up at the digital display to see the next route to Karori flickering from SCHEDULED to CANCELLED. A brief moment of panic as you quickly cast your eye down the list – phew – the Lyall Bay route is still coming – for now.

This is when you notice the sun has disappeared as Uber after Uber starts to pull up at the bus stop to collect impatient young commuters. 'Patience is a virtue.' You hear your gran's voice echo in the back of your mind. Now suddenly eager to get home as well and delve into the last of her baking you took with you after last weekend's trip over the hills. As the third Uber pulls up you notice that they should really have their lights on. Even if you can see – it's about being seen. Moments later with the sun fully gone a chill has started to creep up your back. You start shimmying from foot to foot.

Already having put on your mask your glasses are starting to fog up with each breath you expel. That is when you see your bus pull up to the light at the intersection. Not wanting to surrender your spot at the front of the queue you earned with your patience you step towards the kerb as the bus creeps forward letting straight going traffic sail past. As it turns there is an acrobatically inclined cyclist snaking his way between another Uber and the bus pulling into the same lane... what a close call.

You raise your hand to signal to the bus driver and this is when it happens – in a moment of rejoicing to be alive the cyclist zooms past; your outstretched hand at his head height, and he gives you the most crisp and solid high five you have received since your high school team sport days. Perplexed you just stare at your hand. A warm tingle you almost visually see dripping into your sleeve. The faint laughter of the cyclist already being another 50m down the road. And with that – all the stress, annoyance, and pressure washes off you through a bright and spontaneous sparky high five! You get on the bus with a smile that reaches your eyes. It's the little things that make the biggest difference. In a bizarre way you are already hoping for it to happen again.





# NEWTOWN IS BIKETASTIC!

BY JAMIE HOARE

Newtown - it's got everything! Green space, decent bars, cafes, a library, public toilets, good shops, op-shops, friendly people, artists, the hospital, a mix of generations, a cultural melting pot, and, something that doesn't get talked about a lot - a super diverse bike culture.

Whether it's the lycra-clad speed-racer; the cargo bike riding parent; the mountain biking fiend; the fixed-gear hipster; the super high-vis rider on their new e-bike; or the rider that just picked up a bike for \$10 bucks; Newtown has got it all.

But it's not just people on bikes, Newtown has heaps of bike services too! Like, Wellington's only community bike workshop - The Mechanical Tempest. If something on your bike is just not quite right, head down to the workshop opposite The Sallies and one of the volunteer mechanics will be sure to lend you a hand.

You can even get things delivered to Newtown on a bike. If you need something from town, or something dropped off in the city, shoot Nocar Cargo an email and they'll sort it out.

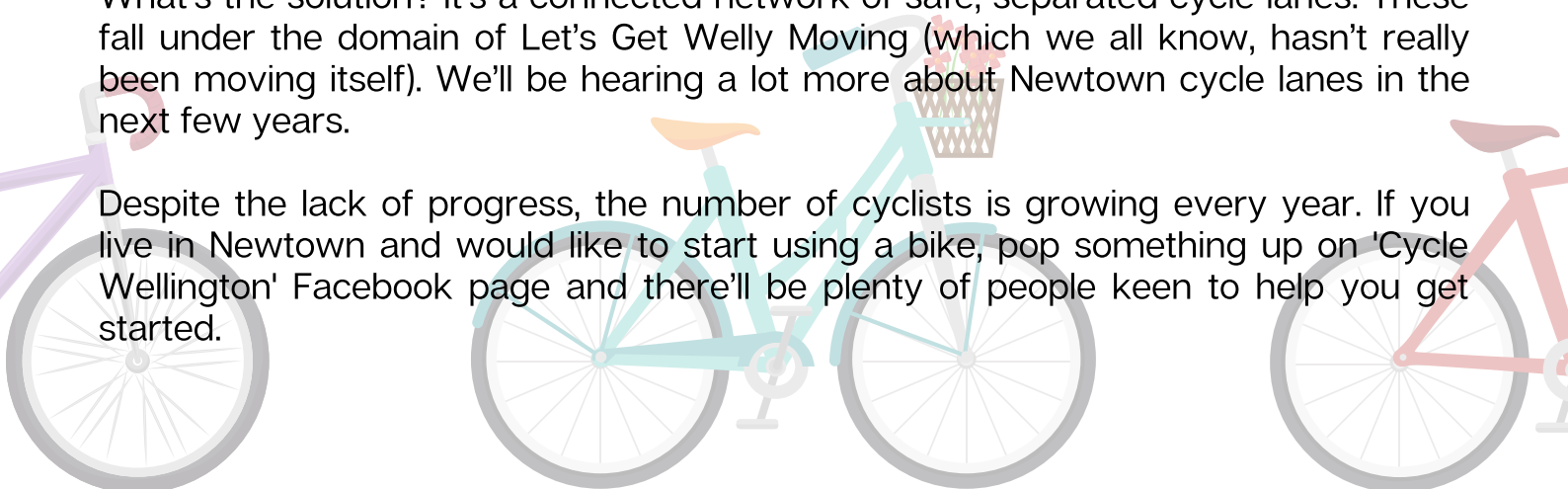
Newtown also has a super amazing program to make bikes accessible to all people - Rebicycle. They fix up donated bikes at The Mechanical Tempest and give them away to people who need them. So far they've given away over 1000 bikes! If you've got an old bike you're not using, need a bike but can't make it work, or know someone else who does, give Rebicycle a shout.

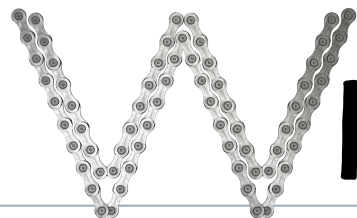
Newtown, I'm told, has the highest percentage of bike commuters of all suburbs in Wellington City, and it's not hard to see why. With just a 20 minute ride from the hospital to the train station, Newtown is perfectly positioned for people to use their bike as their 'primary transport mode.' Throw in the benefits of incidental exercise, the zero carbon emissions, and the zero wait-times in traffic, and riding a bike almost becomes a no-brainer. Almost.

The main barrier to getting even more Newtowners on their bikes, is the perception of safety. That is, a lot of people don't ride a bike in Newtown because they fear they might get squished by a car. A reasonable fear when cyclists need to share a lane with motor vehicles and buses.

What's the solution? It's a connected network of safe, separated cycle lanes. These fall under the domain of Let's Get Welly Moving (which we all know, hasn't really been moving itself). We'll be hearing a lot more about Newtown cycle lanes in the next few years.

Despite the lack of progress, the number of cyclists is growing every year. If you live in Newtown and would like to start using a bike, pop something up on 'Cycle Wellington' Facebook page and there'll be plenty of people keen to help you get started.





# HAT'S THE HAPPS?

## AT THE NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE (2A GREEN STREET)

### Free Legal Advice Drop-in – Wednesday June 2, 11am-12pm

Get some free confidential legal advice from a Community Law lawyer, no appointment necessary! [bit.ly/3oXlfUq](https://bit.ly/3oXlfUq)

### Menstrual Mates – Thursday June 17, 5pm-7pm

Come make your own sustainable pad (or one for a friend!) – no experience or materials necessary! [bit.ly/3yGxCIG](https://bit.ly/3yGxCIG)

### Rūma Noho / Lounge hire

Need a spot for your groovy event? Our big lounge can fit about 40 people, comes equipped with chairs and couches, and has access to our shared kitchen. Cost per hour is between \$16 and \$30 an hour, check out our website for more info: [bit.ly/3vs1WET](https://bit.ly/3vs1WET)

### Rūma Hui / Meeting Room hire

Gotta have a meeting but got nowhere to do it? We've got a big meeting room with trestle tables, chairs, and a blackboard wall. It has access to the shared kitchen, too! Fits around 20 people, cost per hour is between \$11 and \$25—check out our website for more info: [bit.ly/3vs1WET](https://bit.ly/3vs1WET)

### Community fridge and pantry

There's a GREAT lil community fridge and pantry in our new space! Take what ya want, give what you can—BOOM! That's a community food solution for ya. Pop in and check it out!

## AT SMART NEWTOWN (9/11 CONSTABLE STREET)

### Shopping online safely – Tuesday June 1, 4pm-6pm

What's better than shopping from the comfort of your home? Probably nothing. This FREE course will demonstrate how to stay safe and secure when buying things on the web. Sign up: [bit.ly/34mM3DS](https://bit.ly/34mM3DS)

### Using social media safely – Tuesday June 8, 4pm-6pm

It's great to connect with your mates online, but it can be easy to forget some of the dangers involved. That's where this FREE course comes in—it'll teach you how to keep your account and information safe while using social media. Sign up: [bit.ly/3bUtk6I](https://bit.ly/3bUtk6I)

### How to use PowerPoint – Tuesday June 15, 4pm-6pm

Ever wanted to communicate your idea/project/plans using one of those fancy slide-shows? This FREE workshop is designed for new users of Microsoft PowerPoint to learn how to use it. Sign up: [bit.ly/2QUmuH9](https://bit.ly/2QUmuH9)

## AT NEWTOWN HALL (71 DANIELL ST)

### Newtown Māori Portrait Sessions – Saturday June 19, 10am-3pm

Get your photo taken by a professional photographer! Includes Kakahu, Moko Stamp and Taonga. \$50. [bit.ly/3yGxCIG](https://bit.ly/3yGxCIG)

### Intro to Taiko Drumming - Open Day, – Sunday June 13, 3.30pm-4.30pm

Want to try something new? Make new friends? Have a New Years resolution to get fit and have fun doing it? Come and try Japanese Taiko Drumming! No music experience necessary. All ages. Donation entry. Questions?

[narukamitaiko@gmail.com](mailto:narukamitaiko@gmail.com) or [www.narukamitaiko.co.nz](http://www.narukamitaiko.co.nz)

## ELSEWHERE

### TrashArt Creative Workshop – Saturday June 5, 10am-1pm @ Newtown Library, 13 Constable Street

This one-day workshop will take young creators to create their own TrashArt collage, discovering the good, bad and ugly of current plastic consumption and learning what they can do to help out Mother Earth. Aimed at kids ages 9 -15 and it is FREE! FB event: [bit.ly/3fn2xCb](https://bit.ly/3fn2xCb)

### Social English at Newtown Library – Wednesdays, 11am-12pm @ Newtown Library, 13 Constable Street

Looking to practice your English and talk with others? Come along to this free conversation group and have a chat! Everyone welcome. For more information contact Newtown Library on 04 389 2830.

### Newtown Vintage, Craft and Art Market – Saturday June 5, 9am-2.30pm @ Newtown School Hall, Mein St

A local monthly market with stalls ranging from vintage, preloved and thrift traders to local artisans and small businesses carrying handcrafted items and eco-friendly items. FB event: [bit.ly/2TkqGRw](https://bit.ly/2TkqGRw)

### Moon Jam Night – Tuesday June 1, 8pm-12am @ MOON 1, 167 Riddiford St

The jam night continues in 2021! Billy and the Moon crew host Newtown's Tuesday jam night. Registration is via a form on the night. There'll be drinks deals for all performers and spectators too! FB event: [bit.ly/3hX29Mo](https://bit.ly/3hX29Mo)

## GET IN TOUCH

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