

New homes officially opened

Mayor Brown and Minister for the South Island, James Meager, officially opened 16 new elderly persons' housing units at Friendship Lane on Monday.

The Mayor said the one-bedroom units provide warmth, security, and independence for elderly residents in the district and replace pensioner units built in the 1970s.

"These fully insulated units are more than just buildings," Mayor Brown said. "They represent a safe haven for our seniors, a place where they can live independently while remaining connected to the community around them."

Mayor Brown and Minister Meager cut the ceremonial ribbon together, marking the official opening of the new homes alongside councillors, staff, and contractors involved in the project.

Minister Meager said the project demonstrated how great things could happen when local and central government worked in partnership to deliver positive outcomes for the community.

The \$4 million project was made possible with \$2.2 million support from Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga - the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. Their funding and commitment were acknowledged as crucial to the project's success.

Following the ceremony, James and Avis Campbell, residents of Friendship Lane, welcomed attendees into their home, offering a firsthand look at the comfort and quality of the new units.

The Campbells shared how they were settling in and shared their appreciation for the comfort and sense of community the homes provide.



The 16 new units at Friendship Lane, in Ashburton, were officially opened this week. Below: Ashburton Mayor Neil Brown cuts the ribbon on Unit 12, while MP for the South Island James Meager holds the ribbon steady.



Special thanks were extended to the Logic Group and the BP Construction teams for their dedication to building these high-quality homes.

The first concrete pour for the foundation of the homes was made in October 2024, and the homes were blessed by Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua on 28 May 2025.



Mayor Neil Brown Thank you for your service

Two important occasions are worth recognising this week – the final meeting of the Methven Community Board for this term and the official opening of the new Friendship Lane housing units for the elderly.

It's been a pleasure watching the 16 new Friendship Lane units take shape since last year and residents have been moving in over the past few months - it was great to celebrate the official opening on Monday with a traditional cup of tea and chat with a couple living there.

About half the \$4 million project cost is being covered by a grant from Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, which is great for Council, and the builder BP Construction has used local tradies where possible.

Council owns and maintains 102 units for elderly people, spread over six complexes in Ashburton, Methven and Rakaia, and these new duplexes are top rate.

The Methven Community Board has also done some top rate work in its past term of local government and I want to thank them for their service. The board met on Monday for the final time, also farewelling chair Kelvin Holmes and Allan Lock.

The remaining three members – Megan Fitzgerald, Robin Jenkinson and Richie Owen – have been re-elected and will be joined by Simon Wareing and Faye Barrand for a new three-year term, following the local elections on 11 October.

The board has achieved quite a lot this past term, including renewing its strategic plan for the town. Methven

is moving forward and the plan has lots of good ideas and actions to keep up momentum.

I look forward to farewelling Kelvin and Allan in person on 1 October, at an afternoon tea following the final meeting of Council.

On the topic of Local Elections, may I remind you that voting will close at noon on Saturday 11 October – you must have delivered your papers to an orange ballot box by then. If you are posting your papers, then get them in the mail by 7 October, so they arrive at voting headquarters in time to be counted.

For everything you need to know about the elections, head over to voteashburton.nz



SHORT AND SWEET

FEEDBACK WANTED

Council will invite feedback from this Monday on a Draft Gambling Venue Policy and a Draft Dangerous, Affected and Insanitary Buildings Policy. Council must review the gambling venue policy every three years, and changes are proposed, including a cap on the number of gambling venues allowed in the district. The buildings policy is being updated to meet new Building Act requirements. The consultation period will run from 29 September to 26 October. More information will be available from Monday on itsourplace.nz

STOCKWATER NEWS

Two new stockwater reports have been added to the list of race assessments that are available to the public. Both new reports relate to the Methven Auxiliary intake. Council is assessing 17 stockwater intakes as part of its work to exit its stockwater delivery service. The reports are available at ashburtondc.govt.nz/services/water-services/stockwater.

SPLASHDECK FIX

Remediation work on the splashdeck at EA Networks Centre has been programmed after the school holidays, for the two weeks 6-19 October. The toddler pool and the leisure pool will be closed while the old splashdeck surface is removed and a new one laid, but all other pools remain open. The whole pool area will be closed on the weekend of 18 and 19 October, while aquatic staff retrain for a new international lifeguard qualification.

WHAT'S ON GUIDE

Looking for things to do in the school holidays? Check out our fun guide by scanning the QR code.



No voting pack? No problem

With the election period nearing its halfway point, all voting packs have now been delivered across Mid Canterbury.

However, Group Manager of Democracy and Engagement Toni Durham said residents who haven't received their papers or forgot to enrol before the deadline, can still participate through special voting right up until election day.

"We don't want anyone to miss the opportunity to vote, so we're trying to make special voting as accessible as possible."

Before casting a special vote, people will need to be enrolled. This can be done by visiting vote.nz, calling 0800 36 76 56 or free texting their name and address to 3676.

"Alternatively, pop into Ashburton Library or Customer Services any time, and our team will help you with enrolling or updating your details," said Toni.

Once enrolled, residents can visit Council's Customer Service desk at 2 Baring Square East to request their special voting document. Voting can be completed on the spot and papers dropped into the



orange ballot bin located onsite.

Toni said the Council was mindful of those who were unable to visit during office hours or would like further help, so they were providing a special voting drop-in session at Ashburton Library on Saturday 4 October from 10am until 2pm.

"Whoever is elected will have a big impact on our lives over the next three years, so if you haven't received a voting pack or you're unsure of what to do, don't let that stop you from making your voice heard."

"We have staff here ready to help and it only takes a few minutes to get you enrolled and provided with a voting paper."

Voting in the local elections closes at noon on Saturday 11 October. As of Wednesday morning, 3475 votes had been received, equivalent to 15.12 per cent of enrolled voters. Voter turnout for the Ashburton District in 2019 was 50.62 per cent.

Find out more about special voting and the candidates at voteashburton.nz

Pump track pitched for Methven

Bike Methven and Council will work together to try to find suitable land in Methven for a pump cycle track.

The mountainbike club would like to develop an asphalt track in Methven to help young cyclists learn mountainbiking techniques.

Bike Methven members pitched the idea to the Methven Community Board this week, saying they hoped it would start a conversation that would lead to the development of a track in town.

Council staff will look at land it owns in Methven to see if any is suitable. Bike Methven said it could develop the track and then gift it to the community, much like the Methven skatepark.

The pump track would replace Bike Methven's bike skills area, which took a lot of maintenance and was hidden from view.

Club members showed the board plans for a track that included areas for mountainbike learners and scooter riders, as well as outer lanes with jumps.

They said it would be another drawcard for the town.

Community board chair Kelvin Holmes said it was a great concept and a project for the new community board to take an interest in.

Methven's strategic plan, adopted this year, aims to support the development of youth-based activities.

Let's move it, move it

EA Networks Centre will host a free morning for older adults next Wednesday, aimed at helping them to learn about how to prevent falls and how to keep mobile as they age.

People will be able to try strength and balance classes, tai chi, free aquacise classes, see sports like walking netball and pickleball in action, and find out about other classes at the pool and recreation centre.

The Move Well, Age Well expo is being organised by Safe Communities with support from 11 other agencies including Sport Canterbury, the Heart Foundation and Age Concern Ashburton.

Safe Communities co-ordinator Lesley Symington said the expo aimed to inform older people about the causes of falls.

"This means talking about safety in the home, and hearing and sight problems causing falls, as well as ways to keep strong and mobile."

The expo will run from 9am until 12pm on **Wednesday 1 October**, with class demonstrations and goodies to give away.

Ms Symington said demonstrations began at 9am with tai chi, and finished at 12.15pm with Aquafit.

"There's heaps of room at the EA Networks Centre to learn more about staying mobile and we really appreciate the support of the centre staff to help us make this happen. Come along and have a go, or learn something that can help you in everyday life."

You can learn more about:

- Strength and balance classes
- Vision and hearing
- St John medical alarms
- Safe driving courses and community transport service
- Medication, alcohol and falling



ROADING NOTICES

Line Road, Methven - Parts of Line Road will be closed to traffic until mid-October while new wastewater pipes are installed. Tru-Line Civil is laying about 800 metres of pipe from Methven's wastewater treatment plant west along Line Road to the township. Any road closures and detours will be signposted.

King and Alexander Streets, Chertsey - Closed until late September while a new water treatment plant is built. The road closure does not impact school access.

Philip Street - Sections closed at times between Oak Grove and Walker Street until late-September while new water pipes are installed by Rooney Earthmoving. Resident access remains.

Mason Place - Mason Place will be closed to traffic until 31 October, while new water pipes are installed. Access for residents remains.

Tancred Street - Closed between William Street and Chalmers Avenue until late-September while new water pipes are installed by Rooney Earthmoving. Resident access remains.

Grove Street - Closed at Wilkins Street intersection while new water mains are installed by Rooney Earthmoving. Road closures and detours expected until 31 October. Resident access remains.

Ashburton Staveley Road - Closed between Walkhams Road and Driscolls Road from 22 September until 28 September while a stock underpass is constructed by Harmer Earthmoving. Resident access remains, detours will be signposted.

Tinwald viaduct - Melcombe Street, under the Tinwald viaduct, is temporarily closed pending repairs by KiwiRail.

Fords Road - Closed between Griffiths Road and Wheatstone Roa from 29 September until 30 October, while Grant Hood Contracting undertakes road maintenance. Local restrictions apply, access for residents remains.

SH1 Rangitata - There will be no access to SH1 from Withells Road and Ealing Road from 29 September to 31 October while NZ Transport Agency contractors complete shoulder widening and major resurfacing work on SH1, north of the Rangitata bridge.

SH1 Ashburton - NZ Transport Agency contractors are resurfacing a section of highway between the northern end of the Ashburton bridge and South Street, so traffic management will be in place from 28 September until 9 October. Expect delays.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Wednesday 1 October, **Council Meeting** (livestreamed), 1pm (in Hine Paaka Council Chamber).

RECYCLING REMINDERS

- Clean glass bottles in the green crate
- Clean hard plastics 1, 2 and 5 (**no lids**), and clean cardboard and clean pizza boxes, paper and tins in the yellow bin
- Food waste, soiled pizza boxes and all other rubbish in the red bin



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)