

New accessibility representative for Waiheke Transport Forum

The Waiheke Transport Forum has appointed Don McKenzie as the new accessibility representative. Don is a former Waiheke Local Board member who also served on the board of the Blind Foundation, Disabled Person's Assembly and Auckland Council's Disability Advisory Panel.

He has an abundance of personal experience concerning accessibility and says he looks forward to bringing a particular perspective to the way people think about getting around on the island.

"I'm blind, I use a guide dog, I'm in my senior years now, and my hearing isn't as good as it once was," he says.

"I'm very pleased the local board has appointed an accessibility representative because Waiheke presents certain accessibility challenges such as pavement issues and disability parking."

"We have an ageing population, and increasing numbers of people are using mobility scooters, which is why our pavement access is important."

Don says implementing curb cuts so people can transition across road and pedestrian crossings are essential. A curb cut is a wedge cut in an elevated pavement to allow smooth passage between the footpath and the street.

"All of these little things make a difference to the independence of people and anything that increases one's self-reliance is an excellent thing."

Universal design is about developing cities and spaces for people of all ages and abilities, and Don says it's about catering for everyone.

"It's not only about people with disabilities but also people with pushchairs, prams, trolley bags, injuries or heavy



Don McKenzie will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Waiheke Transport Forum as the new accessibility representative.

suitcases that lots of tourists to the island have."

Waiheke Local Board chair Cath Handley says the board is delighted to appoint Don who has worked on transport issues previously.

"He is steeped in governance and life experience here on Waiheke," she says.

Don was a local board member from 2010 to 2013 and is currently a director

for the Deaf-Blind Association of New Zealand and a board member for Auckland Council's Disability Strategic Advisory Group.

"The forum is fortunate to have someone who is so well-networked and knows the challenges people in our community face using Waiheke's transport infrastructure," says Ms Handley.

• Sophie Boladeras



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