

Methven primed for walking festival

Registrations opened yesterday for Methven's new walking festival, which will take place in and around Methven over Easter and the first week of the school holidays and feature 16 different walks – scarecrows and an enchanted forest included.

Deputy Mayor Liz McMillan is one of 12 on the organising committee and said the walks were suitable for a wide range of ages and fitness and included a food and wine trail, a dog walk, an enchanted forest walk and a hike into the Woolshed Creek hut that was part of the Mt Somers track.

"We've got something for everyone and crossing our fingers that the new Sharplin Falls track will also be ready by then and able to be part of the programme. Even before registrations opened we've had good interest in the wine and food trail, which will include food and beverages from four Methven restaurants within walking distance of each other.

"I am also really looking forward to the dog walk, which will take in dog-friendly parts of town and the Methven dog park."

Details about the 16 walks available between 8 April and 16 April are on the festival's website www.methvenwalkingfestival.nz, along with registration forms.

Children's events include the annual scarecrow trail, which opens on 8 April and runs all school holidays, the enchanted forest and fairy walk, and the ramble around Awa Awa Rata Reserve, where children can find a token hidden in the famous bush and exchange it for an Easter egg.



For the serious walkers, there are longer hikes into Woolshed Creek hut and to Scotts Saddle. Several other walks have a historic flavour and share details of how Methven and the surrounding district and foothills developed.

Ms McMillan said the organising committee had been meeting regularly for a year to plan, and while some of the walks were free, those with entry fees would see the money donated to the different groups that managed the walks, like the Mt Somers Walkway Society.

"Methven used to have a walking festival many years ago and we rejuvenated a couple of their most popular walks and added a few more. We see this as a festival that could run annually or every two years and help showcase all the different walks available in our beautiful Methven district.

"We hope that locals will join us and that people from outside the area will come and stay for a few days and take part in several walks."

The festival has been supported by local businesses and with grants, including \$6500 over two years from the Regional Event Fund administered by Council.

Ms McMillan said the combined grants had helped organisers set up a professional website and undertaking marketing and promotion.

"These are the financial boosts that often help a fledgling event off the ground. We really appreciated that help and hope the walking festival becomes a regular and successful event for Methven and the district."

New grants round open for March

Each year, Ashburton District Council provides funding to community groups and projects that help make Mid Canterbury a great place to live.

We're seeking applications for the March funding round, so if your project would benefit, apply now!

✓ Sport New Zealand Rural Travel Fund - Helping cover travel costs for junior sports teams participating in regular competitions.

✓ Mid Canterbury Regional Event Fund - Funding for events that help to attract visitors to our region.

✓ Trail Maintenance Fund - Grants to help maintain and enhance, walking and cycling trails in Mid Canterbury.

✓ Looking to bring your creative project to life? Whether you're making a movie, producing a play or hosting an exhibition, your arts project may be eligible for funding from the Creative Communities Scheme.

Applications open until 31 March.

Find out more at ashburtondc.govt.nz/grants or email grants@adc.govt.nz or phone (03) 307 9646.

Neil Brown - Mayor

Thank you for your flood relief donations

I want to begin with a heartfelt thank you to the residents of our district that have made donations to help people up north affected by Cyclone Gabrielle as they piece their lives back together.

As at Tuesday this week, our Flood Relief Fund had a total of \$11,200 in it and the account will stay open for some time yet if you want to help grow the donations. In these sorts of disasters, cash is the best way to help and donors can specify which region they want their money sent to.

As part of an initiative by Local Government New Zealand, our council has "adopted" Masterton District Council, where some of their rural areas were badly flooded by rain that was part of the cyclone's wide and destructive path.

The devastating effects of Gabrielle are going to be felt for a long time, and Masterton District has suffered loss and destruction and needs our help. Ashburtonians are renowned for our ability to rally around and support each other in hard times, so I have faith that we will answer the call to help Masterton residents who need it.

Please don't rush out and buy items or clear out something you have at home to donate, as the logistics to transport things to the North Island are far too complicated and costly. Cash is king as it's so easily accessible for the people who need to rebuild their lives.

On the home front, councillors have devoted plenty of time and energy into the Annual Plan for 2023-24 and we are tracking for an average 5.99 per cent rate rise across the district. We've deferred some non-critical work in the

water space, but added an extra \$1 million to the roading budget – overall, this is not a bad result, given inflation is at 7.2 per cent and the rising cost of living is affecting us all.

I also had the pleasure recently of being invited to speak at the official opening ceremony of the Ashburton Methodist parish church on Baring Square East – the church was closed for 13 years after the Christchurch earthquakes and has been strengthened and rebuilt, and is open again for business.

The church is looking fantastic and will blend in nicely with the new library (Te Pātaka o kā Tuhihi) and civic centre (Te Waharoa a Hine Paaka) and the redeveloped Baring Square East which will be completed later this year.

We look forward to being good neighbours.



The late councillor Rodger Letham had a connection to the church and I am sure his wonderful singing voice is missed, as is his presence around the Council table.

Rodger certainly leaves big shoes to fill and the by-election to fill his seat on the Western Ward is currently under way. Nominations close on Thursday 16 March and a postal vote will be required if there is more than one nomination.

You can find all the details about the nomination and by-election process at voteashburton.nz

Youth Council busy in recruiting mode

Ashburton Youth Council (AYC) is ready to jump back into action after a covid-induced hiatus and they're looking for new young people who are keen to get involved.

The group is open to those between 12 and 24, with members meeting about once a month. The Youth Council gets to work directly with councillors and one of its main goals is to make sure young peoples' views are represented in decision-making processes.

It's not all work though - current AYC members Isabel, Maddie and Sophia, all find organising youth community events to be one of the most enjoyable and rewarding parts of the role.

They're keen to see their membership grow, so with the support of Council staff, they've launched a recruitment campaign utilising advertising across youth channels, such as social media. They're also planning to have a table at Ashburton College's orientation day on Tuesday 7 March, where they can directly share their experiences with their peers.

Isabel, who designed some of the artwork in the campaign, said she enjoyed learning new skills at Youth Council gatherings and workshops.

"I hope we gain more youth councillors in the coming year who will bring new perspectives. If you are creative or inquisitive, then you would make a great AYC member."

Cr Phill Hooper and Cr Russell Ellis are the elected members attached to the Youth Council and attend their meetings. Cr Hooper said it was a great opportunity for young people to make their mark on the community and provide a youth



Youth Council members (from left) Maddie, Isabel and Sophia handed out popcorn at Council's Christmas movie night.

perspective on the important decisions that will affect the next generation of residents.

"We're keen to get events for young people going again. In the past, the Youth Council have run things like skate jams and Bite Night. We know young people learn a lot by organising these events and they also help make our district more vibrant for everyone."

AYC member Maddie said learning to run events was a great skill to develop, and members also had the chance to strengthen their leadership abilities.

"Even if you don't see politics or local government in your future, the knowledge and skills you gain from being part of the team will benefit you no matter what your future holds."

Cr Ellis said parents should think about encouraging their own, or other young people, to apply. "If you have a young person at home who enjoys planning events or leadership roles, and who might appreciate the opportunities that Youth Council can bring, then definitely encourage them to apply."

Sophia, another youth councillor, agrees. She said she's loved the opportunity to give back to the community through volunteering at events and enjoyed interacting with elected councillors.

"I think that the Youth Council is an amazing opportunity for the youth of Ashburton. I truly love being part of it, and it has helped me grow as a person."

Applications can be made online at ashburtondc.govt.nz/ayc



Poo pipes perfectly placed

The final pieces of pipe in the North West Ashburton wastewater extension were laid underground on Allens Road recently, but not before attracting a bit of attention because of their unusual shape.

The final 64 metre section of pipes is larger in diameter than all the other pipes in the 2km of new network and designed to act as a storage chamber for wastewater coming from the north-west.

The fibreglass storage pipes were laid in a trench dug in the middle of Allens Road between Mill Creek and Carters Road, next to a pump station that will pump the wastewater to Middle Road and the town's

main wastewater network. The north west extension will cater for residential growth.

Infrastructure and Open Spaces Group Manager Neil McCann said the additional storage volume is required to accommodate sudden surges, which often happen on rainy days.

"A surge is often the result of more people being inside on rainy days or when water in the ground gets into the wastewater system. Based on future developments in the Farm Road, Carters Road, Allens Road area, the extension required 287 cubic metres of storage, and this storage pipe helps us achieve that."

The storage pipe has a 40-year lifespan.

ROAD WORKS NOTICES

Thompsons Track - current to 31 March. Thompsons Track between Winchmore Lauriston Road and Line Road is temporarily closed for roading maintenance and reseal works. Detour available.

Mayfield Valetta Road - current to 6 April. Mayfield Valetta Road between Tinwald Westerfield Mayfield Road and Anama Valetta Road is temporarily closed during the day for rehabilitation. Resident access remains, detour available.

Holmes Road - current to 17 March. Holmes Road between Mt Hutt Station Road and Barkers Road is closed for a full road reconstruction and drainage installation. Detour options available.

Railway Terrace East (Rakaia) - current to 31 March. Railway Terrace East from Rolleston Street to Bridge Street SH1 is temporarily closed for work associated with Waka Kotahi's weigh station project.

Allens Road - current until 9 April. Allens Road between Carters Road and Turton Street will be closed while the North West Ashburton wastewater system is extended and connected to the town network. Detour available.

Allens Road - Sections of Allens Road between Middle Road and Harrison Street will be closed over the next few weeks for watermain renewal. Detour available.

Arundel Rakaia Gorge Road - current until 10 March. Arundel Rakaia Gorge Road will be closed between Mayfield Klondyke Road and Moorhouse Road to enable roading repairs. Detour is available.

Seafield Road - Seafield Road, between Bremners Road and Bridge Street, will be closed on 28 March, from 7am until 5pm to allow EA Networks to replace two poles. Detours are available.

View a map of all current and upcoming road closures in the district by going to our website ashburtondc.govt.nz

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are held in the Council Chambers, 137 Havelock Street, (unless otherwise advised).

Youth Council Meeting, Tuesday 8 March, 4pm

Methven Community Board Meeting, Monday 13 March, 10.30am at Mt Hutt Memorial Hall

Council Meeting, Wednesday 15 March, 1pm (live-streamed)

Council Activity Briefing, Wednesday 22 March, 9.30am

Audit and Risk Meeting, Wednesday 22 March, 1.30

Ashburton Water Zone Committee Meeting, Tuesday 28 March, 1pm (live-streamed)

TRIENNIAL MEETINGS

Mayfield Reserve and Hall Board - Tuesday 28 March, 7.30pm at the Mayfield hall

PUBLIC NOTICE

GRAZING TENDER

The Ashburton District Council, on behalf of the Rakaia Reserve Board, seeks tenders to graze the land described below:

Michael Street, Rakaia

- Area 2.0234 ha approximately
- Legal Description: RES 2986 RAKAIA TSHIP-RECREATION RES

A five-year (5) year grazing licence is proposed with a commencement of 1 April 2023.

Tenderers may tender by completing the appropriate tender documentation which may be obtained from **Council's Customer Services Department** at 5 Baring Square West, Ashburton, by phoning Council on 03 307 7700 or by e-mailing info@adc.govt.nz

Tenders are to be enclosed in an envelope enfaced "**Rakaia Reserve Board Licence to Occupy**" and are to be either delivered or posted to reach Council by closing time of 4pm, **Friday 24 March 2023.**

Tenders for the sections close with the Chief Executive Officer, Ashburton District Council, PO BOX 94, ASHBURTON 7700.

Highest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

Officer for enquiries - Ann Smith, Property Officer

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 9am - 8pm
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