

FAQs about Otangaki / Ashhurst 2040 – The Vision Statement

& the community-wide application to the DIA Community-led Development Programme

Q: How has this statement been developed?

A: This is a draft response to a Vision and Planning Process facilitated by RECAP. This process involved two community meetings and a community-wide survey in August, plus engagement with the Ashhurst Senior School. Members of RECAP have collaboratively written the statement to indicate what they heard from the town, then revised it after further feedback from village residents and tangata whenua.

At a November meeting about the vision, some of those present also indicated a desire for a more pithy statement. Discussions about what that might be are ongoing with the understanding that the journey—or the conversation—can be rewarding in itself.

Q: Why does it matter? What are the benefits?

A: A collective vision can help spark community-wide conversations and help us to work collaboratively together. Right now, RECAP is also facilitating a request for a partnership between the Ashhurst community and the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA).

If that partnership goes forward, it will increase resources available to all individuals and community groups in Ashhurst who want to lead initiatives in keeping with the vision.

Particular initiatives do not need to be decided in advance, but it's important to let RECAP know if you would support a community-led development partnership with the DIA and whether you think we're getting the vision statement right.

Q: Who is supporting the partnership request?

A: Several community groups are on board, including Ashhurst School, the Ashhurst Community Library, and others. RECAP is acting as a facilitator. The Ashhurst Action Group (AAG, founded in 1999), is renewing its activities to serve as an open and fluid point of community engagement. Both RECAP and AAG are open to all Ashhurst residents without membership fees. RECAP is an incorporated charitable society with a legal structure, and AAG is currently an informal group with a comprehensive mission.

Furthering the partnership may require that community members develop an umbrella organisation with:

- sufficient breadth to provide support services for multiple community groups and individuals,
- a legal structure and sufficient stability to serve as an employer, and
- a form that requires the organisation to remain transparent, responsive, and accountable to all Ashhurst residents.

It may be that the incorporation of AAG could serve this purpose.

Q: How do I provide feedback and get involved?

A: Sharon Stevens of RECAP is a key point of contact at this stage. Her email is sharon@recap.org.nz. Ashhurst Community Librarian Ross Meads is another contact. Ashhurst Action Group Acting Secretary Harvey Jones can be reached at aag@inspire.net.nz or 3269 189. Councillor Aleisha Rutherford and PNCC more generally are being kept informed as Ashhurst's elected representatives.

Q: How can my group play a larger part in the request for partnership?

A: If you are part of a group that would like to have someone visit for a dialogue about a village vision or the DIA partnership, please contact Sharon Stevens, sharon@recap.org.nz.

Q: If the partnership goes forward, how do I fit into it?

If the DIA enters into partnership with Ashhurst, one of the first steps will be to make sure there are ways for individuals and groups to receive funding and other resources and take action for the benefit of the town. We don't know what that will look like yet, but we'll make sure to keep people well informed through the *Village Voice*, Ashhurst Community Library, public notices, and more. Sign up to the AAG mailing list for the most current notices at <http://lists.recap.org.nz/listinfo/aag>.