

## CBD primed for Christmas cheer

The Ashburton Silver Band and the Ashburton MSA men's choir will be adding their music and voices to Light up the Night on Saturday 25 November, when Ashburton's giant Christmas tree comes to life.

East Street is planned to be closed between Havelock and Tancred Streets for a night of Christmas cheer, including Christmas carols and yummy treats from food vendors.

The Christmas tree, which will be assembled in the CBD in the next few weeks, will be lit up at 9.15pm.

Ashburton Mayor Neil Brown said lighting up the Christmas tree signalled the start of the festive season and the event would be great fun for all the family.

"People might like to bring along their deck chairs and a blanket, and sit in front of the stage that will be beside the tree. It's great to see the silver band and the MSA choir joining the occasion this year, and of course there'll be Santa and his elves there too."

The Samoan Christian Congregational Church choir from Ashburton will also be singing Christmas songs and carols, and the local Life Dance Academy will be performing. The Mid Canterbury Children's Trust will run activities on East Street, in a building kindly provided by



Redmonds, and the Balloon Man will also be working his magic.

The event starts at 6pm and people will be able to buy from nearby food trucks catering to a wide range of tastes, from hangi food to noodles, mussels and tacos. There will also be coffee carts and donuts.

Eco Educate will be onsite with a waste station to encourage people to recycle; they are also urging people to bring their own clean containers to hold food.

Mayor Brown said Council had talked to retailers in the CBD following the 2022 Christmas festival and moved the tree lighting from a Friday to a Saturday, so it

would cause less disruption to trading.

"The roads are planned to be closed to make it safer for everyone to enjoy the night, and there's plenty of parking off West Street and on side streets."

The Light up the Night Christmas festival also includes a family movie night on Saturday 9 December, at the Ashburton Domain picnic ground, off Elizabeth Street. The movie has not been announced yet, but it will begin screening at 7pm.

The Regent Cinema is supporting the Ashburton Youth Council by providing two popcorn machines on the night, churning out free popcorn, and food trucks will be selling other goodies.

The night is free but movie-goers will be asked to bring a canned food item that will be donated to the Salvation Army's community foodbank.

Light up the Night Christmas festival is sponsored by Hokonui and the Ashburton Courier. More information is at [lightupthenight.co.nz](http://lightupthenight.co.nz)

**Light up the Night - Saturday 25 November, from 6pm. Tree will light up at 9.15pm.**

**Christmas Family Movie - Saturday 9 December, entry from 6pm.**

## SHORT AND SWEET

### DIGBY PARK LOOS

Good progress is being made on the new toilets at Digby Park, next to the Hampstead tennis courts. The toilet block has been installed and a new concrete footing at the front of the public facility is under way. The new toilet block should be finished next week and open for business. The toilets have been funded by a Better Off grant from Government.



### SANDBAG SAVVY

Did you know that you can use a pillowcase as a makeshift sandbag? Sandbags don't have to be filled with sand, you can also use any fine material, including soil. Only fill the bags to half or two-thirds full, as this gives the sand room to expand. If you're caught in a pinch, pillowcase sandbags can be used to divert water away from your house or to block doorways, drains and other openings onto properties.

### GULL CONTROL

Operations to reduce populations of the Southern Black Backed Gull are currently under way in the Upper Rangitata and lower Ashburton/Hakaterere River (between Smalls and Croys Roads). Warning signs will be erected the Department of Conservation and Ecan, who are running the operations, at each site. Southern Black Backed Gulls are known predators of threatened braided river birds like the banded dotterel and wrybill.

### BOOK CLUB TIP

Would that be funny? Growing up with John Clarke (AKA Fred Dagg) is written by the comedian's daughter Lorin. Next book club meeting is Thursday 16 November at 1.30pm.

## Tony Todd - Councillor Three Waters reforms need everyone on the same page

**We are expecting a National-led Government to repeal the Three Waters legislation (or Affordable Water reforms as they are now known) within its first 100 days.**

But this will not be the end of water reforms, because we all want to make water better for everyone.

The difference in future reforms is that we will be part of the journey and Council will retain ownership of the drinking water, wastewater and stormwater assets that we have worked very hard to maintain and renew over the decades.

We are told that the Affordable Water legislation will be gone by Christmas and with both National and Act campaigning to repeal it, that seems very likely.

In its place will eventually be reforms that are more palatable for Councils like ours, and that have widespread public support and bipartisan support in the House.

Our Council is among 30 Councils, from the Far North to Waimate, that belongs to Communities 4 Local Democracy, and we all want to retain meaningful control and influence over the assets that our communities have bought and paid for over many generations.

Three Waters is always a subject of great interest at Council meetings and Activity Briefings, and I have learned a lot about what happens to ensure clean, safe water comes out of my tap, or what happens when I flush my toilet. I now also know about sludge that results from Rakaia's wastewater treatment process, and about the membranes that now microscopically filter Methven's drinking water.

Millions of dollars are spent each year on improvements to our three waters services. Right now, Council is installing new UV treatment systems on some of its deep water supplies and putting in special monitoring bollards around the network to make sure water quality is consistent, no matter where you live.



We are making good progress building a membrane water treatment plant at Mt Somers, a smaller version of the new one that now serves the people of Methven, and we are drilling a second water bore for the people of Rakaia.

Much effort goes into Council's core day-to-day services, and also the seasonal ones, like the Christmas events that are making their way onto our agenda. The giant Christmas tree will soon be making its presence felt in the CBD and will be lit up on Saturday 25 November.

Council will also hold a Family Movie Night on Saturday 9 December. The community is wholeheartedly invited to attend this free screening of a Christmas classic, and bring along a can of food for the Salvation Army's community foodbank.

It is definitely time to spread some cheer.

# Stock up before move, readers urged

Book worms are being encouraged to fill their bags with books before the Ashburton Library closes for three weeks on Sunday 26 November ahead of its move into a new building.

Library Manager Jill Watson said library users might like to borrow a few more books than usual and any issued this month would not be due back until 10 January. The new building opens on 18 December.

“We know the move is going to cause some disruption for library users, but we’re really excited about the new space we’re going to and all the new activities that will be available.”

The new library is over twice the size of the current building and includes community meeting spaces, a performance space, makerspace, a learning lab with computers, and a sound studio.

The makerspace includes new equipment like a vinyl cutter, laser cutter and craft cutter. There will also be standard and heavy-duty sewing machines, and an overlocker.

Computers in the learning lab will be equipped with headsets, controllers and games, and in the children’s and young adult library there will be a PlayStation 5 or Nintendo Switch.

The library’s move to the new civic and library building, Te Whare Whakatare, is a big logistical exercise involving relocating



Library Manager Jill Watson restocks shelves in the old library.

over 60,000 books.

Ms Watson said the free public Wi-Fi would still be available outside the old building during the three-week closure.

“We’ve decided to keep the free Wi-Fi available because we know some people rely on that connection. You’ll need to be parked or seated nearby the building to connect.”

For those with a library membership, the library’s digital resources will still be available during the shutdown, with a big selection of e-books, audiobooks, music, videos and more.

Ms Watson said last weekend’s heavy

rain had caused flooding issues in the building, and the library was closed on Sunday so things could be dried out.

“We are really looking forward to being in the new building, where we won’t have to worry about leaks.”

The library will be closed for three weeks from 4pm, Sunday 26 November, before reopening in the new building at 8.30am on Monday 18 December.

The library’s new hours will be:

- Monday 8.30am-6pm
- Tuesday – Thursday 8.30am-8pm
- Friday 8.30am-6pm
- Saturday and Sunday 10am-4pm

## Business awards ramp up

A late surge in the number of businesses entering the 2024 ANZ Business of the Year Awards has led organisers to extend the deadline for entries.

Over 100 entries have been received so far, a 40 per cent increase on the 2022 event, and the deadline has now been extended to 21 November.

Council is partnering with Ri Ra Events to run the biennial awards, and Ri Ra marketing director Colm McGrath said he was delighted with the level of interest in the 2024 awards.

“The objective of the awards is to celebrate business success in our region. We have to credit ANZ and our category partners for helping us to promote and scale the event. With the extension, there’s still some time to enter and we’re encouraging all business in our region to do so.”

He said businesses could enter multiple categories.

“The most popular categories so far are Excellence in Retail and Hospitality, Emerging Business and Excellence in Customer Experience.”

Other popular categories were Excellence in Community Impact and Excellence in Professional Services.

The award categories were expanded for



2024, following feedback from entrants in the inaugural awards. Some categories now break down into small or medium/ large businesses.

The categories are: Primary industries, technology and innovation, environmental sustainability, export, customer experience, and workplace culture.

There are other awards for excellence in emerging new business, community impact, emerging business leader, business leadership, manufacturing, retail and hospitality, and tourism.

Mr McGrath said the business awards endeavoured to celebrate excellence and give high achieving businesses in the Ashburton District a pat on the back for their creativity and passion.

To enter, and for more information, [businessoftheyear.nz](http://businessoftheyear.nz)

## Let's talk about our natural place

Are you going to the Ashburton Farmers’ Market this Saturday?

Keep an eye out for Council staff involved in gathering feedback on the draft biodiversity strategy that is out now for consultation. Stop and have a chat with our team and you can walk away with a free kanuka seedling, grown in Council’s own nursery.

The draft strategy is all about our natural environment and has been developed with the help of local groups and landowners. It aims to protect and enhance the district’s flora and fauna for the next generation.

The document suggests an action plan and outlines what is already happening in the natural environment, which is under pressure from land use changes, and a changing climate.

At the farmers’ market on Saturday will be Council’s ecologist and biodiversity advisor, who is happy to chat with people about the importance of the strategy.

The draft strategy and feedback form is at [ashburtondc.govt.nz](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz). Submissions close Sunday 26 November.

## WORKS NOTICES

**Lagmhor Road/SH1 Tinwald/Agnes Street** – Waka Kotahi is installing traffic lights at this intersection so expect traffic management and delays over the coming months. The Lagmhor Road crossing will be closed for two months from 25 September. **Night works for two weeks from 12 November.**

**Princes Street** - from 4 September to mid-November. The section of Princes Street from Brucefield Avenue to Bridge Street will be closed for water main renewals. Resident access remains.

**William Street** - current until 15 November. William Street and intersections of Kermode and Dobson Streets, will be closed to undertake wastewater upgrading. Residents will still have access and detours will be in place.

**Elizabeth Street (hospital end)** - current. New water and wastewater pipes are being installed in this area and some roads are temporarily closed. Elizabeth Street, between Grigg and Walker, will be one-way (east to west) from early November. No street parking will be available on Elizabeth Street, between Grigg and Walker. Access to Ashburton Hospital remains; resident access remains.

**Thompsons Track** - current to 21 December. Thompsons Track, between Braemar and Pole Road, will be closed for road rehabilitation. Detour in place; resident access available.

**Elizabeth Street** - current to 12 December. Elizabeth Street, between Cross and Allison Streets, is closed for the first stage of a wastewater upgrade. Detour in place; no entry from Baker Street. Resident access remains.

**Kermode Street** - from 30 October to 8 December. Kermode Street, between Mona Square and East Street, is closed for a wastewater upgrade.

## COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are at Council Chambers, 137 Havelock Street, unless specified. Meeting agendas are online at [ashburtondc.govt.nz](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz)

**Biodiversity Advisory Group meeting**, Monday 13 November, 1pm

**Hearing on coach access to Lake Clearwater hut settlement**, Wednesday 15 November, 10.30am

**Council meeting**, Wednesday 15 November, 1pm

**Methven Community Board**, Monday 27 November, 10.30am at Mt Hutt Memorial Hall

**Ashburton Water Zone Committee**, Tuesday 28 November, 1pm

**Council Activity Briefings**, Wednesday 29 November, 9.30am

**Audit and Risk Committee**, Wednesday 29 November, 1pm

## WASTE AND RECYCLING

There will be no change to kerbside rubbish and recycling collections on **Canterbury Anniversary Day, Friday 17 November**. Please put your wheelie bin out as usual, with the wind strap on.

### 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