

Title: Bike trailer reduces car use for load carrying by 90%

Reporter: Steven Muir

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Overview:

Steven Muir is a keen cyclist and used his bike for most transport around Christchurch, except when there was a significant load to carry, in which case he would take his car. Particular loads were shopping for his family (too much for panniers), bass guitar and amp, kayak, library books and ski gear. Typically there would be two to three times a week the car was needed for load carrying tasks.

Steven made his own bike trailer originally from recycled materials for a cost of around \$10 and used it to do all the load carrying activities, and now mainly only uses the car for family holidays when going out of town. Using the car for load carrying now happens only once every month or two (approximately 8 times a year rather than 100 times a year). Benefits are reduced expenses (at \$10 a trip this is almost \$1000 a year), reduced carbon emissions, road congestion, and air pollution associated with car use, as well as increased fitness and greater social interactions (people often stop and talk about the trailers). Enjoyment of the load carrying trips has also increased and so the change has been easy to implement once the trailer had been constructed.

Steven now produces low cost kitset bike trailers made from new aluminium in a variety of sizes, and loans them out for a month for free to encourage others to discover the benefits of bike trailers.



Steven with the first load he ever carried – his bass guitar and amp



Alistair Brown borrowing a large three wheeled bike trailer to take his old fridge off to be recycled.



Three wheeler 'tadpole' bike which is good for carrying multiple kids when they can't or won't bike by themselves, as well as large loads.