

COMMUNITY PUSHES FOR



SAFER CROSSINGS

• **CHANGE:** Warracknabeal Townscape Committee members Joy Swagerman, Adrienne Kreegher and (far right) David Kranz, joined by Peter "Dingo" Schulz, are pushing for a change of the unsafe pedestrian crossings on Scott Street. Committee members will be seen along Scott Street this Friday with surveys for Warracknabeal residents to fill out about their experiences with the crossings.

Photo: DAVID WARD

By Sammie Louise

WARRACKNABEAL Townscape Committee are pushing for Yarriambiack Shire council to install wombat crossings at the pedestrian crossings on Scott Street.

The townscape committee, a sub-committee of Warracknabeal Action Group, have had the dangerous crossings on their radar for

approximately four years.

"Probably a month ago I was crossing there and I could easily see that the driver didn't see me because she was having a full conversation with the passenger," Committee member Adrienne Kreegher said.

"I was noticing and just watching her, she didn't even see me as she crossed there."

The two pedestrian crossings are located approximately in front of the Historical Society Museum and the Royal Mail Hotel and have 'give way to pedestrian' signs.

A raised pedestrian crossing, or wombat crossing, is a regular zebra crossing that is placed in a fat top road hump. The crossing provides pedestrian crossing priority and gives further prominence to pedestrians, encouraging motorists to slow down to approach the crossing.

A recent study undertaken by Safe System Solutions showed that wombat crossings can lower casualty rates by over 60 percent and are

effective at reducing vehicle speeds.

In hopes of coming to a community agreement, townscape committee members will be walking along Scott Street on Friday, June 17 and June 24, with a short survey that community members can fill out about their experiences with the crossing.

The townscape committee said that it should not come to an injury of a pedestrian before something is done to protect the walking community.

"This is what council is waiting for, they want a serious injury before they recognize the potential threat," Ms Kreegher said.

"We don't want a death or someone to have a brain injury."

The townscape committee will also be giving the surveys to the Lions Club, Rotary and Woodbine in hopes that enough people will sign it and show the council that Warracknabeal needs the crossings changed.

By producing the survey in paper form, the

committee hopes that more people will engage with it as an online survey conducted by the Yarriambiack Shire regarding the speed limit for Scott Street was lightly participated in, resulting in no action.

"The worry is that you have these young kids, even aged up to 25, who's brains aren't fully developed yet, and they cross (the street) wherever and put themselves in danger," Ms Kreegher said.

"We have an older population and a disabled population, it's a very vulnerable population and these crossings pose a risk to them."

Pedestrians are amongst the most vulnerable users of roads, according to the Transport Accident Commission (TAC), who recorded over a third of pedestrian deaths in the last decade being elders, aged 70 and over.

The most common types of crashes involving pedestrian deaths between 2014 and 2018 were caused by a pedestrian crossing a road and being struck by the driver's side.

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