

## Record number of ferry trips in January

Passenger numbers were up nearly 10 percent for Waiheke's Fullers360 service during January this year, according to chief executive officer Mike Horne.



A total of 639,800 trips were recorded on Auckland ferries in January 2019, compared to 575,000 in January 2018. Peter Rees Photography

"We saw a high number of cruise ships visiting Auckland, together with a long stretch of fine weather during the local holiday season, making the island a good choice for Aucklanders opting for a full day out on the island," he says.

March is usually considered the busiest month when it comes to the use of public transport in Auckland, mostly because students are returning to school and university after the holiday period but on Waiheke, public transport is heavily used

over the high summer period.

Mr Horne says he hopes local Waiheke businesses have benefitted from the additional visitors choosing to spend their time on tours, as well as at cafés, boutiques and wineries.

Last year, January ferry patronage was affected by wet weather and storms, which he says could help to explain the significant increase in January 2019.

The Sealink vehicular ferries also saw an increase in passenger numbers, although vehicle numbers remain about the same.

According to Auckland Transport Metro Patronage data, a total of 639,800 trips were recorded on the city's ferries in January 2019, compared to 575,000 in January 2018.

Overall there were 91.1 million public transport boardings in the Auckland region for the 12 months to December 2017, an increase of 7.4 percent, or 6.3 million a year earlier. • *Sophie Boladeras*

## Tōrea windows get bedazzled

*Perpetual Guardian Sculpture on the Gulf* is now underway, and visitors have been flocking to the Matiatia headland trail to view 28 exquisite works of art.

In celebration of the event, Fullers360 commissioned a 'stained-glass' installation by artist Shannon Novak on *Tōrea*'s windows. The large-scale artwork transforms the windows of the ferry's top deck, creating a stained-glass effect with bright geometric patterns.

"The installation I designed for *Tōrea* is a direct response to her. Each ferry has its own character, so a piece developed for a different vessel would look completely different," says Novak.

"I wanted to design a living artwork that changes as it moves across the water. I've never done that before - every other piece has been static."

Novak has described the *Tōrea* artwork as a lantern or 'moving rainbow lighthouse' by night, and creating a 'disco' effect as the sun plays on the windows by day.

Novak is one of the exhibiting artists to feature on the *SOTG* sculpture trail. His installation is titled *Active Core*, which is his central work or 'tip of the iceberg' connecting to a series of corresponding satellite pieces which Novak calls 'Extensions.'

These satellite pieces feature at local businesses in Oneroa Village, throughout the Waiheke community and beyond. Like previous works, Novak's 2019 *SOTG* pieces

explore the interrelationships between sound, colour, form, time and social context. Each of the 'Extensions' created for local businesses is a direct response to how Novak interprets the site.

Fullers360 CEO Mike Horne says the installation has been generating a lot of interest and that the ferry company is excited to be a platinum *SOTG* partner.

"We love lending a hand to the community and cultural events across the Hauraki Gulf, plus helping Aucklanders and visitors explore Waiheke, so *Sculpture on the Gulf* is a perfect fit for Fullers360 support."

*Sculpture on the Gulf* runs until 24 March. Entry donation is \$10 per adult and children 15 and under are free.

• *Sophie Boladeras*

The *Tōrea* now proudly displays a 'stained-glass' installation on its top deck windows.

