

Youth inspired by workers' words



Twenty-seven young people from around the Ashburton District learned about different jobs and why people love doing them at an event last week designed to inspire future work choices.

The free Inspiring the Future event was facilitated by Council's Mayors Taskforce For Jobs co-ordinator Sharon Watson and hosted in Te Whare Whakatare, the new library and civic centre.

The young people heard from 10 local volunteer role models, who talked about their jobs, their pathway and challenges they faced along the way.

Role models included a lifeguard, a dog control officer, business owners, a jockey

and projects and logistics managers.

Mayor Neil Brown and deputy mayor Liz McMillan also dropped by to talk with the group.

"The role models covered a diverse range of industries and provided some really good insights into various career paths, and it was inspiring to hear their work histories and how they progressed their careers," Mayor Brown said.

"It was also interesting to realise that the one thing in common they all had and needed was customer service skills.

"I was a shepherd after I left school and then went to Lincoln before farming. As Mayor, I need customer service skills too."

The role models talked about careers

in military, logistics, diesel mechanics, medical, animals, creative fields, and computers/coding, while business owners spoke about having the courage to explore new possibilities.

Mayor Brown said the role models also passed on some good general work tips.

"They said having a driver's licence was imperative, but warned that traffic infringements and criminal convictions can impact what you do in the future.

"They also talked about having positive attitudes and being adaptable through their working lives."

Inspiring the Future events are held in collaboration with Connected NZ and the Ministry of Social Development.

Deputy Mayor - Liz McMillan Connecting with residents

It was a privilege to be able to speak recently about the thought and planning that went into the design and delivery of our new Council chambers, Hine Paaka.

The legend of Hine Paaka is a key aspect of the chambers and it has been brought to life through the wood panels, carvings and carpet. Hine Paaka was the wife of a Ngai Tahu chief, Maru, in the late 1600s and her name was given to a huge Matai tree at Alford Forest that stood for over a thousand years.

The tree was a landmark and used by Maori as they travelled across the district. In our chambers, you can see the branches of the Matai tree in the design of the wool carpet, you can see the leaves in carvings on the ceiling, and a pillar running from the ground floor through the chambers and up to Level 2 symbolises the trunk.

The design as a whole is to celebrate

democracy and we have been working hard in there already on issues that are important for the district. It has been wonderful to show residents through the chamber and wider building, and see their positive reactions.

Last week we hosted a group of international exchange students from Mt Hutt College and invited them to sit around the Council table. The nine students came from Japan, Thailand and South Korea, and are all busy improving their English language skills and enjoying our Kiwi way of living.

We've also restarted our weekly Talk it up Tuesday sessions, which are a chance for people to drop by for an informal chat with a councillor. Councillors take it in turns to host these weekly sessions, which are held from 1pm-2pm just inside the main entrance to Te Whare Whakatare.

It's a great chance to tell us about an idea or a worry on your mind, and if it's

something that our Customer Service team can help with, they are only 20 metres away.

It has also been good to see the hundreds of responses to the Safer Mid Canterbury and Council online survey inviting people to share their views on the future need for public transport. The survey is open until 8 March, so jump in and tell us what you think.

The feedback will be analysed, alongside the thoughts of community groups, businesses and existing transport operators, to help Council gauge if a public transport pilot is feasible.

Lastly I want to say a big congratulations to the Methven Rugby Club for hosting the Crusaders and Highlanders at the Methven Domain last Friday. The grounds looked incredible and the rugby match was a great event for the town.



SHORT AND SWEET

GRANTS DEADLINE

If you have a group, project or event that helps make Mid Canterbury a great place to live, then you may be eligible for a community grant - but act quickly, as applications for this round close on 29 February. Grant categories are diverse, from biodiversity and heritage to one-off projects. Applications are assessed against set criteria and funding allocated as part of the annual budget process. Check out all the info at ashburtondc.govt.nz/grants.

RIVERS DROPPING

River levels in Pudding Hill Stream and the North Ashburton are continuing to drop and there is no more stockwater available to take. People in the Chertsey, Somerton Road and associated areas will see significantly reduced flows. People should monitor races and seek alternative water for livestock should the flow stop altogether. Rangers are monitoring the situation and will keep what water they can flowing as far as possible.

LEGO FOR ADULTS

Ashburton Library has started a weekly Lego drop-in session for adults. The sessions are on Tuesdays, from 5.30pm to 7.30pm, and open to anyone 17 years and older. The library runs Lego Build sessions for youngsters (6-16 years) earlier on a Tuesday from 3.30pm-4.30pm, and the popularity of these has led to the Build Plus sessions for adults. The number of adults using Lego to burn off their day-time stress or let their imagination fly is increasing globally, with many saying it helps them unwind.

DOMAIN GATES

New steel gates have been installed at the main entrance of the Ashburton Domain. They were made by Perkins Engineering and are in a similar design to the domain's 1897 gates outside the domain office on West Street.



Want to book a meeting room?

Ashburton District Council has a range of meeting rooms, a large events space and AV studio that are available for public use in the Ashburton Library and Civic Centre, Te Whare Whakatere.

Bookings are subject to availability and fair use, and can be made online from Monday 26 February.

People and Facilities Group Manager Sarah Mosley said while the primary use of the rooms was for council business and library programmes, other people can also book the spaces when available.

"We're really excited to be in the new building and want the community to be able to use it as much as possible too."

Most of the meeting rooms are on the ground floor, with a tiered charging system (free, half rates, full rates) for external users based on a meeting's purpose and or community benefit.

Individuals or community groups who wish to host a meeting or event that focuses on social, cultural and environmental wellbeing or providing learning opportunities (within



library hours), should email us at library@adc.govt.nz or call us on 308-7192, as the booking could be eligible to pay half price rates or be free.

Private bookings can be made by corporate, government agencies, or individuals and range from \$20 an hour for a small room to \$40 an hour for a large room with kitchenette. Day and half-day rates are also available, with meetings that start and or finish outside of the library hours also possible in some meeting rooms, with any associated security costs covered by the user.

"The fees and conditions of use are included on the booking page and if you're not sure if your community group meets the criteria for the free or reduced

rates, or if you have questions, please get in touch," Ms Mosley said.

The meeting rooms have TV and video conferencing ability and are a range of sizes, to accommodate groups as small as five or as large as 30, as well as a crowd of about 70 in the event space, that has tiered seating and a 200 inch LED wall.

Making an online booking requires a minimum lead time of 72 hours to allow for weekends and public holidays, and can be made up to 30 days in advance. Contact Council for regular repeat bookings or those beyond 30 days.

Catering, and tea and coffee services within meeting rooms can be arranged privately by contacting our onsite café One Ninety Nine, other local caterers or you can bring your own suitable food, as two meeting rooms have kitchen facilities. Occupants are required to leave spaces clean and tidy with the same room setup.

With the move to Te Whare Whakatere, the library's hours changed to 8.30am to 6pm on Mondays and Fridays, 8.30am to 8pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10am to 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are at Council Chambers, 2 Baring Square East, unless specified. Meeting agendas are online at ashburtondc.govt.nz

Ashburton Water Zone Committee, Tuesday 27 February, 1pm (live-streamed)

Council Agencies - Six-month reports, Wednesday 28 February, 9.30am (live-streamed)

Road Safety Co-ordinating Committee, Tuesday 5 March, 9.30am, Wakanui Room
Council meeting, Wednesday 6 March, 1pm (live-streamed)

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

Council meeting, Wednesday 20 March, 1pm (live-streamed)

Ashburton Water Zone Committee, Tuesday 26 March, 1pm (live-streamed)

Council Activity Briefings, Wednesday 27 March, 9.30am

Audit & Risk Committee, Wednesday 27 March, 1pm (live-streamed)

Heritage Mid Canterbury Working Group, Wednesday 27 March, 3.30pm, Banded Dotterel Room

WORKS NOTICES

Graham Street/McMurdo Street - Traffic management (including one-way or full road closure) is in place at the intersection of McMurdo and Graham Streets until 29 February, as part of the SH1 improvements project. Access through the intersection will change, depending on work being done. Be prepared for a short detour, if posted.

Walker Street - Closed between Phillip and Elizabeth Street while contractors install new water and sewer pipes. Elizabeth Street outside the hospital is one-way (traffic running west to east). Hospital access remains.

Maronan Road - Traffic management is in place on Maronan Road while contractors rehabilitate a section between the Hinds River and just north of Swamp Road.

Thompsons Track - Closed between Braemar and Pole Roads until 15 March for road rehabilitation. Detours in place.

Tinwald viaduct - Closed until late February while contractors work on Waka Kotahi's SH1 Tinwald corridor improvements project.

Back Track and Barkers Road - Back Track is closed between Woods Road and Highbank Cairnbrae Road from 6 February until 8 March for repair and sealing. Barkers Road to Back Track is closed from 7-13 February for maintenance and sealing.

Seafield Road - Work is planned for Seafield Road, between Christys Road and Stanley Road, from 12 February to 19 May. Traffic management will be in place and will include detours from 4 March.

Upper Downs Road - Closed between Quarry Road and Hinds Gorge Road on 24 February for the Ashburton Car Club's shingle sprint event.

Full closure details on our website ashburtondc.govt.nz

Fitch gives strong bill of financial health

Ashburton District Council has been given a strong bill of financial health by one of the world's largest independent credit rating agencies.

Fitch Rating Services has given Council an AA+ rating for the fourth year in a row. This rating indicates Council is in a very strong position to meet its debt commitments in the future.

Council Business Support Group Manager Leanne Macdonald said the rating would ensure Council could continue to secure

lower interest rates when borrowing, which would help reduce the financial burden on ratepayers.

"This is a positive affirmation of Council's robust fiscal position and the efforts of current and previous elected Councils, and Council managers, to operate responsibly and efficiently for our community."

The Fitch report said Ashburton's stable revenue profile was underpinned by steady economic growth and capital expenditure was well planned.

Mrs Macdonald said Council revenue and cash flow largely covered its debt servicing.

"I'm pleased that Council has continued to be assessed independently as a well-run and financially robust local authority. The Fitch Ratings process takes an intensive look at many different parts of the organisation and should re-assure ratepayers about our financial management."

The full Council assessment is on fitchratings.com.

TALK IT UP

TUESDAYS

Got feedback on local issues?

A matter to raise with Council?

Drop by for a biscuit and a chat with a Councillor, and let us know how we can better serve our community.

Every Tuesday: 1pm - 2pm
Ashburton Library
No booking required.

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 6am-9pm (pools 7pm, gym 8pm)
Sat & Sun 7am-7pm (pools 5pm, gym 6pm)

ASHBURTON ART GALLERY & MUSEUM

327 West Street
10am-4pm daily (late night Wed)