

Ashburton District Population Facts & Figures

Updated September 2011

Disclaimer:

Every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in this report is accurate and up to date at the time of publishing. Care needs to be taken in interpreting the information and analysis contained in this document. Population forecasting is not an exact science and is intended to show probable trends only.

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Overview

About this Report

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief overview of changes the Ashburton District population has experienced over the last ten years, and what current population projections predict for the future.

This report highlights the trends that will need to be recognised in future planning processes. This information is vital for organisations like Council that provide essential infrastructure and services to the community. It will also be of interest to variety of central government and community organisations and to the private sector in their own planning processes.

Key Findings

The key findings of this report are that the Ashburton District has a:

- **Growing Population** – expected to reach a population of 37,700 by 2031. Ashburton District is one of New Zealand’s fastest growing rural districts. Statistics New Zealand population projections predict continued population growth in the district, with the growth in the next five years (2011-2016) expected to be 5.8%, or an additional 1800 residents (around 700 additional households). This will have implications for demand for housing, transport, essential services (such as water and waste water), community services and facilities, and health services.
- **Ageing Population** – following the national trend as the ‘baby boom’ generation moves into retirement. The number of people in the ‘over 65 years’ age group in Ashburton District is expected to almost double in numbers from 2006-2031, with decreasing proportions of the population in the ‘Working’ group (aged between 15 – 64 years). An ageing population will impact on both the community services and facilities required and demanded, and the ability of the working populations’ ability to fund these community services and facilities.
- **Increasing Ethnic Diversity** – Ashburton District’s population has historically been overwhelmingly European in ethnicity. While this is still the case, the population is becoming more ethnically diverse as new residents make Ashburton District their home. An implication of an increasingly diverse population is the increased need for additional support services to assist the newcomer settling-in process.

Data Source

The statistics used in this report have been sourced from Statistics New Zealand Census data (1991 – 2006) and the latest Statistics New Zealand Population Projections released in February 2010. These figures were accessed from ‘table builder’ on the Statistics New Zealand website (www.stats.govt.nz) during the month of September, 2011.

Data limitations

As with all statistical information, there are limitations of the data used. Assumptions have been made about the data used for this report regarding population projections, ethnicity data and Ashburton District growth. These assumptions are explained below.

Data availability

As the census scheduled to be undertaken in 2011 was postponed due to the Canterbury earthquakes, this report largely relies upon projections and estimates for the current population figures, which use the 2006 census as a base. Therefore it is important to note that figures for 2011 are based on projections rather than actual counts.

Population Projections

The latest population projections provide a forward view of the low, medium and high growth scenarios for the district over the coming 20 years. The projections are based on different assumptions made about future fertility rates, mortality and internal and external migration patterns of the population.

Ashburton District Council uses the “high” population projections for its planning purposes. The decision to refer to the ‘high’ growth forecast is based on:

- current strong population growth in the district, based on the growth trends during the last census cycle (2001-2006)
- continued change in land use with increased on-farm residences
- migration from Christchurch due to the recent earthquakes (based on current anecdotal evidence)
- consistency with Ashburton District residential building consent trend analysis over the past five years.
- It is considered that the “high” series provides a prudent assessment of future increased demand through population growth.

Statistics New Zealand caution users of their population projections as they are “...based on assumptions made about future fertility, mortality and migration patterns of the population. The projections do not take into account non-demographic factors (eg war, catastrophes) which may invalidate the projections. They should be used as guidelines rather than exact forecasts” (Statistics New Zealand, Ashburton District Quarterly Review, June 2007).

Ethnicity Data

In 2006, the “other” category includes “New Zealander” which previously in 1991, 1996 and 2001, was included in the “New Zealand European” category.

An increase in selection of the “New Zealander” ethnicity option has had the effect of increasing the population proportion of the Other Ethnicity grouping and reduced the proportion in the European grouping. In 2006, 11.1 percent of respondents gave New Zealander as one of the responses to the ethnicity question, compared with 2.4 percent in 2001.

Census respondents can identify with more than one ethnic group and those who do, are included in each group, therefore projections may not add up to 100%. However, if two or more of their ethnic groups fall into the same broad ethnic group category, then they are counted only once in that category in tables providing ethnicity data at that level.

Ashburton District Population

Historic Rate of Population Growth

Population Change in Ashburton District, 1991-2006				
	Resident Population (Census)	5 year Numeric Change	5 Year percentage change	Total Growth 1991 - 2006
1991	24702			
1996	25179	477	1.93%	
2001	25443	264	1.05%	
2006	27372	1929	7.58%	10.81%

Table 1: Usually Resident Population of Ashburton District on Census Night 1991 – 2006. Source: Statistics New Zealand Census data.

What is this about?

Table 1 above shows the 'usually resident' population of Ashburton District at the time of each census since 1991, and highlights the rate of population growth for each five year census cycle, and overall between 1991 and 2006.

Key Points

- The usually resident population of Ashburton District was 27,372 on Census night, 2006
- Based on population size, Ashburton District is ranked 42nd out of the 73 territorial authority areas in New Zealand, and we account for 0.7% of the total population of NZ
- The population in Ashburton District has grown by 10.8% since 1991, and by 7.6% in the census period 2001-06. The national population growth rate for the census period 2001-06 was 7.8%
- The main driver of population growth during the 2001–2006 census cycle has been from international migration, accounting for 62% of population growth in this period (N = 1194). Natural population increase (more births than deaths) and internal migration account for the remaining growth.
- The high period of growth from 2001-2006 makes Ashburton District one of the fastest growing provincial districts in the country where population growth is not directly linked to the urban growth of a nearby city, and is among the fastest growing districts with a local economy based on agriculture.
- Ashburton District's current high rates of population growth are being driven primarily by strong growth in the local economy attracting new residents to live and work in the district. The growth in the local economy is due mainly to changing land use (primarily to dairying)

and growth in value-added manufacturing (meat, seed and vegetable processing and light industrial manufacturing).

Current Population Estimate

- Statistics NZ produce population estimates in non-census years. The estimated population as at 30 June 2010 was **29,400**.

Population Growth Forecast

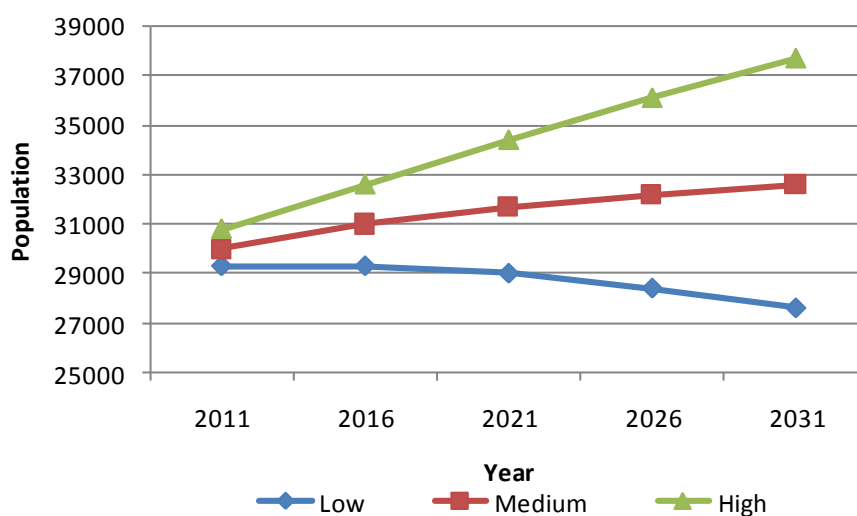


Figure 1: Ashburton District Population Projections, 2011-2031. Source: Statistics New Zealand

Ashburton District Population Projections 2006 - 2031								
	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	Change #	Change %
Low		29300	29300	29000	28400	27600	-400	-1.4%
Medium	28,000	30000	31000	31700	32200	32600	4,600	16.4%
High		30800	32600	34400	36100	37700	9,700	34.6%

Table 2: Ashburton District Population Projections, 2011 - 2031. Source: Statistics New Zealand.

Expected Growth Based on New Residential Building Consents Issued, 2006-2011.	
Total new residential building consents issued 2006-2011:	1,015
Average people per dwelling (2006):	2.5
Estimated population growth 2006-2011:	2,538

Table 3: Expected Population Growth Based on New Residential Building Consents Issued, and the Average Number of People per Dwelling. Source: Ashburton District Council building consent records and Statistics New Zealand census data (2006).

What is this about?

Population growth is about the rate at which our population is growing or declining.

Table 2 shows the expected population of Ashburton District for 2011 and for every five years, through to 2031. Population projections are produced by Statistics New Zealand and are made on assumptions about future fertility rates, mortality and internal and external migration patterns. Together these factors result in overall population growth or decline.

Statistics New Zealand produce three different series, or scenarios of possible population growth – low, medium and high projections. All three series are shown in Figure 1 and Table 2 above.

Ashburton District Council uses the “high” population projections for its planning purposes. The decision to refer to the ‘high’ growth forecast is based on:

- current strong population growth in the district
- continued change in land use with increased on-farm residences
- expected migration from Christchurch due to the recent earthquakes (based on current anecdotal evidence)
- consistency with Ashburton District residential building consent trend analysis over the past five years.

It should be noted that the base for population projections is the estimated population of Ashburton District at 30 June 2006 (28,000) rather than the census usually resident population count (27,372). This is because adjustments are made for residents who were missed, and for residents who were temporarily overseas on census night.

Table 3 shows an estimate of population growth in the past five years based on the total number of new residential building consents issued between 1 July 2006 and 30 June 2011, multiplied by the average number of people per household.

Key Points

- It is projected that the population of Ashburton District will continue to grow, reaching a total population of 37,700 by 2031, (an increase of 35% from 2006).
- Between 2006 and 2011 the rate of growth is expected to have been 10%, or 2,800 additional residents.
- Growth over the coming five year period (2011-2016) is projected to be 5.8%, an additional 1,800 residents (based on the Statistics NZ “high” series forecast).
- The number of residential building consents issued between 2006 and 2011, multiplied by the average number of people per dwelling indicates the population has grown by approximately 2,500 people in this time, supporting the use of the “high” projections.
- Over the 2006-2031 period, 62% of the total projected population growth is expected to be directly attributable to net migration ie: people coming to live in the district minus those who leave.

Population Growth: What could this mean?

A growing population is likely to have the following of impacts:

- **Housing:** The District's population is forecast to increase by 1800 over the 5 years 2011-2016. Using an average household size of 2.5 people per dwelling (Stats NZ 2006), this indicates demand for up to 720 new dwellings over this period.
- **Transport:** The district has a high number of vehicles per household, the 2006 census highlighted that 60% of the districts households have access to two or more vehicles. A lower proportion of households in Ashburton District have no access to a motor vehicle (5.4%) compared to New Zealand as a whole (8.1%). The forecasted population growth could mean an extra 1259 cars in the district over the next 5 years.
- **Essential Services:** Provision of additional new core infrastructure in Ashburton, Methven and Rakaia has been planned for and is unlikely to be problematic. However, housing growth in the District's villages is constrained by limited core infrastructure such as water and waste water. Decisions will need to be made about where growth will be able to occur.
- **Community Services and Facilities:** A growing population will create additional demand for community sporting, recreational and cultural facilities and services.

Population by Area

Ashburton District Population by Area Unit, 2001 - 2006				
Area Unit	2001 Census Usually Resident Population	2006 Census Usually Resident Population	2001 – 2006 Population Change	
			#	%
Ashburton District	25443	27372	1929	7.6%
Methven	1134	1326	192	16.9%
Fairton	1182	1533	351	29.7%
Plains Railway	396	552	156	39.4%
Mt Somers	2307	2361	54	2.3%
Hinds	3348	3702	354	10.6%
Chertsey	1920	2076	156	16.3%
Rakaia	960	1068	108	11.3%
Allenton	5172	5376	204	3.9%
Ashburton Central West	1053	1041	-12	-0.8%
Netherby	1461	1485	24	1.6%
Ashburton Central East	1485	1554	69	4.6%
Hampstead	2325	2472	147	6.3%
Tinwald	2706	2823	126	4.7%

Table 4: Ashburton District Population by Area Unit, 2001-2006.

Ashburton District Projected Population by Area Unit, 2006 - 2031 ¹						
	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
Methven	1360	1640	1810	1970	2130	2280
Fairton	1570	1800	1980	2150	2310	2450
Plains Railway	570	710	800	890	980	1070
Mt Somers	2410	2660	2860	3070	3290	3490
Hinds	3790	4340	4710	5060	5410	5750
Chertsey	2130	2340	2530	2720	2890	3080
Rakaia	1090	1200	1260	1310	1360	1410
Allenton	5500	5820	5920	5990	6050	6090
Ashburton Central West	1060	1100	1150	1180	1210	1240
Netherby	1530	1620	1710	1780	1850	1910
Ashburton Central East	1590	1750	1810	1860	1890	1930
Hampstead	2540	2750	2840	2920	3000	3070
Tinwald	2890	3020	3130	3210	3260	3280
Ashburton District (total)	28000	30800	32600	34400	36100	37700

1: using "high" projection series

Table 5: Ashburton District Projected Population by Area Unit, 2006-2031. Source: Statistics New Zealand Census 2006 (updated).

Urban and Rural Projected Population, 2006-2031. ¹						
Area ²	Year as at 30 June	Resident Population	5 year numeric change	5 year percentage change	Total growth 2006-2031	
					#	Average Annual %
Ashburton	2006	16680				
	2011	17860	1180	7.1%		
	2016	18540	680	3.8%		
	2021	19090	550	3.0%		
	2026	19570	480	2.5%		
	2031	19970	400	2.0%	3290	0.8%
Methven	2006	1360				
	2011	1640	280	20.6%		
	2016	1810	170	10.4%		
	2021	1970	160	8.8%		
	2026	2130	160	8.1%		
	2031	2280	150	7.0%	920	2.7%
Rakaia	2006	1090				
	2011	1200	110	10.1%		
	2016	1260	60	5.0%		
	2021	1310	50	4.0%		
	2026	1360	50	3.8%		
	2031	1410	50	3.7%	320	1.2%
Rest of District	2006	8900				
	2011	10050	1150	12.9%		
	2016	10900	850	8.5%		
	2021	11740	840	8.4%		
	2026	12570	830	7.1%		
	2031	13390	820	6.5%	4490	2.0%

1: Using "high" series projection data.

2: The projected population of towns within the Ashburton District is based on Statistics New Zealand's area unit boundaries. 'Ashburton' comprises of the following area units: Allenton, Ashburton Central West, Netherby, Ashburton Central East, Hampstead, Fairton and Tinwald.

Table 6: Ashburton District Projected Population - Urban and Rural Areas, 2006 - 2031. Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census 2006 (updated).

What is this about?

The population of the Ashburton District at an area unit level is shown in Table 4 above. This table shows the rate of population growth which occurred between the last two census cycles (2001-2006).

Area units are defined by the boundaries set by Statistics New Zealand for their data collection purposes. More information on where these boundaries lie can be found on their website: <https://www.stats.govt.nz>.

The projected populations for each of these area units is shown in Table 5 in five-year increments out to the year 2031. Table 6 shows the district's expected population for the urban and rural areas of the district projected out to 2031.

This information provides an indication of where in the district we can expect the fastest rates of population growth to occur.

Key Points

- The district experienced strong population growth between 2001 and 2006 and based on projections, it can be expected that this trend has continued through to 2011, and will continue through to 2031.
- 67% of the total population live in the urban areas of the district, (Ashburton, Rakaia and Methven), with the remaining residing in rural towns and areas of the district¹.
- Residents living in the Ashburton urban area alone are estimated to be 58% of the total population². This is down slightly from 60% in 2006, indicating that growth in the areas outside of Ashburton is at a faster rate than for the rest of the district.
- The census area unit of Hinds is the most populous rural area within the district, followed by Mt Somers and Chertsey.
- The rate of projected growth varies across the district, with Methven expected to be the fastest growing urban centre over the next 20 years, growing at an average rate of 2.7% per year.
- The rural population is projected to grow at a rate more than double that of the Ashburton urban area.

What could this mean? – Where is the population growth likely to be?

- The District's population is forecast to increase by 1800 over the 5 years 2011-2016. Using an average household size of 2.5 people per dwelling (Stats NZ 2006), this could necessitate require up to 720 new dwellings over this period.
- It can be anticipated that around 280 new dwellings are likely to be built in the Ashburton urban area over the next five years³.
- It can be expected that rural areas and smaller towns in the district will account for the majority of new household development in the district in the next five years, with 48.3% of the population growth in this time.
- Rakaia and Methven are likely to be the fastest growing area units in the district, given the high population increase over the last census cycle.
- Council has a District Development Plan that indicates where land might best be rezoned to accommodate future growth.

¹ Based on 2011 population projections.

² Based on 2011 population projections.

³ Based on total expected dwellings and proportion of population growth.

Population by Age

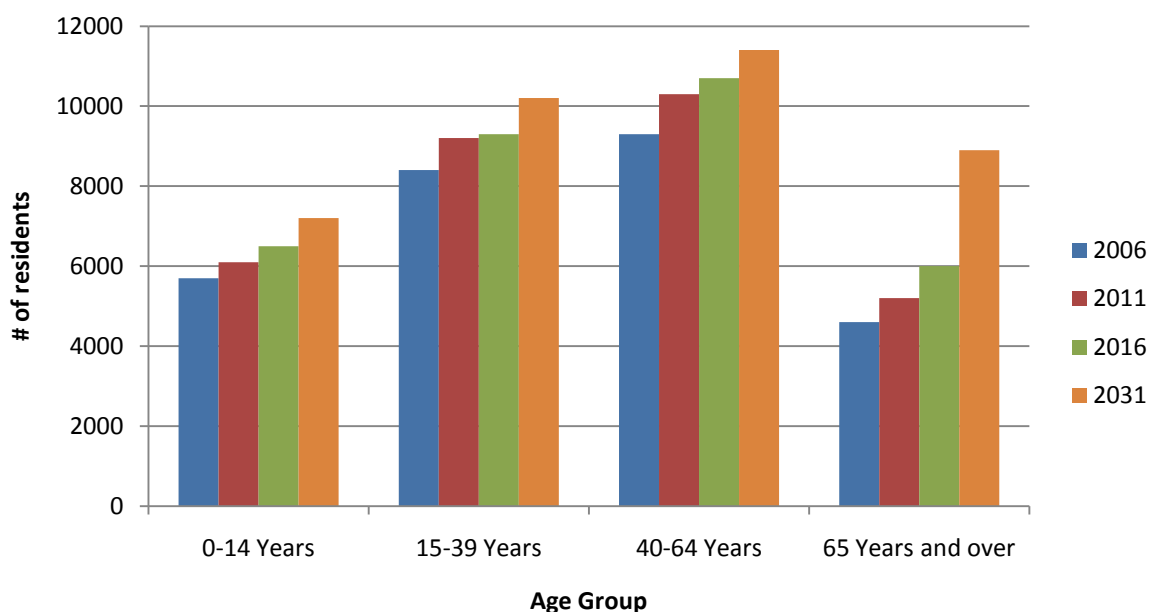


Figure 2: Ashburton District Population by Age, 2006-2031.

Source: Statistics New Zealand Census data 2006 and projections.

What is this about?

Figure 2 shows the population count by age at the time of the last census in 2006. It also shows the current projection for 2011, and the population projections by age for 2016 and 2031.

Key Points

- Ashburton District looks set to follow the national trend of an ageing population as the “Baby Boom” generation moves into retirement age.
- The number of people in the ‘Over 65’ age group in Ashburton District is expected to almost double between the years 2006 (4,600) and 2031 (8,900).
- The proportion of District residents in the working population (aged between 15 – 64 years) is expected to fall from 63% in 2011 to 57% in 2031. The actual numbers within this group are, however, expected to increase by about 3,900.
- The current median age (half the population is older and half is younger) of the district is 38.8 years. This is higher than the national median age of 35.9 years. Since the 2001 census, the median age for the district has decreased, while it has increased for New Zealand as a whole. This indicates that population growth within the district in recent years has primarily been through younger residents, due to an increased birth rate and a higher proportion of migrants to the district belonging to the younger age groups.

- The District median age is showing some convergence with the New Zealand median age, though it remains to be seen whether this trend continues given the large increase in older population forecast.

What this could mean?

Data on population age groups can provide the information necessary to ensure appropriate community services, such as healthcare, schools and accommodation are planned for and provided.

- **Community Services and Facilities:** The needs of an ageing population will impact on the community services and facilities required and demanded. An ageing population will have different social needs to the rest of the population. Leisure is more likely to be passive for the aging population and based around improving and maintaining good health and wellbeing. Examples of facilities an ageing population may value in the community include public gardens and green space, art galleries and museums, and physical recreation facilities appropriate for their use.
- **Health Services:** While older residents can be expected to be fitter and healthier than in the past, health services in the district may need to adapt to cater for the needs of older residents in the future.
- **Housing:** With an increase in the 60+ age group there will be a need for housing suitable for older residents. This includes both independent housing and managed units and rest homes. The housing stock overall will need to increase.

Migration and Ethnic Diversity

Population by Ethnic Group, Ashburton District and New Zealand, 1991-2006								
	1991		1996		2001		2006	
	NZ	AD	NZ	AD	NZ	AD	NZ	AD
European	82.4%	96.9%	79.5%	95.2%	76.8%	95.5%	64.8%	81.2%
Maori	12.9%	3.2%	14.5%	4.6%	14.1%	4.6%	14.0%	6.0%
Pacific Island	4.9%	0.2%	5.6%	0.4%	6.2%	0.5%	6.6%	1.4%
Asian	2.9%	0.5%	4.8%	0.7%	6.4%	0.7%	9.5%	1.3%
Middle Eastern / Latin American / African	0.2%	0.03%	0.4%	0.1%	0.6%	0.1%	0.9%	0.4%
Other Ethnicity (2006 includes New Zealander)	0.01%	0%	0.01%	0.01%	0.02%	0%	10.7%	13.7%

Table 7: Population by ethnic group, Ashburton District compared to New Zealand, 1991 - 2006. Source: Statistics New Zealand Census data 2006.

	Population at 30 June	5 year population change (#)	Net Migration - 5 years ended 30 June	% population increase due to net migration
2006	28,000		-	
2011	29,600	1,600	800	50.0%
2016	30,800	1,200	700	58.3%
2021	31,800	1,000	700	70.0%
2026	32,800	1,000	700	70.0%
2031	33,600	800	700	87.5%
Totals 2006-2031		5,600	3,600	64.3%

Table 8: Projected population growth attributable to net migration, 2006-2031. Source: Statistics New Zealand Population Projections by characteristic, 2006 (base) – 2031 (updated).

What is this about?

Table 7 shows the proportion of Ashburton District residents who identified with each ethnic group in the last four census years -1991 1996, 2001 and 2006.

It is important to note that people can identify with, or belong to, more than one ethnic group. People who do identify with more than one ethnic group have been included in each group; therefore, the projections may not add up to 100 per cent.

It is also important to note that the 2006 census included the ethnic category of 'New Zealander', for the first time. This ethnic category has been included in the 'Other Ethnicity' category by Statistics New Zealand. The majority of respondents in the 'New Zealander' ethnicity category are likely to be of New Zealand European descent, (please refer to the data limitations at the beginning of the report for further details).

Table 8 shows the proportion of population growth projected to be attributable to net migration. Net migration is not a count of every new resident, but rather a count of the change - the number of arrivals, minus the number of departures.

Key Points

- Since 2002, significant numbers of newcomers have come to live in the district seeking employment opportunities, particularly in the areas of dairying, meat processing and manufacturing. These have come from both internal migration from other parts of NZ, as well as international immigration.
- In 2006, 10% (2,841) of the district's resident population were born overseas, with just under half of those born in the United Kingdom or Ireland.
- The arrival of international migrants to the district accounted for 1194 new residents, or 62% of the total population growth from 1991 – 2006. The net migration figures (arrivals minus departures) show we can expect this level of population growth due to migration to continue through to 2031.
- The population of Ashburton District is becoming increasingly ethnically diverse. From 1991 to 2006 the European ethnic group has dropped from 97% to 81%, while the proportions of Maori, Pacific Island, Asian, and Middle East / African / Latin American ethnic groups increased.
- Ashburton District has a greater proportion of the population belonging to the European ethnic group than the nation as a whole (65%).
- National population projections predict all ethnic groups will increase in numbers to 2016, and proportionately, the European ethnic group is expected to decrease. Currently these projections are not available at a territorial authority level, however it can be expected that Ashburton District will follow a similar trend.

What this could mean?

If the numbers of both international and internal migrants continue to rise, one of the key implications of an increasingly diverse population is the increased need for additional support services to assist the newcomers. These include:

- **Community Facilities and Services** - Various ethnic groups are likely to develop their own social infrastructure within the District and this may require community and Council support to enable this to happen. This process may include some changing uses of community facilities such as churches and halls.
- **Social Service Provision** - Many community and social services in New Zealand are provided to meet specific cultural requirements. This probably hasn't occurred to the same extent in Ashburton as in other parts of New Zealand, but increasing demand may mean this becomes a preferred option for this district also. There may also be an increased demand for support services to assist the newcomer settling in process.