

## Library abuzz with new visitors

Ashburton's new library opened this week with the sound of running feet, as children discovered tables piled with Lego and then sprawled in beanbags with books or tried the outdoor playground and slide.

Adults too came with bags bulging with books due back, as the old library closed three weeks ago – they discovered a new return book area, comfy new seats to begin their new reading material, and much more.

The honour of borrowing the first book from the new library in Te Whare Whakaterere went to Jenifer Wiggins, whose book was issued by Mayor Neil Brown, who also presented Jenifer with a special certificate as the first borrower.

Mayor Brown said the long wait for a new library had been worth it and the rest of the building would be open for Council business next Monday 29 January.

"How good it was to see families, young people, older people and our own library staff with big smiles on their faces as they moved about the library space.

"We've done something really special here. As well as checking out books, you can also make stickers, use a sewing machine, build a Lego castle, record your own podcast or song, or do your homework on one of the computers in the Learning Lab.

"It's a place we hope people will find comfortable, meet their friends, read or play, or just be here in a safe and friendly space using the free wi-fi."

Library Manager Jill Watson said opening day was busy and almost 2,000 books were issued. "It was great to finally show



the community what we have been working towards these past few years.

"I hope people take advantage of our daily tours, on the hour, to learn more about the new features we have and why they are important for our community.

"We also gave out 42 Kānuka plants to new library members, to be planted in honour of the occasion."



The library's community rooms can be booked online from 1 February.

The library's new hours are: Monday 8.30am-6pm, Tuesday-Thursday 8.30am-8pm, Friday 8.30am-6pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am-4pm.

You can find more about the new library online at ashburtondc.govt.nz



## Artist revisits farming fun in mural

Celebrated artist and author David Elliot remembers fabulous Mayfield farming stories of his childhood when he sees his artwork spanning 15.5 metres across the eastern wall of the new children's library.

On the wall is Henry, the tidy pig, and his animal friends, taken from David's sketchbook along with notes and scribbles, pencil marks and watercolour stains. The images are intentionally incomplete and soft, inviting young minds to fill in the gaps using their own imaginations, says David, who was a special guest at the library's opening.

"I'm really proud to be part of this and it means a lot to me. I grew up here and those farm stories come from my childhood. My family farmed at Mayfield and my mum was full of stories about animals, so there's a lot of her in those stories."

Henry is the main character in David's award-winning books, Henry's Map and Henry's Stars. David's favourite image



Ashburton Library Manager Jill Watson and Ashburton-born artist and author David Elliot.

on the wall shows three sheep, intently listening to Henry under a clock telling them when it is time to eat and sleep.

His work commissioned for the children's library is called Canterbury Tails and the original drawing was scanned and printed onto huge vinyl panels, which are stuck to

the smooth surface of the wall.

Ashburton Art Gallery and Museum director Shirin Khosraviani oversaw the installation last week and will also frame the much-smaller original work, which will hang elsewhere in the new library and civic centre, Te Whare Whakaterere.

## SHORT AND SWEET

### LIBRARY TOURS

Come on down to the new library and take a tour to find out about all its special new features. Tours are running daily until Sunday 4 February, and run on the hour - the last tour during the week is at 4pm, and the last one on Saturdays and Sundays is at 3pm.

### COUNCIL OFFICE

Council's administration office at Baring Square West will be closed to the public on Friday 26 January so Customer Services staff can relocate equipment and take part in training at the new civic centre, Te Whare Whakaterere, which opens on Monday. All other Council facilities and services will operate as normal this Friday, and telephone calls to the office will still be answered. Residents wanting to pay their rates invoices should do so at the new building from Monday 29 January.

### OFF THE COUCH

EA Networks Centre is running its popular Couch to Wellness programme again, starting 16 February. The programme was life-changing for many on the inaugural event last year and it is aimed at introducing physical activity through fun circuits and games, all with expert supervision and advice. The programmes will run on a Friday, over eight weeks. Details at eanetworkscentre.co.nz.

### PLAYGROUND

Council contractors have started work on a refresh of the well-used playground at Davis Crescent Park. We're planning for the job to take about two weeks, so some areas of the park will be fenced off while the work is in progress.

### DOMAIN CULVERTS

Two culverts are being replaced in the Ashburton Domain early next week so walkers and cyclists may have to detour from their regular routes to avoid the work zones. One culvert is near the water wheel and the other is near the picnic area public toilets. The work is expected to take three days and will help the water flow between ponds.



# CE - Hamish Riach Library opening joyous occasion for community



This week has proudly been all about the Ashburton Library and it has been a joy to hear so much positive feedback about the new facility within Te Whare Whakatere.

From the huge David Elliot mural to the outdoor playground, there is much to surprise and delight in the library, as well as it being a functional and comfortable space for the community and staff.

I invite you all to visit and see a modern library in action, because as well as books, you will find Lego, computer gaming and a sound recording studio, plus a whole lot more.

These occasions are special in the life of Council and I know that staff and the community are looking forward to the whole building being fully operational on Monday 29 January.

We're planning a formal opening in the near future to celebrate the new

building and will be sharing details with the community. We've also invited the Prime Minister and we hope to announce a date soon.

While it's been great to pause and mark the new building's opening, there is plenty of other work that is ongoing and equally important to the community. I'm referring to the Long Term Plan that requires Councillors to think about priorities for the next 10 years.

A lot of ideas have been chewed over and options considered, and we are at the point of finishing a draft LTP and budget for 2024-25. We'll be taking this draft plan to the community in March and we really want to hear about the ideas that resonate with the community and what people see as priorities for the next decade.

We will be talking about how to spend \$3 million earmarked for outdoor water play and people can tell us if they want that money spent on repairing the

Tinwald pool, or on a new outdoor pool at EA Networks Centre, or a hydroslide or on relocating the paddling pool at the Ashburton Domain.

There'll be plenty of different views and we'll be providing plenty of opportunities to give feedback.

This dry, hot summer has also focussed attention on the wise use of water and while our larger urban centres are not on restrictions, it is timely for everyone to think about sensible use so that restrictions are not needed.

Watering the lawn at noon on a hot day means a lot of water will be lost in evaporation, so it's better to turn the sprinkler on in the evening, or you could choose to love your brown lawn at this time of the summer.

There's lots of good information about using water wisely on our website [ashburtondc.govt.nz](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz)

## 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.

**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](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz)

## STOCKWATER ALERTS

Council staff are monitoring stockwater flows, which have declined because of reduced river flows. A special text alert system has been set up so people can receive stockwater updates in the event of sudden changes – text STOCK to 4196 to receive these free alerts.

# New round of community grants opens in February

Community groups in the Ashburton District are being encouraged to think about projects that could qualify for a Council grant when funding applications are called for at the start of February.

Council grants about \$300,000 annually, for projects as small as buying a heat pump to as large as recreating a wetlands.

Group Manager Democracy and Engagement Toni Durham said groups should start thinking now as the funding round opened on 1 February.

“Applications will be accepted until 29 February and we encourage those who run community groups and projects to check the qualifying criteria and see if they could apply.

“Many of the grants Council gives to community groups and organisations are on a smaller scale, but they make a huge difference to the people seeking them. More substantial grants also have the ability to help get major projects off the ground, for the benefit of the whole district.”

The grants available in February include those for community development, biodiversity, heritage and trail maintenance. A second round of grants will open in March and include funds from the Creative Communities Scheme and travel costs for junior sports teams.

“In the last year, grants have been used



**The Ashburton Toy Library was a grant recipient in 2023.**

for a big range of projects, from helping to rebuild an historic fire appliance to undergrounding power at a community hall,” Mrs Durham said. “If you are part of a group or project that provides a benefit to our community, then there's a good chance it may be eligible for one of the community grants.”

Mrs Durham encourages any organisation or group that has questions or needs assistance with their application to get in touch with the Council.

Applications for the first round of grants will close at the end of February, and people can find out more and apply online at [ashburtondc.govt.nz/grants](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz/grants).

## COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are at **Council Chambers, 2 Baring Square East, unless specified.** Meeting agendas are online at [ashburtondc.govt.nz](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz)

**Methven Community Board**, Monday 29 January, 9am at Mt Hutt Memorial Hall

**Ashburton Water Zone Committee**, Tuesday 30 January, 1pm

**Council Long Term Plan Workshop**, Wednesday 7 February, 9am

**Council Meeting**, Wednesday 7 February, 1pm

**Biodiversity Advisory Group**, Monday 12 February, 1pm in Wakanui Room

**Council Activity Briefing**, Wednesday 14 February, 9.30am

**Audit & Risk Committee Meeting**, Wednesday 14 February, 1pm

**Council Meeting**, Wednesday 21 February, 1pm

**Ashburton Water Zone Committee**, Tuesday 27 February, 1pm

**Council Agencies - Six-month reports**, Wednesday 28 February, 9.30am

## RUBBISH & RECYCLING

There will be no change to rubbish and recycling collections on **Waitangi Day, Tuesday 6 February**. If Tuesday is your normal day for collection, then please have your bins out at the kerbside by 7.30am, windstrap on.

The Ashburton Resource Recovery Park will be open on Waitangi Day from 9am-6pm.

## 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)