

Skatepark now vested with Council

Ashburton District Mayor Neil Brown politely declined to take a spin around the Methven skatepark yesterday; the body was willing but the mind called caution.

The skatepark was built by a group of parents who wanted a healthy outdoor activity for their kids and it has now been officially handed over to Council to maintain into the future.

Parents Sally-Ann Kircher and Liz McMillan sealed the exchange by handing over a much-loved stakeboard that has seen plenty of action on the concrete bowls and ramps since the skatepark opened in 2020.

The project has been a mission for more than 10 years, after the Canterbury earthquakes damaged Methven's indoor skatepark.

Parents of the town held a public meeting and proposed some alternative activities, then Mrs Kircher spotted a skatepark in Wanaka and thought it would be an ideal fit in Methven.

Deputy Mayor Liz McMillan was among parents to join KidzMethven and she said the group first had to find appropriate land, then set about fundraising \$150,000 to build the skatepark.

Council offered land on McMillan Street and a design first sketched on the back of a serviette at the Green Parrot became the concept plan.

The idea was to provide a safe place for young people to ride their skateboards, scooters and bikes.



Ashburton Mayor Neil Brown, Sally-Ann Kircher (centre) and deputy Mayor Liz McMillan at the official handing over of the Methven skatepark this week.

Ms McMillan said the group applied for grants and ran fundraisers that ranged from selling teeshirts to organising fireworks and movie nights. The Methven Community Board also gave its backing, and some financial help.

"We begged and borrowed and leaned on our community, which has been so generous, helping with fencing, lights and landscaping. We think the skatepark is a real asset to Methven and it has the potential to host skate jams and other competitive events."

Mayor Brown said Council would now oversee maintenance on the skatepark, and that included the gardens, rubbish collection and mowing.

"Methven parents have worked very hard to create this great facility and it is well used by the kids of the town. It would be great to see some skateboarding tourists check it out too."

Council contributed \$10,000 to the skatepark project in its development stages and has included \$7540 in its 2022-23 Annual Plan to maintain the site.

Waste plan draws good feedback

A waste minimisation plan that proposes a new kerbside collection for food waste has attracted 129 submissions and the Council is pleased with the enthusiastic response.

Infrastructure Services Group Manager Neil McCann said the majority of the submissions on the draft Waste Minimisation and Management Plan focused on the proposal to introduce a food waste collection for households and offer it as a user-pays service to businesses.

"There was a range of views from the community, with some supporting an opt-in service and others wanting the collection expanded to include garden waste as well.

"Some other submitters were against the food waste collection altogether."

If Councillors adopted the plan as proposed, staff would investigate options for how the food waste collection could operate and how much it would cost. Further consultation with the community would be held once that work was completed, likely during an upcoming Annual or Long Term Plan.

The draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan aims to reduce waste going to landfill; in 2020, nearly 4000 tonnes of material was prevented from going to landfill, through recycling and reuse.

"We know we can divert more and at this stage, and we wanted to obtain the community's feedback regarding a household food waste collection service and our other proposed actions."

Councillors will hear from submitters and deliberate on feedback on the draft on 6 July, with the final form of the plan due to be adopted by Council on 27 July. Both meetings will be livestreamed.

On 6 July, Councillors will also consider 28 submissions received on the draft Trading in Public Places Bylaw.

People can view the submissions for both consultations online at ashburtondc.govt.nz/haveyoursay

Neil Brown, Mayor Standing the test of time

The last day of June marks the end of Council's financial year and a 12-month period that has been challenging, uncertain and rewarding all at the same time.

We started the year trying to bring many roads back up to scratch following the floods of May 2021 and have ended it by agreeing to draw \$1.7 million from reserves to keep up that momentum - through a roading programme of repairs, renewals and maintenance that is part of our Annual Plan 2022-23.

That Annual Plan sets out an average 9.4 per cent rate rise for the coming financial year, and that has been driven by the rising costs of goods and services everywhere and property revaluations that will impact urban people the most. The budget for this period was difficult and is about needs rather than wants.

We have some big projects still on the go: the library and civic centre continues to take shape on Baring Square East and will inject many more

workers into the CBD when Council moves into it next year.

The detailed business case for a second urban bridge is also progressing and that will be back before Council on 17 August. Our roading staff and the consultant engineers have been meeting with stakeholders about the proposed design, and I will be on a plane to Wellington to talk to Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and deputy Grant Robertson as soon as the costs are known.

Much of our other work has been business as usual, and that is ongoing but crucial work to ensure we get clean water from our taps, that our wastewater is dealt with properly and our rubbish collected and disposed of.

It has been great to see the CBD come back to life and the importance of that project, and the job well done, was acknowledged with a commendation at local government awards recently.

A Royal tree planting tour around the



district, to plant seven London Plane trees to celebrate the Queen's platinum jubilee year, was another reminder about projects that will stand the test of time.

This will be my last column ahead of the Local Body Elections, as the pre-election period begins on 8 July and there are rules around communication and campaigning in my role as Mayor. That doesn't mean elected members stop work, we will all be carrying on in the business of Council until a new group is elected on 8 October.

Nominations for roles as district councillors, Mayor and Methven Community Board members open on 15 July and Council will hold an evening for potential candidates on 19 July. If you are thinking about standing, then this is a great time to see what is involved in shaping our district.

Winter Driving

Be alert.
Slow down.

Water meters rolling out for Methven trial

ACL is making good progress on a project to install 1200 water meters on Methven properties, as part of a trial to assist with the management of the water supply and identify leaks.

Covid supply chain delays meant the bulk of the water meters have only just arrived in the district and ACL will install them over the next few months on behalf of the Ashburton District Council.

Infrastructure Services Group Manager Neil McCann said ACL had previously identified the location of toby boxes, and which connections would also need manifolds.

“Now they have begun installing the water meters and as at the end of last week about 300 had been fitted.”

The contractor is working street-by-street and Methven residents can expect a card in their letterbox advising when water will be shut off in their area for meters to be installed.

“The card will tell residents the date and time of the shut off, and how long it will last. We advise people to make sure they have enough drinking water and the jug full. It can take three or four hours to do a typical street.”

Staff undertaking the work may also require access to an outside tap.



A typical water connection in Methven, during and after meter installation.

Installing the water meter usually involves excavating around the toby, installing a manifold (if there is not one already) and then fitting the meter.

“A survey in April showed there were about 400 properties that required new manifolds and they typically have older pipe connections,” Mr McCann said.

“The meters will be read digitally using radio technology similar to bluetooth, by a staff member in a vehicle, going down the street every six to eight weeks.”

Council has previously estimated up to 65 per cent of water in the Methven community water supply was

unaccounted for in the system.

“Once we get meters on all the connections we can determine where the water is actually going and whether there is leakage is on the public network or on private property.

“The information will also eventually be used to prioritise acoustic leak detection activities on the public network.”

He said education around water use was also part of the wider programme and in the future Council would be helping residents understand the data collected from their meters.

Gallery prepares for arts society annual event



Vanja Venrooy prepping her art for the exhibition.

The Ashburton Art Gallery and Museum is preparing for one of its busiest times of the year, when it hosts the Ashburton Society of Arts' annual exhibition.

Entries began arriving last weekend and staff have been busy working on displays, and helping artists arrange their work. Winners in the various categories will be announced at a special opening night event on Monday 4 July.

It is the society's 58th annual exhibition and it will be open to the public daily from Tuesday 5 July until Friday 29 July.

There are 11 awards for art and sculpture, three for applied art, craft and photography, and one for miniatures. There is also a People's Choice award.

The gallery traditionally records its highest visitor numbers during the exhibition, which features about 200 works that are also available to purchase.

The visual feast is provided by local, national and guest artists in a variety of media, and commissions from sales help run the society's Short Street studio.

Society members will be present at the gallery everyday throughout the exhibition, so this is a great opportunity to visit and learn more about one of Ashburton's longest established art organisations.

The society was formed in 1964, with the philosophy to encourage the study, practice and creativity of the visual arts.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are at Council Chambers, 137 Havelock Street, unless specified

Submission hearings: Waste Management and Minimisation Plan, and Trading in Public Places Bylaw, Wednesday 6 July, 9am (live-streamed)

Methven Community Board, Monday 25 July, 10.30am, at Mt Hutt Memorial Hall

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

Council meeting, Wednesday 27 July 1pm (live-streamed)

PUBLIC NOTICES

SMOKE-FREE FIRES

Winter is upon us, and we want everyone to be warm and cosy in their homes. A smoke-free fire means a warmer, cheaper fire – and cleaner air for us all to breathe.

Environment Canterbury has started its winter air campaign and is urging people to remember these three things to ensure a smoke-free fire:

- Use of dry, well-seasoned wood
- Adopting good burning technique
- Use of a modern, well-maintained burner.

Ensuring your wood is dry and well-seasoned is key to burning a hotter, more efficient fire with less smoke. It'll also save you money as you'll use less wood to achieve a better result.

See a list of Trusted Good Wood Merchants at warmercheaper.co.nz, and watch some video tips on burning "upside down", identifying when your chimney needs cleaning and learn how to stack like a pro.

Need help with your technique?



It's doggy rego time!

It's now time to register or re-register your four-legged friend.

Look out for the information pack in your mailbox or visit our website to register online.



0101

All dogs over the age of three months need to be registered by 31 July.

Ashburton
DISTRICT COUNCIL
ashburtondc.govt.nz

TAKE A STAND
STAND FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

VOTE 2022
LOCAL ELECTIONS

voteashburton.nz

Thinking about standing in the upcoming local government elections?

This session will provide you with the information you'll need to know and answer your questions about standing for election.

CANDIDATE INFORMATION EVENING

Tuesday, 19 July at 5.30pm | Council Chambers, 137 Havelock Street, Ashburton

COUNCIL OFFICE

5 Baring Square West
Mon, Tue, Wed & Fri 8.30am - 5pm
Thursday 9am - 5pm

ASHBURTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

180 Havelock Street, Ashburton 7700
Mon - Fri 9.00am - 8.00pm
Sat 10am - 1pm | Sun 1pm - 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 & ASHBURTON MUSEUM

327 West Street
10am - 4pm daily