

## New aerators help worker bugs

Seven new aerators at the Wilkins Road wastewater treatment plant are deliberately causing quite a stir.

The aerators, four in the first settling pond and three in the second oxidation pond, churn up the water and move it around, ensuring there is enough oxygen evenly distributed for bacteria to break down the effluent.

Without aeration, bacteria would struggle to multiply and die before completing their part in the wastewater treatment process.

Group Manager Infrastructure and Open Spaces Neil McCann said the aerators were currently running 24 hours a day, but oxygen levels would eventually be monitored and the aerators only activated when a trigger level was reached.

“The first aeration pond, built in 2008, had 10 aerators but now we only need four, thanks to technological advancements. This means wastewater is better treated when it moves to the second pond, where oxidation occurs, and where we have three aerators currently operating.

“Since the new aerators were installed earlier this year, there’s been a significant improvement in water quality in both ponds, visually and in the measurement of dissolved oxygen in the water.”

The total cost of the aerators was just over \$1 million.

Mr McCann said it was important for the wastewater to be treated properly and efficiently to minimise the amount of sludge that accumulates in the ponds.

“Sludge build-up can cause odour issues



as well as creating the need to desludge the ponds sooner than necessary, which is a very expensive operation. The ponds at Wilkins Road have not required desludging since they opened, because we’ve kept the oxidation process going efficiently, but climate change may create challenges in the future.

“Ponds are extremely forgiving, but they rely on bacteria to do all the heavy lifting. If temperatures are too warm, the chemistry of the water can change without enough oxygen and the bacteria die and turn into sludge.

“That creates a blanket on the pond that stops the treatment process, so it’s critical for water to be moving and to have oxygen

introduced to keep the bacteria alive.”

The ponds at Wilkins Road treatment plant receive Ashburton’s residential and commercial wastewater from the reticulated network and supply pipeline, or delivered in tankers by contractors who empty septic tanks.

Mr McCann said one of the biggest bugbears for the wastewater treatment system is flushable wet wipes.

“Unfortunately, these don’t break down like some manufacturers claim and they have to be mechanically removed via a screen at the plant and then taken to landfill. They wrap around our pumps and can cause overflows of wastewater from our system.”

## Mayor Neil Brown In praise of reading, volunteers

I’m reminded of my childhood this month, with an invitation to read to a primary school class and to also attend the launch of a new programme aimed at reading to babies and toddlers.

Many of us can recall favourite books we explored as kids, or that we read to our own children, or grandchildren.

The one I’m reading to children at Methven Primary School is called The Little Yellow Digger Goes to School. The little digger is brought in to dig a new swimming pool at the local school and hits a water main, causing some dealings with the local Council.

It’s fun, and finishes on a good note, and it’s a great opportunity to show that reading is a lifetime pursuit, whether it is for work or pleasure.

The Ashburton Library’s new 1000 Books Before School programme is

a great way to establish the habit of reading, from infancy. If you read one book a night, for three years, then you will pass the target and help establish a platform for life-long literacy and opportunity.

Reading is not everyone’s strong point, so the definition of reading is broad: you can sing, tell a story, recite what happened in your day or put on an audiobook and sit together and listen.

Building platforms for the future is something that Council does for the community – having compliant water and wastewater networks, and good roads and rubbish collections is at the core of our work.

Looking after people is also important and so it was great to see the 40,000-plus people who enjoyed Glow in the Park. While Glow has been put to bed for this year, Council staff are already working on the next fun and free

gathering for residents to enjoy, so watch for details of a food festival later in the year.

Food was the order of the day for a smaller, but no less important, event at the Tinwald Hall earlier this week. I had the privilege of officially thanking three long-serving members of the Tinwald Memorial Hall Board for their volunteer work collectively spanning 114 years.

John Harris, Maureen Colville and Theresa O’Connell have retired from the board recently and it was my pleasure to present them each with certificates of appreciation for their service.

It is fitting that this celebration happened during Volunteer Week, as volunteers play a large role in making the Ashburton District a welcoming and attractive place to live.



## SHORT AND SWEET

### INDUSTRY PRAISE

The new library and civic building, Te Whare Whakaterere, was awarded excellence in the Sustainability category at the national property awards last week. The building also earned merit in the Civic, Health and Arts category.

### VOCAL ON LOCAL

Council is consulting on three changes to the way local elections are held - extending the boundaries of the Ashburton ward to include new housing off Trevors Road, extending the boundaries of the Methven Community Board, and reducing the number of elected community board members from five to four. Feedback closes on 21 July.

### LOVE YOUR PARK?

Council is encouraging residents to provide their feedback on a draft plan for managing Ashburton District’s 121 parks and reserves. The Draft Reserve Management Plan sets out how local parks and reserves will be managed, what activities they’ll cater for and what facilities will be provided. The plan has five volumes, each focused on a particular topic or area, ranging from general principles to specific policies for individual reserves. Submissions close 4 August.

### GLOW WASTE

This month’s Glow in the Park event generated 670kg of waste, but 93% of it was diverted from landfill, thanks to the team from Eco Educate operating a special waste station. Some 331kg of food waste was diverted, as well as 180kg of compostable packaging. The 44.5kg of rubbish that went to landfill included coffee cups, waxed lined bowls and plastic cups.





# Keep your metal dog tag this rego

Thousands of local dog owners will begin re-registering their pets in July and they are being reminded to hang on to their metal dog tags.

Council moved away from plastic tags last year and issued longer-lasting metal ones, which only need replacing if they are lost or the number wears off.

Council Compliance and Development Group Manager Jane Donaldson said almost 7000 dogs were currently on Council's database and owners could expect to see registration packs arriving in their letterboxes soon.

"All dogs aged three months and over must be registered with the Council before August and it's important that owners register on time.

"The easiest way to register is online at [ashburtondc.govt.nz/dogs](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz/dogs) and all you need is your dog number, which will be provided on the registration pack you receive in the mail."

If your dog is very active and the number has worn off your tag, then call into



Customer Services with your old tag for a free replacement. The replacement cost for a lost tag is \$13.

Ms Donaldson said registration fees go towards funding animal control services in the district, including operating the dog pound and responding to animal complaints.

"We currently have five dogs in the pound and we are looking to rehome all of them, locally or through DogWatch in Christchurch. Owing a dog comes with responsibilities and registration is one of them."

Owners who do not register by 31 July risk being charged late fees.

## 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](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz/council/agendas-and-minutes)

**Ashburton Water Zone Committee**, Tuesday 25 June - CANCELLED

**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.

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

**Carters Road** - Closed between Allens Road and Farm Road until 21 June to install a service connection. Resident access remains.

**Johnstone Street** - Closed between Harland Street and Thomson Street from 24 June to 28 June to underground services. Resident access remains.

**Windermere Road** - Closed during the day between Poplar Road and Lower Beach Road from 26 June to 3 July while tree felling is in progress.

Full closure details on our website [ashburtondc.govt.nz](http://ashburtondc.govt.nz)

## MATARIKI VIEWING

The Ashburton Astronomy Club will be holding two free Matariki public viewings (weather permitting), at Argyle Park to celebrate the rising of the star cluster.

**The events will be on Saturday 6 July and Saturday 13 July, and run from 5.45am until 7am.**

Matariki is the Pleiades star cluster and the rising marks the beginning of the new year in the Māori lunar calendar. The public holiday to mark Matariki is on Friday 28 June.

# Mayor thanks hall trio for tour of duty



Three hard-working volunteers who have helped keep the Tinwald War Memorial Hall on track over the past 50 years were celebrated by Council this week.

Maureen Colville (left), John Harris and Theresa O'Connell were the guests of honour at a special afternoon tea hosted by the hall board.

While they shared a superb chocolate cake, Mayor Neil Brown thanked them for their tour of duty - which has involved cleaning, maintenance, booking and general caretaking of the hall, which was officially opened in 1960.

Maureen had chalked up 50 years, Theresa 35 and John 29 years.

The hall has hosted innumerable events, including sporting activities and performances.

The hall board works with Council to manage and maintain the facility.

# Traffic plan for Lauriston while solar cables laid

Some roads will be closed at Lauriston for short periods in the next five weeks while EA Networks installs a feeder cable from a new solar farm to the nearby Lauriston electricity sub-station.

The work will be done in five stages to minimise disruption, with the first stage to get under way on Monday 24 June.

Three 22kV feeder cables will be installed in open trenches on the road shoulder along Lauriston Barrhill Road and then Line Road to the sub-station. The trench will be backfilled with thermal crusher

dust to help with heat dissipation.

People moving around Lauriston will see excavators, truck and trailers, tip trucks, cable drums and a winch machine.

The first stage is from the solar farm to a joint pit near Church Street and is expected to take up to three weeks. Detours will be in place and signposted for all road closures as they happen.

Stage four includes a week-long closure of the intersection of Line Road, Winchmore Lauriston Road and Lauriston Barrhill Road.

Ashburton Library

# 1000

Books Before School

**Bring your baby or toddler and join us for the launch party!**  
25 June, 10.30am  
Ashburton Library

## 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)