

Letters to the editor

Open letter to Auckland Transport

I went to do your survey and the first question was regarding the mode of travel to get from my home to my destination; that is, from Onetangi on Waiheke to Meadowbank. I travelled on two buses, the ferry and the train, but your useless survey would only allow me to choose one form of travel.

You asked me via email to have my say but the first question did not allow that, so I must assume that the following questions were of a similar nature and would only allow me to choose pre-determined answers. Surveys need to be

flexible, not guided.

So I will explain my journey on Friday 27 January.

I left home and caught the 8.55am bus from Seventh Ave on Waiheke. I wanted to be early at Mātiatia just in case there was a queue at the ticket counter. I arrived at Mātiatia around 9.25 am to catch the 10.00am ferry to Auckland via Devonport.

While waiting it was announced that the 10am ferry would be delayed, as it had not left Auckland until 9.30am. At approximately 10.15am we were asked

to start queuing for the ferry. There were three people in front of me in the queue and they decided to go onto the new boarding ramp. I followed - that was a mistake.

I had not travelled off the island since the new ramp had been opened. The shelter provided on that ramp is non-existent to point of being useless for wind and rain. The three people in front of me shared an umbrella, I had my own. The old ramp provided better shelter than its replacement.

When the ferry did dock, finished unloading and we were able to board it, the Fullers employee scanning the tickets was standing in a puddle of water. The design of the whole system is an absolute disgrace and would be more suited to loading sheep.

After the waiting passengers were loaded aboard, the ferry finally departed at 10.40am, the first stop being Devonport, then on to Auckland's downtown, but the ferry could not enter the ferry basin because a cruise ship had a problem with



Those queuing for the Waiheke ferry have very little protection from sun or rain.



EV Gala Day - Sunday 26th February 2023

Calling all EV owners - we need your help

All EV owners are asked to assemble their vehicles at Placemakers/Waiheke Living carpark, Ostend, Waiheke Island from 2.15pm, Sunday 26th February 2023. The aim of the assembly is to attempt to set a record for the most EVs in one place at one time on a residential island and register it with Guinness World Records. The aim cannot be achieved without your attendance. Drone photo at 3pm. Visitors to the Island are welcome to attend with their EVs. Plug in hybrids welcome. Registration on arrival to establish an email database to enable EIW to communicate with EV owners. Registration will enter you into a prize draw of a battery powered garden blower donated

by Stihl Shop, Waiheke. Please support this business in thanks for supporting the EV Gala Day. There is no cost to attend. Register your intention to participate and to order a free drone photo email, john.mead@electricisland.co.nz
All EV, e-bike, e-scooter and e-motor cycle owners are also urged to attend the event with their vehicles. Please invite your family, friends, neighbours and anyone who may be interested.
The 05/02/23 EIW database update lists a total of 661 EVs including 448 Nissan Leafs based on Waiheke. Flyer #4, 10/02/23.



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a mooring line and was using its side thrusters to stay against the wharf. So, along with other ferries we waited and waited to enter the ferry basin. In the end the ferry went back to Devonport because one of the passengers was unwell and needed to get off. (More than half those on board got off at Devonport and then we headed back towards the ferry basin).

We finally got a berth, and I disembarked around 12.30pm. Fortunately, there was minimal rain at that time and I was able to get into the Britomart train station reasonably dry and catch the train to Newmarket. Arriving at Newmarket, I awaited the route 70 bus on Remuera Road to get me to the Meadowbank Shopping Centre. While waiting for the bus, light rain was being blown onto the waiting passengers. The protection from the elements at that stop is minimal... it is very open to the prevailing wind.

Once on board the 70 bus and heading towards Meadowbank, the rain intensified to the degree that I decided not to get off at my usual stop just past the Meadowbank Shopping Centre, but to exit at the previous stop where there is a shelter - great in theory - but it provided no protection whatsoever and I had to make a dash for the block of shops on the corner of Meadowbank and St Johns roads.

There, I decided to text my daughter who was waiting in a car to pick me up from the Meadowbank Shopping Centre.

After a late lunch at the shopping centre, we visited my elderly sister in



Long queues have become commonplace on the Waiheke route.

the Gerard Way Bupa Rest Home, after which I had to make the return journey to Onetangi. Fortunately, my daughter drove me from the rest home to the bus shelter outside the Meadowbank Shopping Centre before making her return trip home to Maramarua.

What did I learn from that day?

1) The new boarding ramp at Waiheke is poorly designed, provides little shelter and the ticket-scanning area pools with water. It is a danger to people because it is only wide enough for loading sheep. If a person is slow or disabled, people are piling up and an accident could occur. The designer should be sacked.

2) The ferry basin should not also

be the berthing place for cruise ships, because when berthing, leaving or have problems, as on 27 January, they create further problems and disrupt the ferries.

3) That there is very poor shelter for waiting passengers at the bus stop at the bottom of Remuera Road outside the railway station.

4) The bus shelter I used just before the corner of Remuera and Meadowbank Roads was as wet inside as it was outside. Most modern bus shelters should be called 'sun shelters' because that is about the only thing they provide shelter from, certainly not wind or rain.

Allen Davies, President Waiheke Grey Power Association.

Gratitude for Stony Batter restoration

In January 1998, my boyfriend and two friends took a picnic to Man o' War Bay. En route, we stopped at the Stony Batter tunnels. They had been abandoned but with the help of torches, we set out to explore them. At one point, the guys piggy-backed us through an area that was ankle deep in

water. After the picnic at Man o' War, we wandered through a derelict cottage at the southern end of the beach. This had been stripped of anything useful, such as taps, and someone had spraypainted the words "Fred Dagg Hotel" beside the front door.

It is heartening that this property has

been privately restored and that dedicated volunteers have been instrumental in the restoration of Stony Batter, which is now a popular attraction for tourists and locals alike. Their hard work deserves our thanks and support.

Jan Scott, Ostend

Thanks for sweet gift

Thank you Waiheke Honey Bee for a lovely surprise! I found a large tub of Mānuka honey on my stall at the market last Saturday. As I don't use a computer and knew nothing about it, I phoned the number

printed on the honey label. Yes it was for me! Thank you again it is lovely honey.

Betty Willis, Surfdale

Correction

In last week's story *From Waiheke Island to Treasure Island* we incorrectly named Micah Marsh as Micah Marshall. We apologise to Micah and his family for any inconvenience caused. •

Letters to the editor should be received no later than midday the Tuesday before publication and be no more than 300 words. A name and address must be supplied. All letters are published at the editor's discretion and may be reduced in length to fit space available. Email to editor@waihekegulfnews.co.nz - Editor