

Ashburton hosts top golfers

Ashburton Mayor Liz McMillan welcomed 60 of New Zealand's best amateur women golfers yesterday, ahead of the inter-provincial teams tournament being hosted by the Ashburton Golf Club this week.

The players represent 12 provinces and are accompanied by teams of supporters, all staying in Ashburton.

Mayor Liz said it was great to see the spirit of competition, and friendship, combine for the week in her district.

"We know the players have worked hard to gain representative honours to be here and the Brandon course is beautiful, but testing, so there'll be some fierce battles.

"It's great to see the Ashburton club hosting such a major tournament and their greenkeepers and volunteers organisers have done a sterling job."

Club president Paddy Bradford said it was an important event on the national golf calendar and the players were representing provinces from Northland to Southland.

"These women are among the best golfers in the country and we're looking forward to seeing them play. This tournament hosted a very young Lydia Ko a decade or so ago, so there'll be stars of the future here too."

Mr Bradford said members of the public were welcome to visit the course during the tournament and watch the match play.



NZ Golf's Dave Mangan (left) at the Ashburton Golf Club with Ashburton Mayor Liz McMillan, club president Paddy Bradford and Council CE Hamish Riach.

Competition started Tuesday and runs until Friday.

The Aorangi team features local golfer Jennifer Shepherd and the team is managed by Ashburton's Mary-Lou Watson.

Mayor Liz said the tournament was important for golf, but also a win for the district.

"This event brings 150 people to town, who stay in our hotels and motels, eat in our restaurants and shop locally.

"It's a great opportunity for our visitors to explore further, maybe visit the art gallery and museum or walk in the Ashburton Domain, because Mid Canterbury has a lot to offer."

Award could celebrate biodiversity

Councillors will be asked to establish an Environmental Champion's Award as part of the next Community Honours Awards.

The Ashburton District Biodiversity Advisory Group recommended this week that a new environmental category be added, to celebrate and recognise landowners and community members who have showed outstanding commitment to conservation, restoration and environmental initiatives.

The award would also help meet actions in Council's Biodiversity Strategy.

The Community Honours Awards recognise outstanding voluntary service and contributions to the district and already include a Mayor's Medal, an Ashburton Medal and Civic Awards.

The next awards are in 2026.

The advisory group's recommendation will be discussed by Councillors, who will make a decision on expanding the categories.

Over recent decades, landowners and community groups have played a critical role in restoring habitats, improving water quality, and enhancing biodiversity.

Cr Russell Ellis How do we roll with change?



It was great to be part of the happy crowd that filled Baring Square East on Saturday night to see the lighting of the giant Christmas tree.

This free, council-run community event delivered a big serving of joy to young and old, and I want to thank the performers and organisers who brought it all together.

But will we be saying the same next year?

I ask that question because this week we have been told by Government that Councils must cap their rates and focus on essential business only.

Is it council's business to stage an event such as Saturday's Light up the Night? Some would argue yes, some no.

I expect councillors will be debating this very question, and others, when we have to decide what will be in our Annual Plan and budget for 2026-27 ... and it's going to be tricky.

We first need to understand the scope of the changes that Government is demanding of us, and the impact they will have on how our district operates.

Change is inevitable, and we need to ensure it is positive for everyone who lives, works and plays here.

One thing already set in concrete is the work we need to do to ensure our drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services comply with national rules.

Council's infrastructure in the water services space is in good order, but there is work to do in the technical and reporting space, which doesn't affect the quality of our water but does affect our compliance rating overall.

I look forward to leading the Three Waters Committee over the next three years as we start to turn our Water Services Delivery Plan from words into action.

SHORT AND SWEET

VAL MARKS 40!

The Mayfield Reserve Board and Hall Committee marked a special occasion last week when one of their own chalked up 40 years of service. Val Fleming, and her late husband John, have given decades of voluntary service to the board and Val has formally stepped down. She'll still be up for the odd little job though!



TINWALD HALL

The Tinwald Memorial Hall is not available for bookings from 22 December until 27 February while its timber floors are refurbished. The hall will host the community Christmas lunch, and then the hall committee will begin clearing the floors. The refurbishment work is scheduled to start on 5 January and take up to three weeks. To allow the polyurethane to fully harden, the hall will remain closed until Friday 27 February.

TRIAL PILING OVER

Trial piling work for the second Ashburton bridge has been completed. Most of the piling equipment has been packed up but part of the site remains fenced off so the contractor can store piling equipment onsite until it is needed against next year. NZTA will be doing a compaction trial on gravel from the northern part of the river to see if it can be used in the project. The design team continues its work and in coming weeks surveyors will be working on the alignment and digging small test holes.

TINWALD VIADUCT

The Tinwald Viaduct is closed to vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians until 19 December while KiwiRail fixes the impact beams on the overhead bridge. Residents are asked to not to take shortcuts across the tracks and cross at level crossings at Compton Street or Lagmhor Road.

Christmas carols for swimmers

Hampstead School’s choir and kapa haka teams delighted staff and visitors to the EA Networks Centre this week with a selection of Christmas carols and waiata.

Each year, a different local school is chosen to place a new bauble on the centre’s Christmas tree, and students, Mele and Ramona, joined the mayor to do the honours for 2025.

“It was fantastic,” said Mayor Liz McMillan. “Beautiful voices, stunning kapa haka and they should all be very proud of what their practice and hard work has achieved.”

The tamaraki then received an enthusiastic “swimming ovation” when they delivered an encore performance poolside for the Monday aquacise classes.



Parking change for Methven centre

A no parking zone is to be created on Methven Chertsey Road outside Methven’s new elder care facility.

Members of the Methven Community Board and Methven Care met with Council’s roading team recently and agreed that the no parking area would extend from the SH77 corner to the eastern end of the care home, and incorporate a loading zone for delivery vehicles.

The community board had asked for a pedestrian crossing that could be used by Methven Care residents crossing the road to the Methven Medical Centre and by primary school students on their way to and from school.

Infrastructure Group Manager Neil McCann said the merits of a zebra crossing, median island and kerb buildout had been



Methven Care, community board and Council representatives agreed on the no parking zone.

discussed with the board and the care home.

“There is not enough pedestrian traffic on Methven Chertsey Road to justify a painted crossing and a median island is also not appropriate, given the use by farm

machinery and heavy vehicles. “In the end, the best option agreed to by all was to improve drivers’ vision of pedestrians and provide more room for the larger vehicles by having no parking in front of the care home.”

Community board chair Megan Fitzgerald said the changes would be in place soon, as the care home was opening in early December.

"We talked through all the options, and taking into account pedestrian safety, traffic flow, and feedback from the community and roading team, it was agreed that creating a no parking zone outside Methven Central would make the area safer for all."

Methven Central has off-street parking for visitors and residents with the main entrance being off Kilworth Street.



Tree draws happy crowd

It was standing room only in Baring Square East on Saturday, as the community came together to celebrate the start of the festive season.

Thousands enjoyed fine weather and an evening of entertainment, food and fun

activities. Mayor Liz McMillan and MC Luke Howden were joined onstage by Heidi McLennan from Tinwald School to push the button and light the town tree.

A video of the tree lighting has also proved popular online, with over 100,000 views.

ROADING NOTICES

Chalmers Avenue - Closed at the river until 19 December while water mains are installed. No entry to South Street from Chalmers Avenue.

Spaxton Street/Lilley Place - Closed between Alford Street and Patton Street, including Lilley Place, until 19 December while water mains are installed.

Thompsons Track – Closed between Winchmore Lauriston Road and Pole Road, and Braemar Lauriston Road at Thompsons Track intersection until 19 December, so Fulton Hogan can do heavy road maintenance on behalf of Council. Detours in place. Resident access remains.

Saunders Road – Closed between Creek Road and Galbraith Street intersection, until 12 December while new wastewater pipes are installed by Tru-Line Civil on behalf of council.

Oak Grove - No through access to Harrison Street and Walnut Avenue roundabout from 15-19 December while wastewater pipes are installed.

Elizabeth Avenue (Rakaia) - Closed between Burrowes Road and Tancred Street from 8-19 December while water pipes are installed.

Philip Street - Closed between Walker Street and Grigg Street until 12 December, for wastewater pipe renewals.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

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

- Tuesday 9 December, **Road Safety co-ordinating committee**, 9.30am, Banded Dotterel Room
- Wednesday 10 December, **Bylaws workshop**, 9.30am
- Wednesday 10 December, **Activity Briefings** (livestreamed), 1pm
- Wednesday 16 December, **Resource Manaement Act workshop**, 1pm
- Wednesday 17 December, **Council Meeting** (livestreamed), 1pm

ROAD CLOSURE

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

ASHBURTON SANTA PARADE

- Roads to be closed:
- Walnut Avenue, from Oak Grove to West Street (SH1)**
 - Creek Road, from Walnut Avenue to Queens Drive**

Period of closure: **From 10am to 3pm on Saturday 6 December 2025**

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

Grab your summer
What’s On Guide!

TRIENNIAL MEETINGS FOR
RESERVE & HALL BOARDS

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

- 8 December - **Alford Forest Reserve Board** - 7.30pm, Alford Forest hall
- 27 January - **Highbank Reserve Board** - 7.30pm, Highbank 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)
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