

Machines roll up for mini golf

Mayor Neil Brown turned the first sod of earth for Ashburton's new mini golf course on Tuesday, using a 5-tonne mini excavator.

He climbed into the cab of the machine, owned by local business Grant Hood Contracting and used the controls to dig up several buckets of dirt, marking the official start of the project.

The outdoor mini golf course is being constructed at EA Networks Centre, on the north side of the carpark, and will have three levels.

Mayor Brown said it was great to have the project under way.

"This will be a free activity that we know lots of families and young people will enjoy, and it adds to the outdoor attractions at Council's sport and recreation centre.

"Once it's finished, people will be able to bring their own putters and balls down to play, or hire equipment from the centre. It'll be a lot of fun."

The 18-hole course should be ready for play by summer.

People and Facilities Group Manager Sarah Mosley said Grant Hood Contracting moved in this week, to begin excavating the site and then construction of the retaining walls.



Men at work: Mayor Neil Brown was happy to turn the first sod of earth for the mini golf project, under the supervision of contractor Grant Hood (left) and EA Networks Centre manager Richard Wood.

"The work area has been fenced off and they'll be creating three levels for the holes. The flat area in front of the carpark will be for holes one to 11, and the other holes will be on higher terraces, looking down towards EA Networks Centre."

It is the contractor's first mini golf course, though the company was involved in construction of an outdoor golf course at Millbrook Resort.

The Mid Canterbury-themed mini golf holes are being designed and built by

Creo, specialists in building play spaces. The holes will be made from synthetic turf and recycled rubber, suitable for the outdoor environment.

Ms Mosley said the holes would be constructed off site and delivered and installed two at a time.

Carparking at the EA Networks Centre will remain largely unaffected during the works, and the steps from River Terrace will also remain open for pedestrians.

WATER WORKS

Line Road

Parts of Line Road, in Methven, will be closed to traffic from 18 August while new wastewater pipes are installed over the next two months. Council's contractor Tru-Line Civil is laying about 800 metres of 375mm diameter pipe from Methven's wastewater treatment plant west along Line Road to the township, and initially Line Road will be closed between Dolma Street and Methven Chertsey Road.



Wastewater strategy

Council is developing a wastewater strategy to protect and serve both the community and the environment over the next decades. It will include assessing current wastewater flows and predicted demand, as well as extending wastewater services into Hinds and Mt Somers, stormwater infiltration into the wastewater network at Tinwald, and disposal options for treated wastewater from the Ashburton scheme.

CE Hamish Riach

Pipe renewals lead winter work



One of my regular walking routes takes me past the Argyle Park water treatment plant and it's been great to see that upgrade project be completed well ahead of schedule.

A new UV disinfection step was added to the plant, so it complies with national drinking water rules, and the site will now be tidied up and the fences taken down.

Council has been installing UV equipment on other community water treatment plants that require it and by the end of the year that huge job will be almost complete.

It's a high bar for 100 per cent compliance and only part of it is the physical equipment at the plant. Monitoring and reporting also contributes to compliance and if a plant misses just one daily report then it is considered non-compliant for the whole year.

New national rules for wastewater treatment are also in the pipeline and Council will wait to see how those affect our longterm work. In the

meantime, we are spending millions of dollars renewing wastewater pipes in urban areas, and trying to ensure our pipe networks and treatment facilities remain operating at their best.

Driving around Ashburton at the moment, you can see this work on Philip Street and Tancred Street, and soon the people of Methven will see renewal work on Line Road. Wastewater is not a sexy subject, but it's a service that needs to run super-smoothly because nobody wants blocked pipes and sewage overflows.

I had the privilege recently of attending the launch of the ANZ Business of the Year Awards. The awards are hosted by Council and organised by event specialists Ri Ra, with the aim of celebrating our big, medium and little businesses that grow and thrive.

The Ashburton District does punch above its weight economically and that is the result of much hard work by business owners, managers and staff.

The awards are held every two years and the 2026 category winners and supreme winner will be announced at the gala next February.

SHORT AND SWEET

STAYING SAFE

Council, Age Concern and NZ Transport Agency are teaming up to run another refresher course for older drivers. The Staying Safe course will be on **Friday 5 September**, at the Senior Centre on Cameron Street, from 10am-2pm - phone 308-6817 to register, or email ageconcernashburton@xtra.co.nz. This is a free classroom course to re-familiarise yourself with traffic rules and safe driving practices.

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.

LOVE NOODLES?

The Hakatere Noodle Festival is back on Saturday 13 September! Join us at Baring Square East from 3pm for a night of yummy noodles and entertainment to celebrate our multicultural community during Welcoming Week. There'll be dishes from a host of food trucks and you can explore flavours including Korean, Thai, Singaporean, Filipino, Japanese, Cantonese, Mexican, Indian, Argentinian and more...



CAREER FEST

Mid Canterbury businesses, educators and community organisations are being invited to showcase their trade at an interactive careers event on Thursday 9 October. Career Fest 2025 is aimed at showing the many different industries and jobs that are available. Interested in being an exhibitor? Email our Mayors Taskforce for Jobs co-ordinator Sharon.Watson@adc.govt.nz

Illegal downpipes causing issues

Downpipes illegally connected to gully traps on residential properties are putting pressure on Council’s wastewater networks, particularly in the Tinwald catchment.

Water that comes from the roof or gutters should end up in soak pits or stormwater drains, not the wastewater network, which for Ashburton and Tinwald conveys sewage and used household water to the Wilkins Road treatment facility.

Group Manager of Infrastructure Neil McCann said that the treatment facility at Wilkins Road experienced very high flows during a big rain event recently and Council staff suspected illegal discharges into gully traps and low-lying gully traps were part of the problem.

“We asked staff to investigate areas of Tinwald and they discovered downpipes discharging into gully traps and low-lying traps, in both older and newer houses. We’ve written letters to property owners as a result and asked them to take action.

“Downpipes in some houses discharge into pipes that lead to the kerb and channel and Council’s stormwater system, and that is okay. Downpipes in other



A downpipe illegally discharging into a wastewater gully trap.

houses may discharge into soak pits in the ground and water is absorbed that way.

“However, we have found some soak pits have been paved over or need maintenance, and concerningly we found some downpipes discharging straight into the gully traps for wastewater. We also found some gully traps were set too low in the ground and surface water was able to easily run into them.”

Mr McCann said the Building Act had

specific requirements for the way drainage systems were constructed, regardless of the age of a residential property.

“Council also has a drainage bylaw to project the sewerage network from stormwater infiltration, but we prefer education rather than prosecution, though that could be a step of last resort.”

The Building Act requires a gully trap be located at least 25mm above a paved surface and 100mm above an unpaved surface.

Soak pits, or soak holes, should not be in high-traffic areas so the soil above and around it is not compacted. They can get blocked with silt or vegetation over time but can be cleaned and flushed by professionals; slow drainage is a sign that your soak pit needs maintenance.

Plumbers know the legal requirements regarding stormwater and can advise the best ways for property owners to comply.

Mr McCann said high groundwater in the Tinwald area had also contributed to recent high flows in the wastewater system and Council was assessing the condition of its own pipe network to check for issues.

PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURE

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

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.

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

Thursday 21 August, **Canterbury Water Management Strategy** Local Leadership Groups (Environment Canterbury) briefing, 9am

Wednesday 27 August, **Treasury Policy Workshop**, 1.30pm

Wednesday 3 September, **Council meeting**, 1pm

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

Community board members elected

The five new members of the Methven Community Board have been officially declared elected to office.

Five residents stood for the five seats on the board, including incumbent board members Megan Fitzgerald, Richie Owen and Robin Jenkinson. They are now joined by Simon Wareing and Faye Barrand.

The community board members will be inducted into office late October, alongside the new mayor and Council decided in the upcoming Local Elections. The first meeting of the board is pencilled in for 10 November.

Retiring board chair Kelvin Holmes said the community was in good hands.

“There’s a good mix around the table and I’m certain they will enjoy the work,



New members Simon Wareing and Faye Barrand.

which is all about growing Methven and advocating for things that our community needs. We are all passionate about our place and I look forward to seeing the new Methven strategic plan continue to be rolled out.”

Methven people still need to vote in the Local Elections, as the district needs a new mayor and two Western Ward councillors.

Mr Holmes said voters could get to know

the candidates in both contests at a meet-the-candidate evening in Methven on Wednesday 20 August.

“This is a good opportunity to come along, listen to them, and ask a few questions. It’s important people know who they’re voting for and why they want to represent their communities.”

The Methven meet-the-candidate event will be held at the Mt Hutt Memorial Hall, starting at 7pm.

Another candidate evening will be held at Ashburton College auditorium on Wednesday 27 August. This event will be livestreamed, and a recorded version available on Council’s Facebook and YouTube channels.

The two Eastern Ward candidates have also been officially declared elected by the Electoral Officer – incumbent Richard Wilson will be joined by Phill Everest.

Arts project on the go?

Looking to bring your creative project to life? We can help!

Whether you're producing a play or hosting an exhibition, your arts project could be eligible for funding from the Creative Communities NZ.

Council is inviting applications for any project that helps to increase local participation in the arts - you can apply until 31 August. Find out more about the scheme, and qualifying criteria, and apply online at ashburtondc.govt.nz/grants

Meet Your Local Candidates!

It's nearly time to elect a new Mayor and Council, but how well do you know the people asking for your vote? Come along to our Q&A session and hear directly from the candidates.

METHVEN
Wed 20 August, 7pm
Mt Hutt Memorial Hall Function Room

ASHBURTON
Wed 27 August, 7pm
Ashburton College Auditorium



voteashburton.nz

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)