

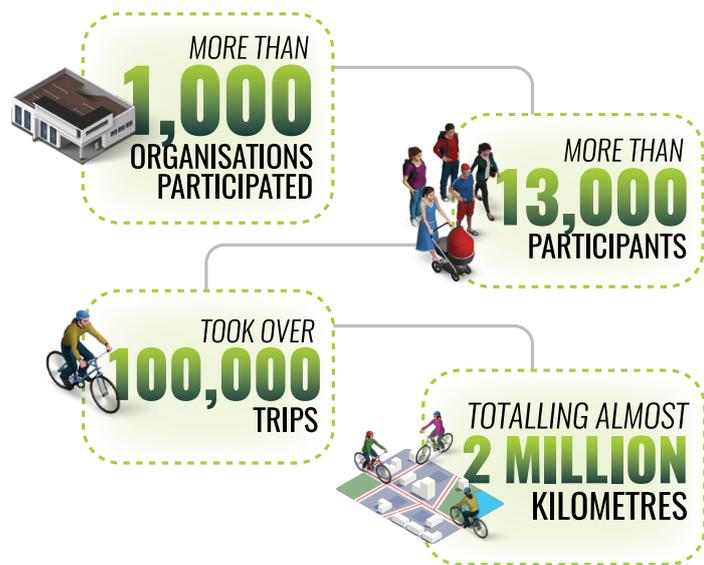
New Initiatives to Encourage Bike Friendly Workplaces

AOTEAROA BIKE CHALLENGE 1–28 February 2017



This February saw the nationwide launch of the Aotearoa Bike Challenge, a friendly workplace competition that encouraged people to try incorporating an A-B bike ride into their day and discover how easy it can be to build exercise into everyday transport.

The Aotearoa Bike Challenge pilot ended on 28 February, proving to be a huge success.



Tauranga City Council was among the top performing organisations that took part in the challenge with 93 out of 500 staff clocking up over 1,000 trips by bike over the month, including 31 of them being new riders.

Martin Parkes, manager of transportation has enjoyed seeing staff giving cycling a go and experiencing its benefits over the month. "It's great to see so many people realising the benefits of cycling. Not only is it good for health and the environment, but cycling is a cost effective way to get around that helps create great places for people to live, work and play." Radleigh Cairns, pollution prevention officer, chose to take on the role of cycle champion at Tauranga City Council after deciding to get himself back into the habit of biking to work after a recent change in job. "I used to bike to work a lot, however when I changed jobs I got into a habit of taking the car."

I used the challenge to get myself back into the habit of biking; it gives me a real energy boost in the morning and time to 'reset' on the way home. So the benefits are not just physical, but mental as well." With cycling to work becoming increasingly popular, organisations are beginning to adopt sustainable transport options into their offices. Wellington City Council and NZ Transport Agency are among organisations who have recently added pool bikes to their fleet. Hugh Wilson, transport choice coordinator at Wellington City Council is thrilled with the success of their pool bikes; in particular, the e-bike which at times needs to be booked by staff days in advance to ensure they can access it. "Since the introduction of our new pool bikes, staff use has risen significantly. We're making fewer short trips by car, cutting down on costs and improving health at the same time. Lunch time rides along the waterfront have also become popular with staff."

With over 1,000 organisations having experienced first-hand the benefits of encouraging cycling in the workplace and as a transport option, it is expected that interest in making changes to support this transport option will grow.

A cycle friendly workplace guide is currently being developed by the Transport Agency in partnership with the Sustainable Business Network (SBN) to provide guidance to businesses and organisations on how they can accommodate people who choose to ride, the guidance will cover everything from bike racks and office showers to pool bikes. The guide will be published late 2017.



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