

Surprises around every corner!

Ashburton Library staff are gearing up to celebrate the opening of the new library on Monday and can't wait to show it to the public.

Regular guided tours of the new space are planned for the first two weeks and new activities organised so the facility can show off its cutting-edge creative spaces.

People and Facilities Group Manager Sarah Mosley said the new library space was over twice the size of the old library and significantly widens its services to the community.

"It is spread out on the ground floor and Level 1 of the new library and civic building, Te Whare Whakatare, and there are many new spaces and activities to explore.

"You can record your own podcast using our modern equipment in the new sound studio, or you can grab a book from the sport section and read it from a window seat with a fantastic view of Baring Square East and the mountains.

"While much is new, it's also going to be exciting to resume our regular events in this state-of-the-art new setting."

The children's library is on the ground floor and incorporates historic Pioneer Hall (which also features Mid Canterbury's legendary black panther). At the other end of the children's library, Ashburton author and illustrator David Elliot has created a special piece of work that has been magnified and encompasses the entire eastern wall.



Simon Worrall of Noah's Art and Ashburton Art Gallery and Museum director Shirin Khosraviani installing artwork by author and illustrator David Elliot.

Adult fiction is also on the ground floor facing Baring Square East. Non-fiction and the young adult area is on Level 1, with lots of different views and comfy reading nooks - the young adult area is also home to a PlayStation 5.

Ms Mosley said a scavenger hunt had been organised to help people of all ages discover the new library, and on Level 1 there was a trip down memory lane with an exhibition of photographs of the library taken through the years.

"The whole library team has been busy preparing the new space, which includes the new Audio Visual Studio, a Learning Lab and Makerspace.

"The new equipment includes a vinyl printer and cutter that can make stickers, wall decals and posters; a laser cutter for cutting and engraving wood and plastic; and standard and heavy duty sewing machines that can handle all fabrics.

"There are so many surprises in this new library and we're looking forward to seeing people when the doors open at 8.30am on Monday and showing off this amazing space."

Mayor Neil Brown and councillors will be helping library staff welcome visitors on the first morning, and the mayor will issue the first book.

New library hours, new services

Library Manager Jill Watson has a lot to keep tabs on as her team moves into Te Whare Whakatare and sets up all the services they offered before, and some new ones.

She said her team had been busy moving and setting up in the new space, while still running events in the rural community.

"We're keen to get to know this new space as well so we can help members enjoy it. We'll have staff at all the different parts on opening day so people can ask lots of questions and give activities a go."

She said the library's regular children's programmes, like Wriggle and Read, and the Knitting Group, would resume next week, while others like Craft & Chatter, and the Book Club, would start in February.

So what's new or changing?

Operating hours - The library's new hours will be 8.30am-6pm on Mondays and Fridays, 8.30am-8pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10am-4pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

Tours - For at least the first two weeks after opening, staff will be available to take small groups on a tour of the new library, on the hour, between 10am-4pm.



Ashburton Library Manager Jill Watson.

Meeting spaces - A range of meeting rooms will be available for individual, group and corporate bookings, suitable for four people or up to 30. These can be booked online from 1 February.

We're going cashless - EFTPOS will be available for payments in the new library, but we will no longer accept cash. Photocopying machines will still accept coins. Library staff can also accept electronic payments for routine things like rates if the Customer Services counter is

closed.

Membership - We're encouraging new members to sign up, so that they can easily attend programmes and utilise the full range of activities available, including new gaming equipment. New members will also take home a free kanuka seedling for their garden.

Performance space - This space can host performances, public meetings and events, and it features a large LED wall screen and terraced seating.

SHORT AND SWEET

LAKE WARNING

Community and Public Health is maintaining a health warning for Lake Hood after potentially toxic blue-green algae was found in the canals earlier this month. People and dogs should avoid contact with lake water as the algal bloom can produce toxins that are harmful to humans and animals. Environment Canterbury is monitoring the lake weekly and will advise of any water quality changes.

STOCKWATER ALERT

Council staff are continuing to closely monitor stockwater flows, which have declined because of reduced river flows and hot weather. A special text alert system has been set up so people can receive stockwater updates and advisories in the event of sudden changes - text STOCK to 4196 to receive these free alerts.

RESTRICTIONS

Properties connected to the Mount Somers Water Supply are on Level 3 water restrictions because of declining water levels at the Woolshed Creek intake gallery. This means Pattons Road properties may hose on even dates, and all other properties may hose on odd dates. Hosing may only be carried out by hand, between 6pm and midnight; no irrigation systems and wash vehicles using buckets only. Dromore water supply remains on a conserve water notice because of reduced levels in the reservoirs; household use only.

METHVEN PLAN

The Methven Community Board is calling a public meeting on Tuesday 23 January to talk about plans to develop Council reserve land behind the Garden of Harmony into a safe habitat for birdlife, as part of the Methven Lions' Birdsong Initiative. The meeting will be at the Mt Hutt Memorial Hall function room, at 7.30pm. A workshop about the Birdsong Initiative, funding for pest control, and to teach people how to set and manage pest trap lines in residential areas and on farms will be held on Thursday 25 January, at the hall, from 4.30pm.

Neil Brown - Mayor Thinking long-term for our district's wellbeing



It's been straight back to business as usual this week, with a day-long workshop for more discussion on the Long Term Plan.

This is where we think about infrastructure and services the district will need in the next 10 years, and plan in more detail for the first three years.

We will be signalling a lot more money will be spent improving the district's roads and on keeping our community drinking water supplies up to national standards. These two activities alone make up for than half of the draft rates increase for 2024-25.

All the work that is planned will be out for public consultation in March and we hope as many residents as possible will tell us what they think. It's always a balance between keeping rates rises modest but making sure the Ashburton district has all it needs to be an attractive play to live and work or do business – a challenge with rising costs everywhere.

A project that came into Long Term Plans after being signalled as needed back in 2004 is coming to fruition and I'm pleased to see Te Whare Whakareta in the final stages of construction. The library will open on Monday 22 January and its space on the ground floor and Level 1 is light years from the old library building.

It has been a mission, hindered by covid, supply chain issues and trades availability, and all the consequences, but the whole building will be an anchor in the CBD for decades to come.

Being able to plan for the future is a vital part of Council governance. We are in a good position financially and in infrastructure terms because of the sensible decisions made by councillors of the past. I hope that residents and visitors to our town will see the new library and civic building as a resilient piece of architecture, built to be used by the community.

There will be an official opening for the whole building later in the year,

once we have confirmed some very important and special guests.

A man who did a lot of long-term thinking for our district, and contributed much through his service to Council and civic affairs, sadly passed away on New Year's Eve. John Leadley spent nearly 25 years in local government and was deputy mayor for 12 years; he was knowledgeable and well respected around the Council table, and will be missed by many.

I had the pleasure of working with him for a decade and his legacy lives on through the many projects and plans he was involved in over the years.

It was also my pleasure to send a letter of congratulations to David West, who was awarded the Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the New Year's Honours. David has spent more than 30 years leading the development of Lake Hood and its surrounds, another legacy for our district.

PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURE

Ashburton District Council gives public notice of a proposal to temporarily close roads to ordinary vehicle traffic to enable the holding of the **Ashburton Car Club's Upper Downs Road Gravel Sprint**.

Roads proposed to be closed:

- **Upper Downs Road (from Hinds Gorge Road to Quarry Road)**

Period of Closure: **From 8am to 6pm on Sunday 24 February 2024.**

This proposed closure is made under the Local Government Act 1974 – Schedule 10 (11 (e) and will be considered at the Council meeting on **21 February 2024**. Any person objecting to the proposal should lodge a notice of their objection and grounds for their objection in writing by post or email to the Council, 5 Baring Square West, Ashburton by 4pm, **Friday 26 January 2024**.

NEIL McCANN
Group Manager Infrastructure and Open Spaces

WORKS NOTICES

Graham Street/McMurdo Street - Temporary closure planned for the intersection of McMurdo and Graham Streets from 15 January to 29 February, as part of the SH1 improvements. The closure will affect only west-bound traffic and the contractors will keep access for vehicles heading towards Lake Hood; there will be no access from McMurdo Street onto Graham Street.

Rakaia Barrhill Methven Road/Back Track Road/Barkers Road - closures until 26 January for road maintenance, stabilising, dig-outs and sealing. Detours will be marked and available; resident access remains.

Grey Street - closed between Cass and William Street from 22-24 January so contractors can install a culvert. Detours available; resident access remains.

William Street - closed until 1 February from Moore Street to Tancred Street (including intersections) so contractors can install new wastewater pipes.

Elizabeth Avenue (Rakaia) - Elizabeth Avenue, from West Town Belt to Rakaia Barrhill Methven Road, is closed until 28 January while a sewer connection for a new subdivision is installed. Detours will be available.

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.

Full closure details on our website ashburtondc.govt.nz

Road rehab under way, more planned

A 2.4km section of Thompsons Track will be closed for two months from this week as contractors begin a rehabilitation project to widen and strengthen what is one of the district's busiest rural roads.

Sections of Thompsons Track either side of Pole Road will be rehabilitated and short detours using Pole Road and Braemar Road will be in place while the work is happening.

Group Manager Infrastructure and Open Spaces Neil McCann said the cost to repair these two sections of Thompsons Track was about \$830,000.

"Essentially the contractors are building a new road on top of an existing road and widening it to 8 metres. The road is

structurally weak and thin, which is why we end up with potholes and pavement failures, and it is too narrow for the traffic that uses it.

"Along with Arundel Rakaia Gorge Road, Thompsons Track is one of our primary collector routes and we are gradually rebuilding both to modern standards."

A 900m section of Maronan Road is also being widened and strengthened in a project starting Tuesday 16 January. The section under rehabilitation is between the single-lane bridge over the Hinds River and just north of Swamp Road.

Traffic management will be in place while the work is under way over the next month and regular users of the road should be alert for changes and temporary detours.

Mr McCann said Maronan Road also had pavement issues, resulting in potholes and bitumen bleeding through the seal in hot weather. "The work here is about \$290,000 and will improve the road surface for all motorists."

Three different contractors are working hard over summer to complete Council's roading repairs.

"We have a lot of repairs programmed. ACL and Fulton Hogan are completing major road rehabilitation work while HEB are completing the spot repairs on the roads which are not quite at the stage of needing a full road rehabilitation.

"All works are on track to be completed within the construction season prior to winter setting in."



COUNCIL OFFICE

5 Baring Square West
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 (from 22 January 2024)

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)