

Rakaia salmon resumes perch

Schoolkids, tourists and Rakaia locals gathered to watch Rakaia's restored giant salmon be reinstated at her spot alongside State Highway 1 this week.

The iconic fish has been away for six weeks, benefiting from an allover scrub, sand and fibreglass repair, and intricately-detailed new full-body paint work. Much of the painting has been by hand, with new pearlescent scales now catching the sunlight at different angles.

Mayor Liz McMillan said the salmon's new sparkle was beautiful and the artist responsible, Phil Price, agreed.

Phil was just 25 when he created the sculpture for the Rakaia Lions Club back in 1990. He repainted it in 2006 and says the new artwork will see it through another 30 years.

Mayor Liz said the project had gained a lot of attention around the country, as the salmon was a well-photographed attraction that had put Rakaia, and Mid Canterbury, on the map.

"There were many who wanted to be a part of this project, and I am grateful to the local businesses who gave their time and expertise. They are part of the history of this special fish."

One of the engineers working on site has a family connection to the sculpture too. Sam Cullimore, of Cullimore Engineering, is the grandson of former deputy mayor John Leadley, who attended the original salmon unveiling in 1990. He took young Sam along to see the fish when it was repainted in 2006.

For this restoration, Sam was in charge of attaching the lifting rod, cutting and re-attaching the salmon to its metal pole. Some of that work was carried out very carefully from a cherrypicker at full stretch.

He said it had been a unique project and



people might notice the sculpture was sitting about 50cm higher, due to an extension of the base pole to keep the tail out of most people's reach.

Phil, above with Mayor Liz, said the pearlescent paint was a special feature of the salmon and the artwork had a lot more depth than the 2006 refresh.

The salmon was craned out of his Christchurch workshop early on Saturday morning and transported by Tarbotton

Land & Civil to the yard of Rakaia Engineering Limited, where it sat until Monday morning before it was reinstalled.

Many of the contractors involved have heavily discounted their services, and Council would like to thank: Treetech, EA Networks, Cullimore Engineering, Lysaght & Associates, Ashburton Cranes, Canterbury Cranes, Tarbotton Land & Civil, S&J Piloting Service, Spraymarks, Qualis, Methven Lions, Rakaia Seed and Field and Rakaia Engineering.

Cr Julie Moffett

Join us for public workshops

It's a time for cool heads around the council with the coalition government announcing big reforms to local government and the Resource Management Act.

Council staff have been doing a great job in communicating the gist of these reforms to us councillors, in a series of workshops, as more is revealed and the implications and the work ahead is better understood.

All this is going on as council carries on with its planned activities, which lately has included things like making amendments to the gambling bylaw, and looking at the open spaces policy.

All of these things affect the lives of the people in Mid Canterbury and are facets

of the community that anyone can have a say on.

Democracy isn't just for voting time and it isn't just for homeowners.

If you're a resident here, you drive on the road, use the EA Networks Centre, turn on the tap, or kick a ball around a sports field then you have the right to have a say.

Councillors are involved in regular workshops when they're given the information they need in their decision-making, most are public and you have the right to observe the process.

So, that's my invitation to you - empower your decision-making and understanding of what council does by taking a look.

On a personal note, I've been thinking a



lot about how easy it is to have our outlook on life skewed by the onslaught of bad news and voices telling us what's wrong in the world.

Fortunately, since being elected to the Ashburton District Council, I've had the opportunity to see there are many people who care about others and are putting that into action in our community.

Most recently, I chaired the Safe Communities steering group, which is made up of many organisations in Mid Canterbury, and hearing what they were all doing in the community was an excellent foil for all the stuff that we hear is "wrong".

SHORT AND SWEET



DOG PAWLICY FETCHES FEEDBACK

A summer survey on dog control received 339 responses from residents. The feedback will help Council update the district's Dog Control policy and bylaw for public consultation later this year. Those who provided early feedback were entered into a draw for a \$100 Prezzy voucher and the winner was Jacqui Howden.

INFO SESSION FOR STOCKWATER

Council will host a public information session on Tuesday 17 February for those who receive water from the **Cracraft and Klondyke stockwater intakes**. The event will start at 4.30pm and be held in the Ruapuna hall. The stockwater race network for those two intakes is between Ruapuna and Lowcliffe, and Council is exiting the stockwater delivery service. Property owners have been invited to take part in a survey about future water use and are welcome to come along to the session. An online survey for the public will open this week at itsourplace.nz.

SERVICE HOURS ON WAITANGI DAY

The Waitangi Day public holiday on Friday 6 February will see temporary changes to operating hours at some Council facilities and to some Council services. The Ashburton library and administration building, Te Whare Whakatere, will be closed but you can still get in touch at any time if you have a problem or urgently need to contact us - the afterhours service will be operating 24 hours-a-day, please phone 03 307 7700. The Ashburton Library will be open Saturday and Sunday, while EA Networks Centre and the Art Gallery and Museum will be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday. See full hours at ashburtondc.govt.nz



Lake study kicks off

A full scientific study into algal control products at Lake Hood began this week, with several distributors of the products on site to watch the project kick off.

Professor Susie Wood from Lincoln University, who is leading the study, said that the work was important for Lake Hood and lakes across New Zealand.

"A scientific approach is not just important for Lake Hood, but any lake, because every lake is different and the causes are different in each system.

"Resources are limited, so we want to ensure any money is spent effectively and that we get a long-term solution that's tailor made for this lake.

"There's lots of potential solutions, so we want to have robust data to help the Council make the right decision."

She said the sealed shipping containers being used in the lake's canal are like "mini lakes", and they're open to the sediment at the bottom of the lake, where algal biomass can lie dormant.

"Some products are chemical based and some are biological. Essentially, the products either kill the cyanobacteria or enhance other things to outcompete them."

She said these products could be part of the solution for Lake Hood but not the whole solution, and they might be applied to specific locations, like the water ski area for example.

The project team also installed ultrasound devices around the lake, to test their effectiveness against cyanobacteria blooms.

Professor Wood said that ultrasonics machines emit high-frequency sound waves that burst the cyanobacteria cells.

Council asks that people on the water steer clear any trial equipment while the full scientific study is under way.

The study is part of a national collaboration by many research organisations to improve the health of New Zealand lakes, and is part of the Our Lakes, Our Future project.

Various measures will be monitored until the end of April.

Health New Zealand issued a health warning for the lake on 14 January, after testing showed elevated levels of potentially toxic planktonic cyanobacteria in a sample from the water ski area.

The latest test results show a sample from the water ski lane on 29 January contained cyanobacteria biovolume of 0.01mm³/L.

Annual Plan under way

Council is proposing to allocate \$20 million to the second Ashburton Bridge project as part of its annual plan and budget for 2026-27.

The cost of the bridge project has not been finalised yet, but Council is committed to paying for the connecting road from Carters Terrace to the roundabout at Grahams Road. The draft budget proposes to borrow the \$20m.

Council's contribution to the second bridge project was discussed on Tuesday as part of a Council workshop on the draft annual plan for 2026-27.

Mayor Liz McMillan said the workshop gave Councillors a global view of the budget, and the opportunity to flag projects or work that they wanted a deeper understanding of at further annual plan workshops in the next month or so.

"At first flush, the draft budget shows an average rate increase of 10.2 per cent, but we'll be scrutinising this. Rate rises affect people differently, depending on where

they live and the Council services they receive.

"Some work we are already committed to, like the second bridge connecting road, introducing the new food and green waste kerbside collection and investing in our three waters networks. There's also other work we need to consider, and there are business cases for additional wastewater projects, an upgrade to the septic system at the Hinds Domain and for operations at Lake Hood.

"One other thing that is also affecting the 2026-27 budget is a smaller contribution from revenue sources that have previously offset general rates, like dividends, transfers from reserve funding and interest on our investments. This current year those rates contributors came to \$4.1m, but this coming financial year we are budgeting for \$3m."

Councillors meet again on 10 February for another workshop – it is open to the public and livestreamed on Council's Facebook and YouTube channels.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council meetings are held in Hine Paaka, the Council Chamber, unless otherwise stated; agendas are online at ashburtondc.govt.nz

Tuesday 10 February, **Council workshop on Draft Annual Plan**, 9.30am (livestreamed)

Wednesday 11 February, **Three Waters Committee**, 10am (livestreamed)

Wednesday 11 February, **Audit, Risk, & Finance Committee**, 1pm (livestreamed)

Tuesday 17 February, **Road Safety Co-ordinating Committee**, 9.30am, Wakanui Room

Tuesday 17 February, **Biodiversity Advisory Group**, 1pm, Wakanui Room

Wednesday 18 February, **Council workshop on Revenue & Finance Policy**, 9.30am

Tuesday 24 February, **Council workshop on Development Contributions**, 1.30pm

Wednesday 25 February, **Council workshop on Draft Annual Plan**, 9.30am

Wednesday 25 February, **Council Meeting**, 1pm (livestreamed)

PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURE

Ashburton District Council gives public notice of proposal to temporarily close roads to traffic to enable the holding of the following EA Networks Centre event:

KIDS TRIATHLON

Roads proposed to be closed:

- **Smallbone Drive, at the intersection of River Terrace**
- **Robinson Street, from Dobson Street West to Watson Street**

Period of closure: **From 7am to 1.30pm on Sunday 23 March 2026**

Any person objecting to the proposal should lodge notice of their objection and the grounds for their objection in writing by post or email to the Council, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton by 4pm on Friday, 13 February 2026.

NEIL McCANN
Group Manager Infrastructure

TRIENNIAL MEETINGS FOR RESERVE & HALL BOARDS

- 24 February - **Ealing Reserve Board** - 7pm, Ealing hall.

GRAZING TENDER

This tender is for a three-year Licence to Occupy for 0.4043 hectares of land at 14 Meadowlands Green, Ashburton (Lot 8 DP 539231). **Permitted use is for sheep grazing only.**

The Licence to Occupy commences 1 April 2026, and tenders must be received by Ashburton District Council on or before 4pm, 20 March.

Please contact commercial@adc.govt.nz for a tender application form or for more information.

ROADING NOTICES

Thompsons Track – Closed between Winchmore Lauriston Road and Pole Road, and Braemar Lauriston Road at Thompsons Track intersection until 31 March, so Fulton Hogan can do heavy road maintenance on behalf of Council. Detours in place. Resident access remains.

Mayfield Valetta Road – Closed between Anama Valetta Road and Tinwald Westerfield Mayfield Road until 28 February, so Fulton Hogan can do heavy road maintenance on behalf of Council. Detours in place. Resident access remains.

Ealing Montalto Road – Closed between Shepherds Bush Road and Ruapuna School Road until 27 February while Grant Hood Contracting carries out road maintenance for Council. Detours in place.

Ealing Montalto Road – Closed between Baxters Road and Lakes Road until 6 March while Grant Hood Contracting carries out road maintenance for Council. Detours in place.

Fairfield Road – Closed between Company Road and Singletree Road until 31 March, while Fulton Hogan carries out heavy road maintenance for Council.

Elizabeth Avenue (Rakaia) – Closed from Burrowes Road to Tancred Street until 27 February, while Rooney Earthmoving installs water pipes for Council. Access for residents remains.

Spaxton Street – Closed in parts (including Lilley Place and Macphail Place) until 27 February while Rooney Earthmoving installs water mains for Council.

Tancred Street – Closed in places between Cass Street and Chalmers Avenue until 5 February while Tru-Line Civil installs new wastewater pipes.

Full closure details are on our website ashburtondc.govt.nz

WAITANGI DAY RUBBISH & RECYCLING

There is **no change** to kerbside rubbish and recycling collections on Waitangi Day on Friday 6 February and Friday's collection will take place as usual, with residents to have their wheelie bins out by 7.30am. Remember to use your windstrap, whether it's windy or not.

The **Ashburton Resource Recovery Park** will be open on Waitangi Day from 8am-6pm, and open its usual weekend hours (Saturday 9am-6pm and Sunday 9am-5pm).



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)