**Building a (diverse) cycling community through (social) infrastructure**

Cycling has an incredible ability to conquer social and equitable divides, yet many people still feel excluded from it. In Pōneke, Wellington, we have seen a commitment from local government to increasing equitable transport choice through the rapid roll out of the Paneke Pōneke cycle network. Safe cycling infrastructure is the key step to getting more people cycling, but many potential cyclists who sit in the “interested but concerned” category need an inclusive community to first try out life on two wheels.

As recipients of Cycle Wellington’s 2023 Alastair Smith Fellowship, Women in Urbanism sought to boost participation by women in cycling through strengthening the presence of women-led initiatives in the local cycling ecosystem. This talk proposes to outline the unique needs of female cyclists and highlight how ground roots advocacy that provides a network of “social infrastructure” can maximise the benefits of physical cycle infrastructure. With this fellowship, Women in Urbanism held a community ride in Tawa, to introduce seasoned cyclists to local newcomers, and produced a first edition of a ‘zine sharing stories of women-led cycling initiatives in Pōneke. The aim is using people power to connect locals and normalise stories of non-typical cyclists becoming cyclists. By diversifying our cycling community and welcoming newcomers of all backgrounds and abilities, Women in Urbanism believes new cycle infrastructure has an even more powerful impact on transport equity, on the path to low carbon transport.

It is anticipated this presentation would best suit a conventional presentation or a rapid-fire style. It aligns with multiple sub-themes, especially equity and inclusivity and normalising walking and cycling. Catarina Gutierrez and Miriam Moore will present.