

Be informed before you vote

Voters in the Ashburton District are being encouraged to be as informed as possible about the candidates in the coming local elections, and their reasons for standing.

Council is hosting two meet-the-candidate meetings and also inviting candidates to make a short video about themselves to help voters learn more.

A candidate meeting will be held in Methven on 20 August, and another in Ashburton on 27 August. Both start at 7pm.

Chief Executive Hamish Riach said voter turnout in the Ashburton District in 2022 was about 50 per cent, but that had been tracking down over previous elections.

“Declining voter turnout is a national trend too. Auckland Council surveyed people after the last local elections to find out why they weren’t voting and the top two reasons were people didn’t know anything about the candidates and they didn’t know enough about the policies.

“Another main reason given was they couldn’t work out who to vote for, and that is why we are going the extra mile to give Ashburton voters a chance to be as informed as possible in the local elections this October.”

The candidate evenings will give those standing a chance to introduce themselves and talk about why they want to represent



their community. There will be at least two set questions about their priorities and issues they see, and they will have 60 seconds to answer each question.

The audience will also have a chance to ask questions, and talk to the candidates informally after the event over tea and coffee.

The Methven evening will be at the Mt Hutt Memorial Hall and involve Western ward candidates and those standing for the mayoralty.

The Ashburton event will be at Ashburton College and involve Ashburton ward candidates and those hoping to be mayor.

The Ashburton event will also be livestreamed and people can tune in on the night or view a recorded version on YouTube or Facebook.

Mr Riach said the five candidates standing for the Methven Community Board and the two in the Eastern ward would not be on stage, as there was no election required for them with the number of candidates matching the seats available.

“So come along to our meetings as these are the people who will have a big influence on your daily lives over the next three years, and check out what they have to say.”

WATER WORKS

Argyle Park WTP

The new UV disinfecting equipment at Argyle Park water treatment plant is on track to be commissioned this week. The upgrade has led to low water pressure on some parts of the scheme but that should end as soon as the whole plant is restarted on 11 August. The project is being completed well ahead of schedule.



Keenans Road

Council is progressing plans to extend its drinking water network on Seafeld Road, Keenans Road and Southpark Road. Twenty-one properties in the area have been consulted, with an initial up-front cost to connect estimated at about \$12,500. The decision to proceed will be up to Councillors later this year.

Mayor Neil Brown Still work to do, despite elections



The next couple of months before the local elections will speed by, and already I’ve found myself doing things for the last time.

While I’ll be a spectator in the contest to elect a new mayor and councillors, I still have plenty of work to do ... and this week I attended a meeting of the Ashburton District Biodiversity Advisory Group for the final time.

The group meets every three months and represents all manner of people interested in our environment, from farmers and catchment collectives, to Fish and Game and the Department of Conservation.

It was also the last meeting for Councillors Leen Braam and Lynette Lovett, who are also retiring from local body politics.

A piece of work that the advisory group is very proud of is the Biodiversity Strategy, which has guidelines and an action plan to protect, restore and enhance our biodiversity and ecosystems.

We had some special guests from the Waimate District Council attend the meeting too, to observe and learn about our group’s collaborative approach to getting things done, despite the varying points of view.

It’s good to see our members both challenging and backing regulatory decisions that will impact the Ashburton District and its ability to thrive ecologically and economically.

It’s also good to be back in the rhythm of meetings and Council work, and I can see councillors refreshed after a break. Charging the batteries with family and friends fuels you for what can be a tough, but rewarding job.

Now that the nominations for the local elections are in, I urge voters to check out those who want to sit around the Council table and vote when the ballot papers arrive in letterboxes.

It’s important to know what candidates stand for, why they want the job and to see and hear the skills they will bring to keep this district on a solid platform for growth.

SHORT AND SWEET

PARVO ALERT

Another case of parvovirus has been identified in the district, with a veterinarian confirming the infected dog has sadly passed away. While it’s highly contagious, vaccination is the key to preventing this disease and protecting dogs. Council is taking a stringent and precautionary approach with our pound and vehicles that transport dogs and we’re asking the community to be vigilant too.

WATER LEAK?

Council has sent about 120 letters to commercial or extraordinary properties whose water meters have flagged a potential leak. Higher than normal consumption was identified during routine meter reading and property owners were encouraged to check for any leaks and have them repaired as soon as possible.

VOTE FOR GLOW

EA Networks Glow in the Park 2025 has been announced as a finalist in the New Zealand Event Awards in the Local Government category, and is now also eligible for the People’s Choice award which will be decided by public voting. The NZEA awards recognise and celebrate the very best of Aotearoa’s events and now it’s the public’s turn to decide the winner of New Zealand’s Favourite Event 2025. Those who wish to support Glow in the Park in the awards can visit eventfinda.co.nz to cast their vote.



WOMEN'S NIGHT

The next women’s swim night at EA Networks Centre is on Wednesday 13 August. These sessions are held regularly on the second Wednesday of the month, from 7pm-8.30pm and are for women only and children 10 and under. Come for a soak in the spa, do some lengths or spend time with the kids in the water. Adults pay \$5.

New library manager appointed

Council has appointed a familiar face as the new Ashburton Library manager.

Jane Riach takes on the role following the retirement of long-time library manager Jill Watson, who leaves this week after 50 years at the library.

Mrs Riach’s career includes working in libraries in Christchurch, Feilding and Wellington, and she has been working at the Ashburton Library since 2021, focusing on community engagement.

People and Facilities Group Manager Sarah Mosley said the recruitment process for a new library manager also involved input from independent employment consultant Brannigans.

“Jane has lots of new ideas and is determined to continue the legacy of providing a fantastic library service, with lots of public programmes that the community can enjoy.

“While she has worked in libraries previously, she has also enabled learning in the private and education sector.



Reader of the pack: New Ashburton Library manager Jane Riach.

“Since moving here after her husband was appointed Council Chief Executive in 2017, Jane has also built networks through volunteering or governance appointments within the Citizen’s Advice

Bureau, Ashburton Zonta Club, Friends of Ashburton Hospital and Kanuka Mid Canterbury Regeneration Trust.”

Mrs Riach begins her new role on Monday 11 August.

Snap Send Solve helps keep our district tidy

Ever spotted a pothole, overflowing rubbish bin, or graffiti and wondered who to tell? There’s a free app to help, use Snap Send Solve and reporting local issues is easier than ever.

Using the app is straightforward: just snap a photo of the problem, send it through the app, and the right team is alerted to sort it out. It’s free to download from Google Play or the App Store, and takes only a few taps, no need to wait on hold or fill out forms.

To help speed things up, users are encouraged to include two photos: one close-up of the issue and one wider shot showing where it is. This helps council and its service providers respond more quickly and effectively.

One issue that’s often overlooked is



overflowing public rubbish bins. If you spot one that’s full or spilling over, report it through Snap Send Solve. It’s a small action that helps keep our shared spaces clean and pleasant.

Whether it’s a broken swing at the local playground or a bin that’s seen better days, every report makes a difference.

So next time you’re out and about and see something that needs fixing, take a moment to Snap it, Send it, and help Solve it.

ROADING NOTICES

King and Alexander Streets, Chertsey - Closed until 13 September while a new water treatment plant is built. The road closure does not impact school access.

SH1 Hinds - NZTA is advising motorists to expect delays of up to 15 minutes on the highway between Ashburton and Hinds while contractors install a new culvert at a flood-prone site on the side of the highway, between Windermere Road and Lynnford Road. The work will happen from 18-22 August.

Philip Street - Sections closed at times between Oak Grove and Walker Street until the end of August while new water pipes are installed by Rooney Earthmoving. Resident access remains.

Tancred Street - Closed between William Street and Chalmers Avenue until 29 August while new water pipes are installed by Rooney Earthmoving. Resident access remains.

Tinwald Viaduct - Melcombe Street, under the Tinwald Viaduct, is temporarily closed to vehicles until KiwiRail repairs the overhead impact beam. Pedestrian and cyclist access remains.

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

RAIL SAFETY WEEK

Next week is **Rail Safety Week** and to mark the occasion, our road safety team is setting up a display in the children’s library. There’ll be posters, train books and a colouring competition - with prizes including family swim vouchers at EA Networks Centre.

Colouring sheets will also be available at Customer Services, for those who want to take them home and bring them back all coloured in.

PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURES

Ashburton District Council gives public notice of a proposal to temporarily close roads to traffic to enable the holding of the following community events.

ASHBURTON MARKET DAY

Roads proposed to be closed:

- EAST STREET**, from Havelock Street to Wills Street
- BARING SQUARE EAST**, from Havelock Street to Cameron Street
- CAMERON STREET**, from East Street to Victoria Street

Period of closure: **From 6am until 6pm on Monday, 22 September 2025.**

Any person objecting to the proposal should do so in writing by post or email to the Council, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton by 4pm on **Monday, 11 August 2025.**

ASHBURTON CAR CLUB GRAVEL BENT SPRINT

Roads proposed to be closed:

- Le Bretons Road**, from Christys Road to Denshires Road
- Chertsey Road**, from Le Bretons Road for 2km

Period of closure: **From 8am to 5.30pm on Saturday, 13 September 2025**

Any person objecting to the proposal should do so in writing by post or email to the Council, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton by 4pm, **Monday, 18 August 2025.**

NEIL McCANN, Group Manager Infrastructure & Open Spaces

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are at Hine Paaka (Council Chamber), 2 Baring Square East, unless specified. Agendas can be found on our website.

Monday 11 August, **Methven Community Board**, 9am, Mt Hutt Memorial Hall

Wednesday 13 August, **Council Hearings - Water Races Bylaw** (live-streamed), 10.30am

Wednesday 13 August, **AI policy workshop**, 1pm (open to the public)

Wednesday 13 August, **Local Government Sytems Improvements Bill workshop**, 3pm (open to the public)

Wednesday 20 August, **Council meeting**, 1pm

Thursday 21 August, **Stockwater Transition Working Group**, 1.30pm

ASHBURTON RRP HOURS

The Ashburton Resource Recovery Park is operating under its winter hours.

The facility is open from 8am-5pm Monday to Friday, and from 9am-5pm Saturday and Sunday.

Looking to bring your creative project to life?

We can help!

Whatever you’re planning, your arts project may be eligible for Creative Communities Scheme funding.

We’re seeking applications for projects that:

- ✓ **Increase opportunities for local participation in the arts**
- ✓ **Support the diverse artistic expressions of our local communities**
- ✓ **Enable young people to engage with the arts**

Ashburton District **creative** COMMUNITIES **nz**

Apply now! ashburtondc.govt.nz/grants

Ashburton DISTRICT COUNCIL

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)