

Ashburton Domain Ready to Glow

It's been a hive of activity at the Ashburton Domain this week as crews bustle away day and night to get Glow in the Park ready for the thousands of people expected to attend this weekend.

Now in its third year, the free family event will be the biggest and brightest yet, and Group Manager Compliance and Development, Jane Donaldson is encouraging locals to think about how they might get there.

"The State Highway is always busy during King's Birthday weekend, and people travelling to Glow will add to the traffic, as we saw last year in Tinwald."

"We're hopeful that the more central location will make a big difference, but if you live within a few blocks of the event, we'd encourage you consider walking."

"For those who do need to bring the car, please remember to schedule extra travel time, be patient and check our website for parking options."

Off-street parking locations include the West Street Carpark, the old Polytech site next to Balmoral Hall, the old Council building on Havelock Street, the Robert Harris / Smiths City car park and EA Networks Centre.



Onsite parking is available for mobility card holders and can be accessed from the corner of Elizabeth and Grigg Streets.

Ms Donaldson says there is also plenty of on street parking available around the domain.

"However, please stay off the hospital's grounds and be considerate to nearby residents when parking by leaving driveways unobstructed."

This year's event will feature more lighting displays, more amusement rides and a much larger food court, it also coincides with the 160th anniversary of the

Ashburton Domain.

One aspect outside of organisers' control is the weather. Last year, rain saw the cancellation of the Sunday evening session – but Ms Donaldson is hopeful that the people will be able to enjoy all three nights.

"The weather is looking pretty good at this stage, but if it does get really wet, people should check our Facebook page or the glow website for updates."

More event information, including a venue map and parking locations can be found at glowinthepark.nz

Mayor Neil Brown Wrapping up the LTP and welcoming winter

As we wrap up warm and welcome winter, I look forward to the community coming together at Glow in the Park this long weekend.

Also wrapping up soon, is our work on the Long Term Plan (LTP) 2024-34.

After many months of conversation, compromise, debate and discussion we are now doing the final calculations and auditing of the ten-year budget.

Next up is adoption day on 26 June and the new plan commences on 1 July.

We heard loud and clear that residents wanted Council to make savings where they could, while investing in core services like roads and water.

That's why we're planning to spend \$67.6 million over the next ten years on road upgrades, \$33.9 million on drinking water infrastructure, and \$22.6 million on wastewater.

Councils across New Zealand have all been facing a tough LTP period with the average rate rise across the

country currently sitting at 15%.

Costs to build roads and water supply systems have risen by 27% over the last three years in New Zealand.

Our commitment to core infrastructure means that our other decisions might not be popular, but we need to spend very carefully at this time when people have told us they are struggling.

We're pleased to have decided on a comprehensive green waste collection that is both what residents have been asking for and is good for the environment.

We also believe that working together with the Tinwald Reserve Board on an alternative for the Tinwald Pool is the best solution for that community.

With our planned exit of stockwater we had to be brave with our decision, and a working group will tackle the key issues the community came forward with and develop a plan for the way forward.

Pushing the stadium extension out two more years to start in 2030 is a decision balanced against the difficult



economic climate we are currently in. It means future councils will have a chance to re-evaluate things at the time.

We're still deciding on the future of Balmoral Hall, as there are many considerations to weigh up.

It signals our commitment to improving our community facilities and preserving history while we can, but also invests in the future of the town's development.

Along with these projects, Council will continue to deliver the range of services it does to the community, from animal control to roading, wastewater disposal to playgrounds, liquor licensing to swimming pools.

We appreciate all those who commented on our Long Term Plan. Please be assured that while all of the decisions made may not please everyone, they were made in the best interests of the Ashburton District.

SHORT AND SWEET

Wastewater Inspections

Wastewater pipes in Ashburton and Methven will be inspected with fibre optic cameras over the next six weeks. The contractor, Citycare Water, will advise residents by letter drop when working in their local area.

KING'S BIRTHDAY SERVICES

Rubbish & Recycling

There's no change to kerbside rubbish and recycling services over King's Birthday weekend. Please put your bin out as normal on Monday if that's your collection day.

Te Whare Whakare

Ashburton Library and Council customer services will be closed on Monday 3 June. Council's 24/7 After Hours service is still available for urgent enquiries such as noise and animal control on 03 307 7700.

There's more to lose than your licence

Drinking? Don't drive.



BETTER TOGETHER

Drink drivers will be the target of police during June in a joint campaign with NZ Transport Agency and Council. Drivers can expect education and enforcement, with traffic stops. Alcohol is a major contributing factor in 14 per cent of deaths and serious injury crashes in the Mid and South Canterbury.

LTP 2024-34: Decisions so far

Ashburton District Councillors were in full-on decision-making mode last Thursday and on Wednesday as they worked on the final form of the Long Term Plan 2024-34.

Mayor Neil Brown said a common theme had emerged from the submissions to the draft plan and residents wanted council to make savings there they could, while ensuring core services like roads and water, were done well.

“Essentially, they told us not to waste money, and we’ve listened. Some of our decisions might not be popular with a few people, but we need to spend very carefully at this time when people are struggling with rising costs in their everyday lives.”

Councillors worked their way through a list of decisions they must make about projects and services.

On Thursday 23 June, the following decisions were made on the five main consultation topics.

GREEN WASTE

Council will introduce a green waste collection in residential areas from September 2026. Details of the collection, including the size of the bins, will be decided at a workshop in the next 12 months; they will also look at how a green waste collection service could happen for businesses.

Government has mandated that councils introduce a green waste collection by 2027 and the green waste collection will be part of the existing kerbside rubbish and recycling collection.

Mayor Brown said a green waste collection would be good for the environment and reduce greenhouse gases as food and grass clippings will no longer end up in landfills producing methane.

“A green waste service is also something that residents have been asking for. We’ll have a workshop to work out whether the green waste bin will be 80 litres, 120 litres like the current red bin, or 240 litres like the yellow bin, but it definitely won’t be a small 23-litre caddy.”

During the consultation, 1313 people commented on the green waste collection, with 83 per cent (1097) in favour of the introducing one.

WATER-BASED LEISURE

No investment will be made in water-based play. This means the Tinwald Pool will be permanently closed, though Council will work with the Tinwald Reserve Board to find an alternative activity at the pool site – like a paddling pool or water play area.

A move by Cr Russell Ellis to have a hydroslide on the books for EA Networks Centre in Year 5 was lost 5 votes to 4, those against it cited concerns about affordability.

Mayor Brown said the move to now work with the Tinwald Reserve Board was good news for the people of Tinwald. “We are not just walking away, but looking at an alternative activity for that space.”

BALMORAL HALL AND THE OLD POLYTECH

Councillors are currently deciding the future of Balmoral Hall and the Polytech land. They are considering more information about a new option – to retain the hall and redevelop the Polytech land as a carpark.

They want to know detail about the repairs needed on the hall (replacing the roof triggers a wider compliance with the Building Code), and about the car park numbers.

The extra information will also cover the impact on rates of not selling the two sites, projected income from the new



carpark, and the heritage value of the Balmoral Hall.

STOCKWATER

Council will exit its stockwater service by 30 June 2027. A project group, including two Councillors, will be formed and report progress to Council on a quarterly basis – some races will remain open for biodiversity.

“We have heard from both sides of the equation and making a decision is not easy, but we must look after those who believe they have no alternative water. The working group will work through that with them to find a cost-effective other source of water,” Mayor Brown said.

STADIUM EXTENSION

Council agreed to extend the EA Networks Centre indoor stadium by three courts, but moved the project to Years 7-9 of the Long Term Plan (in 2031-33).

While there was general agreement that the existing stadium was at capacity at peak times now, Councillors were concerned at the cost, which was forecast to be \$23.7 million.

“Affordability is a major part of this decision, and pushing it out will give successive councils a chance to re-evaluate it against the economic conditions of the time. Now is not the time while many people are struggling with the cost of simply living.”

Council will continue calculations on the plan until it is due for adoption on 26 June, ready to take effect from 1 July.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are at Hine Paaka (Council Chambers), 2 Baring Square East, unless specified.

Meeting agendas are online at ashburtondc.govt.nz/council/agendas-and-minutes

Road Safety Co-ordinating Committee Meeting, Tuesday 4 June, 9.30am

Council Meeting, Wednesday 5 June, 1pm, (live-streamed)

Methven Community Board, Monday 10 June, 9am, at Mt Hutt Memorial Hall

Council Activity Briefings, Wednesday 12 June, 9.30am

Audit & Risk Committee Meeting, Wednesday 12 June, 1pm (live-streamed)

Ashburton Water Zone Committee, Tuesday 25 June, 1pm (live-streamed)

Council Meeting, Wednesday 26 June, 1pm, (live-streamed)

WORKS NOTICES

Walnut Avenue - Kerb and channel renewal from Oak Grove to West Street, until 30 June. Traffic should not be affected, but watch for temporary changes.

Dobson Street - Closed between William and Cass Streets from 27 May to 7 June, so contractors can install service connections to a new residential project. Detours are in place, resident and business access remains.

Grace Ireland Drive, Methven - Closed for subdivision development until 31 August.

Full closure details on our website ashburtondc.govt.nz

PENSIONER UNITS

One elderly pensioner single housing unit at Rakaia has become available.

If you are in need of housing and meet the criteria please contact Council for an application form.

Applicants shall:

- Be eligible for Government National Superannuation
- Not be in full time employment/business
- Be able to care for themselves independently
- Show a housing need which cannot be met adequately elsewhere
- There is a total assets criteria (contact Council for more info)

Please phone 03 3077770 or email info@adc.govt.nz

TALK IT UP

Every Tuesday: 1pm - 2pm
Ashburton Library
No booking required.

Clock ticking for rates rebates

Council's Customer Services staff are encouraging people in low income households to check if they qualify for a rates rebates, as the deadline for this financial year is fast approaching.

Many households in the district are eligible for increased support to pay their council rates, more than 997 people have applied since last July. In the last financial year 877 residential and 80 retirement village rebate applications were approved.

If a couple is receiving superannuation of \$42,500 (gross) and it is their only household income, they qualify for a rebate. If their rates are \$3800, the rebate is \$750; if their rates are \$3200, the rebate is \$476; if their rates are \$2900, the rebate is \$276 and if their rates are \$2700, the rebate is \$143.

Business Support Group Manager Leanne Macdonald said people had to apply for the rebate every year.

“Often people’s circumstances change, and the number of people living in a household changes, so that is why the rates rebate is an annual process. Residents can call our Customer Services team on 307-7700 to book an appointment, or pop in and see them at the counter.”

The Rates Rebate Scheme is run by Government and provides a partial refund to ease rates bills for people on lower incomes. It provides financial relief for those who own their own home and live in that home.

It includes people living in retirement villages, but does not apply to rental or holiday homes or commercial premises.

Mrs Macdonald said Customer Services staff are available to help ratepayers work out if they qualified for a full or partial rebate.

“We will accept rates rebate applications for this current financial year right up until 30 June 2024, so act now if you want to

apply for this year”

As part of the rebate application process, people need to prove their income level with a summary of earnings from the IRD. It must relate to the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

You must be:

- ✓ The person who pays the rates on the property that’s your home
- ✓ Living in your home
- ✓ Listed as the ratepayer in Council’s rating information database
- ✓ You cannot apply if:
 - ✓ Your property is mainly used for commercial activities, such as farming or business
 - ✓ Your property is a rental property or holiday home
- ✓ Most retirement village residents, including people who live under a licence to occupy agreement, can apply for a rates rebate

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 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)