

## Better Off Funding for new toilets

New toilets at Digby Park and money for new footpaths are among Council projects to benefit from \$4.19 million received as part of the Three Waters Reform support package (termed Better Off Funding) from the Government.

Seven projects, including \$2.3m to help relocate Ashburton's rail freight hub to Fairton, received funding. The funds do not require Council to change its position on the reforms, which Council continues to actively oppose in their current form.

Council applied for and has been given funds for the following projects:

- **\$2.3m** for Fairfield Freight Hub – to help fund the relocation of the rail freight yard from the Ashburton town centre to a purpose-built facility at Fairton
- **\$900,000** for additional new footpaths
- **\$200,000** for urgent repairs to five playgrounds
- **\$190,000** for equipment in specialist spaces in the new Ashburton Public Library and Civic Centre
- **\$200,000** for changing rooms at the Rakaia and Hinds swimming pools, water treatment upgrades for all five district pools, and design work for a future upgrade of the Tinwald pool
- **\$150,000** to relocate the South African War Memorial from Baring Square East to Baring Square West, as part of a



major redevelopment of Baring Square East

- **\$250,000** for toilets at Digby Park

Business Support Group Manager Leanne Macdonald said the various projects were now being advanced by staff.

“The projects had to meet certain criteria to qualify for funding, like being infrastructure that improves community wellbeing, or enabling growth, or supporting a move to a sustainable or low emissions economy.

“We will certainly put the funds to good use and these are projects that were outside our annual and long term plans.

“For example, significantly reduced Waka Kotahi funding for Low Cost Low Risk projects over recent years means we have

not been able to do as many new footpaths as we would like, but now we will be able to do this around the perimeters of Ashburton, Methven and Rakaia where there has been rapid urban growth.

“There are also some much-needed repairs at playgrounds in Methven, Mt Somers and Rakaia Huts.”

New toilets at Digby Park were asked for by the community during consultation on recent long-term and annual plans, and on the Play, Active Recreation and Sport Strategy.

The projects were all approved by the Department of Internal Affairs, which will monitor their progress and manage funding.



**POOL Party**  
7pm - 8:30pm  
Pool inflatables

**SUMMER**  
**27 JANUARY**

Pool entry  
**\$4.50 children**  
(8 - 18 years)  
Adult supervision Advised.

**EA networks**  
centre

eanetworkscentre.co.nz

### ROAD WORKS NOTICES

**Thompsons Track – current to 31 March.** Thompsons Track between Winchmore Lauriston Road and Line Road is temporarily closed for roading maintenance and reseal works. Detour available.

**Mayfield Valetta Road – current to 6 April.** Mayfield Valetta Road between Tinwald Westerfield Mayfield Road and Anama Valetta Road is temporarily closed during the day for rehabilitation. Resident access remains, detour available.

**Holmes Road – current to 17 March.** Holmes Road between Mt Hutt Station Road and Barkers Road is closed for a full road reconstruction and drainage installation. Detour options available.

**Railway Terrace East (Rakaia) – current to 28 February.** Railway Terrace East from Rolleston Street to Bridge Street SH1 is temporarily closed for work associated with Waka Kotahi's weigh bridge project.

**Cass Street – 23 January to 30 January.** The northbound lane of Cass Street between Victoria Street and Peter Street will be closed to enable an upgrade of power lines. Detours available.

View a map of all current and upcoming road closures in the district by going to our website [ashburtondc.govt.nz](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz)

## Neil Brown, Mayor Backing for our community

**The beginning of the year is a logical time to shake out your thoughts a bit and re-assess your position on key issues ... sometimes we discover new information or circumstances change, and we must adapt.**

One thing that hasn't changed is my opposition to the commercial vehicle weigh stations that Waka Kotahi is planning to build just north of Rakaia. Council has opposed these on road safety grounds since they were first proposed several years ago.

Their plan is to build two stations - one for northbound traffic at Weavers Road (we don't oppose this one) and one for southbound traffic between the river and rail bridge (this one we oppose).

It makes no sense to have a slow-moving heavy truck pull out into a 100km/h or 80km/h zone after visiting the weigh station – that's just an accident waiting to happen on an already-tricky piece of road.

Technically it might not be in the Ashburton District but the

consequences of a crash there will affect us, so you can be sure that I'll be revisiting this issue again with Waka Kotahi soon.

Councillors will be back around the table next week for the first big budget workshop of the year. There will be plenty of information to digest and decisions about our district's critical needs, wants or luxury items. I doubt we'll be having many of the latter in this current economic climate with the cost of goods and services remaining high.

Community groups planning big or little projects might also feel the pinch and that is why they should take note that the next round of Council community grants opens in February.

The first cluster of grants includes financial help for community projects, biodiversity and heritage work, and new community events. In March, groups will be able to apply for financial help from a regional event fund, a mountain bike trail maintenance fund, the New Zealand Creative Communities Scheme and Sport New Zealand's rural travel fund.



Don't be put off by the documentation required – that's just our way of making sure we are accountable for the money handed out to community groups. Council staff are more than happy to answer questions about the process and give you a hand if needed, so have a look as your project may qualify.

The annual list of recipients is hugely varied, from money to support organisations like Ashburton District Neighbourhood Support to covering printing costs for the Methven Historical Society, or resource and building consent costs for the new walkway into Sharplin Falls.

Another project that you'll be hearing more about soon is our involvement in the Mayors Taskforce For Jobs national project, which encourages local employers to take on local youth.

It will be a privilege giving my support to this new initiative, which comes with money from the Government to get it under way.



# Rakaia presents new scene for tourists



The Rakaia Salmon Reserve on SH1 has gained two more colourful features that will help tourists discover more about the Ashburton District.

Two huge vinyl images have been fixed to the ends of the reserve’s new public toilets – one is an aerial shot of the iconic, braided Rakaia River and the other is a map of the district showing main roads and tourist attractions. Both images are about 2.7 metres x 2.5 metres and have been applied to the exterior walls of the building.

The artwork is a collaboration between Council and the Rakaia Lions, and both organisations have worked together over the past two years to revitalise the reserve, which is famous for its giant fibreglass salmon.

The transformation over time has included the new public conveniences, which are some of the flashiest and busiest in the district, and an historical walk with interpretive signs that tell the story of Rakaia.

The historic panels cover a range of topics,

The iconic Rakaia River, captured by Methven photographer Bill Irwin, is a new attraction in the Rakaia Salmon Reserve off State Highway 1.

from facts about the nearby Rakaia River to early inhabitants of the town and how the surrounding land is farmed. The first settlers had to navigate the tricky Rakaia River before rail and road bridges were built, and many drowned in its fast-flowing waters.

The new artwork was installed recently by Juice Signs on behalf of Council.

The photograph of the river was taken by Methven photographer Bill Irwin and it shows the winding shingle riverbed and channels. The map shows Mid Canterbury from the sea to the mountains and highlights main travel routes and other towns and tourist attractions.

Tourists can also see features of the Ashburton Lakes / Ōtuwharekai, where the national walking trail Te Araroa crosses the district, and the location of the Mt Somers track.

Council’s Democracy and Engagement

Group Manager Toni Durham said the artwork had been attracting lots of positive attention since it was installed.

“Rakaia is the gateway to the Ashburton District from Christchurch International Airport and this project helps people navigate their journey along the coast or inland to the high country.

“Creating images of that size for printing was a challenge, and Council staff spent a lot of time making sure the images were sharp and the information accurate.

“The Rakaia Lions have provided information, labour and plenty of passion for the reserve’s redevelopment too, so it’s been a really good collaboration.”

Another new facility opened in Rakaia recently to help tourists and travellers is the motor caravan wastewater dump station at the end of Ferguson Street, on land between Railway Terrace and the railway lines.

## Contract awarded for Baring Square redo

A \$2.45 million contract to redevelop Baring Square East has been awarded to Tru-Line Civil, the same contractor who worked on the revitalisation of Ashburton’s CBD.

The square redevelopment involves creating a new one-way road with angle parking in front of the new library and civic building, and a major replant and renovation of the square itself.

Infrastructure and Open Spaces Group Manager Neil McCann said the work would breathe new life into the area, while retaining some original features of the space, like the whale bones, oval path and water feature. The town’s clock also stays.



“As part of the redevelopment work we will also be moving the Boer War Memorial to Baring Square West. We applied for resource consent to relocate the memorial and that has been granted.”

Relocating the war memorial will be undertaken by specialists and it will be moved across the rail tracks to Baring Square West, where Ashburton’s other main war memorials are located.

“We’ve consulted with the community over this sensitive relocation and have included the advice of heritage experts in the moving plan that has been approved,” Mr McCann said.

The \$2.45m contract to redevelop the square was awarded to Tru-Line Civil at Council’s December meeting. The work is designed to complement the revitalised CBD and the new library and civic building currently under construction.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURE

Ashburton District Council gives public notice of a proposal to temporarily close a road to ordinary vehicle traffic to enable the holding of a community event, **Gravel Sprint Meeting**.

- **UPPER DOWNS ROAD**, from Quarry Road to approximately #518 Upper Downs Road

**Period of closure:** From 8am to 6pm on **Saturday, 18 February 2023**.

This proposed closure is made under the Local Government Act 1974 – Schedule 10 (11 (e) and will be considered at the next Council meeting on 1 February 2023. Any person objecting to the proposal should lodge a notice of their objection and grounds for their objection in writing by post or email to the Council, 5 Baring Square West, Ashburton by 4pm, Friday 20 January 2023.

**NEIL McCANN**  
Group Manager Infrastructure and Open Spaces

### TRIENNIAL MEETINGS

- Alford Forest Reserve Board** - Tuesday 24 January, 7.30pm in the Alford Forest hall
- Rakaia Memorial Hall** - Wednesday 1 February, 7pm in the hall supper room
- Mayfield Reserve and Hall Board** - Tuesday 28 March, 7.30pm at the Mayfield hall

### COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Meetings are held in the Council Chambers, 137 Havelock Street, (unless otherwise advised).*
- Ashburton Water Zone Committee** - Tuesday 24 January, 2pm (live-streamed)
  - Budget Workshop** - Thursday 26 January, 10.30am
  - Methven Community Board** - Monday 30 January, 10.30am at Mt Hutt Memorial Hall
  - Council Meeting** - Wednesday 1 February, 1pm (live-streamed)
  - Budget Workshop** - Thursday 2 February, 10.30am
  - Road Safety Co-ordinating Committee** - Tuesday 7 February, 9.30am
  - Biodiversity Advisory Group** - Tuesday 7 February, 1pm
  - Council Activity Briefings** - Wednesday 4 February, 9.30am (live-streamed)
  - Audit & Risk Committee** - Wednesday 4 February, 1.30pm (live-streamed)
  - Council Meeting** - Wednesday 15 February, 1pm (live-streamed)
  - Council Agencies (6 month report presentations)** - Wednesday 22 February, 9.30am

### COUNCIL OFFICE

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

### ASHBURTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

180 Havelock Street, Ashburton 7700  
Mon - Fri 9.00am - 8.00pm  
Sat 10am - 1pm | Sun 1pm - 4pm

### EA NETWORKS CENTRE

20 River Terrace  
Mon - Fri 6am-9pm (pools 7pm, gym 8pm)  
Sat & Sun 7am-7pm (pools 5pm, gym 6pm)

### ASHBURTON ART GALLERY & ASHBURTON MUSEUM

327 West Street  
10am - 4pm daily