

Sandbag station for residents

Next time Ashburton District residents are asked to prepare for a flood event, they'll be able to make their own sandbags to help prevent surface flooding from entering their homes and garages.

A community sandbag station, equipped with sand, bags and instructions, will be made available by Ashburton Contracting Limited (ACL) and Ashburton District Council on the corner of William and South Streets. There'll be instructions on how to fill the bags and residents will only need to bring their own shovels.

Group Manager of Compliance and Development Ian Hyde said the community sandbag station had been organised by Council's Emergency Management Officer Jim Henderson.

"It's a fill-your-own sandbag operation and there'll be hessian bags and mini hoppers to help fill the bags. The set-up costs were just under \$1000 and will come out of the Civil Defence Emergency Management budget.



Emergency Management Officer Jim Henderson with two of the new sandbag stations.

"Sandbags are useful, but they do have limitations and homeowners who might need them will already be aware of the potential flooding risk at their properties. A sandbag wall is only practical for surface

flooding, it will not protect properties if rivers burst their banks."

Ahead of severe weather where flooding is likely, ACL will deposit 10 cubic metres of sand at the bagging station and the community will be alerted it is available.

Mr Hyde said that sandbags had helped divert surface water from getting into homes and garages during the 2021 floods, and three other past weather events.

"Previously those sandbags were supplied at various sites on a case-by-case basis, but now there'll be an official sandbag station and people will know where to go and what to do, without having to call Council or emergency services.

"It's important that people can look after themselves when an emergency happens, as Civil Defence, Council and emergency services will be focused on preserving life and protecting key infrastructure such as roads, water and sewage. It's unlikely they'll be able to assist with sandbagging individual properties."

Residents will be responsible for disposing of the sandbags after the weather event.

SHORT AND SWEET

BALLET FOR KIDS

The Ashburton Library will host dancers from the Royal New Zealand Ballet on Thursday 12 March, for a free dance session for children aged 2-6. The ballet workshop will get toddlers moving and grooving, and learning ballet positions and choreography from the ballet company's children's show Dazzlehands. Dazzlehands will be coming to the Ashburton Event Centre in the April school holidays. The workshop next week is free, just pop along.

PRESSURE CHECK

Stroke Aotearoa NZ are providing free blood pressure and pulse checks in Ashburton on Friday 6 March, from their mobile van. The vehicle will be parked outside Te Whare Whakare from 10am until 1pm.

BOOKS ON WHEELS

Books on Wheels is a free, fortnightly delivery service for readers who are housebound or find it difficult to get to the library. It is offered to any reader who lives in the Ashburton urban area. The reader specifies the types of books they like to read and each fortnight library staff select up to eight books for delivery. The deliveries are made by the Altrusa Club of Ashburton, who then return the previous selections to the library. If you, or someone you know is interested in this free service, please call the library on 308 7192.

Live on the Lawn strikes right chord

Live on the Lawn is ready to hit the high notes as it returns for its second year to the Ashburton Domain with an outstanding lineup of homegrown talent on Saturday 28 March.

The free outdoor music event is supported by radio station, The Breeze, and promises an afternoon of relaxed autumn vibes, bringing together some of Mid Canterbury's finest musicians alongside food trucks and market stalls.

This year's all-local lineup includes country singer-songwriter Molly Harrison; blues, country and folk duo, Amelia and Cam Luxton; Tyrone Schwalger; and The Mavericks who will be cutting loose with a crowd-pleasing selection of sing-along anthems.



Council Group Manager for Compliance and Development, Ian Hyde, said the event's return was an easy decision.

"The feedback from last year was overwhelmingly positive, and we knew straight away we had struck the right chord," he said.

"While all Council events are family-friendly, Live on the Lawn offers something

a little more geared towards adults and it fills an important niche in our events calendar."

The music kicks off from 11am, with visitors encouraged to bring a picnic blanket and settle in for an afternoon of live entertainment amongst the blooms.

Entry is free, with guests welcome to bring their own lunch and refreshments, or sample something delicious from the onsite vendors. Attendees may also bring wine or beer to enjoy responsibly, but no glass is permitted in the domain.

Live on the Lawn will be on the Long Lawn, adjacent to the West Street layby in the Ashburton Domain. Follow the Council's Facebook page or website for updates.

Cr Jeanette Maxwell

Hard work pays dividends over time

As we enter into the third month of the year, one thing I can say is that life as a councillor is busy and full of decisions.

So much has happened since being sworn in last October – policies and bylaws to review, consultation and submissions, along with proposed changes and new bills from Government.

Our council is now working through the Annual Plan for 2026-27, seeing how this fits with the long term plan and making the all-important budget decisions.

All through this process we are doing our best to achieve the right outcomes for our community, its people, the facilities and environment we all live in.

Outside of council we still have our "other life" and we are juggling work, businesses, family and commitments.

As councillors, we are fortunate to be invited to some wonderful events to celebrate openings, achievements and progress, and it's clear there are many talented, hardworking people in this community of ours.

I have been told I'm lucky to live in Mid Canterbury and that it's a great place - it is, but it hasn't come about by luck. It has come about from hard working people with a great sense of community belief and because of this hard work we have a great community and pride in our people.

In this coming year we look forward to the commencement of the second bridge project and the bike skills park progressing in the Ashburton Domain. Good things take time.

I'm not the only one who thinks

Ashburton District is a great place to live. Recently a World Atlas survey of the best nine places to call home in New Zealand 2026 ranked Ashburton second best. "Ashburton offers a comfortable lifestyle within a tight-knit, friendly community, with services for residents of all ages."

So, while at times things can be challenging, take time to look around, breathe and relax in our community, it's for all to enjoy.



Tools to boost your grant application

Applications are now open for the Ashburton District Council's community grants, with funding available until the end of March.

Community and Open Spaces Group Manager, Toni Durham said that nine Council grants are available, covering everything from community events to biodiversity initiatives, and she encourages people to explore the options.

"If you're working on something that will benefit the Mid Canterbury community, then there's a good chance there's funding available," she said.

"In the past year, we've supported a wide range of groups and projects, from non-profits who serve adults with disabilities to native planting projects in the Mid Canterbury foothills, and we're excited to see what comes through this round."

Council also administers funding for the Creative Communities Scheme and the Sport New Zealand Rural Travel Fund.

Alongside the opening of the grant round, the Council has launched the new Mid Canterbury Fund Finder, a website designed to connect community groups with funding opportunities. It replaces the previous Generosity platform that was provided through the library but was getting little use.

Toni says the new site will be more helpful for the community.



Okawa Farms planted natives in a wetland area of their foothills property, as part of a project to create safe travel corridors for native birds.

"It connects those looking for funding to a wide range of local, national and international opportunities, and it's suitable for companies as well as non-profits, so we believe it's going to be a really useful tool.

"In addition, once you've registered, Fund Finder will automatically notify you of any new funding opportunities that are a match for your profile."

To learn more about the Community Grants or the Mid Canterbury Fund Finder, visit ashburtondc.govt.nz/grants.

Ideas for open spaces?

The Ashburton District Council is inviting residents to give feedback on three documents to help shape and protect the district's shared spaces.

The Open Spaces Strategy, Open Spaces Bylaw and Brothel Location Bylaw are all being reviewed.

Mayor Liz McMillan says that it will be this council's first round of consultations since being elected last October.

"We look forward to hearing ratepayers' views on the future of our Open Spaces and whether the two amended bylaws get the rules right.

"The Open Spaces Strategy from 2016 has achieved a lot, from the Ashburton Domain becoming a Four-Star Garden of Significance, to the completion of the Ng King Brothers Market Garden Settlement.

"But it's a decade old, and times have changed, so we'd like to know what the community wants to see now and in another 10 years' time."

The Open Spaces Bylaw review is proposing to ban the lighting of fires and allow controlled public fireworks displays with the right permissions. It also proposes to make rules clearer for organising events and drone flying, aligning them with



current rules and practice.

The Brothel Location Bylaw sets out where brothels are permitted to operate within the district, and the review recommends minor updates to reflect current legislation.

Residents can view the draft documents and make submissions online at itsourplace.nz or at Te Whare Whakatere, Ashburton Library and Civic Centre.

The three consultations are open until 7 April and people are invited to speak to their submission at hearings scheduled from 28-29 April.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council meetings are held in Hine Paaka, the Council Chamber, unless otherwise stated; agendas are online at ashburtondc.govt.nz

Monday 9 March, **Methven Community Board**, (live-streamed), 9am, Mt Hutt Memorial Hall

Wednesday 11 March, **Extraordinary Council Meeting**, 9.30am

Wednesday 11 March, **Three Waters Committee**, (live-streamed), 10am

Wednesday 11 March, **Annual Plan Workshop**, (live-streamed), 1pm

PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURE

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

ANZAC DAY CEREMONIES

Roads proposed to be closed:

- **Havelock Street, from Park Street to West Street (SH 1)**
- **Cameron Street, from Park Street to West Street (SH 1)**
- **Baring Square West, from Havelock Street to Cameron Street**
- **West Street (SH 1), from Wills Street to Tancred Street**

Period of closure: From 6am to 8.30am, and from 10am to 12.30pm on Saturday 25 April 2026.

Any person objecting to the proposal should lodge notice of their objection and the grounds for their objection in writing by post or email to the Council, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton by 4pm on Friday, 20 March 2026.

NEIL McCANN
Group Manager Infrastructure

TRIENNIAL MEETINGS FOR RESERVE & HALL BOARDS

- 10 March - **Rakaia Memorial Hall Board**, 7.30pm, Rakaia Hall supper room. All Welcome

ROADING NOTICES

Ealing Montalto Road - Closed between Baxters Road and Lakes Road until mid March while Grant Hood Contracting carries out road maintenance for Council. Detours in place.

Trevors Road - Closed from Ealing Montalto Road to Cracroft Maronan Road, 7am-7pm closure, until 19 April for road maintenance by Fulton Hogan. Detours in place.

Fairfield Road - Closed between Company Road and Singletree Road until 31 March, while Fulton Hogan carries out heavy road maintenance for Council.

Seafield Road - Closed between Stanley Road and Christys Road until 19 April for road maintenance by Fulton Hogan. Traffic management in place.

Elizabeth Avenue (Rakaia) - Traffic management in place from Burrowes Road to Tancred Street until late March, while Rooney Earthmoving installs water pipes for Council. Access for residents remains.

Spaxton Street - Traffic management in place from Blackford Street to Main Street) until 20 March while Rooney Earthmoving installs water mains for Council.

Railway Terrace West - Closed between Bowen Street and South Town Belt from until Friday 27 March while flow meters are installed on water mains. Resident access remains.

Catherine Street - Closed between Ashbury Grove and McMurdo Street until Friday 20 March while new wastewater pipes are installed. The work will include traffic management, trenching and pipe-laying. Resident access will be maintained.

SH1 at Longbeach Road intersection (NZTA) - Road reconstruction until 18 March. Expect speed restrictions and delays of up to 10 minutes. This reconstruction work is weather dependent and may be rescheduled at short notice.

SH1 Tinwald (NZTA) - Traffic management in place until 12 March for resurfacing between Carters Terrace and Manchester Street, and for resurfacing from Agnes Street to Hassal Street.

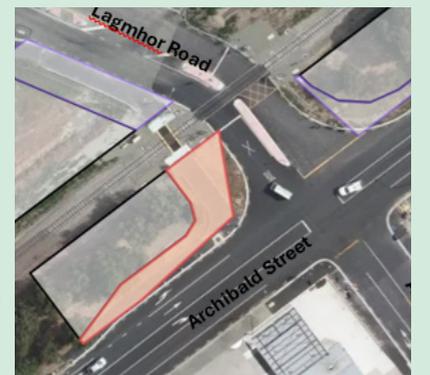
Full details of local road closures are on our website, ashburtondc.govt.nz

PROPOSED RESERVE REVOCATION AND DISPOSAL

Notice of Proposed Reserve Revocation and Disposal, Section 24(2) Reserves Act 1977

Ashburton District Council intends to notify the Department of Conservation under section 24(1)(b) of the Reserves Act 1977 that it considers that the following reserve should have its reserve status revoked to enable its disposal, as it is not required for its stated purpose:

Corner Archibald Street and Lagmhor Road, Recreation Reserve containing 0.0324ha held in Record of Title CB39D/1008 being part of Lot 2 Deposited Plan 68747 comprising in Record of Title CB39D/1008.



Any person affected by this proposal has the right to provide written notice of any objection to the proposal, including the grounds for that objection, any time before 6 April 2026 to Ashburton District Council.

Written objections should be addressed to: Reserve Revocation, Ashburton District Council, 2 Baring Square East, Ashburton 7700. Attention: Property Manager - commercial@adc.govt.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