

TAR 21/12: E-bikes & transport equity

HIKO: A marae-led, long-term e-bike pilot

Emma Osborne, Caroline Shaw, Cheryl Davies



Context: Wainuiomata

Geography & transport infrastructure

- Joined to the rest of Lower Hutt by a single major road over a steep hill
- Many amenities outside Wainuiomata but within Lower Hutt
- One major shared walking & cycling path over hill



Context: Wainuiomata

Priority area for cycling investment

- High levels of car dependence
- Under-served by public transport
- Minimal cycling for transport, however many people working within 'cycling distance' of home

(Ross & Groom, 2021)



Context: Wainuiomata

E-bikes could overcome cycling barriers

- Prior research with women in Wainuiomata found barriers to cycling included hills, weather, fitness, cycling ability, getting sweaty.
- Non-powered bikes seen as poor fit with transport needs.
- Many of these barriers could potentially be overcome with e-bikes.

(Russell, Davies, Wild & Shaw, 2021)

What is HIKO?

Long-term e-bike loan (6 months, extended to 12 months)

Programme includes:

- Cycling skills training
- Servicing & mobile mechanic
- Group rides
- Cycling gear (lights, mirrors, helmets, locks, panniers)





HIKO whānau

- 25 participants
- All Māori or Pacific peoples
- Living within Wainuiomata
- Mix of age, gender, household types/whānau composition

HIKO research

Aims to investigate:

- HIKO as a model of e-bike support programme
- Participants' cycling experiences

Methods:

- Pre-trial focus groups
- 6-month and 12-month participant interviews
- Surveys of transport & physical activity
- Stakeholder interviews



Pre-trial perceptions of cycling

Material barriers:

- Lack of access to bikes
- No bike shops
- Security concerns

Views of cycling:

- Cycling is a slog
- Cycling is a luxury
- Cycling is an unknown
- I don't see people like me on bikes
- ** "Bikes are whānau thing"





Pre-trial views on cycling

E-bike expanding opportunities

“In saying that though we’ve never had the option of like an e-bike, it was just a normal bike. So that was just unrealistic for us who live in Wainuiomata... If you work in the city, you’d have to leave work hours before, get fit to be able to even get up that hill, still have a bloody how many Ks to get to work. Lug your stuff. Things have changed now but then we haven’t been able to access or know about it - it’s like for those sort of bikie sort of fit people, spandex people.”

Reasons to try e-biking

- Biking for health
 - Looking for health gains
 - Achievable exercise
- Biking to role model being active to whānau, particularly tamariki
- Social connections
- Connection to te taiao
- Cost savings



Framing outcomes of HIKO with Te Pae Māhutonga



Mauriora

Forging new cycling identities

- Changing perceptions of who cycles by visible presence of Māori & Pasifika people on bikes in Wainuiomata
- HIKO name and tohu
- Programme running through Kokiri marae
- Connections to Wainuiomata Marae & Hub, other Māori orgs e.g. Iron Māori

“In these Kaumātua Flats where they're looked upon as people that are just sort of coming to the end of their life, and the next minute e-bikes are coming out of the driveway. Yeah, and then I take my shopping out of the bag and take it in. Yeah, it's a whole new mindset.”

Waiora

Environmental connection and protection

- Connection to te taiao, noticing the natural world more on a bike
- Time in the sunshine as good for mental wellbeing
- Access to coast, rivers, bush, mahinga kai [natural resources]
- Reduced driving & impact on climate

We've been looking down Wainui Coast to a bunch of creeks, he says, 'Oh Dad, I just want to see what does watercress look like.' 'Let's jump on the bike, jump on your scooter and let's go and have a look.' Yeah, so, just experiences like that with my young fella have been really good and like I say, I don't think I would've done it, well, we wouldn't have done anything like that because I wouldn't have had a bike. It's just been really awesome.

Toiora

Supporting health journeys

- E-biking as a form of low-intensity exercise that is achievable for people with a range of long-term health conditions & which is also fun.
- Increasing physical activity & time outside, leading to better mental and physical health.
- Recruitment for HIKO as recognising existing health journeys

When you go out with your mates, we can all go together. One doesn't have to be faster or... more powerful than the other because we can all do it all at the same time. I enjoyed that with our group rides. It didn't matter what size you were, how big or small you were, we all did it together... it didn't matter what your fitness levels were, if you knew how to ride your bike and you used the right power level we could stay together.

Toiora

‘A whole family thing’

- Role modelling being active, in line with participants’ aims
- Supporting both shared adventures & independent travel
- Passing on safe cycling skills

We’re not going on the footpath, we’re going to go on the road so there’s going to be cars and I... explained to him that for safety you’ve got to listen to Nan, look out for my arm, you know my arms will tell us to come or we’re going to turn; we’re going to stop. Just teaching him these sort of sign languages you do on a bike.

I've got my kids one each [non-electric bikes] as well and they're like teenagers so that's just made life a lot easier. Because now they can go off and do their things with their friends and stuff like that. Then on the weekends we go on rides together which is really cool, at least once a week.

Te oranga

Social participation via affordable transport & recreation

- Cost savings on fuel, public transport, car running costs
- Lower cost way of keeping fit & spending time with whānau
- Connectedness to both people and place when e-biking

I love the convenience of it. I love knowing, okay, if I leave at this time, I'm going to be at the gym at this time on the bike. I just think it's so convenient. Like I said earlier, if I'm out of gas on a Monday because payday is Tuesday, I'm fine. I've got the bike. It's free.

[E-biking is] something that you enjoy.... that doesn't cost a whole heap of money. You're actually getting out and doing something that you otherwise never would have done. Yeah, just adding something - some fun to your week really.

Ngā manukura

Organic & formal leadership

Community leadership

“Wainui icons” – promotion of achievable representation of cycling

Organic leadership through participant-led cycling groups

Health leadership

Participation in HIKO as congruent with mahi in leading health promotion

Kokiri as trusted health research leaders

Alliances between leaders and groups

Participation in council transport planning, Waka Kotahi

HIKO & Kokiri connected with and well regarded by other organizations (e.g. training provider, community bike provider)

Te mana whakahaere

Community aspirations & control

Recognition of group aspirations

Pre-trial hui identifying what participants wanted from the programme
& what kind of e-bikes would be suitable

Self-governance & control

HIKO running through Kokiri Marae & events & support from Wainuiomata
Marae Kokiri managing participant selection

Summing up

A group of people who previously didn't bike have taken up e-biking, largely in line with the kinds of riding they envisaged doing.

Marae-led, long-term e-bike programme as a good fit for participants' needs – practically, culturally, in terms of personal health goals & whānau aspirations.

Some of the support to get riding was built in from the start and some developed in response to both participants' needs & participant leadership.



Thank you & any questions