

A Vision for Otangaki / Ashhurst 2040

As you read the statement below, imagine Ashhurst residents working together, from 2016-2040, to shape the future of Ashhurst. It's now 2040 and we've kept the best elements of Ashhurst while developing improving others to make it an even better place to live.

Vision Statement

It's 2040, and Ashhurst (Otangaki) is the most liveable village in New Zealand. Residents have long known that their village is a great place for families with young children. It's welcoming, peaceful, and relaxed; the young and old are connected; neighbours look out for each other. It's a village that cares. Over the years, Ashhurst School and the Ashhurst Community Library have remained at the heart of village life, along with churches and service clubs and the various opportunities these provide. A wide range of community groups continue to offer diverse ways for people of all ages and interests to be involved and connected to one another.

Between 2016 and 2040, Ashhurst has developed in ways that have preserved this connected, village character while further enhancing its liveability for a diverse population.

Developments have included:

- youth-oriented facilities;
- a health centre incorporating a GP;
- increased connectivity with the larger region, especially in terms of active and public transport;
- place-making including artwork, clean-up, signs, community bump-space, and green space development;
- new approaches to celebrating our unique character and community spirit alongside ongoing support for village traditions;
- loyalty to local businesses and creative community solutions for local prosperity;
- tools to support community connection and an informal economy based on sharing, supporting, and caring for one another.

At the same time, Ashhurst has become more conscious of, and grounded in, both its human and natural heritage.

- Both Rangitāne and Pākehā settler history are recognised and honoured, and the contributions of a multi-cultural population are valued. Our town's heritage has a public profile.
- The unique geography of the place—at the downstream end of the Manawatu Gorge, and at the gateway to the Pohangina Valley—imparts a special character to the town. The uniqueness of our landscape is a part of the town's identity.
- Villagers value the generous green space and use it for recreation, with places for play, sports, edible plantings, rest and relaxation, walkways and cycleways, and community interaction.
- Villagers appreciate, conserve, and enhance the natural ecology.
- Villagers also value their rural environment. Some of the area's showcase businesses are rural in flavour. The creative productivity, seasonal awareness, outdoors orientation, and local self-reliance of rural life is reflected in lifestyles, community spaces and celebrations.
- With the increasing national profile of the Te Āpiti Project and the Pohangina Valley, Ashhurst has become a tourist destination, but the village's rootedness in place, landscape, people, and history have helped keep the town grounded and true to itself.

Above all, the diverse people of Ashhurst know that their engagement with one another and with their town has kept Ashhurst “Our village—a unique place where we belong.”