

SAFE COMMUNITIES ASHBURTON DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT: 1 JULY, 2019 - 30 JUNE, 2020



Our Vision: Ashburton District, our place, a safe place to live, work and play, free from preventable injury and harm



What is a “Safe Community”?

The Safe Community model enables local communities to increase action on injury prevention and safety promotion through local **collaboration**. Working together provides the opportunity to take a district-wide, strategic overview of community safety issues in the District and enables greater reach and a collective “weight” to respond to them.

Ashburton District – Key Safety Issues (identified by research and community consultation)

- Rural Safety/Rural Isolation
- Falls in Older People, Leading to Fatality or Hospitalisation
- Road Safety
- The Environment (built and natural)
- Alcohol, Drugs and Community Safety (early intervention/prevention)
- Harm Reduction/Prevention (family harm; suicide prevention)
- Theft/Burglary
- Social Recovery in Covid-19 Times

Governance Structure

- There is a Steering Group of 27 agencies, chaired by Deputy Mayor Liz McMillan

- The Steering Group has developed a Five-Year Strategic Plan (2019-2024) to improve safety in the District and has delivered the first year through its 2019-2020 Business Plan
- Working Groups are developed for projects, which agencies “self-select” to join if they have an interest
- The Steering Group meets bi-monthly and receives reports from the Working Groups
- A Safe Communities Co-ordinator is employed 20 hours per week to co-ordinate the Steering Group and to develop and co-ordinate projects

Key Achievements: 1 July, 2019 - 30 June, 2020: Delivering Year 1 of the 2019-2024 Strategy

People Keeping Themselves and Their Families Safe – the Importance of Access to Quality, Up to Date Information:

- **Promoting Safety Messages - Safety Village, Ashburton A and P Show, 1st and 2nd Nov, 2019** – 12 agencies took part in this 2-day Show, collaborating to gain a high profile for safety messages and demonstrations. Positive feedback was received from the community.



Kitchen fire demonstration by Fire and Emergency New Zealand - Safety Village

- **Citizens Advice Bureau**

A partnership with the Community House Mid Canterbury and Citizens Advice Bureau National Office, to establish this new service for Ashburton District at the Community House. Establishment funding and a grant for the 2020-2021 financial year from the Council enabled the early establishment of this service to go ahead, with the appointment of a part-time Co-ordinator in June. Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS) funding was applied for to enable the Community Directory for the District, currently on the Community House Mid Canterbury website, to be uploaded onto the Citizens Advice Bureau website (www.cab.org.nz), which has a Community Directory with over 47,000 listings from around New Zealand.



Rural Isolation - Community Transport Project – Ashburton District has no public transport system. This project aims to reduce rural isolation by looking at the need for a low cost community van service, using volunteer drivers, to bring people living in the more rural/remote areas of the District into Ashburton Township regularly for medical appointments, shopping, visiting friends and family, doing business with Council, etc. Funding was applied for from COGS to run a 6-month trial in order to ascertain demand for the service and to test preferred routes and pick-up places around the District.

A Falls Prevention/Home Safety Network has been established. A promotion on local strength and balance classes and the Live Stronger for Longer Home Safety Checklist was co-ordinated in both local community newspapers, as part of the Age Concern Ashburton Older Persons Expo held on 5 March, 2020.

Suicide Prevention – the Safe Communities project assisted the Safer Mid Canterbury Lives Worth Living Suicide Prevention Programme with the establishment of a Mid Canterbury Suicide Prevention/Postvention Network, aimed at working collaboratively to promote wellbeing/resiliency and ultimately reduce suicide in the District. A draft Mid Canterbury Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan (2019-2024) and Charter was developed.

Social Recovery in Covid-19 Times – the Safe Communities project was pleased to assume responsibility for co-ordinating the social recovery project from the Council. Funding was obtained from Advance Ashburton to conduct a large research project, looking at the short, medium and long-term impacts on the community of the pandemic; the capacity of the not for profit sector to cope with potentially increasing demand; and the need to work with local funders to align funding with community needs.

Safe Communities Foundation of New Zealand Governance Survey

After its first year of operation, the Safe Communities Steering Group took part in its first annual survey conducted by the Safe Communities Foundation of New Zealand.

The survey report provides a picture of how well the governance group is functioning, in particular how well the group is combining members' knowledge, skills and resources, so that the group can accomplish more together than on their own.

Our Steering Group had a very strong performance, with 5/6 scores rated strong in terms of collaboration; leadership; members believing the group has legitimacy and credibility; and satisfaction with the way the group is developing and implementing its plans.

Looking Forward: Delivering Year 2 of the 2019-2024 Strategy - Key Projects and Focuses 2020-2021:

Information:

- Safety Village, Ashburton A and P Show, 30th and 31st October, 2020.

- Citizens Advice Bureau – work with the project partners and the CAB Co-ordinator to recruit and train volunteers, establish the service at the Community House Mid Canterbury and upload the Community Directory onto the Citizens Advice Bureau website/database. Contribute to the establishment of an incorporated society which will manage the service.

Rural Isolation – Community Transport Project – recruit and train volunteer drivers and run a six-month trial of the service using the Community House Community Van. Establish a Community Vehicle Trust which will manage the service.

Falls Prevention/Home Safety – undertake a promotion during the month of October, including a newspaper feature for International Day of Older Persons (1st October); free passes to strength and balance classes over the month and participation in the Safety Village at the Ashburton A and P Show (30th and 31st October). Establish a regular monthly newspaper column promoting safety in the home. Research the need for a service assisting older people to review home safety and install any required safety devices (for example non-slip rugs) in their homes.

Suicide Prevention – continue to work with the Mid Canterbury Suicide Prevention Network to develop collaborative projects which have been identified in the Mid Canterbury Suicide Prevention/Postvention Strategy and Action Plan, which will grow wellbeing and resiliency in the District and assist people affected by suicide.

Social Recovery in Covid-19 Times – widely share the results of the social recovery research project. Develop an Action Plan to identify projects which will benefit the social recovery of the District and the agencies supporting this, and work collaboratively to achieve them.

Burglary/Theft – develop a promotion along with Police and Neighbourhood Support.

Establish a **Parenting Network** to promote parenting skills and programmes available.

Work with ACC to explore how best to support the **farming/rural community** with safety concerns/issues.

Funding

Thanks to Ashburton District Council for their continued support of the Safe Communities programme.

ACC has made a 5-year commitment (\$15,000 per annum) to supporting the programme, from 2019-2024.

Funding of \$15,000 was obtained by Safer Mid Canterbury from Advance Ashburton for the social recovery community research project.

Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS) funding of \$4,525 was received to enable a six-month trial of the Community Transport project.

Concluding Remarks

Ashburton District has developed a robust coalition of government and community stakeholders, working across a range of sectors, under the Safe Community “umbrella”.

The Safe Communities Ashburton District programme is achieving valuable, lasting “legacy” projects for the District which will continue to benefit local residents.

Working collaboratively and the sharing of skills, knowledge, resources, information, ideas and experience between local community safety agencies will increase community safety in Ashburton District over time.