

Hamish Riach, Chief Executive Ending the year with covid in its place, and a positive summer ahead

The end of the calendar year always provides a chance to look back and reflect and 2022 is no different – it was a year that started with a degree of frustration in some parts of the community but will end on a generally more positive note.

This time in 2021 we were preparing for the impact of Omicron in our community, a number of people were frustrated about Government mandates around vaccination and the impact on access to facilities and events. We masked up before venturing out.

Now we are learning how to live with covid and people are keen to gather again as a community, though we are facing new challenges, like the rising cost of groceries and interest rates, and another wave of the coronavirus.

The green shoots of positivity can be seen as we come to work every day, by

visitors to our district and in our work at council, which provides a platform of essential services that we all need – like drinking water, a sewer network and roads.

We are also thinking at council about our future needs, like the second bridge for Ashburton and an economic development strategy that will help keep us on course as a growing and vital district. Government is also planning to have a say in our future, with major reforms of Three Waters, the RMA and an examination of the system of local government itself.

Add a General Election into the mix next year and legislative fireworks may ensue.

If you think that sounds like a lot of planning, you are right.

Council's financial year runs from 1 July to 30 June, but staff are already putting together information for Councillors to consider early next year

when they begin setting the budget for the Annual Plan, and ultimately setting the amount of rates money that will be needed to do the work approved.

In this current year, Council decided to draw \$1.7 million from a reserve account (thanks to forestry) to do more roading repair work and I am pleased to report the money is being well spent. I met with our roading contractors recently to talk about problems and progress, and how to ensure Council money was being spent wisely, given the dollars available and the crews and machinery at the contractor's disposal.

We can feel positive about the amount of work under way on our roading network now that we are in summer, and our contractors will be flat out in the next few months. Councillors will get a full briefing from the contractors on progress in February and the community will also be able to listen in on that meeting via our meeting livestream.



Another busy team is Open Spaces, whose members are covering plenty of ground and grass in their new wider mowers. Pick a park and go for a picnic over the summer holidays and you will see what they've been up to.

One New Year's wish I've got is for a speedy and smooth construction of Methven's new water treatment plant. Earthworks have begun and we are pushing hard for the building to be complete and the new membrane treatment equipment working before the end of June next year.

That would be cause for a good mid-winter Christmas celebration for all!

I wish you all festive best wishes for now though, and hope you have happy and safe holidays.

Plunket gifts building back to Hinds

Whānau Āwhina Plunket is gifting its Hinds property back to the community, who may be able to use it as much-needed changing rooms for the nearby pool in the future.

Community Services Manager Jane Denley said the building was fundraised for by the local community and built on leased reserve land back in the 1950s.

"The building at 1 Isleworth Road was a clinic to start with but has not been used to provide Plunket services for several years as whānau now travel to Ashburton."

The building has been empty for some time and Plunket handed over the keys on settlement day, 9 December.

"We have no plans for future use so it's a win-win situation that we can gift the property back to the Hinds community through the Ashburton District Council to be used as changing rooms for the pool."

The old changing rooms at the pool were demolished last summer, after being red stickered as an earthquake risk.

"In fact you could say the Plunket rooms have gone from being used to changing nappies to hopefully changing into togs," Ms Denley said.

The building was gifted to Plunket by the late R.A. (Bob) Burnett. He was a prominent figure and businessman in Hinds who was very generous to the greater community. He was the founder of Burnett's Motors.



Hinds Reserve Board chair Garry Brown (left) and Cr Richard Wilson officially take ownership of Plunket's building next to the Hinds swimming pool.

The Plunket building sits on land managed by the Hinds Reserve Board, with the help of Council. It has two separate rooms and a toilet.

Cr Richard Wilson said the building held lots of memories for the community and several generations of Hinds district babies had been weighed and assessed there.

"Council has applied for Government funding to create new changing rooms at

Hinds, and at the Rakaia pool, and so this building from Plunket is appreciated. We hope it can be renovated to become new changing rooms."

The building is currently separated from the pool by a tin fence that would be removed if the renovation project goes ahead. Council staff are looking into the detail of what would be needed to convert it to new, compliant changing rooms.

This is Bob,



Bob is a sober driver,
be like Bob.

GET HOME
SAFE

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Batteries pose fire risk: Recycle with care

A sprinkler system is being considered for the Ashburton Resource Recovery Park's pit area following two fires in the last few weeks thought to have been started by discarded batteries.

Infrastructure and Open Spaces Group Manager Neil McCann said batteries of any sort should not be disposed of at the pit face or in kerbside rubbish or recycling.

"We have a special battery recycling point at the resource recovery park and it is free, so we'd really like to see people using it. Collect all your dead batteries at home and bring them to the park."

A fire last month started after a customer dropped rubbish into the open pit; a child's toy with a battery was amongst the items discarded and an investigation after the fire pinpointed it as the likely cause.

Mr McCann said the fire was quickly put out because park staff compacting rubbish at the pit face spotted it.

"It could have been a lot worse and we were lucky it was seen before a larger fire developed."



The battery recycling station at the Ashburton Resource Recovery Park.

There was another fire this week, in one of the pods that contains compacted rubbish from the pit area.

Asprinkler system is now being considered for the pit area; it could also be used to dampen down excess dust on windy days.

Batteries accepted at the resource recovery park's drive-through drop-off include alkaline, drycell and zinc batteries, button

cells, LI-ion (used in laptops, cameras, cellphones and tools), and other batteries like NiCd, NiMH, gel and button cells, and camera batteries).

Batteries disposed of in kerbside rubbish have also been known to cause fires in collection trucks.

Not sure? Ask our team at the recovery park or check out all the details at binitright.nz

Video helps search for workers

Council has created a promotional video to help Mid Canterbury businesses attract staff to the district.

The video is just over one minute long and highlights the area's lifestyle and recreational opportunities – like affordable housing and being close to the great outdoors. It also features footage of Ashburton's newly-renovated CBD and expanding business parks.

It's been designed so it can easily be customised with the logo and website details of any local business, and it will be completely free for local businesses to use.

Ashburton Mayor Neil Brown said the district had a low unemployment rate and some local businesses were struggling to attract staff.

"They can use this video as an extra recruitment tool. The footage was originally shot for Council's own recruitment drive and that was so well received that we have edited another version that's all about working and living



in the Ashburton District. It's an initiative by our Economic Development team and we hope people will make good use of it."

The video will be part of a toolkit for employers, including images, templates and more videos, that is being developed by the Economic Development Team and all the collateral will be available free on Council's website.

The recruitment video can be viewed on the Council's YouTube channel. Businesses interested in accessing the video for their own use can contact the Economic Development team via email at economic.development@adc.govt.nz

Controlling waste at our lovely lakes

Visitors and hutholders at Lakes Camp and Clearwater this summer will be left in no doubt what to do with their rubbish, thanks to new signs that are being installed.

Four new signs in the main area where the skip bins are provided are aimed at helping keep waste under control and they will list items that can be placed in the bins, and items that can't (like dangerous or oversized rubbish).

Controlling waste, particularly over the busy summer season, will reduce unpleasant smells and keep camp fee maintenance costs down.

People will also be pointed to the nearest rural recycling station at Mt Somers (on Ashburton Gorge Road) and to the district's larger resource recovery parks.

RUBBISH AND RECYCLING

CHRISTMAS-NEW YEAR

There is **no change to kerbside rubbish and recycling** collections over the Christmas and New Year holiday period, because they fall on a weekend. Please have your bins out on your usual day by 7.30am; please use your windstrap, no matter the weather.

The **Ashburton Resource Recovery Park** will be closed Sunday 25 December, Monday 26 December, Tuesday 27 December, and Sunday 1 January and Monday 2 January. Usual hours 8am-6pm weekdays, 9am-6pm Saturdays, 9am-5pm Sundays.

The **Rakaia Resource Recovery Park** will be closed Monday 26 December and Monday 2 January.

The **Methven Green waste facility** will be closed Sunday 25 December and Sunday 1 January.



TRIENNIAL MEETINGS

Ealing Hall and Reserve Board - Monday 19 December, 7pm at Ealing Hall

Rakaia Memorial Hall - Wednesday 1 February, 7pm in the hall supper room

RECYCLING TIP: NO LIDS

With the holiday season here, you might have friends and family staying over - please help us keep our recycling ship-shape by remembering hard plastics 1, 2 and 5 for your yellow bin, and no lids of any size.



Lids jam the automated sorting machine; you can recycle lids at your nearest resource recovery park, just not in kerbside recycling.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are held in the Council Chambers, 137 Havelock Street, (unless otherwise advised).

Council Meeting – Wednesday 21 December, 1pm (live-streamed)

STOCKWATER

KEEP YOUR RACES CLEAR

Races need regular maintenance in summer to make sure water can flow easily to where it is needed.

To help get the water through the network, races need to be cleaned of any weed growth and silt build-up, and items like plastic containers, hedge clippings or rubbish removed.



Family Movie Night

This Saturday from 6pm
Picnic Ground, Ashburton Domain

HOME ALONE PG

Movie starts 7pm

Bring your chairs & blanket, and join us for a special outdoor screening of the original Home Alone, a movie that the whole family will enjoy.

Entrance at corner of Elizabeth and Grigg Streets. Free entry, but please bring a canned food item for the Salvation Army Foodbank.



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Ashburton
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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