

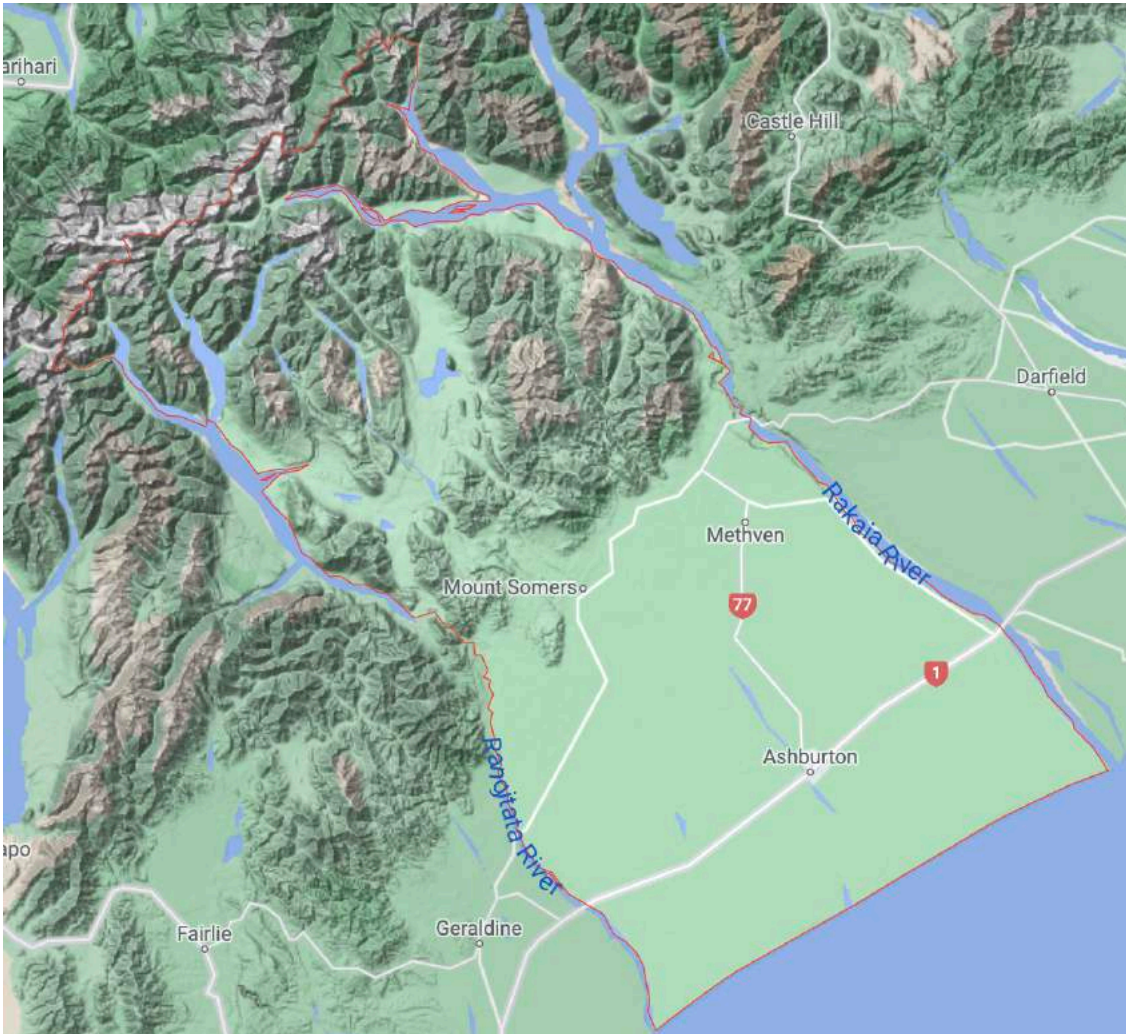


ography: Chris Wylie

Safe Communities: A Snapshot of the Ashburton District Community 2021

**Prepared by Sarah Wylie and Nicola Morton on behalf of Safer Ashburton District,
December 2021**

Geography



Google Maps, 2021

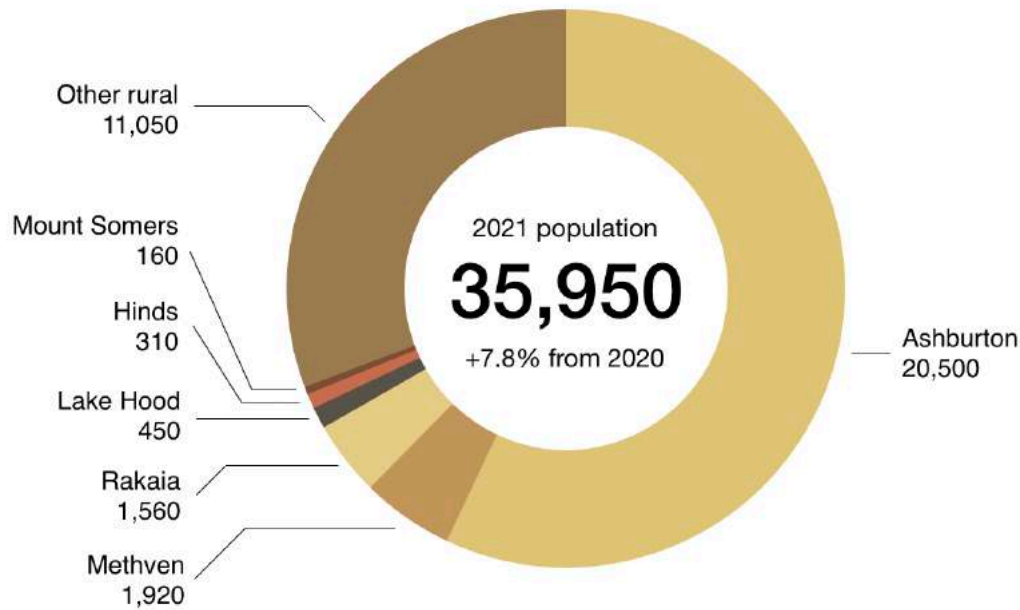
A diverse physical environment

Stretching from the Southern Alps to the Pacific Ocean and bordered to the north and south by two major rivers, the Rakaia and the Rangitata, Ashburton District encompasses varied physical environs, from sweeping coastline to rugged mountains and rolling plains. The 6,175 km² district, located in the central South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand, is centred on the town of Ashburton.

Agricultural heartland

Agriculture continues to form the economic heart of the Ashburton District, with 27.3% of the district's 2019 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) coming from agriculture (MBIE, 2020).

Population counts



Stats NZ, sub-national population estimates (urban/rural areas), 2021

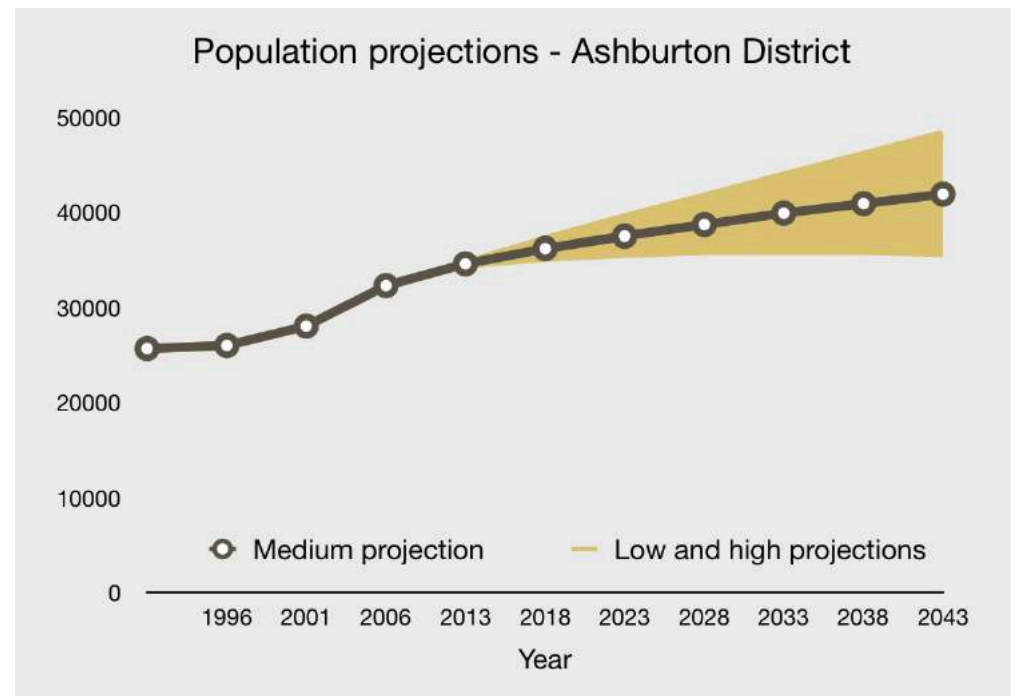
The geographic distribution of Ashburton District's population is characterised by large rural spread, and the main urban settlement of Ashburton. Just under three-fifths (57.0%) of the District's population resides in Ashburton township. A further tenth (9.7%) live in the small urban areas of Methven and Rakaia, and 2.6% in the rural settlements of Lake Hood, Hinds, and Mt Somers. The remaining 30.7% of the population live in other rural areas across the District.

The total estimated resident population of 35,950 in 2021 was up from 33,336 in 2020, representing a 7.8% increase.

Population projections

Medium population projections (based on 2018 Census data and current demographic trends) anticipate steady growth in the District for the next 30 years. Projections for 2048 range between 35,800 (low) and 41,900 (high).

Over the coming decades, strongest population growth is predicted to occur in rural areas of the district, and especially Ealing-Lowcliffe (which takes in Hinds), Chertsey, and Ashburton Forks (Mt Somers and Mayfield).

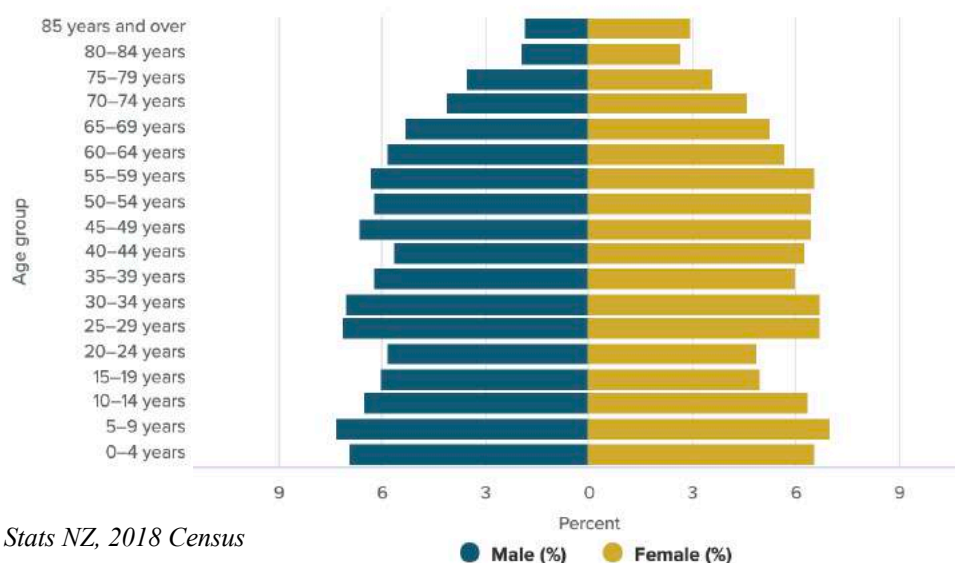


Stats NZ, sub-national population projections, 2021

Population structure

The composition of Ashburton District's population is changing, and demographics are expected to continue to change in the future. Like the rest of New Zealand, the district's population is ageing.

Age and sex of people in Ashburton District, 2018 Census



Stats NZ, 2018 Census

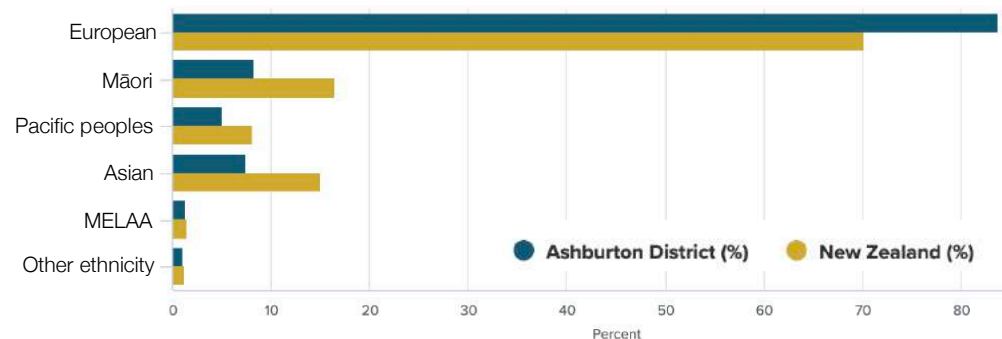
The median age in Ashburton District is 39.1 years old, slightly younger than the 2013 median age of 39.8 but older than the median age for New Zealand as a whole, 37.4 years. 17.9% of people in Ashburton District are aged 65 years and over, compared with 15.2% of the total New Zealand population. 20.4% of people are aged less than 15 years in Ashburton District, compared with 19.6% for all of New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2020).

Along with age distribution, the ethnic composition of the district is also changing. While the district remains predominantly European (83.8%), Māori comprised 8.2% of the 2018 population, up from 7.3% in 2013, while 7.4% of the district's 2018 population were Asian (up from 3.9% in 2013), 5.1% of the district's usual residents are Pacific people (3.4% in 2013) and 1.3% Middle Eastern / Latin American / African (MELAA).

18.8% of people in Ashburton District were born overseas, compared with 27.1 % for New Zealand as a whole, and 15.3% in 2013.

Between 2013 and 2018, strongest growth in the proportion of population aged 65 and over occurred in Cairnbrae (which includes Methven) and Eiffelton (rural surrounds of South Ashburton), whilst strongest growth in the proportion of population under 15 years occurred in Rakaia.

Ethnic groups for people in Ashburton District and New Zealand, 2018 Census



Stats NZ, 2018 Census

Households and tenure

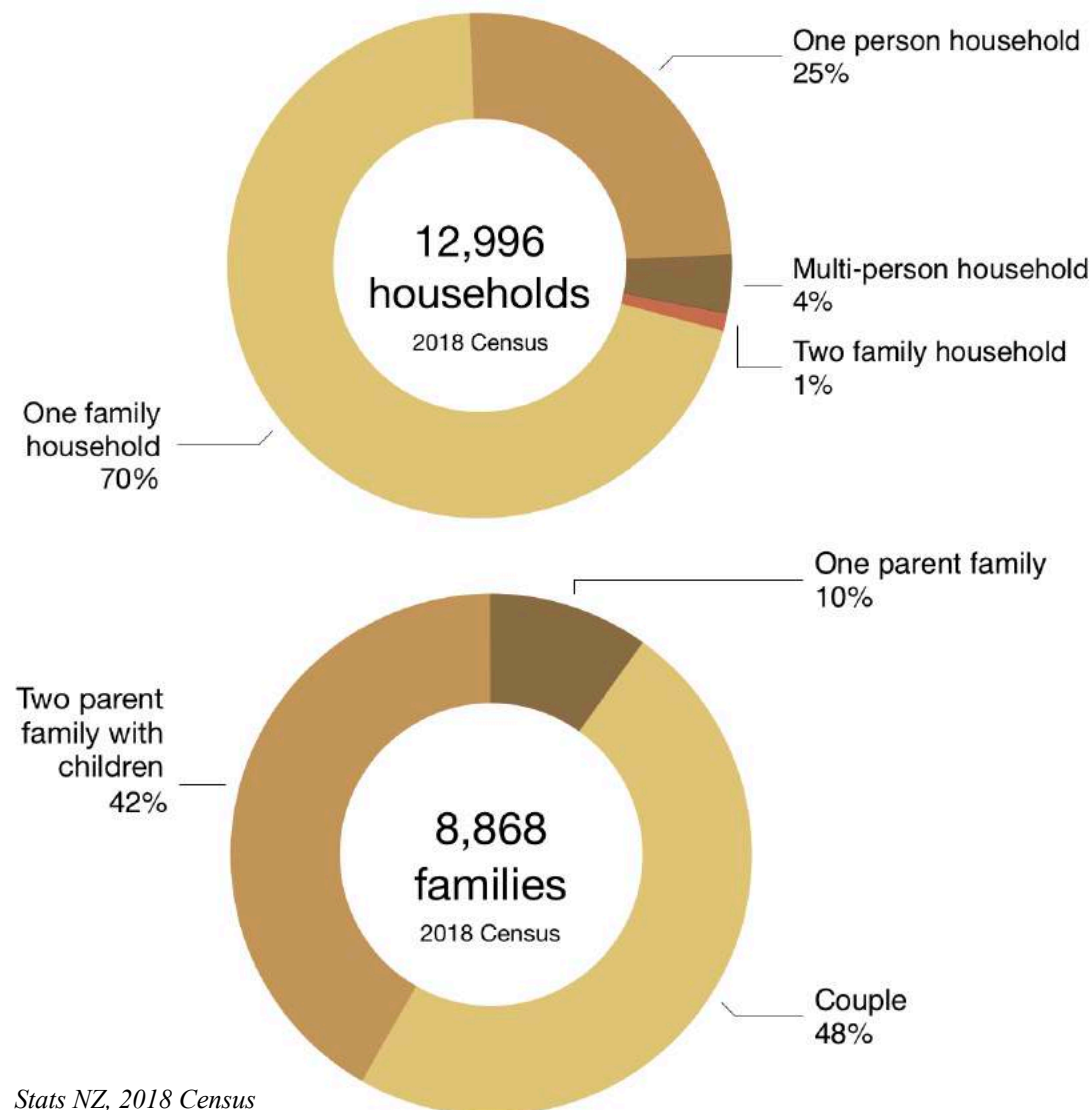
Households

At the time of the 2018 Census, there were 12,996 households in the Ashburton District, of which 8,868 were families (Stats NZ, 2021). Of people living alone at the time of the 2013 Census, 47.5% were male and 52.5% female, and 46.1% were aged 65 and over.

Housing tenure

Of the 12,996 households in Ashburton at the time of the 2018 Census, 65.9% were owner-occupiers (either owning or part-owning the dwelling they lived in, or holding it in a family trust). This was a slightly lower level of home ownership than was the case in 2013, and compared with 64.6% for New Zealand as a whole.

As at the 2018 Census, there were 3,675 occupied homes being rented in Ashburton District (up 20.1% on the number of rented occupied dwellings in 2013). Of Ashburton's rental housing at that time, 90% was rented from a private landlord, trust or business, 3.1% from Ashburton District Council, and 4.8% from Housing New Zealand (now Kāinga Ora).



Stats NZ, 2018 Census

Housing stock



Infometrics, 2021

2018 Census data on dwellings is rated as moderate in quality. There were 13,083 private occupied dwellings counted via the 2018 Census across the district, and a total 14,700 private dwellings.

According to Infometrics (October 2021), the average house value in Ashburton District was \$456,622, up 19.1% compared with a year earlier, and with growth rate having increased substantially, as has also been the case nationally. Both house values and growth rates remain lower in Ashburton than across New Zealand as a whole.

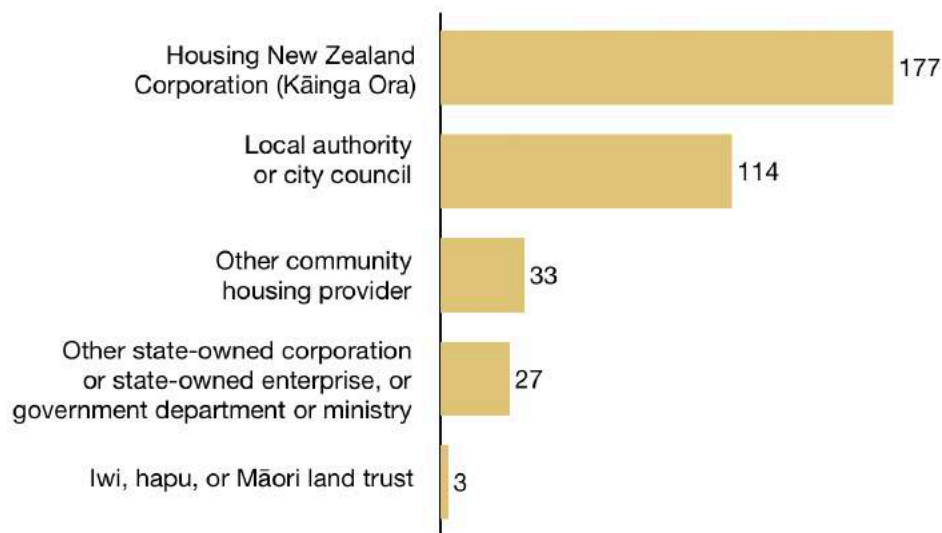
For the six months to 30 September 2021, Tenancy Services data shows the median weekly rent for Ashburton as \$360, with 387 bonds held across the district.

A search of Trade Me Property for rentals in Ashburton District on 23 November 2021 showed 26 properties available, 20 of which were in Ashburton, five in Methven and one in Rakaia, with the bulk (n=15) 3-bedroom, five 2-bedroom, four 4-bedroom and three 1-bedroom.

Social housing

At the 2018 Census, 177 households in Ashburton District reported Housing New Zealand (Kāinga Ora) as their landlord. This accounted for half (50%) of social housing tenants at the time. A further third (32.3%) reported being tenants of Ashburton District Council. The remaining respondents living in social housing reported renting from 'Other community housing providers' (9.3%), 'other state-owned corporation or enterprise, government department or ministry' (7.6%), or 'Iwi, hapu, or Māori land trust' (0.8%).

Sector of landlord (social housing) - Ashburton District, 2018 Census



Stats NZ, 2018 Census. Note: numbers are randomly rounded to nearest multiples of three.

Kāinga Ora

As at June 2021, Kāinga Ora managed 192 dwellings in Ashburton District, all located in Ashburton. Of these, 22 were one-bedroom dwellings, 68 two-bedroom, 85 were three-bedroom and 17 were four-bedroom. As at 30 June 2021, 9 of these properties were vacant, with one under repair, 4 undergoing renewal and maintenance and 4 pending decision. With stock typically older and below the standards now required of a rental property, when properties become vacant at the moment, it is Kāinga Ora practice to undertake renewal and maintenance on the property to bring them up to a standard that exceeds the requirements of the current legislation around Healthy Homes. This typically takes 3-6 months.

Under Central Government's Public Housing Plan 2018-2022 (2018), an additional 5 public housing Income-Related Rent Subsidy (IRRS) places (properties) are being sought by 2022, all via Kāinga Ora. It was reported that Kāinga Ora has undertaken to develop social housing in centres where refugees are being settled, and Ashburton is getting 33 houses under this arrangement over the next few years, but this information is unverified.

Social housing

Other social housing stock

For the 33 dwellings reportedly rented by community housing providers in Ashburton in the 2018 Census, the Ministry of Housing and Development (under OIA request) was unable to confirm which provider was the landlord. However it is known that Fale Pasifika at that time had two transitional houses in Ashburton (no longer in place), the Salvation Army has three one-bedroom units for older people, and Ashburton Anglican parish had a small number of one bedroom units.

It is possible that some dwellings at that time were being rented out by Accessible Properties New Zealand Limited, Comcare Charitable Trust, Link People Limited or VisionWest Community Trust (as community housing providers in Canterbury), but this is unconfirmed.

As at August 2021, Ashburton District Council had 96 units. Council housing is strictly for people aged 65 years and over. In practice, the majority of tenants are female. The waitlist at that time was 20. There is strict criteria around eligibility which includes means testing. Placements are dependent on people being able to care for themselves (support such as means on wheels and home help is acceptable) and need to be able to get on with neighbours. Priority is given to people from the Ashburton district, followed by people with family in the district, and people wanting to move to Ashburton are third priority. Tenants tend to stay until they either move into care or pass away.

Since the 2018 Census, Haven Housing Trust has purchased Cameron Courts, the independent living components of a former retirement complex. There are 9 units, 4 of which are occupied under right to occupy, but will be bought by the Trust as they become available. The Trust is building a further 17 units at Mona Square (in resource consent stage currently) on land formally occupied by older person ADC housing, and has a goal of having 100 units catering for people 60 plus and on low incomes. Currently they provide housing for those 60 years + only, on low incomes or dependent on national superannuation. They currently have around 25 people on their waiting list, and there has been no movement in tenancies over the past 18 months.

Coronation Park is a holiday park and motel complex, which provides emergency housing via MSD: as at mid 2021 they had 30 long-term residents. Four other motels contract to MSD to provide emergency housing, although some of these have very low levels of vacancy so are utilised to only a limited level for this purpose.

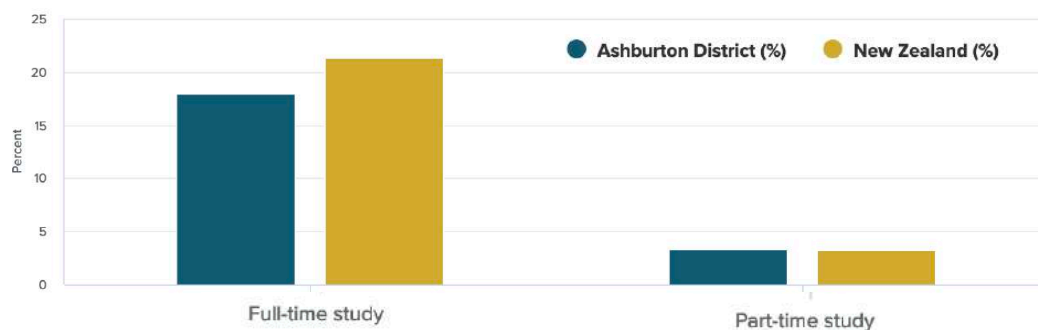
Education and income

Education

Ashburton's population is, on average, less qualified than New Zealanders as a whole. At the time of the 2018 Census, 75.2% of people aged 15 years and over in Ashburton District had a formal qualification, compared with 81.8% of people in New Zealand. Only 13.9% of Ashburton residents aged 15 years and over in 2018 held a bachelor's degree or higher as their highest qualification, compared with 24.8% for New Zealand as a whole.

Educational attainment for Māori, as is the case nationally, was lower for Māori in the District. At the 2018 Census, 70.2% of Māori aged 15 years and over in Ashburton District had a formal qualification, compared with 74.7% of Māori in New Zealand. 6.9% of Māori aged 15 years and over in Ashburton District held a bachelor's degree or higher as their highest qualification, compared with 12.5% of New Zealand's Māori population.

Study participation for people in Ashburton District and New Zealand, 2018 Census



Stats NZ, 2018 Census

Income

At the time of the 2018 Census, the median personal income for those aged 15 years and over in Ashburton District was \$35,900, up from \$32,900 in 2013. This compared with a 2018 median of \$31,800 for all of New Zealand. 28.9% of people aged 15 years and over in Ashburton District had an annual income of \$20,000 or less (down from 31.7% in 2013), compared with 34.5% of people 15 years plus in New Zealand as a whole. 33.6% of people aged 15 years and over (up from 27.9% in 2013) had an annual income of more than \$50,000, compared with 31.6% of people in New Zealand.

At the time of the 2018 Census, 11.2% of usual resident males aged 15 years and over and 4.1% of females in that age group in Ashburton earned over \$100,000. For Māori, these figures were 4.8% and 2.1% respectively.

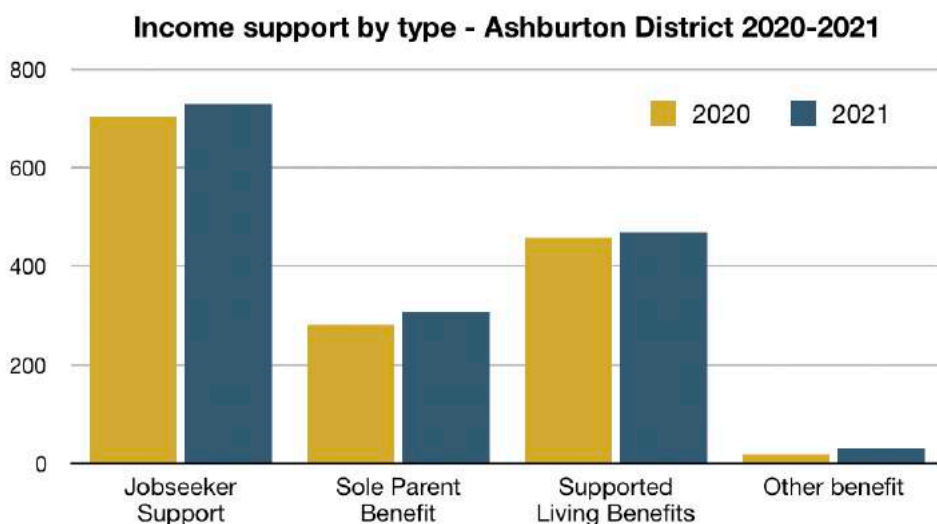
As at Census 2018, the median family income in Ashburton district was \$86,200, slightly lower than the New Zealand median of \$86,700.

Income support

Benefits

For the quarter to 30 June 2021, Ashburton had 1,539 people receiving benefits, up 5.3% from 1,461 for the same quarter in 2020 and with increases across all benefit types.

Females comprise a slightly higher proportion of benefit recipients compared to 2020 (57.9% of benefit recipients in then June 2020 quarter were female compared with 55% for the same quarter last year). Māori are now more over-represented in this group than they were for the same quarter last year (19.9% in June 2021 compared with 18.2% in the June 2020 quarter).



Ministry of Social Development, 2021

Housing register

At 30 June 2021 there were 57 applicants on the Housing Register managed by Work and Income for social housing, up from 49 at the end of the previous quarter, 31 March 2021. 186 public housing tenancies were in place, down one from 31 March 2021. There are no transitional housing places in Ashburton. As a comparison, the number of applicants on the housing register in Ashburton district is 0.16% of its June 2020 population, whereas 1,755 applicants were on the housing register in Christchurch, 0.44% of its June 2020 population.

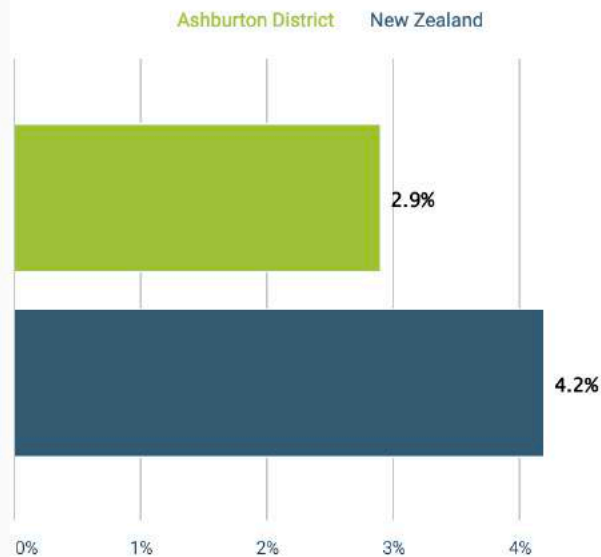
Housing Support Products (HSPs) consist of a range of Work and Income products designed to assist people to achieve or sustain independence in the private housing market, thus reducing the number of people on the housing register. HSPs include bond grants, moving assistance, rent arrears assistance, rent in advance, tenancy costs cover and transition to alternative housing grants. Levels of access for these products are only reported for the wider Canterbury region and not by TLA.

In the quarter to June 30 2021, 103 applicants received emergency housing support in Ashburton District, up from 69 in the previous quarter. In total, \$117,576 was paid for emergency housing in the quarter to June 30 compared with \$75,673 in the quarter to March 31.

Employment

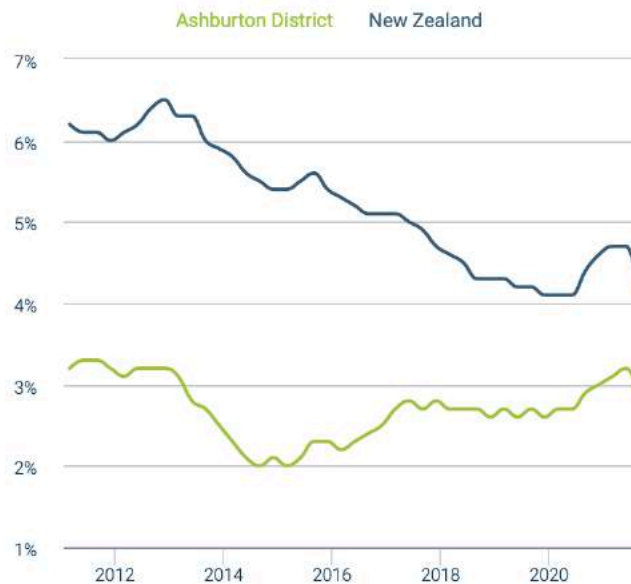
Unemployment rate

Annual average % change September 2020 - September 2021



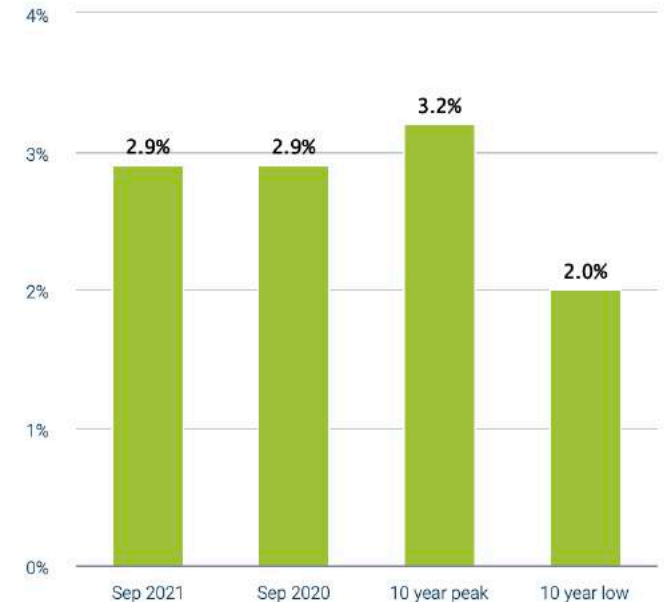
Unemployment rate

Annual average rate



Unemployment rate

Annual average, Ashburton District

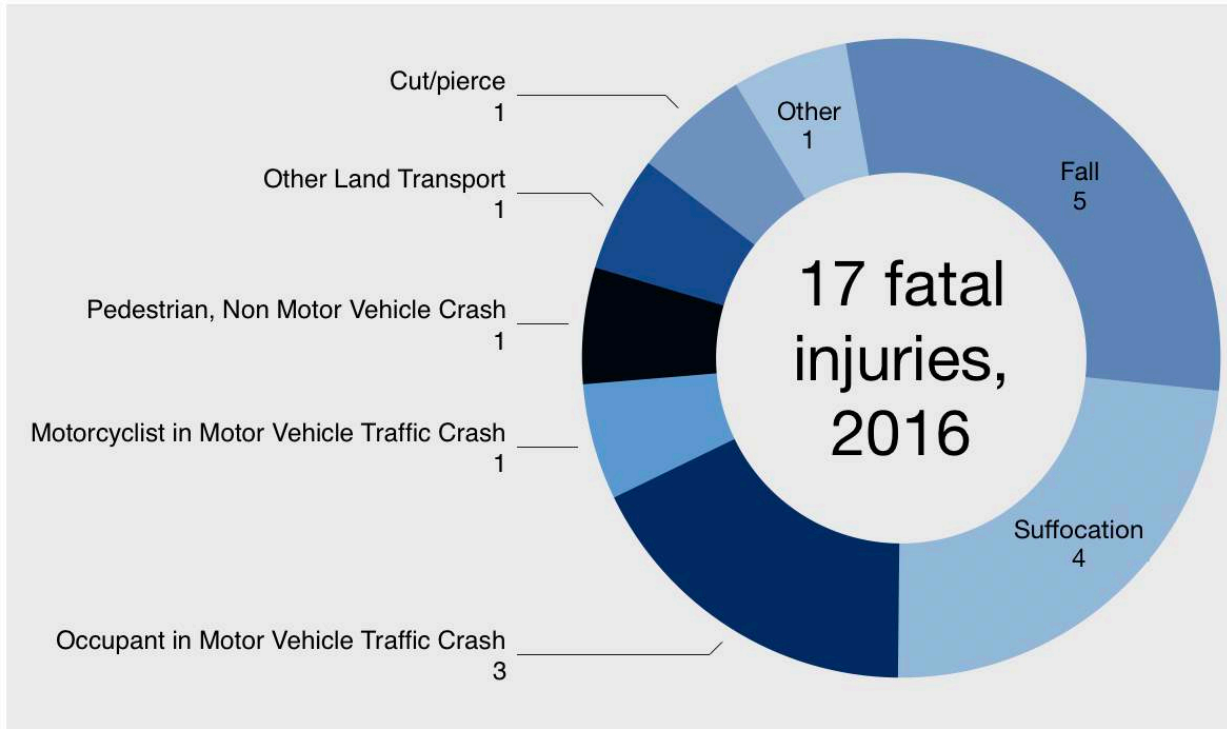


Infometrics, 2021

Ashburton District has for some years been characterised with low rates of unemployment, although the rate since 2020 has been higher than at any time in recent years and since 2013, when it climbed after the Canterbury earthquakes. The annual average unemployment rate in Ashburton District to September 2021 was 2.9% (the same as in the previous year). Ashburton District's unemployment rate was considerably lower than the New Zealand average rate of 4.2% over the year to September 2021. Over the last ten years, the unemployment rate peaked at 3.3% in September 2011.

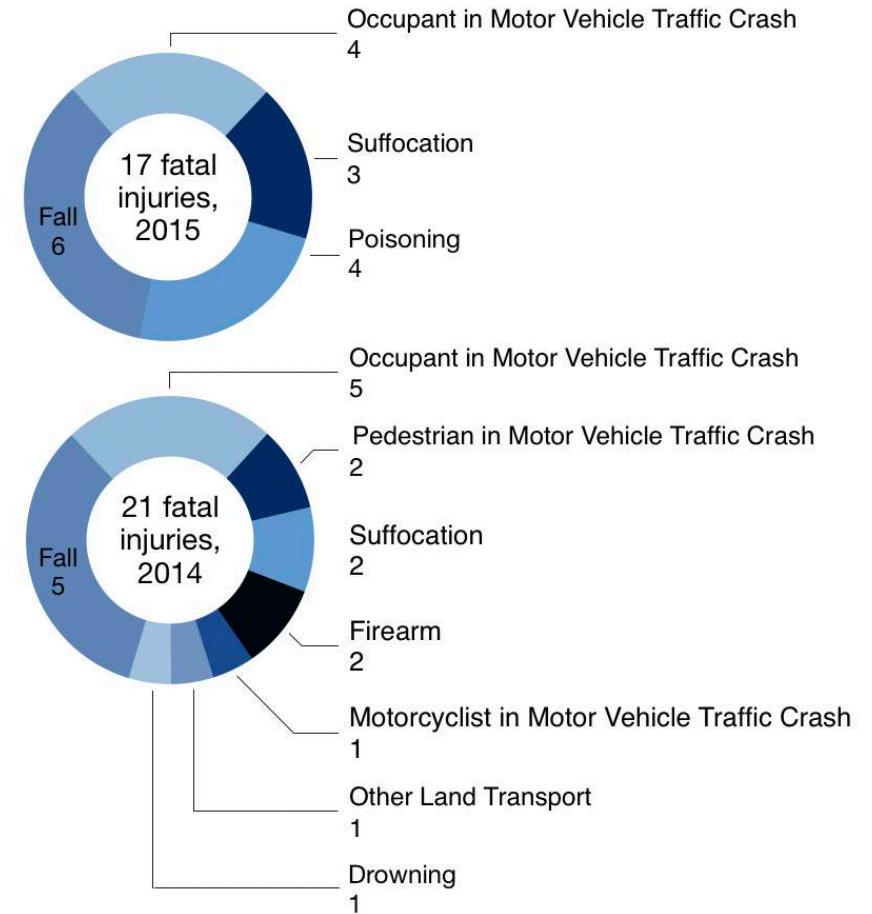
At the time of the 2018 Census, as was the case in 2013, the most common occupational group in Ashburton District was 'managers', followed by labourers.

Injury fatalities



In the Ashburton District there were 17 fatal injuries in 2016, the same number in 2015, 21 in 2014, 6 in 2013 and 20 in 2012. External causes of fatal injuries in 2014, 2015 and 2016 are shown above.

Information on injury fatalities was sought from ACC in late 2021 via OIA but this has not yet been supplied.

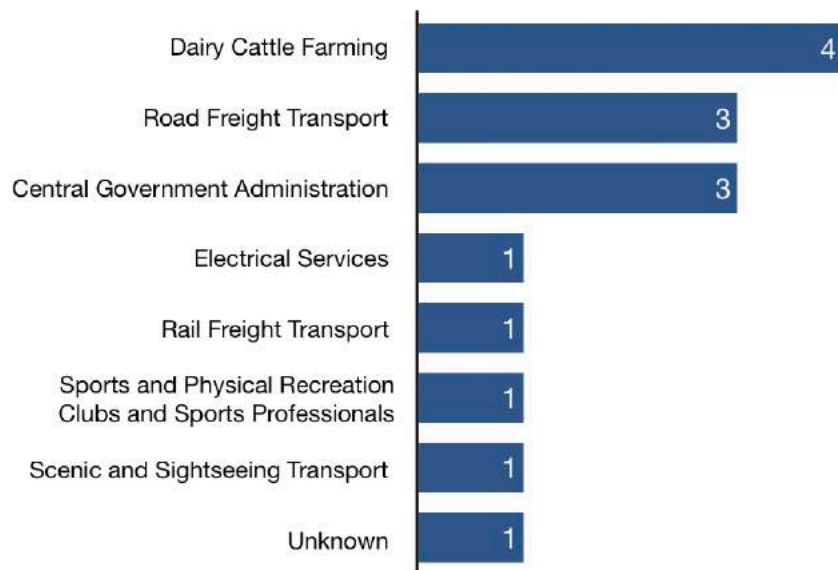


Workplace injuries and fatalities

Workplace fatalities

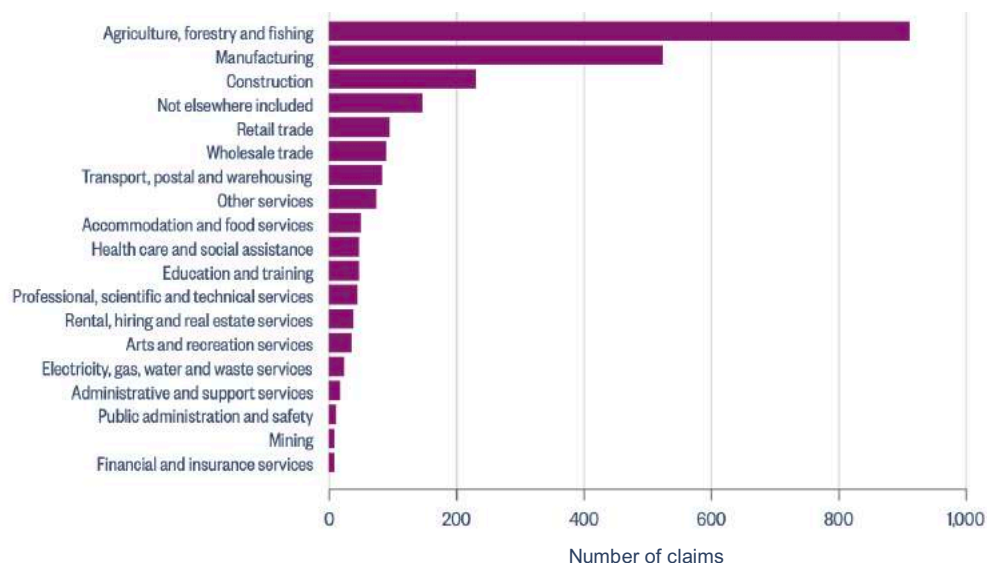
There were two workplace fatalities in Ashburton district in 2021, one on a dairy farm (hit by falling objects) and one in the transport, postal and warehousing industry (involving a truck or ute). Since November 2012, 15 workplace fatalities are recorded for Ashburton district with 60% (n=9) involving motor vehicles, two then result of assault in the Work and Income incident, 20% (n=3) involving falls and one the result of falling objects.

Industry of workplace fatalities in Ashburton District since 2012



Workplace injuries

Industry of work-related injuries in Ashburton District, 2020



Stats NZ

By industry, the greatest proportion of workplace injuries in Ashburton district occur in agriculture and forestry, followed by manufacturing.

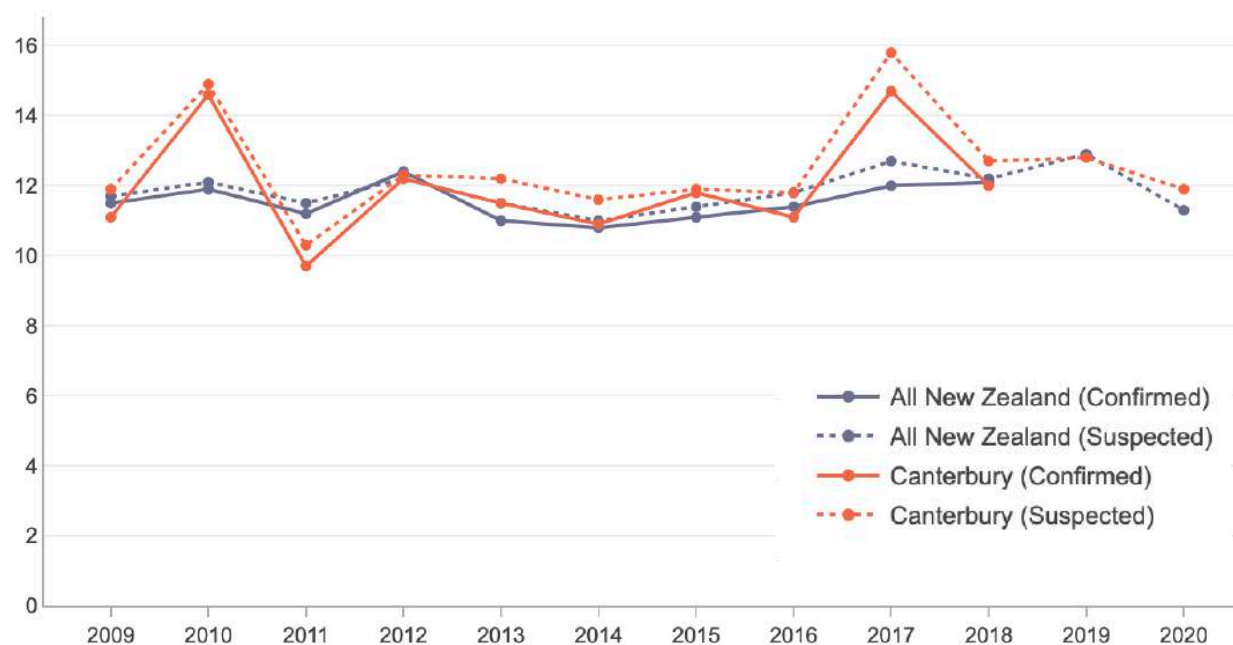
Suicide

Suicide is a statistically rare event in any community across New Zealand, and for this reason, the Ministries of Justice and of Health avoid reporting numbers and rates for small population areas. Small changes in the number of suicides in smaller communities result in large changes in suicide rates, and these seemingly large changes in rates may not accurately represent underlying trends.

Across the CDHB area, which spans from Kaikoura to Ashburton district and includes the Chatham Islands, the number of suspected suicides recorded annually for the past three years has remained relatively similar, with 74 in 2020, 76 in 2019 and 75 in 2018.

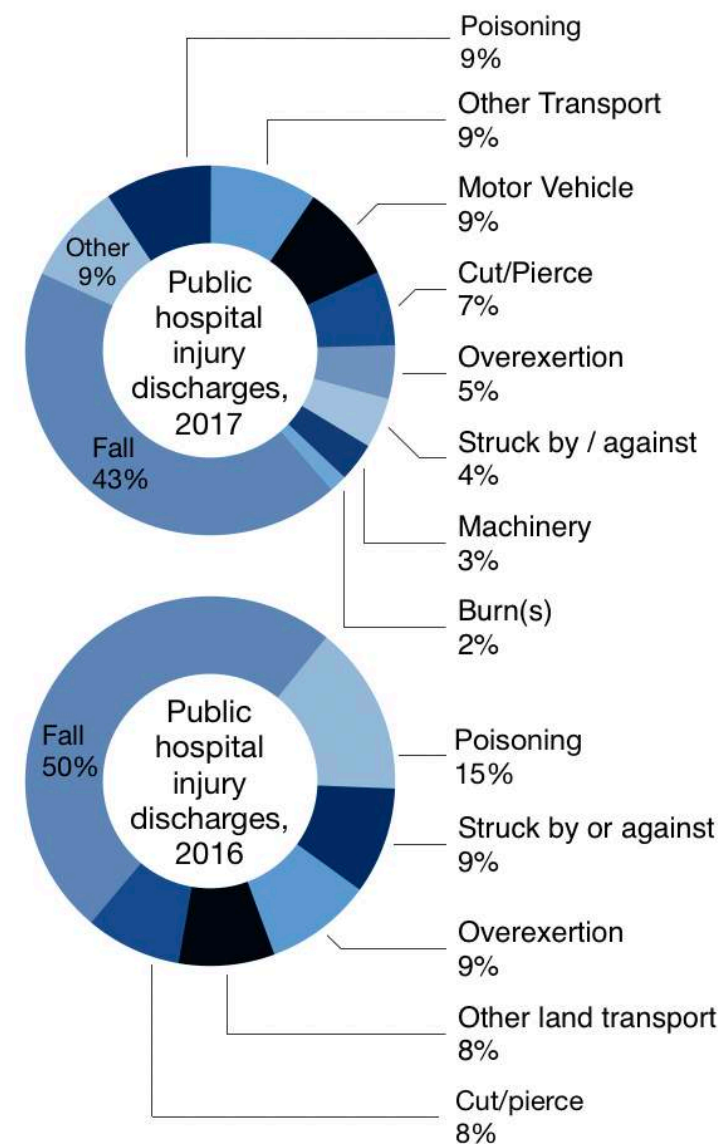
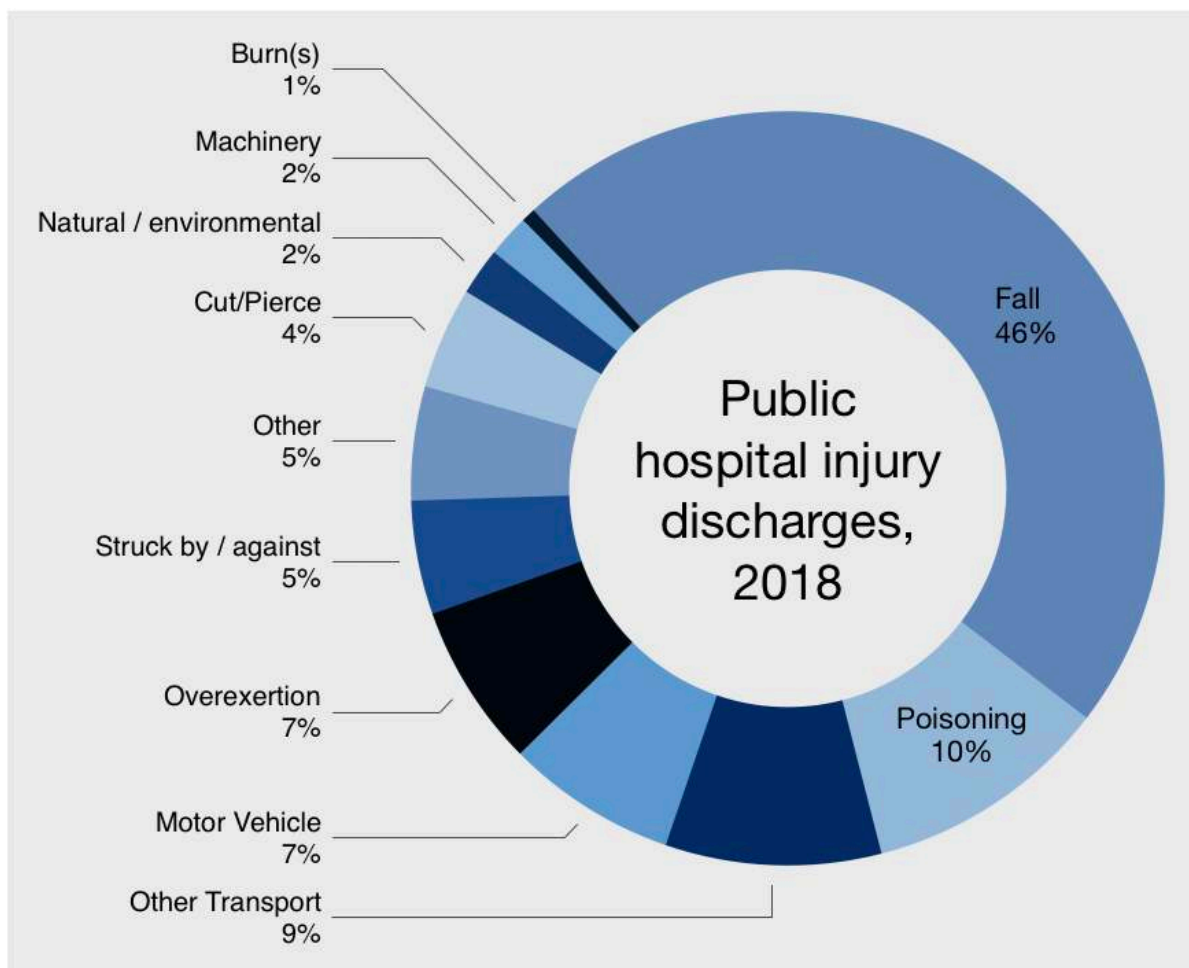
Rates are presented for the CDHB area and for New Zealand in the following graph.

Rates of suicide deaths – Canterbury District Health Board and Aotearoa New Zealand, 2009-2020



Source: New Zealand Mortality Collection (confirmed suicides); Ministry of Justice's case management system (suspected suicides).

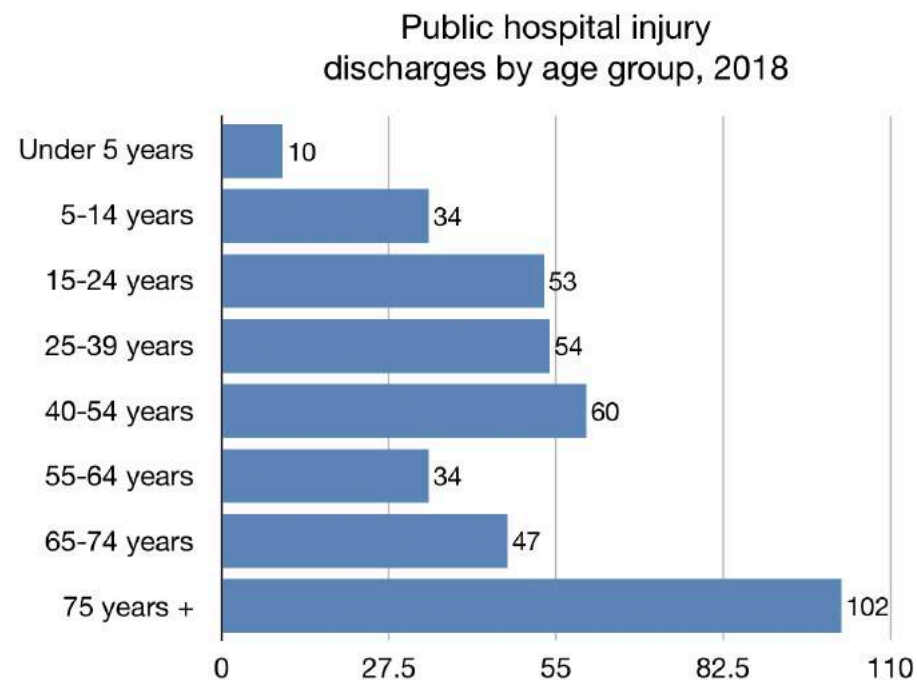
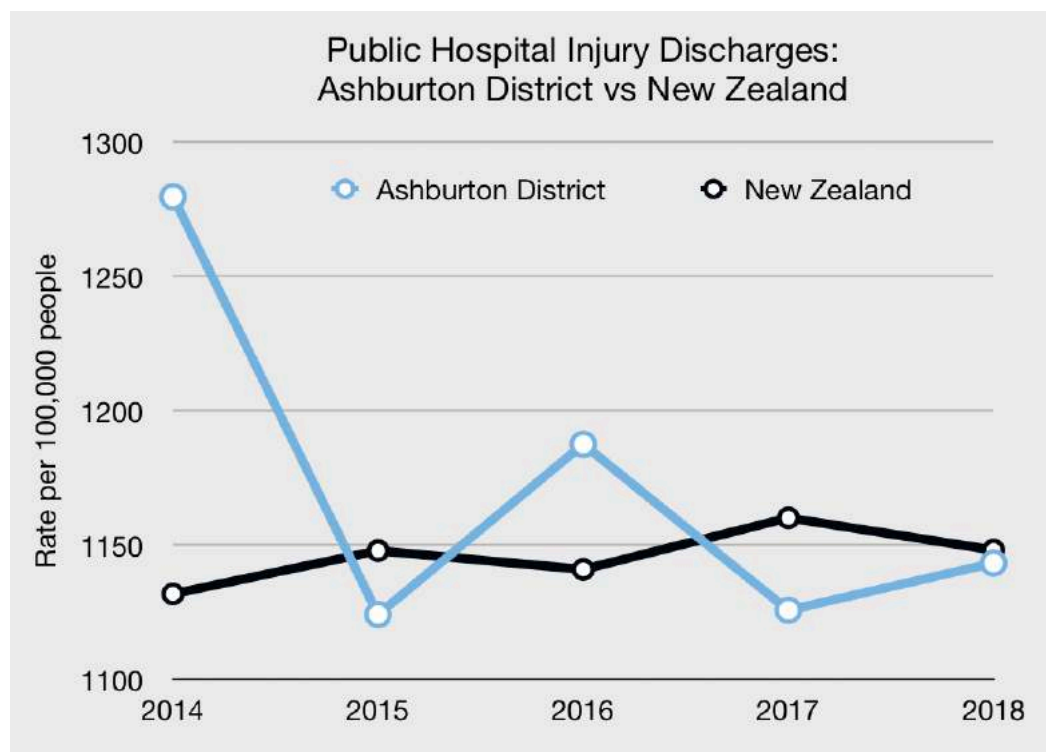
Injury hospitalisations



In the Ashburton District there were 394 public hospital discharges due to injury in 2018, 384 in 2017, 400 in 2016, 373 in 2015 and 420 in 2014. External causes of injury are shown for 2016, 2017 and 2018. (An attempt to obtain updated data from ACC via OIA request was made but was unsuccessful.)

Injury hospitalisations

In the Ashburton District there were 394 public hospital discharges due to injury in 2018, 384 in 2017, 400 in 2016, 373 in 2015 and 420 in 2014. Of the injury hospitalisations in 2018, 216 were male and 178 female. Ages of those discharges for injury are presented in the graph to the right.



Publicly funded hospital discharges with a principal diagnosis of injury caused by any intent (excludes readmission for the same incident, day patients and patients discharged dead).

Compiled by Safe Communities Foundation NZ. Source: Injury Prevention Research Unit (IPRU) database. Data current as at 3 February 2020. Updated data was sought from ACC but was unable to be obtained.

Injuries to children

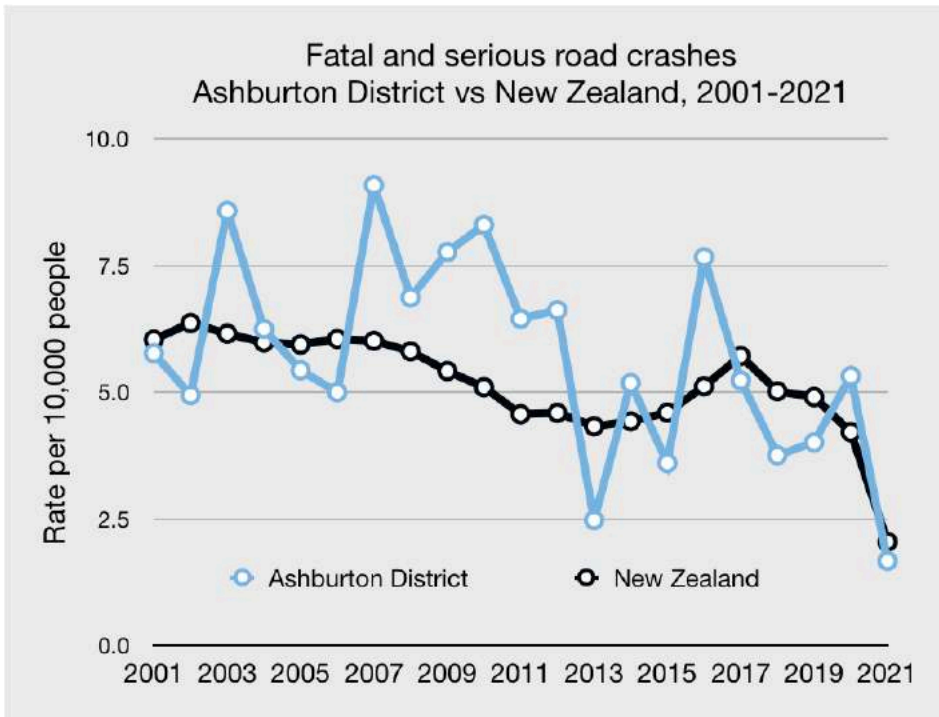
In 2019, 2,153 ACC injury claims (injuries serious enough to seek medical attention) were made in Ashburton district for children aged under 15 years, with the most common cause of injury being loss of balance or personal control (as is the case across New Zealand), followed by struck by person or animal and collisions, and twisting movements. Following the same trends as the country as a whole, the most common diagnosis is soft tissue injury, followed by lacerations, puncture wounds and stings, and fracture / dislocation. Males (n=1,221) outnumbered females (n=932) in number of injuries in every age group, with the number of injuries to males 0-14 years 31% higher than for females in the same age group.

The most common sports injury for children under 15 in Ashburton district is skiing / snowboarding, (127 injuries in 2019), followed by rugby union (n=114), cycling (n=69) and basketball (n=43). Nationally, the most common sports injuries for children arise from rugby union followed by soccer, basketball and netball. The most common place of injury for children aged under 5 years and for those aged 5-9 years is the home, whereas for those aged 10-14 years and for older teens, the most common injury scene is the sports field or place of recreation / sport (*data sourced from ACC Ashburton*).



Fatal and serious road crashes

There were 2 fatal and 4 serious road crashes in the Ashburton District in 2021, down from 19 fatal and serious crashes in 2020. This rate marked a 20-year low for the District, as was reflected nationally.

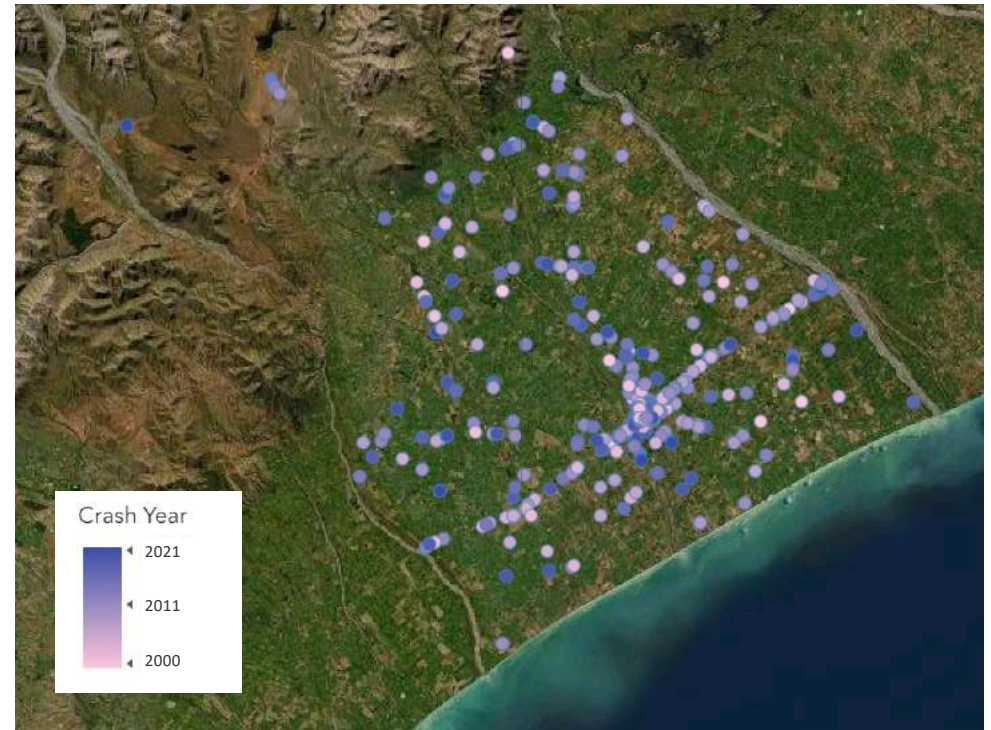


Data limited to Police-reported fatal and serious crashes involving motor vehicles. It covers all NZ roadways or places where the public have legal access with a motor vehicle. Due to the nature of non-fatal crashes, it is believed that these are under-reported, with the level of under-reporting decreasing with the severity of the crash.

Compiled by NZ Transport Agency. Source: Crash Analysis System (CAS).
Data current to 1 December 2021.

Locations of serious and fatal road crashes, 2001-2021

As shown in the map below, a concentration of serious and fatal road crashes in the over the last 20 years can be seen along State Highway 1. A spread of locations across the rural parts of the district, as well as urban Ashburton township, is also evident.

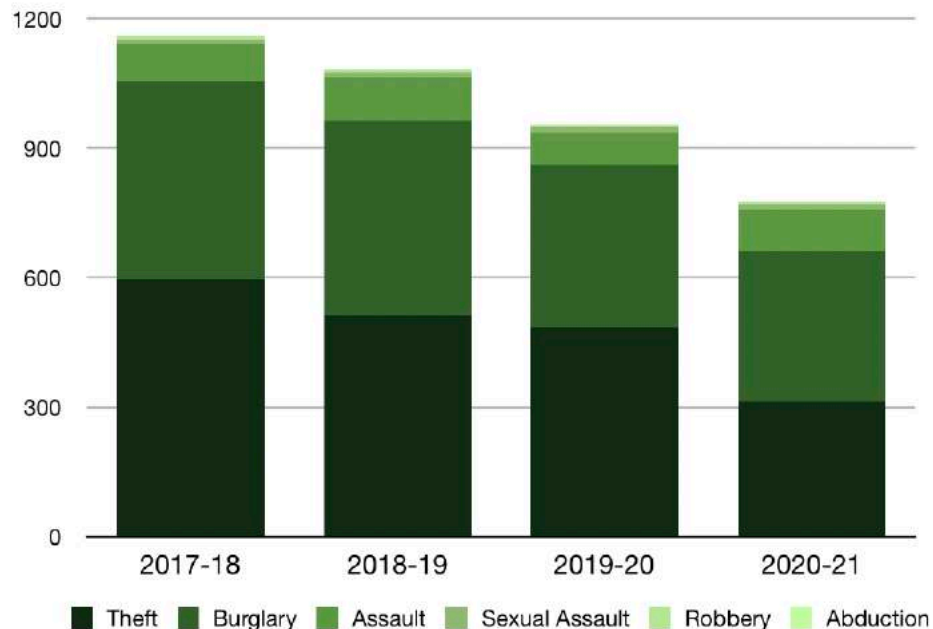


Locations of fatal and serious crashes in Ashburton District by year, 2001-2021. Source: Crash Analysis System (CAS), Waka Kotahi (NZ Transport Agency), December 2021.

Reported crime

According to Police Statistics for the year to March 31, 2020, 776 crime victimisations were reported to Police within the Ashburton District, down from 956 for the previous year. Around 85% of reported crimes in the 2020-21 year to end of March were theft and related offences, compared to 90 percent for the previous year. Assaults and sexual assaults increased by 23.9% over the number reported in the previous year to March 31.

Reported crime victimisation in Ashburton District, 2017-2021



Police.govt.nz, 2021

In the Ashburton District there were 97 victimisations for assault by a family member in the year from July 2020 to June 2021, well up from the 44 in 2019 calendar year, 67 in 2018, 63 in 2017 and 59 in 2016. Of those in the 20-21 year, 24 occurred in Allenton, 16 in Ashburton Central, 12 in Hampstead, 8 in Netherby, 7 in Tinwald, 1 in Ashburton East, 7 in Mt Somers, 7 in Hinds, 5 in Chertsey, 4 in Methven, 4 in Rakaia, and 2 in Fairton.

Saturdays and Sundays had highest levels of victimisation, followed by Fridays. While the number of victimisations in the Ashburton District had trended up from 2014 to mid-2018, the rate of reported victimisation has continued to decline since that time.

Victimisations by month in Ashburton District, Jan 2017- Jan 2021

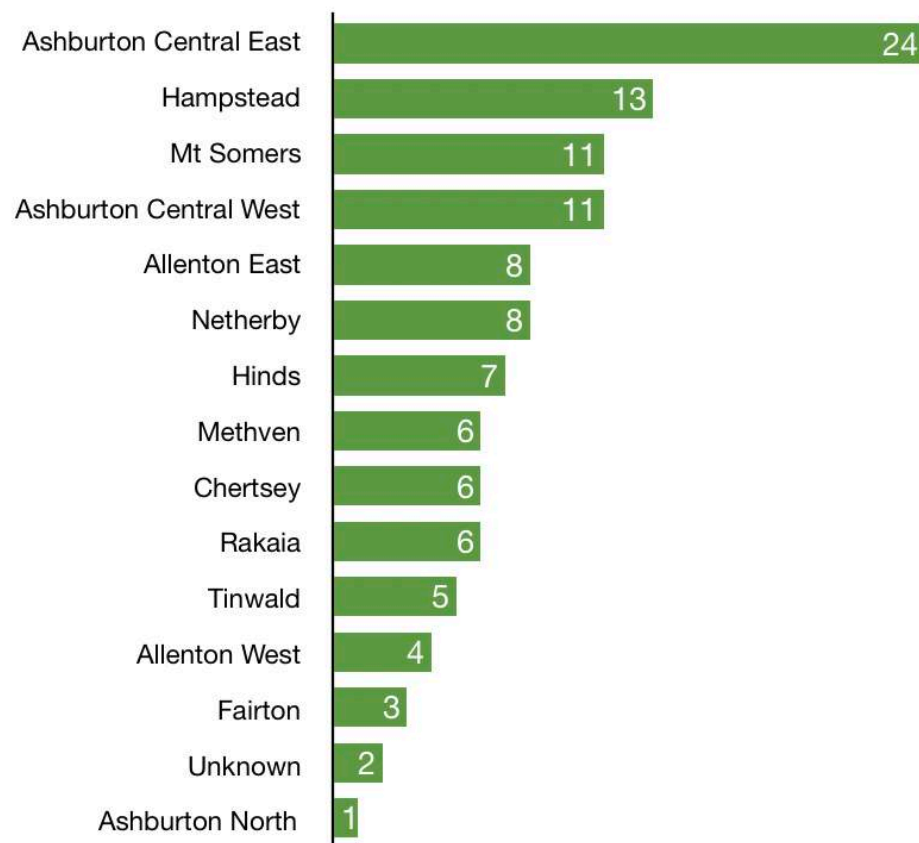


Police.govt.nz, 2021

Reported crime

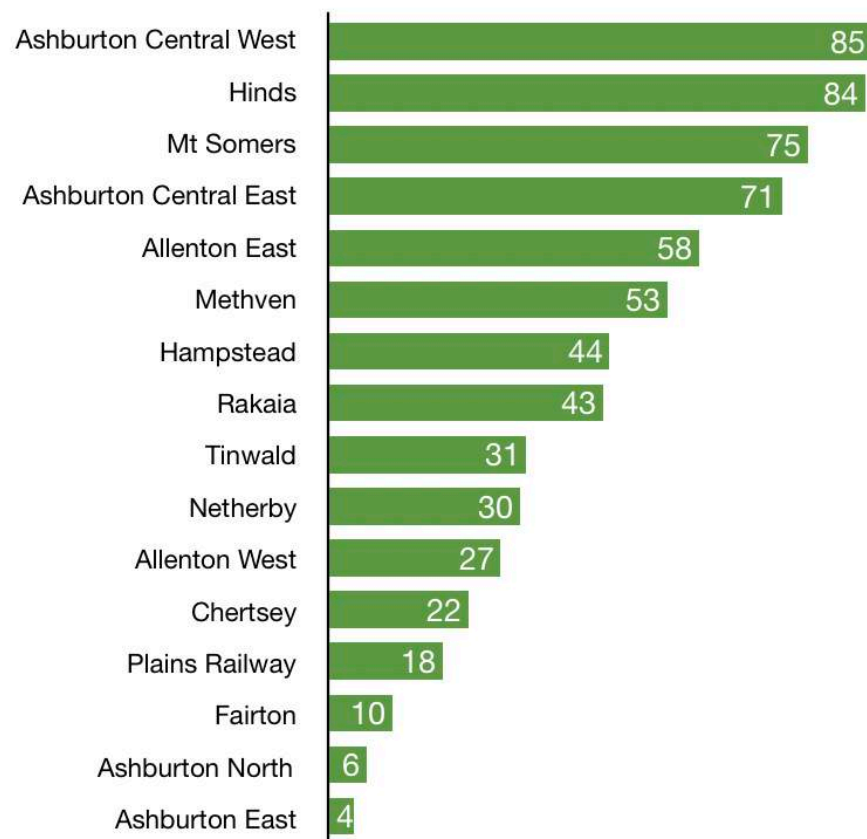
Of the 115 violent crimes reported to Police between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, these occurred in the following locations across Ashburton district:

Statistical area (SA2) of violent crimes in Ashburton District, 2020-2021



Of the 661 property crimes reported to Police between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, these occurred in the following locations across Ashburton district:

Statistical area (SA2) of property crimes in Ashburton District, 2020-2021



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