

## Council, NZTA progress bridge

Council has signed an agreement with NZ Transport Agency to manage the construction of the second Ashburton bridge and connecting road as one project.

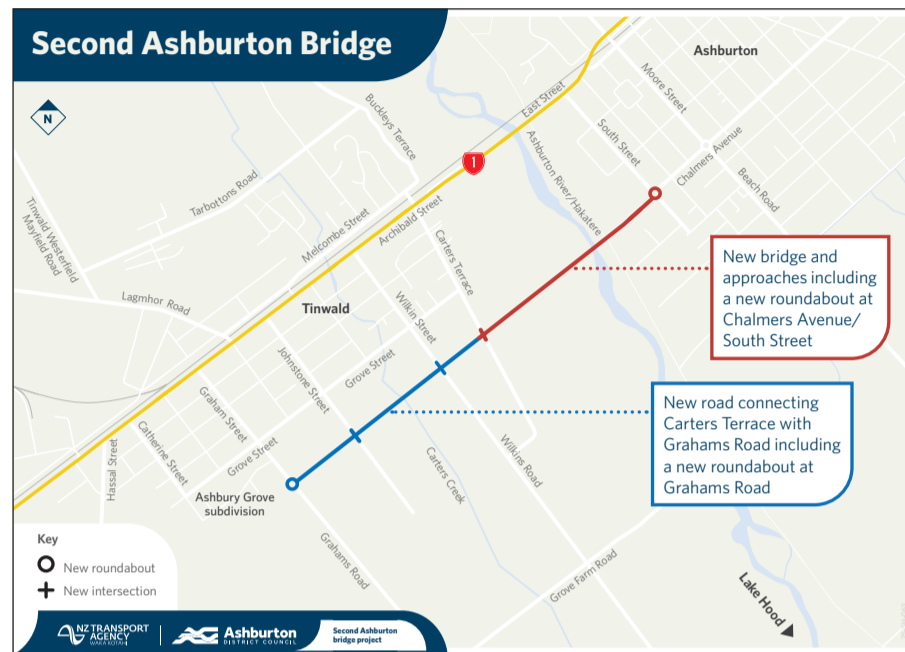
NZTA will tender the full work package as a design and build project later this year.

The NZTA board officially approved the project at its meeting last week, allowing the work on the ground to now get under way, says NZTA's Acting Director Regional Relationships Ian Duncan.

Central Government will fund the 360-metre bridge plus embankments from Chalmers Avenue to Carters Terrace. Council will fund the connecting local road from Carters Terrace to Grahams Road.

"This second bridge is so important for our community," says Ashburton Mayor Neil Brown. "I'm excited all the necessary paperwork to get it started is now signed and sealed. The agreement Council has signed with NZTA means we will soon see and approve concept plans for the second bridge and connecting road, and then have regular meetings during the construction period to ask questions and ensure it is done in a timely manner."

Council has been buying property for the project since a land designation was



confirmed in 2014, and the bridge and connecting road are shown in the District Plan.

Mayor Brown said the project could be completed away from existing traffic routes, given it will be part of a new local road network, without major disruption to residents and travellers.

"There'll be a roundabout at the

intersection of South Street and Chalmers Avenue, and another at the end of the new connecting road and Grahams Road, and a footpath on the Tinwald side of the new road.

"We're looking forward to seeing physical works starting as early as possible in 2026."

Read the full story on our website news channel.



## New toilets for Hakatere under way

Contractors have begun installing a new public toilet block at the Lower Hakatere Huts. The two-cubicle block replaces public toilets that have been in use for many decades, and are considered earthquake-prone.

The new block will include one accessible cubicle, designed to better accommodate people with physical disabilities. An outside basin is also part of the design.

The first part of the project is installing tanks and a concrete base, and the toilet block itself has been manufactured off site and will be delivered later.

Sewage is discharged into a dry vault holding tank, which is pumped out regularly and taken to a treatment plant for disposal. The existing public toilets will remain until the new block is complete, and will then be demolished.

Work is also planned for the old concrete block changing shed, opposite the existing public toilets. The concrete base will be retained and a new steel frame installed later this year, to turn the facility into a shelter.

## Lake Hood closed due to algal bloom

Council has closed Lake Hood to the public until further notice due to an algal bloom and the risk to health posed by cyanobacteria toxins.

A health warning to avoid contact with the lake water was issued on 20 March

because of high levels of potentially toxic blue-green algae, and more recent testing has shown the presence of a new species of algae which is known to be toxic.

Chief Executive Hamish Riach said Council was closing Lake Hood to the

public because the cyanobacteria posed a genuine health risk, with two substantiated cases reported by GPs of patients with typical symptoms of exposure to cyanobacteria.

Read more about the lake on our website.

### CE Hamish Riach

## Weighty decisions about water for Council

**It's been a week of big decisions, many about water: the second Ashburton bridge has cleared its last administrative hurdle, water reforms that affect this district are out for consultation and Lake Hood is closed until further notice because of cyanobacteria.**

The bridge is being progressed now that it has been signed off by the board of NZ Transport Agency; the council and NZTA have signed an agreement to manage the bridge and connecting road as one project.

The bridge has been on council's radar for 15 years and there has been a lot of consultation and planning to reach this point. The deal struck with Government is that they will pay for the lion's share (the bridge itself and embankments)

and council will cover the cost of the connecting road (between Carters Terrace and Grahams Road to the south).

With NZTA currently undertaking six weeks of road works at the northern end of the existing bridge on SH1, there are probably many who wish the second bridge was already built!

Local Water Done Well is the name of the Government's new programme for the delivery of drinking water, wastewater and stormwater, and Council is talking with the community at the moment on the right delivery model for Ashburton district.

Council is proposing an inhouse model, a much-enhanced version of what already happens, and asking the community what they think.

There were two public meetings about this important decision this week and submissions are coming in already - that is good, for this is a big decision and councillors need to hear from the community and who they want to deliver water services in the future.

Closing Lake Hood was a gutting decision, for Council as managers of the lake and for all those who use it. The need to shift a national water ski event because of the closure was particularly disappointing, but the public health risk was too great to continue.

We are following advice from Environment Canterbury and Health New Zealand to treat the lake, canals and extension as one waterbody as the algae is dynamic and able to move.

With two substantiated cases of exposure to cyanobacteria already

reported (and from different parts of the lake), we know the water as it is at the moment poses a genuine health risk.

I was pleased to see visitor numbers in our library are rising and on a par with other modern libraries around New Zealand.

Some people take out books, some come in for meetings or gather to do an activity, some visit the makerspace and recording studio, and some visit for a coffee and a cinnamon scroll.

That is what modern libraries are all about: They are hubs of their communities and their customers are big and small, young and old, and all are on their own literary and digital journeys.



# Comparing water services models

Submissions have begun to arrive at Council, with some good feedback on the proposed models for delivering future water services.

Check your mail for the consultation document, which compares the proposed Stand-Alone Business Unit with an alternative model, a Water Services Council Controlled Organisation.

Both these models must prepare a Water Services Strategy and comply with regulations set by Taumata Arowai (water quality) and the Commerce Commission (pricing).

The Stand-Alone Business Unit is an enhanced model of the current inhouse way of delivering water services. The CCO model would be a Council-owned company focused on water services, with an independent competency-based board of directors for governance.

## Stand-Alone Business Unit

Key features:

- Council continues to own and manage all water assets, infrastructure and operations
- Elected members (councillors) are responsible for governance and oversight
- Water rates set by Council

## Water Services Council Controlled Organisation

Key features:

- Council as shareholder, and appointing competency-based directors
- Prepares Water Services Strategy guided by Council's statement of expectations
- Water charges are set annually and billed by WSCCO

### Why is a Stand-Alone Business Unit the proposed model?

Council believes it retains strong Council control and provides residents with the most input into how water services operate. It meets Government's new requirements, while building on decades of our good work. Financial modelling indicates it will offer lower household costs compared to the alternative model.

For more information and to have your say, go to [itsourplace.nz](https://itsourplace.nz)

# Land available for future growth

Ashburton District is well placed to accommodate future residential and business growth, according to a report by consultants Property Economics.

Group Manager of Compliance and Development Ian Hyde said the report showed the district has good land availability for future growth.

"It really highlighted the benefits of previous decisions and reassured us that there are no big issues."

The report was also positive about the availability of industrial and commercial land for the future, and provided a health analysis of the Ashburton town centre.

"It was good to see that the report commended the work done over the past five years in the town centre, including



relocating the library and civic centre," Mr Hyde said.

"It showed that the investment revitalising the CBD should hold Ashburton in

good stead to take advantage of future opportunities."

The report is available online.

## COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are at Hine Paaka (Council Chamber), 2 Baring Square East, unless specified.

Monday 14 April, **Methven Community Board**, 9am at Mt Hutt Memorial Hall

Wednesday 16 April, **Council Meeting** (live-streamed), 1pm

## PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURE

Ashburton District Council gives public notice of a proposal to temporarily close roads to traffic to enable the holding of a community event - **the Ashburton College Ball**.

Road proposed to be closed:

- **Wills Street - from 211a Wills Street (the Ashburton Event Centre/Cass Street end) to 197 Wills Street (Neumann's Tyres/East Street end)**

Period of closure: **From 7pm until 9.30pm on Friday, 6 June 2025**

Any person objecting should do so in writing by post or email to the Council, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton, by 4pm on **Monday 14 April 2025**.

**NEIL McCANN, Group Manager Infrastructure & Open Spaces**

## RUBBISH & RECYCLING EASTER AND ANZAC DAY

Ashburton's kerbside collection service will **not operate on Good Friday**, 18 April, so people whose bins are normally emptied on a Friday should put them out for collection on Saturday 19 April instead.

Bins will be collected as normal the week beginning Monday 21 April.

Anzac Day is on Friday 25 April and there will be no change to kerbside collection that day; put your bins out as normal.

### Resource Recovery Parks

The Ashburton Resource Recovery Park will be closed Good Friday 18 April and closed Anzac Day Friday 25 April. The park will be open its usual winter hours 9am-5pm on Saturday 19 April, Sunday 20 April and Easter Monday 21 April.

Rakaia Resource Recovery Park will be closed Friday 18 April and Monday 21 April, but open on Saturday 19 April.

The Methven greenwaste facility will be open Sunday 20 April.

## WORKS NOTICES

**King and Alexander Streets, Chertsey** - Closed until 13 September while a new water treatment plant is built. The road closure will not impact Chertsey School access.

**Trevors Road** - One way (northbound traffic only) between Beach Road and Wellington Street from 7 April to 27 June for work related to lifestyle village development.

# Discover our fun autumn activities

Check out what's happening at our Council facilities by picking up your free copy of the **What's On Guide**. It's an easy way to keep track of everything you can do over the school holidays!



### COUNCIL OFFICE

2 Baring Square East  
Mon, Tue, Wed & Fri 8.30am-5pm  
Thursday 9am-5pm

### ASHBURTON LIBRARY

2 Baring Square East, Ashburton 7700  
Mon & Fri 8.30am-6pm, Tue-Thu 8.30am-8pm  
Sat & Sun 10am-4pm

### EA NETWORKS CENTRE

20 River Terrace  
Mon - Fri 5.45am-9pm (pools 8pm Mon & Tue, 7pm Wed-Fri, gym 8pm). Sat & Sun 7am-7pm (pools 6pm, gym 6pm)

### ASHBURTON ART GALLERY & MUSEUM

327 West Street  
10am-4pm daily (late night Wed)