

Pudding Hill race network to close

A large section of the Pudding Hill stockwater race network will close this year, as part of Council ending its stockwater delivery service.

Water from the intake on Pudding Hill Stream will still flow into Mt Harding Creek, but no water will make it into the local race network once Scarness gate and Drayton's gate are permanently closed from September.

The Pudding Hill race network is about 220km, including a 6.8km section of Mt Harding Creek, and has served 181 properties.

Deputy Mayor Richard Wilson said it was a significant decision by Councillors in December to agree to the closing of a race network that had been fed from Pudding Hill Stream since 1881.

"But the reality now is that few properties want or need the race, but all of them must pay for its upkeep. Closing the Pudding Hill race network is the first of some big decisions that Council will make about the future of 17 intakes across its entire stockwater race network in the coming 18 months."

A survey of Pudding Hill race network users showed 70% supported closure.



Cr Wilson said Pudding Hill was a complex intake because of its interaction with Mt Harding Creek, which had operated as a main race to deliver water to the smaller races in the network.

"As part of the decision by Council, officers will now talk with Environment Canterbury about the possibility of using water from the intake to augment the flow in Mt Harding Creek. This environmental augmentation work will not be done by Council, but we are happy to facilitate this discussion by all those who want water to stay in the creek for ecological and aesthetic reasons."

Council will cease rating for stockwater on

the section of the Pudding Hill network being closed from 30 June this year, with the operation of the network finishing on 30 September when the two side gates are shut off. The Pudding Hill intake will continue to operate as normal in the meantime, with flows continuing into the Methven Auxiliary race network – the Methven Auxiliary intake flows will be reduced to compensate.

Council has written to property owners on the race network to advise them of the closure. Those properties who still need stockwater are encouraged to talk with Barrhill Chertsey Irrigation about accessing water.

Modern booking system for rooms, spaces

Council has modernised its booking system for Council rooms, some outdoor spaces and the Tinwald Memorial Hall, and reservations can now be easily made online.

The booking system is for rooms at Te Whare Whakatare and the Ashburton Library, parking places for food trucks, open spaces at the Ashburton Domain and

some halls. You can find it on our website under the Facilities tab.

Group Manager of Community and Open Spaces Toni Durham said the online system had been designed to make life easier for those using Council spaces. "Some of the bookings for these spaces were being recorded in a book and others on a digital calendar, and now we've got them all in

one online area that will make it easier for Council to gather information about hireage use and for people to pay for hire. Those not comfortable booking online can still phone us or come in a talk to staff, who will help them make a booking."

The booking system, called Bookable, was launched last week and regular users have been advised about the new process.

CE Hamish Riach

Shaping up for the new year

The new year has arrived, heralding the usual annual discussions about budget and work programmes but also talk about reforms for local government.

While our elected members get to grips with understanding how these reforms will affect us here in the Ashburton District, the services Council provides 24 hours a day, seven days a week, continue uninterrupted.

Providing drinking water, treating wastewater, collecting rubbish and maintaining roads to drive on is essential business, that often happens in the background.

For the first time in many years, we implemented Level 2 water restrictions in December as daily demand rose

to near our consented volume. The restrictions mean households effectively water their gardens and lawns on alternate days, while there remains no limit on water used for essential purposes like cooking, washing and showering.

Our roading contractors are back on the job, with maintenance and rehabilitation projects in full swing while the weather is fine.

Council staff have also started early engagement on a review of our dog control rules, so if you have a dog, or are interested in dogs and their behaviour, then I encourage you to take part in an online survey we are running until the end of January.

The survey asks questions like, do we

have enough dog parks and dog exercise areas, and are there more areas where dogs should be prohibited. Your feedback will help us review the Dog Control Policy and Bylaw later in the year.

It's been great to see families visiting the library, art gallery and museum, EA Networks Centre and our open spaces over the break.

The What's On Guide remains popular, with 1500 copies printed and 1600 downloaded - check it out if you are looking for things to do with the kids.

The first Council meeting for the year is on 4 February, but before that will be Activity Briefings and a workshop on 28 January.



SHORT AND SWEET

SAVE THE DATE

Save the date, Ashburton's free outdoor music event, Live on the Lawn, is returning to the Ashburton Domain on Saturday 28 March. This year's theme will be 'homegrown', with a selection of Mid Canterbury's finest musical talent taking to the stage for a relaxed afternoon of grooves amongst the grass. Visitors are encouraged to bring a picnic or grab a bite from the onsite food trucks. Now in its second year, Live on the Lawn attracted around 1500 attendees in 2025.

STAY IN THE KNOW WITH TXT ALERTS

Are you subscribed to the Council's 4196 text system? It's the easiest way to receive important alerts for your area and it's free. Text your postcode to 4196 to subscribe.



LEVEL 2 WATER RESTRICTIONS

Water restrictions remain in force across the district, meaning residents may only water their gardens and lawns from a hose, sprinkler or irrigation system between 6pm and midnight on assigned days. For most of the district that means watering on even dates if your house has an even street number, or on odd dates if your house has an odd number. There's no restriction on essential use such as cooking, washing and showering.

LAKE HOOD

Environment Canterbury tests contact recreation swimming sites around the region during summer and the latest sample from Lake Hood has returned a result of 10mm3/L biovolume of cyanobacteria. This means the lake is now in red mode, and Health New Zealand has issued a warning. Council is working with scientists to improve water quality at the lake.

Salmon takes on fresh sparkle

Artist Phil Price has been busy at his Christchurch workshop leading the restoration of Rakaia’s landmark salmon.

The iconic 12-metre sculpture was moved offsite for the specialist work, which has involved extensive sandblasting, repeated applications of industrial paint and meticulous hand detailing of scales by a team of four artists.

Work is still needed on the steel pole that supports the fish at its home on the State Highway 1 reserve at Rakaia.

Mr Price and his team have been working on the salmon since it arrived mid-December, with a team of 10 involved in sandblasting, scraping back cracked epoxy and adding new layers.

The repeated filling, undercoating and sanding had prepared the surface for a paint job that would last another 30 years, he said.

The salmon will remain silver grey in colour and the artists have used spray guns to add scale details and the pearl metallic colours of a real fish.

“I’m very proud of this sculpture and I’m rapt with the paint work,” Phil said.

The sculptor was 25 and just out of Canterbury University when he was commissioned by the Rakaia Lions Club to create the sculpture in 1990. He used a



real salmon to replicate form and colour, and spent five months single-handedly building the frame and body.

He has a box of photos and original engineering plans that document the original work.

The Rakaia salmon was his first piece of large art and there’s an emotional attachment to it; he went on to have a successful career and his work around the world is acknowledged for its beauty and design. His sculptures have been installed

everywhere from fierce coastal situations to busy urban environments.

Phil said a special industrial paint used on the Rakaia salmon would ensure it withstood the harsh sun and wind.

He said the salmon had attracted a lot of attention at his workshop and fellow artists had been keen to help work on it. Visitors will find the restored version has a new red gill and a new overall sparkle.

The sculpture will be returned to Rakaia after restoration is complete.

New wastewater pipes for Tancred St

Wastewater pipes are being replaced on Tancred Street, between Cass Street and Chalmers Avenue, over the next six weeks and temporary road closures are in place.

The work will happen in two stages. The first road closure is between Cass Street and the intersection of Tancred and William Streets; the second will be from the intersection to Chalmers Avenue.

Group Manager of Infrastructure Neil McCann said letters about the work had been sent to residents and businesses on Tancred Street and in the wider area.

“Vehicle access is being maintained to the St John ambulance station and to the Ashburton Central shopping centre, where City Fitness and Number One Shoes are. Tru-Line Civil are doing the work for Council and will do their best to cause the least disruption to those who usually drive or park in the area.”

The wastewater pipe renewal work involves removing old concrete pipes and replacing them with PVC pipes. There will be diggers making trenches for the new pipes and lateral reconnections to properties.

Mr McCann said renewing ageing wastewater pipes was part of important routine maintenance on Council’s network.

“We have over 200 kilometres of wastewater pipes in Ashburton, Methven



and Rakaia and those urban areas service about 11,000 connections to homes and businesses. These pipes collect used water that is flushed down toilets and greywater from sinks and showers, so the networks have to operate smoothly at all times.

“Regular maintenance and upgrades are essential and closing some roads temporarily means our contractors can get the work done as quickly and efficiently as possible.”

Council will spend a total of \$2.6 million on wastewater pipe renewals this financial year.

PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURE

Ashburton District Council gives public notice of proposal to temporarily close roads to traffic to enable the holding of the following Ashburton Car Club community event:

WAKANUI BENT SPRINT

Roads proposed to be closed:

- **Bonningtons Road, from Seaside Road to Fitzgerald Road**
- **Fitzgerald Road, from Bonningtons Road to Gibsons Road**
- **Seaside Road, from Fitzgerald Road to Bonningtons Road**

Period of closure: **From 8am to 5pm on Sunday 15 March 2026**

This proposed closure will be considered at a Council meeting on 4 February. Any person objecting should do so in writing by post or email to the Council, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton by 4pm, **Friday 23 January 2026.**

NEIL McCANN
Group Manager Infrastructure

TRIENNIAL MEETINGS FOR RESERVE & HALL BOARDS

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

- 20 January - **Dorie Reserve Board** - 7pm, Dorie hall
- 27 January - **Highbank Reserve Board** - 7.30pm, Highbank hall
- 24 February - **Ealing Reserve Board** - 7pm, Ealing hall.

ROADING NOTICES

Chalmers Avenue - Closed at the Ashburton River end until 30 January while water mains are installed.

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.

Thompsons Track – Closed between Blands Road and Dip Road until 27 January while ACL carries out road maintenance for 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.

Winters Road - Closed between Hamptons Road and Buckleys Road from until 3 February while Tarbotton Land & Civil install a stock underpass under Winters Road.

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.

Fairfield Road - Closed between Company Road and Singletree Road from 19 January to 31 March, while Fulton Hogan carries out heavy road maintenance for Council.

Elizabeth Avenue (Rakaia) - Closed from Burrowes Road to Tancred Street from 19 January to 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.

Tancred Street - Closed in places between Cass Street and Chalmers Avenue until 5 February while Tru-Line Civil installs new wastewater pipes.

Albert Street - One-way closures are in place on Albert Street until 16 February, while ACL installs services for a private development. No entry from Albert Street to Trevors Road, no entry from Trevors Road to Albert Street.

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 are online at ashburtondc.govt.nz

Monday 26 January, **Methven Community Board**, 9am at Mt Hutt Memorial Hall

Wednesday 28 January, **Activity Briefings**, 9am

Wednesday 28 January, **Bylaws workshop**, 1.30pm

Wednesday 4 February, **Council meeting**, 1pm

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)