

## On tour: Airport to irrigators

Councillors spent a day on the road this week, getting a closer look at the Ashburton Business Estate, the Wilkins Road wastewater treatment plant and several other important Council assets and infrastructure.

Mayor Liz McMillan said the bus trip was a great opportunity for new councillors to visit the places that were the subject of many Council reports and workshops, and hear from staff about how they operated.

"It's good for experienced councillors too to update their knowledge, especially with the Annual Plan process underway and budgets for some of these activities being debated."

The itinerary started at the Ashburton Business Estate, Council's dedicated business park just north of Ashburton. The 80-hectare park is fully serviced and zoned for business, commercial and industrial purposes, with sections ranging from about 2400 square metres to 11,606 square metres.

The park is home to a wide range of businesses and it borders the new Fairfield rail freight hub.

At Ashburton Airport, councillors were hosted by Owen Moore from the Ashburton Aviation Museum, a tourist attraction that continues to expand and that has about 7000 visitors annually.

Council and airport users are currently discussing ways to better manage the wider facility.



Councillors and CE Hamish Riach check out the largest tractor and mower kit at the Ashburton Domain depot.

The itinerary also included stops at the Ashburton Domain depot, EA Networks Centre, Ashburton Contracting Ltd (a Council-owned company), Lake Hood, the wastewater treatment facility and the Tinwald Domain.

The final stop of the day was to Elderly Person Housing units at Friendship Lane and McKee Place. Council has 102 units for elderly persons across seven sites around

the district.

Mayor Liz said Council had replaced 18 units at Friendship Lane recently and there was ongoing maintenance to do on the other units.

"We'll be doing another trip soon to Methven and the foothills area, to see Council assets in that part of the district too."

### CE Hamish Riach

## Water services busy with projects and pipe renewals



**Rain or shine, our water services team and their contractors are busy keeping drinking water, wastewater and stormwater networks running smoothly.**

This week's Three Waters Committee agenda offers a snapshot of that work and provided an update on 18 drinking water projects undertaken in 2025-26, 13 wastewater projects and one for stormwater.

I know it can be disruptive when contractors are working on your street, digging up the road and replacing old sewer pipes or water pipes, but it is essential work – and renewing pipes or parts of the infrastructure ensures it is safe and reliable.

One piece of work that will help Council meet drinking water compliance is happening on the Montalto community supply. This is a small supply that started out life as a stockwater source, but now also supplies some households – that

means the supply must be as compliant as our new water treatment plants at Methven and Mt Somers.

Achieving that level of compliance for a small rural scheme will potentially cost significant amounts of money for a very small number of households, so Council is working with the national water regulator Taumata Arowai to find an acceptable solution. That solution could be one of the three in-home water treatment systems we are trialling at the moment, so we'll keep you posted on the results.

Councillors had the chance this week to visit some of our three waters facilities, including the wastewater treatment plant at Wilkins Road and Ocean Farm, where the treated wastewater is irrigated onto land at Ashton.

Just over \$5 million is tagged in the 2026-27 Annual Plan to improve the irrigation system at Ocean Farm, so that it sprays the treated wastewater evenly, to meet consent conditions.

The list of three waters work for the next financial year is also long and includes 31 drinking water projects, 22 wastewater projects and two for stormwater. Most of the drinking water projects are watermain renewals in our urban areas, though money is also tagged for the installation of water meters and for a new watermain on the second Ashburton bridge.

The wastewater projects are also mainly renewals, alongside the work at Ocean Farm and a strategy to improve wastewater operations on the Tinwald network, which gets inundated with groundwater during high rainfall events.

The district's longer-term plans for drinking water, wastewater and stormwater are contained in the Water Services Delivery Plan, an important document that every council in the country must submit for Government approval to show their commitment to providing clean drinking water and dealing responsibly with wastewater.

## SHORT AND SWEET

### BOY WITH WINGS

Boy with Wings is a free puppetry and music show, for all ages, in the Event Space at the Ashburton Library on Sunday 22 March. The show starts at 1pm and is a comic, touching, environmental story. It uses the wonder of puppetry and live music, and tells an epic fable of one young man's life-altering journey - set against the backdrop of the miracle of the great migration of the Godwits.

### SCAM ALERT

There is an electoral roll scam doing the rounds advising people they have been removed from the roll because they have moved address and not responded to a communication. Please don't respond to the scam. Voters can legitimately update their address and details online at [vote.nz](http://vote.nz) or by phoning 0800 36 76 56.

### DIGI COACHES BACK

Need help with your phone, tablet, laptop, or other digital devices? Our friendly Digi Coaches at the library are here to assist! Whether it's setting up an app, troubleshooting a tech issue, or learning something new, come in and sit down with them. Available Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, 1pm-3pm at the library. Outside of these times you are welcome to drop in with your device and library staff will do what they can to assist you.

### NEW CITIZENS

Last week 52 people from 14 different countries became New Zealand citizens in an official ceremony at the Ashburton Event Centre. Mayor Liz McMillan handed out the certificates of citizenship to the new Kiwis, 20 of which came from the Philippines. All the citizens were also gifted a Kowhai tree, symbolising their new beginning.

### GRANTS OPEN

Is your community group planning a big project and could do with a financial boost? Council's annual community grants are open until 31 March, with nine categories - from biodiversity to events. Check out our website for more details, [ashburtondc.govt.nz/grants](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz/grants)

# Mt Somers board to review campground

The Mt Somers Domain campground will remain open until mid-April this year, but close over winter while the Mt Somers Reserve Board explores new ways of operating the facility.

The board has been reviewing campground operations, to ensure it runs as cost-effectively as possible.

Board chair Nathan Huggins said the board had planned to offer only unpowered sites from March, but feedback from the community had encouraged it to keep all facilities open until 13 April.

“Then we’ll use the winter break to do some long term planning, taking into account some of the really constructive feedback we received when we shared our change proposal with the community last month. It was great to see people supportive and passionate about Mt Somers.

“We’ve taken on board what has been said and over the next few months we’ll be re-evaluating the campground operation and

looking at new ways to create efficiencies and reduce costs.”

Group Manager of Community and Open Spaces Toni Durham said Council had been helping the reserve board implement the changes it wanted to make.

“After reading the feedback, the board, with the support of Council, chose to make some amendments to its original change proposal but it also decided to progress other aspects, including the disestablishment of the part-time caretaker role.

“The winter shutdown will be from 13 April to 24 September, though the full campground and facilities will be available for one-off events during that time on request and with the approval of the reserve board.

“They aim to have a new system in place for re-opening on 25 September, ensuring the campground can continue to be enjoyed by returning and new campers to Mt Somers.”

## Methven projects could qualify for funding boost

The Methven Community Board has \$25,000 to give to community projects and is encouraging non-profit groups and organisations in Methven to apply for a slice of it.

The board starts each financial year with a discretionary fund of \$30,000, and invites applications for grants across four funding rounds each year.

Group Manager of Community and Open Spaces Toni Durham said the purpose of the fund was to assist projects that maintained and made life better for residents in the Methven area.

“We know there are some great little projects going on in that community, and those involved should see if they are eligible for a grant. The board has only given \$5000 so far this financial year and it

would love to see all this money being put to good use in our community.”

Applications close for this financial year on 4 May; they will be decided by the community board at its meeting on 27 May.

In 2024-25, the board gave between \$737 and \$9200 to Methven Primary School, the Methven Lighting Group, Methven Toy Library, Methven and Foothills Walking Festival, Mt Hutt Memorial Hall, Methven Birdsong project, Mt Hutt College, Methven Rugby Football Club and to the Methven Arts and Growers Market.

Applicants must be based in the Methven township, provide all the information required in the application form and comply with Council’s grants and funding policy.

**LIVE ON THE LAWN**  
ASHBURTON DOMAIN

**SAT 28 MARCH**  
11AM-4PM

Easy vibes. Open air. Homegrown sounds.

TIMARU 89.9FM THE BREEZE Ashburton DISTRICT COUNCIL

### 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:

#### ANZAC DAY CEREMONIES

Roads proposed to be closed:

- **Havelock Street, from Park Street to West Street (SH 1)**
- **Cameron Street, from Park Street to West Street (SH 1)**
- **Baring Square West, from Havelock Street to Cameron Street**
- **West Street (SH 1), from Wills Street to Tancred Street**

**Period of closure:** From 6am to 8.30am, and from 10am to 12.30pm on Saturday 25 April 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, 20 March 2026.

#### STREET SPRINTS

Roads proposed to be closed:

- **Smallbone Drive, from River Terrace to Robinson Street**
- **Robinson Street, from Smallbone Drive to McNally Street**
- **Watson Street, from Range Street to Robinson Street**
- **McNally Street from Range Street to Robinson Street**

**Period of closure:** From 6pm on Friday 8 May to 8pm on Sunday 10 May 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, 27 March 2026.

**NEIL McCANN**  
Group Manager Infrastructure

### ROAD CLOSURE

Ashburton District Council gives public notice of temporary road closures to enable the following community event:

#### EANC KIDS TRIATHLON

Road 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 15 March.**

It will be an offence under the Transport (Vehicular Traffic Road Closure) Regulations 1965 for any person otherwise than under authority of an authorised permit to use the roads for ordinary vehicular traffic during the period of closure.

**NEIL McCANN**  
Group Manager Infrastructure

### TRIENNIAL MEETINGS

Our hall boards, reserve boards and domain boards are holding their triennial meetings and looking for new members.

- **Wednesday 25 March - Seafield Reserve Board - 7.30pm, Seafield Hall.**

### ROADING NOTICES

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

**Trevors Road** - Closed from Ealing Montalto Road to Cracroft Maronan Road, 7am-7pm closure, until 19 April for road maintenance by Fulton Hogan. 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.

**Seafield Road** - Closed between Stanley Road and Christys Road until 19 April for road maintenance by Fulton Hogan. Traffic management in place.

**Elizabeth Avenue (Rakaia)** - Traffic management in place from Burrowes Road to Tancred Street until late March, while Rooney Earthmoving installs water pipes for Council. Access for residents remains.

**Spaxton Street** - Traffic management in place from Blackford Street to Main Street) until 20 March while Rooney Earthmoving installs water mains for Council.

**Railway Terrace West** - Closed between Bowen Street and South Town Belt from until Friday 27 March while flow meters are installed on water mains. Resident access remains.

**Catherine Street** - Closed between Ashbury Grove and McMurdo Street until Friday 20 March while new wastewater pipes are installed. The work will include traffic management, trenching and pipe-laying. Resident access will be maintained.

**Johnstone Street** - Closed between McMurdo Street and Thomson Street on 16 and 17 March for Chorus contractors to remove poles and install fibre.

**SH1 at Longbeach Road intersection (NZTA)** - Road reconstruction until 18 March. Expect speed restrictions and delays of up to 10 minutes. This reconstruction work is weather dependent and may be rescheduled at short notice.

**SH77/Alford Forest Road** - Closed between Cross Street and Oak Grove on Saturday 14 March for road resurfacing. Detours planned. Work is weather dependent.

*Full details of local road closures are on our website, ashburtondc.govt.nz*

### COUNCIL MEETINGS

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

Wednesday 18 March, **Council Meeting** (live-streamed), 1pm

Wednesday 25 March, **Activity Briefings** (live-streamed), 9am

Tuesday 31 March, **Bylaw Workshop - Keeping of Animals, Bees & Poultry**, 10am

Tuesday 31 March, **Arts, Culture and Heritage workshop**, 2pm

Wednesday 1 April, **Audit, Risk & Finance Committee**, 2pm (live-streamed)

#### 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