

Mayor Neil Brown Thank you for the memories

This is my final column and I feel a mix of pride, sadness and excitement.

I've been in local government for 21 years, and mayor of this great district for the past six. Many things have changed in that time, but for me it has always been about the people.

Many people have been part of Team Brown over the years - my wife Judy, my fellow councillors, council staff and the community. I learned to talk the talk but I also hope you'll see that I have walked the walk too.

We have a new second bridge in the making, our drinking water and wastewater systems are safe and

reliable, ratepayers seem happier about the state of our roads and we have invested in a bright future by building Te Whare Whakare, or as some like to call it the library and civic building.

The Ashburton District has evolved over the past two decades in many ways - it is still a powerhouse of agriculture, but the people who work on our farms, and in our shops and service businesses come from all corners of the world.

As mayor, I've had a front row seat to these changes and I've attended official openings and galas but also dealt with ratepayers experiencing grief, upset and anger.

It has been a privilege and I'm proud of

the relationships that have been built with our community, with Arowhenua, within the wider local government level, and with the country's leaders (and whichever party they represented).

There are certainly challenges ahead, but this district has a solid platform from which council can continue to deliver services, big and small, and and the leaders that voters choose this weekend must navigate societal change and government reform.

The community has a role too, to invest in this district by building their own lives and making the most of what we have on our doorstep.



SHORT AND SWEET

SPLASHDECK WORK

The splashdeck around the toddlers' pool and leisure pool is off limits for the next two weeks while the rubber surface is replaced. The work will not affect swimmers using other pools in the aquatic area, though the steam room has also been closed so contractors can apply an anti-slip treatment to the tiles. A reminder too that the aquatic area will be fully closed the weekend of 18 and 19 October, while pool staff retrain for a new international lifeguard qualification.

TICK TOCK

Voting for the local elections closes at midday on October 11. If you haven't voted, now's the time. It's too late to return your voting papers by post, but you can drop them into any of the six orange voting bins we have around the district. These ballot bins are at the Ashburton Library and Council building in Ashburton, Tinwald FreshChoice, EA Networks Centre, Mobil Rakaia and the Methven Four Square. You can cast a special vote on Saturday from 10am-12pm - although we recommend people don't leave it until the last minute, as voting finishes at noon sharp.

ELECTION RESULTS

The progress results for the local elections will be announced shortly after voting closes at noon on Saturday 11 October. We'll post them on our website, voteashburton.nz and on our Facebook page. Progress results include all votes received up to and including Friday; Saturday votes and special votes will be included in the preliminary results announced later.

LAKE HOOD

Scientists have this week been surveying the lake bed at Lake Hood, to help create a 3D model to assist their research projects into water quality at the lake. Trials of products that might mitigate algae growth in the lake this summer will be tested in a section of the canals in November. Keep up to date with developments at Lake Hood by signing up for regular email newsletters. Visit ashburtondc.govt.nz/community-facilities/lake-hood

Mayor, councillors farewelled



Mayor Neil Brown and his wife Judy Brown.

Ashburton District Councillors have paid tribute to retiring Mayor Neil Brown, describing him as an authentic and democratic leader, with a considered and practical approach.

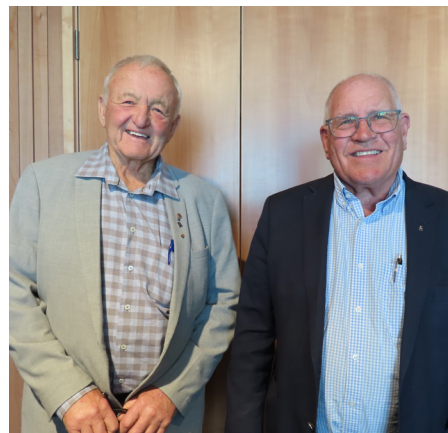
Deputy Mayor Liz McMillan led the informal valedictory speeches at the final meeting of



Councillors Leen Braam and Lynette Lovett.

Council last week, saying Mayor Brown had been pegged as "a fellow with a bit of nous" when he was first elected in 2004.

She acknowledged his wealth of knowledge accumulated over the years, his fair leadership and desire to build a great team to serve the district.



MCB's Allan Lock (left) and Kelvin Holmes.

Cr Leen Braam and Cr Lynette Lovett are retiring after nine years, while Methven Community Board chair Kelvin Holmes and board member Allan Lock are also standing down.

You can read more about their farewells at ashburtondc.govt.nz/news

Reserve, hall boards seek new members

The new term of Council also signals a new three-year term for the volunteers who sit on the district's hall boards, reserve boards and domain boards.

Over the next couple of months, boards will be advertising their triennial meetings and looking for new members.

Group Manager of Democracy and Engagement Toni Durham said the district's volunteer boards did great work, and were supported by council.

"They take on projects big and

small, and they look after important community assets, like reserves where sport is played and halls where families celebrate their most special occasions. The triennial meetings are a chance to recruit new members who have skills, time and resources to help."

Council looks after 18 boards in total and each has its own chair.

"If you are a person who likes to get things done for your community, then consider joining your nearest hall board or reserve board."

TRIENNIAL MEETINGS FOR RESERVE & HALL BOARDS

- 5 November - **Tinwald Memorial Hall Board** - 7.30pm, Tinwald Memorial Hall meeting room
- 11 November - **Mt Somers Reserve Board** - 7pm, Mt Somers Memorial Hall supper room
- 17 November - **Tinwald Reserve Board** - 7pm, Tinwald Memorial Hall meeting room
- 18 November - **Pendarves Reserve Board** - 7.30pm, Pendarves Fire Station
- 20 November - **Hinds Reserve Board** - 7.30, Hinds Fire Station meeting room
- 27 November - **Mayfield Reserve Board** - 7pm, Mayfield Memorial Hall supper room
- 1 December - **Rakaia Reserve Board** - 7pm, Rakaia Recreation Centre

Join us for an earthquake drill

Schools, businesses, families and individuals in the Ashburton District are being encouraged to take part in the national earthquake drill next week.

People are encouraged to Drop, Cover and Hold all at the same time at 9.30am on Thursday 16 October as part of ShakeOut 2025.

Drop, Cover and Hold stops you being knocked over, makes you a smaller target for flying and falling objects and protects your head, neck and vital organs.

You can prepare in advance by identifying a safe space, like under a strong table or next to an interior wall, to take refuge in a quake.

Civil Defence controller and Group Manager of Compliance and Development Ian Hyde said earthquakes were in the top five emergency risks for the district.

“We can’t predict when earthquakes will happen, but scientists tell us the South Island’s Alpine Fault has a regular history of producing large earthquakes, so we need to be prepared.”

People who live along the Mid Canterbury coastline can also use the ShakeOut to think about what they would do in the event of a tsunami.



Ashburton Library staff Stacey, Carla and Jono practise drop, cover and hold in the Makerspace.

Mr Hyde said council staff would be taking part in the drill.

“Staff working in the administrative levels of Te Whare Whakare and those in the library will be pausing to drop, cover and hold and we hope any members of the public in the building at the time will do the same.

“Staff at the Ashburton Art Gallery and Museum and at EA Networks Centre will also be taking part in the drill, so if you’re

visiting these facilities then please join in. If you’re in the pool, you should move to the centre of the pool, and in a real quake you’d look up to watch for falling objects.

“Council has an important role in civil defence emergency management and everyone needs to know what to do and how to protect themselves. Know what to do can save lives.”

Sign up for the ShakeOut at getready.govt.nz/involved/shakeout

PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURES

Ashburton District Council gives public notice of proposal to temporarily close roads to traffic to enable the holding of the following community events:

LIGHT UP THE NIGHT CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Roads proposed to be closed:

- **Baring Square East, from Havelock St to Cameron St**
- **Cameron Street, from East St to Victoria St**

Period of closure: **From 6am to 10.30pm on Saturday, 29 November 2025**

ASHBURTON CAR CLUB'S QUARTER MILE SPRINT

Road proposed to be closed:

- **Somerton Road, from Jamiesons Rd to Coplands Rd**

Period of closure: **From 9am to 4.30pm on Saturday, 29 November 2025**

The proposed closures will be considered at a meeting of Council on 5 November.

Any person objecting to either of the proposals should do so in writing by post or email to the Council, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton by 4pm, **Friday 24 October 2025.**

NEIL McCANN, Group Manager Infrastructure & Open Spaces

ROADING NOTICES

Fairfield Avenue - Closed in parts until 24 October while contractors install new water pipes. The avenue will initially be closed to traffic between Deans Street and Waymouth Street until 24 October, and additional road closures will happen as the work progresses towards Fairfield Road. Resident access remains.

Grove Street - Closed at Wilkins Street intersection while new watermain are installed by Rooney Earthmoving. Road closures and detours expected until 31 October. Resident access remains.

Fords Road - Closed between Griffiths Road and Wheatstone Road from 29 September until 30 October, while Grant Hood Contracting undertakes road maintenance. Local restrictions apply, access for residents remains.

See our live road closures at ashburtondc.govt.nz/road-closures-map

Lowdown on mobility scooters

Council is teaming up with Greypower to run a free information session about mobility scooters and how to use them safely.



The two-hour workshop will be at the RSA on Thursday 16 October, from 1pm-3pm. The first hour will be learning about mobility scooters, from batteries and maintenance to road rules and insurance; in the second hour, participants can have a go on a course set up in the RSA’s carpark.

Group Manager of Infrastructure and Open Spaces Neil McCann said mobility scooters were a good option for those who couldn’t drive, or those who chose not to drive.

“You don’t need a licence to use a mobility scooter, but you must ride it in a careful and considerate way, and on the footpath whenever possible.

“Being considerate means that you must watch out for other people using the road or footpath too.”

The course will share helpful tips for riding safely and navigating uneven surfaces.

If you’re interested in attending, please contact Greypower on 03 308 2092. Attendees will also receive a microfibre cloth and an information pamphlet.

New name, final step

The gifting of a new name for the Ashburton Art Gallery and Museum means the facility can embark on the final stage of a merger that started nearly five years ago.

The art gallery and museum combined in 2021 as an in-house activity of Council and last week they were gifted the name Rokowhiria by Ūpoko of Te Rūnaka o Arowhenua, Tewera King.

Chief Executive Hamish Riach said it was an honour to receive the te reo name, which beautifully captured the essence and spirit of the facility. The name now allowed staff to begin a rebranding process, and any associated costs would

be covered by the facility’s operational budget.

“We’ve been running two separate websites, two social media channels and two marketing programmes and now we’ll be consolidating those. Both the museum and art gallery have long and separate histories and we’ve been mindful about respecting that history as we’ve combined the two at Council level.”

Earlier this year, a new combined reception desk and retail space were built on the ground floor to gain further efficiencies in running the merged facility.

See the full news story on our website.

Cultural Whānau Fun Day

A day of free and fun activities for the whole family! Come along and learn about the services available in our community and connect with our emergency services!

Free BBQ and other ethnic food, plus prizes and games



18 October 2025

11am-3pm

Hampstead Sports Club

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)