

Meters for Rakaia watermains

Council is installing three bulk flow meters on the drinking water network in east Rakaia, as part of its Rakaia metering trial project.

Smart water meters are being installed on household connections to gather data on water use, and Council is also installing flow meters on watermains at Normanby Street, South Town Belt and Rolleston Street.

Group Manager of Infrastructure Neil McCann said affected residents may have no water for at least two hours while the bulk flow meters are installed in the next week or so, depending on community use.

“We are planning to do the work when demand on the system is low, and the watermains will be shut down for two or three hours.”

Low/no water may be experienced on:

- Normanby Street, shutdown from 9am on **Friday 20 February**
- South Town Belt, shutdown from 9am on **Tuesday 24 February**
- Rolleston Street, shutdown from 9am **Thursday 26 February**

Mr McCann said contractors would prepare the worksites on the afternoon before each of the shutdowns the following morning to fit the bulk flow meters.

“We’ve already installed about 180 domestic water meters in east Rakaia which are transmitting data on water use. It is also important to be able to measure flow in the Council water pipes that take water to each household, so we can compare the data to find leaks in the system.”

The smart meters being trialled at Rakaia have advanced technology that captures data every 30 minutes which is uploaded to a cloud platform.

“We use the information to look for unusual water use, which might indicate a leak in Council’s pipe network or on private



Above: ACL staff have been fitting water meters to household connections in Rakaia east. **Right:** The Intellihub smart meter.

properties. The information is also really helpful when we programme water pipe renewals, as an area with a lot of leaks might indicate a bigger issue.

“The ability to also gather how much water households use and when, is valuable, and helps us better manage our assets for the community.”

Methven, Hinds and Mayfield already have meters and Council is proposing to roll out water meters to the rest of Rakaia and in Ashburton over the next two years.

Mr McCann said water meter technology was a rapidly developing field and the results of the Rakaia trial would inform the wider roll out.

“Information is important and helps show the water regulators that we are using



water wisely, as well as complying with the conditions of Council’s consent to take water for community supplies.”

The Rakaia trial will end in December, and council staff will present the results of the trial to Council early next year to consider which meters and associated technology should be used in the wider rollout of meters.

The Water Services Delivery Plan is proposing to spend \$7.3m over two years to roll out the water meters.

SHORT AND SWEET

OVER 70s CRICKET

The Ashburton Domain oval will host the first of two international cricket matches this Sunday, 22 February, when England plays Canada in an over 70s tournament. New Zealand will play England at the oval on Sunday 1 March, as part of the same tournament. Both matches are free to watch and start at 10am, so grab a camp chair and a viewing spot on the boundary. The tournament brings together players from around the globe for a celebration of skill, camaraderie and life-long passion for cricket.



HINDS HERITAGE

Two war memorial plaques from the concrete wall at the Hinds swimming pool are being cleaned and stored safely until they return to a new, more prominent spot at the baths. The pool’s old fence was taken down recently and replaced by a modern, compliant one. Council granted \$956 to the Hinds Reserve Board to have the black granite plaques removed by a monumental mason, who will reset them onto concrete bases at the pool. The swimming pool was built in 1956 and is dedicated to those who lost their lives in World War Two, and relocating the plaques has the blessing of the RSA.

Cr Deb Gilkison

What surprised me most about joining Council

One of the biggest surprises since joining Council has been just how complex many decisions are behind the scenes.

Issues that seem simple on the surface often involve balancing budgets, legislation, community needs, long-term planning and practical delivery - all at the same time.

Another surprise, though a positive one, has been how much people care.

Recently we’ve seen strong community engagement around the proposed

changes to the Mt Somers campground and the stockwater system changes.

People are turning up, asking questions and wanting to understand how decisions are made. That’s exactly what healthy local democracy looks like.

What it often comes down to, though, is that many people simply don’t know how the system works or how to have their say.

Council processes can feel confusing or distant, and if you don’t know when or how to engage, decisions can feel like they just happen to you.

Change can be uncomfortable - sometimes it just plain sucks - but community input genuinely helps shape outcomes. Submissions, meetings, conversations and feedback really do matter.

So if something affects you, or you have questions or concerns, please reach out. Councillors are here to listen, explain, and help people navigate the process where we can.

Local government works best when people get involved.



Advice for first homes, jobs

Council's Welcoming Communities programme is running a free workshop in Ashburton this month about how to buy your first home.

The workshop will have information from bankers and lawyers, and there'll be a chance to ask lots of questions.

Group Manager of Community and Open Spaces Toni Durham said the Ashburton event on 24 February followed a successful workshop in Methven.

"Buying your own home is a big life event, whether you are relatively new to New Zealand or have lived here all your life. People always have lots of questions and this workshop is a good place to start."

The workshop is in the Ashburton Library and starts at 5.30pm.

Welcoming Communities is organising two other free workshops in the next few months, with a focus on jobs and local business opportunities. These events are also open to all residents, and free.

"We have lots of people moving to our district from other parts of New Zealand, or from other countries in the world, and all these workshops are designed to share useful information as they start new lives here," Mrs Durham said.

The events are:

How to Buy Your First Home

Tuesday 24 February - 5.30pm, Event Space, Ashburton Library

Join guest speakers from ASB and Tavendale and Partners for a practical



session on the steps to buying your first home. The session will include information specific to Ashburton.

Employment Essential Workshops

From Tuesday 10 March - 1pm, Learning Laboratory, Ashburton Library

Delivered in partnership with Mayors Taskforce For Jobs, these workshops will help participants build job-ready skills. Topics include writing a professional CV and cover letter, understanding what employers look for, completing online applications, using digital tools to stand out, and interview skills.

Places are limited. These are a series of weekly workshops ideal for newcomers, migrants, and anyone

seeking employment, a career change, or returning to the workforce.

Thrive Local: Business Foundations

Tuesday 21 April - 5.30pm, Event Space, Ashburton Library

This event is for anyone interested in starting a business. Guest speakers from Ashburton District Council, Inland Revenue, Business Canterbury, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, and others will share information on funding, mentorship, and support available for entrepreneurs. Open to everyone, and questions are encouraged.

For more information or to register for these events, visit Welcoming Communities - Ashburton District Facebook page.

Tinwald bore on watch

Council is looking at the future of the Tinwald drinking water bore, which continues to show higher levels of nitrates than other bores used for community supplies.

Investigations are underway on managing nitrates at the bore, including the feasibility of making the well deeper, drilling another bore and installing a nitrate treatment system.

Infrastructure Group Manager Neil McCann said council was reviewing a report it had just received from water engineering specialist Aqualinc.

"We've been keeping a watching brief on the bore and have tagged \$1.13 million for nitrate management in 2028-29, as part of our Water Services Delivery Plan.

"We are constantly monitoring all our Council supplies to ensure nitrate levels comply with national drinking water standards, and the Tinwald bore has not exceeded the maximum value set under Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand.

"However, we are aware of the concern around nitrates in drinking water and looking at our infrastructure and areas of population growth to assess projects that could be included in our long term planning."



Council monitors and tests its 10 community supplies constantly and publishes a monthly nitrate level report on its website. Council drinking water supplies service about 70 per cent of the district's population.

Council also encourages private bore owners to monitor their water periodically and seek advice from a water quality professional if they have concerns.

Mr McCann said the Tinwald bore was one of eight bores on the Ashburton urban drinking water supply.

"We also supply Tinwald from deep bores on the Ashburton side of the river at Argyle Park, via a pipeline under the State Highway 1 bridge. We'll also be including a pipeline on the second Ashburton bridge to deliver drinking water to improve resilience for the Tinwald community."

COUNCIL MEETINGS

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

Tuesday 24 February, **Council workshop on Revenue & Financing Policy and Development Contributions**, 1.30pm

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

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

Tuesday 3 March, **Council Workshop on Emissions reduction scenarios**, 1.30pm

Wednesday 4 March, **Stockwater Transition Working Group**, 1.30pm

Monday 9 March, **Methven Community Board**, (live-streamed), 9am, Mt Hutt Memorial Hall

Wednesday 11 March, **Three Waters Committee**, (live-streamed), 10.30am

Wednesday 11 March, **Annual Plan Workshop**, (live-streamed), 1pm

Wednesday 18 March, **Council Workshop - Bylaws**, 9am

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

Wednesday 25 March, **Activity Briefings (live-streamed)**, 9.30am

Tuesday 31 March, **Council Workshop - Arts, Culture & Heritage Strategy**, 1.30pm

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.

Railway Terrace West - Closed between Bowen Street and South Town Belt from Monday 23 February to Friday 27 March while flow meters are installed on water mains. Resident access remains.

Catherine Street - Closed between Ashbury Grove and McMurdo Street from Monday 16 February to Friday 20 March while new wastewater pipes are installed. The work will include traffic management, trenching and pipe-laying. Resident access will be maintained.

Racecourse Road and Saunders Road - Traffic management will be in place for night-time work involving CCTV inspections of wastewater pipes. Contractors will be working on 23-26 February.

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.

SH1 Tinwald - Traffic management in place from 22 February for resurfacing between Carters Terrace and Manchester Street.

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

TRIENNIAL MEETINGS FOR RESERVE & HALL BOARDS

- 24 February - **Ealing Reserve Board** - 7pm, Ealing hall
- 2 March - Ashburton Forks-Greenstreet Reserve Board, 7pm, Greenstreet hall

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)