

Pedestrians — check before you step!

The local road safety campaign “check before you step” started recently with the aim of increasing driver awareness of pedestrians and also to encourage pedestrians to consciously stop and check for traffic before crossing the road, regardless of whether the crossing point is controlled or not.

As part of this campaign, pedestrian crossings, traffic lights and pedestrian refuge points will be observed and a

small survey will be completed to measure how safe our local pedestrians feel they are. If you are asked to participate, your contribution will be greatly appreciated.

During the past five years there have been 19 reported crashes between a pedestrian and a vehicle on Ashburton District roads. The records show that one person was killed, five received serious injuries and 15 received minor injuries.

Fifteen of the “collisions” occurred while the pedestrian was attempting to cross the road. Most people cross the road regularly during a normal day and possibly give more thought to their destination instead of how or where they are crossing.

Without doubt, the shortest route is not always the safest.

Four of the pedestrians injured were less than 10 years old so it is crucial for young children to be taught how, where

and when to cross the road. Young children have limited skills when it comes to judging the speed and distance of traffic and may not always make rational decisions when crossing the road. In this instance, the driver needs to be alert and be prepared for unpredictable behaviour.

However, walking should always be safe and enjoyable for everyone and the following tips can make your journey safer.

CROSSING AT TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Traffic lights are installed at busy intersections to allow traffic to flow and turn safely. At most intersections there are also special pedestrian lights that will allow short periods for pedestrians to cross safely.



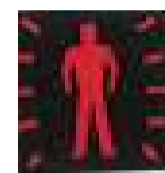
WAIT:

Do not cross the road. Wait for the green pedestrian light.



CROSS:

Check for traffic. Start to cross the road. Drivers must give way.



FINISH CROSSING:

When the red pedestrian light is flashing, finish crossing the road — do not start.

Drivers must still give way

CROSSING AT PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

If you are within 20 metres of a pedestrian crossing, you must use the crossing to cross the road. Pedestrians must not step out to the pedestrian crossing suddenly if there are vehicles so close to the crossing that they are not able to stop.

Whenever possible, try to make eye contact with the driver before beginning to cross the road.

Vehicles should always give way to

pedestrians on crossings, regardless of which side of the crossing they are walking, unless there is a pedestrian refuge in the middle of the crossing.

Using a pedestrian refuge

Some refuges are placed on roads where there are no pedestrian crossings. The refuge simply allows a safe place for pedestrians to wait until the second lane

is clear of traffic.

As vehicles are not obliged to stop, the decision to cross is the pedestrian's and waiting for sufficient space to cross safely is essential.

In school areas

Some schools in our district have crossings that are patrolled for short periods before and after school by students, parents and teachers.

- Stop if the school patrol sign is down — give way to pedestrians on both sides of the crossing.

- Slow down and be prepared to stop around schools at all crossing points

- Keep plenty of space between you and the vehicle in front

- Take extra care to watch for young pedestrians between parked cars

Ngaira Tinning

Road Safety Co-ordinator

New faces at the council . . .



Jamie Grant is a new face you'll see in the Ashburton Public Library. Jamie recently joined the library team as a library assistant. Her role encompasses all facets of library work including general customer service, book enquiries and circulation, book-binding and book repair work. Prior to this position, Jamie worked as a teacher aide at Ashburton College and at PPCS for two years. The born and bred local is a sporty lady, enjoying both touch and tennis. Her favourite author is American mystery/thriller writer Michael Connelly.



Allison Ferguson joined the building department at the council as a building systems administrator on July 28.

She is tasked with monitoring the building consent procedures undertaken by the council's building inspectors and in ensuring that the current national building accreditation process is followed. The south-west Scotland native's previous work experience has included spells in the administrative, legal, financial areas, more recently at Dunedin City Council. The Methven resident and mother of three boys is a keen jogger and is looking forward to taking up mountain biking with her husband in the near future.



Naadia Te Moananui recently joined the environmental services department as an administration assistant in the property numbering area. Naadia allocates and reissues rural and urban property numbers, as well as issuing and putting up any new RAPID numbers around the district. Her seven years as a signaller in the New Zealand Army means that she is very familiar with the use of GPS, which assists her in the part-time role. The mother of two young girls is a keen netballer, rugby player, volleyballer and lover of the great outdoors.