

Tourism ventures in spotlight

Ashburton District tourism operators had a chance recently to talk directly with the people who set the funding for district promotion in Mid Canterbury.

Elected councillors spent a day visiting tourism operators from Mt Potts in the Ashburton high country to a garden of international significance on the plains, hearing about the work under way to attract visitors from around New Zealand and the world.

They were accompanied by senior Council staff, members of the local Tourism Advisory Group and in-house district promotions lead Shelley Donnelly, who has been working with local tourism operators, running promotional campaigns showing off the district, coordinating visits from influencers and content creators, and raising awareness and confidence in the Experience Mid Canterbury brand.

Chief Executive Hamish Riach said it had been 18 months since Council brought visitor promotion back inhouse.

“The work had previously been contracted out, so it was a good chance to recap all the work that has happened since February 2023.

“The point of the day was to raise awareness of the things in our district that attract tourists and meet some of the operators and hear their stories. I think we all saw, heard and experienced something new and have a new appreciation of the promotional requirements necessary to put the district on the map.”



Councillors Liz McMillan and Leen Braam check out the Ashburton Aviation Museum's jet module.

The bus tour began at Mt Potts Lodge in the Hakatere Conservation Park, with a quick visit to the world famous Mt Sunday, and further stops at the Staveley Store, Ōpuke Thermal Pools & Spa, and a final stop at Trott's Gardens.

In total 18 local operators presented to the envoy and each gave an insight into their business, and their needs and challenges in the industry.

This interaction provided the Councillors with personal insights into the operations of many owner-operated businesses run by passionate locals. This exchange of ideas and information is crucial for fostering a collaborative environment that supports the growth and success of the tourism industry in the Ashburton District.

Mid Canterbury is enjoying an eight-year high in tourism expenditure and with international tourism still at only 80 per cent of pre-Covid levels, this should continue.

This growth was a theme of the day and highlighted the need for how to further realise the district's potential and achieving sustainable visitor growth.

At the final stop, the new owners of Trott's Gardens, Rob and Janene Riedstra, served afternoon tea and a tippie from their newly licensed mini-pub, the Brantwood Arms.

The group also heard from members of the Ashburton Aviation Museum, about their plans for expansion.

CE Hamish Riach

Important next step in second bridge progress

Ashburton's second bridge was in the headlines again this week, after it was included in the Government's National Land Transport Programme 2024-27.

The fact that a second Ashburton bridge is now part of the national programme of significant transport works is an important next step in making the river crossing a reality.

Council understands that the Government will subsidise the project to a minimum of 51 per cent, and we are continuing to work with them on how to fund the balance.

Transport Minister Simeon Brown clearly sees a second Ashburton bridge as a critical project to increase resilience, reduce congestion and enable us to get where we want to go,

quickly and safely. We don't disagree.

The cost for a new second bridge off Chalmers Avenue and a new road connecting to Grahams Road was last estimated at about \$130 million, so there are still big funding discussions to be had about our local share.

This week is also important because it is National Welcoming Week and we have two events planned to mark the occasion.

The first was yesterday, when 33 new Kiwis from 10 different countries were officially bestowed their citizenship by Mayor Neil Brown. The second will be on Saturday, when Council joins with the Hakatere Multi Cultural Council to run the Hakatere Noodle Festival.

The noodle festival will be held in Baring Square East, in front of Te Whare

Whakatere, and it will be the first big event to be held in the square. Some 20 food vendors will be spaced around the square and two roads have been closed so noodle-lovers can search out a dish to try and then sit down and enjoy the occasion.

There'll be live entertainment, and the event will run from 3pm-9pm.

Many countries incorporate noodles into their traditional dishes so the noodle festival is a fun way to taste another culture's food, celebrate our district's diversity and make new connections.

Newcomers play an important role in boosting the district's workforce and enriching our communities, and everyone is welcome to join our noodle celebration.



SHORT AND SWEET

WATER PLANT OPEN

The wind was blowing but the water was flowing when the new water treatment plant at Mount Somers was officially opened last week. The \$4.6m plant uses ultra-fine membranes to filter water before it is treated and distributed for drinking and household use. It will end the need for boil water notices on the supply after a heavy rain event.

SH SPEED LIMIT

People are invited to give feedback to NZ Transport Agency about a proposal to increase the speed limit on Christchurch's Southern Motorway from 100km/h to 110km/h. The speed changes would apply from east of Curletts Road at Addington to west of Weedons Road at Rolleston. Feedback closes on 1 October and more info is at nzta.govt.nz

FALLS PREVENTION

Come along to the Ashburton Library on **Tuesday 24 September** for a free, fun, informative session on preventing falls and the causes of falls as you get older. The expo is about keeping you on your feet and will run from 10am until 1pm. It is being organised by Safe Communities with support from 10 other agencies including Sport Canterbury, the Heart Foundation and Age Concern Ashburton.

ROAD CLOSURE

Ashburton District Council gives notice under the Transport Regulations 1965 (Vehicular Traffic Road Closure) that the following roads will be closed to allow the Ashburton Car Club to hold its Gravel Bent Sprint meeting.

Roads to be closed:

- **Le Bretons Road, from Christy's Road to Denshires Road**
- **Chertsey Road, from Le Bretons Road for 2km**

Period of closure:

- **From 8am until 5.30pm on Saturday 14 September 2024**

It will be an offence under the above regulations for any unauthorised person to use the roads for ordinary vehicular traffic during the period of closure.

NEIL MCCANN
Group Manager Infrastructure Services

Women's only swim nights return

Women's swim night is returning to EA Networks Centre once a month until the end of the year.

This follows an earlier trial in response to a call for women's only sessions to help support women and girls' confidence in using the pool facilities.

The sessions will run from 7pm until 8.30pm and the first will be on Wednesday 11 September.

People and facilities group manager Sarah Mosley said that all women, girls and boys (up to and including the age of 10) would be able to experience swimming in a private space.

"The entire pool area will be visually separated from adjacent areas by blinds and screens providing greater privacy."

Women's only swim sessions are popular offerings nationwide as they create an environment that eliminates barriers some women have in regards to public swimming pools, she said.

"We've heard that the privacy allows people to experience an increased sense of safety, greater confidence, more relaxed social time and a support for their religious or cultural beliefs.

"Women can relax in the spa or steam room, swim some laps in the lane pool,



splash with kids on the wet deck or learn about water safety to further their water confidence."

Participants will pay \$5 each, with children under 10 years old welcome to attend for free.

The EA Networks Centre offers a range of aqua and fitness programmes for targeted demographics in the community such as babies, school children, teens, mums, seniors and those with Parkinsons,

prostate and breast cancer.

The other dates scheduled for women's swim night are 16 October, 13 November, 11 December – all Wednesdays. On each date the pool area will close slightly earlier (6.30pm) for the public.

For more information, please contact the EA Networks Centre on 308-4020 or email eanccsr@adc.govt.nz or via the contact form on eanetworkscentre.co.nz

DAYTIME BRIDGE CLOSURE

pudding Hill Bridge over the north branch of the Ashburton River on Arundel Rakaia Gorge Road will be closed during the day on September 16, 17 and 18 for bridge repairs.

The bridge will be closed from 6am-6pm on these three days, with a detour in place via Ashburton Forks. Repairs will be made to the rails at the passing bay, and to kerbing.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

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

Meeting agendas are online at ashburtondc.govt.nz

Monday 9 September, **Methven Community Board**, 9am (Mt Hutt Memorial Hall)

Wednesday 11 September, **Council Activity Briefings**, 9.30am

Wednesday 11 September, **Audit & Risk Committee**, 1pm (live-streamed)

Thursday 12 September, **Council Workshop – Public Transport Research**, 9.30am (live-streamed)

Wednesday 18 September, **Council Meeting**, 1pm (live-streamed)

Monday 23 September, **Youth Forum**, 9.30am (live-streamed)

Tuesday 24 September, **Water Zone Committee**, 1pm (live-streamed)

Wednesday 25 September, **Council Agencies** (6 month reports), 9.30am

WORKS NOTICES

Baring Square East and Cameron Street - Closed on 7 September from 10am for the Hakatere Noodle Festival.

McKendrys Road - closed between Lyndhurst Road and Oaklands Road until 13 September, while pipes are installed under McKendrys Road.

Acton Road - Closed between McLachlans Road and Gardiners Road until 14 September for road maintenance. Detours available.

Le Bretons Road - Closed between Christys and Denshires Road on 14 September for the Ashburton Car Cub's shingle sprint event.

East Street, Tancred Street and Burnett Street in the CBD - closed from 5am on Monday 23 September for Ashburton Market Day.

Full road closure details are available at ashburtondc.govt.nz

KEEP NZ BEAUTIFUL

Litter-Free Ashburton is hosting a special community clean-up day on **Saturday 21 September**, as part of Keep NZ Beautiful Week. Those interested in joining the community clean-up can to the West Street car park at 10am, where gloves and bags will be provided. Keep NZ Beautiful Week runs from 20-27 September.

HAKATERE NOODLE festival

THIS SATURDAY



3pm–9pm

Baring Square East



- Food vendors
- Dining area
- Entertainment
- Picnic lawn / area
- Event HQ
- Porta-loos
- Waste station

Celebrate our multicultural community with noodles from around the globe.





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)