

Can Oneroa cope with visitor influx?

The issue of inadequate toilet facilities during the holiday period comes up every year, and although the number of visitors to the island could be less this summer, public bathroom availability, particularly in Oneroa, is still a concern. Covid-19 related budget cuts and uncertainty around visitor numbers meant that this year, council felt additional portaloos wouldn't be necessary. Local board member Robin Tucker says public toilet facilities, especially those in Oneroa Village and near the island's popular beaches, haven't been able to meet demand for several years.

"Since I have been on the board we have been pushing for council to look at improved and increased public toilets at several places on the island."

Ms Tucker says that Auckland Council used the portable toilets installed in Oneroa last year, to gain data on public bathroom usage and to assess need. However, this information has not yet been made available to the board.

"We definitely need more toilet facilities, but council said this wouldn't be necessary as they don't think visitor numbers will be as high this year," says Robin.

The board member says it's still likely there will be a need for increased facilities since 60 percent of the island's tourism is usually domestic and the number of visitors to the island from around the country is



Oneroa's limited public bathroom facilities struggle to meet demand over the Christmas and New Year period. Photo Sophie Boladeras

likely to skyrocket this summer.

Local board member Paul Walden says Covid-19 budget cuts are affecting the situation.

"It's disappointing that we don't yet have anything permanent when it comes to extra public bathrooms, but I can see that council's budget won't allow for additional

is Oneroa Beach where a single public facility is available to beach-goers.

"It's a double-edged sword, we don't like the portaloos, but we need something."

Despite council's negative response to the board's request for portable facilities this summer, chairperson Cath Handley says the board is still pushing for a solution.

"We understand that holiday-accommodation bookings are very strong and many businesses like Waiheke Dive and Snorkel also see indications of a busy holiday season.

"We need the extra toilets, and we are still working on getting this sorted." • Sophie Boladeras

"We need the extra toilets, and we are still working on getting this sorted." Waiheke Local Board chairperson Cath Handley.

facilities."

Oneroa resident Kate Hastings says she regularly sees queues for village bathrooms over summer. Ms Hastings says the area that concerns her the most

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26 Oct - 1 Nov	Rainfall mm		Maximum		Minimum	
	Waiheke	Auckland	Waiheke	Auckland	Waiheke	Auckland
Monday	0.0	0.0	20.8	21.7	15.2	15.1
Tuesday	0.0	0.0	22.0	22.2	16.0	15.1
Wednesday	0.0	0.0	19.9	21.5	14.9	16.7
Thursday	0.0	0.0	21.5	22.3	16.3	17.3
Friday	0.0	0.0	20.0	22.8	16.5	17.6
Saturday	7.0	13.5	20.7	23.6	15.0	15.7
Sunday	0.0	0.0	23.3	23.0	14.3	13.8
Weekly Total	7.0	13.5				
Oct Total	0.0	0.0				
Nov Average			23.3	23.0	14.3	13.8
Weekly ave			21.2	22.4	15.5	15.9
Nov Hist Ave	48.1	64.3	16.8	20.4	10.3	12.5

Data by WeatherWise Auckland: 029-4023-0100.

