



# Ashhurst Village Voice

## *Informing the communities of Ashhurst & Pohangina*

ISSN 2324-5468 (Print)  
ISSN 2324-5476 (Online)

February 2026

[https://recap.org.nz/village\\_voice](https://recap.org.nz/village_voice)  
Established 1997

### Community Comment

The summer holiday period has concluded for most people. Hopefully, workers feel refreshed and rested, and ready to face the demands of the new year.

Children are returning to school at this time with various start dates according individual school needs and study year. Please be observant as you drive past school sites and watch for children.

The high school bus service funded by the Ministry of Education was scheduled to be withdrawn by the middle of 2026. Horizons Regional Council, who operate the public bus service in our region, have agreed to fund this service from mid 2026 to enable up to 300 students to continue to access education. While this will cost ratepayers \$150,000, there will be co-funding from the Ministry of Education until mid-2027. Student fares are also to be paid and are to be capped at \$10.40 per week when using the Bee card. Discussions will continue to develop a longlasting solution, which will not leave our students and their parents searching for transport options in future years.

Our summer weather has been quite variable in past weeks. We have had long hot periods when the Council asked for voluntary restraint on water use. Between Christmas and New Year, Ashhurst endured a day of gale

force winds. Trees were uprooted, branches torn off and trampolines blown into and over fences. Branches ripped off trees and hanging off power lines over streets provided video highlights of the storm's fury for the evening news. There was some damage to the Ashhurst Domain's native bush and its bush walks. Maintenance work is an unwanted extra cost yet to be undertaken. Debris and hanging branches remain a hazard to avoid, especially in windy periods. We hope more settled weather and sunshine will return and drive away the gloom of cool, wet and windy times which are with us at present.

Council contractors completed their footpath repairs of some Ashhurst streets prior to Christmas. Stockpiles of crushed road chip have appeared at the gravel pit in Cambridge Avenue. This signals the beginning of resealing work of many streets under regular maintenance and is likely to repair damage from the State Highway 3 detour traffic. Some of this work will be funded by NZTA under reparation agreements.

The resident inspired upgrade of Wyndham Street following underground infrastructure upgrades continues to make some progress. Some sections of new footpath have been formed. Current work appears to be the installation of stormwater

sumps in advance of kerb and channelling on the south side of the street. These will link up to the upgraded stormwater reticulation network. The street continues to be one way traffic, mostly catering for residents' vehicles.

Have a great New Year.  
**Harvey Jones**



Photo: Wyndham Street upgrades

### Contents

<b>Letter From the Editor</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Ashhurst Memorial R.S.A.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Ashhurst Senior Citizens Association</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Country Fayre Update</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The Story Behind Our Gym</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Book Review: Mother Mary Comes to Me</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Dienas' Journey to The Local Backyard Cafe</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Cicadas</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Gorge Quarter</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Changes to Bus Fares</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Emergency Management Website Launched</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Ashhurst Library</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Ashhurst Clay Target Club</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Ashhurst Rainfall</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Palmerston North City Council</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Ashhurst Bowling Club</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Village Voice Contacts</b>	<b>12</b>

**Deadline for March  
Issue—Friday, 20th  
February 2026**

## Letter From the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of the Ashhurst Village Voice for the year 2026.

The end of the the year was rough for the Manawātū. I hope the storm damage was minimal and easily fixed.

New Zealand has not had a great start to the new year due to the tragedies in Mount Maunganui and Pāpāmoa. Our deepest sympathies go out to the families of the victims.

Our thoughts also go to the residents of Northland where the clean up has begun. Many have lost homes and possessions due to flooding and some communities continue to be cut off or have limited access due to slips.

Let us hope that things get better hereon in.

**Llyvonne Barber—Editor**

### Village Voice Funding

The Village Voice has a circulation of 1880 and is delivered free to households in Ashhurst and the Pohangina Valley. The newsletter is run by a small volunteer incorporated society and funded solely by our loyal advertisers. Please support these community-minded businesses. If you wish to support this publication in any way, please refer to the back page and contact Grey Smith.

## Ashhurst Memorial R.S.A.

Whether the summer sun decides to shine or not, the welcome is always warm at the Ashhurst Memorial R.S.A! We have a packed calendar for the coming months, featuring great outdoor live music, the return of our favourite weekly games, and plenty of opportunities to catch up with friends and colleagues.

### Sunday Sessions

Live Music and Events. Mark your calendars for our upcoming Sunday sessions. We are bringing the entertainment outdoors from 2.00 pm – 5.00 pm:

- Sunday, 8th February: We kick things off with the fantastic seven-piece band, Sweet Mother of Pearl. Come along and support a group that features some of our very own local talent!
- Sunday, 8th March: Enjoy the afternoon sounds of Two Tones.
- Sunday, 12th April: A double-header event! Join us for the Car Show accompanied by live music from Two Tones.

Looking further ahead, we will be

## Ashhurst Senior Citizens Association

The Ashhurst and Districts Senior Citizens usually start the year's activities with an outing and this year is no exception. Members and guests can meet at the Village Valley Centre in Ashhurst on Thursday, 5th February at 1.30 pm for transport arrangements and directions, or meet directly at Longwood Gardens at 2.00 pm. Admission is \$18pp which includes afternoon tea.

We are a friendly group who would love to see some new people from either Ashhurst or its surrounding

commemorating ANZAC Day with our traditional services, followed by a live band in the afternoon.

### Weekly Favourites

The weekly schedule is back in full swing:

- **Bingo:** Eyes down! Join us for the first session on Tuesday, 20th January. Bingo continues every Tuesday night at 7:00 pm.
- **Darts:** Flights fly on Wednesdays and Fridays.
- **Friday Nights:** The heart of the club. Join us for the Ode of Remembrance, followed by meat raffles. We are also thrilled to announce that Joker's Wild is back!

### Great Food and Company

Don't worry about cooking—grab a bite from the rotating Food Trucks visiting us every second Thursday and every Friday night.

Come on down to the Ashhurst R.S.A. to enjoy the entertainment, meet old friends, or make new ones. Whatever the weather, we look forward to seeing you there!

**Peter Knight—President**

districts in 2026. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 2.00 pm at the Valley Village Centre. We will meet there each month until our next Christmas party in December.

If you have any queries regarding the group or even transport, please phone either Trish (President) on 021 0277 3853 or Stephanie (Secretary) on 021 0259 9382.

Hoping your year has started well and we look forward to seeing you in 2026.

**Stephanie Madgwick—Secretary**

## County Fayre Update

Happy New Year everyone.

County Fayre is currently closed due to our Kitchen being fully renovated, thanks to Guy and his team from Rowdy Builders Limited, local to

Ashhurst. We hope to be open and operating again by the end of February with updates and announcements being made via our Facebook page, *County Fayre at Pohangina*.

*Continued on next page*



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### Clinic Hours

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Tuesday 8.30am - 5.00pm

Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm

Saturday 9.00am - 12 noon

141 Cambridge Avenue



# County Fayre Update

If you have a small gathering or special event coming up, and need somewhere to host it, have you considered County Fayre? We can accommodate groups of up to 40 people, and can cater for you if

required. Contact us via [countyfayre@inspire.net.nz](mailto:countyfayre@inspire.net.nz).

See you at County Fayre.

**Jo Morris-Kynoch—President**

## The Story Behind Our Gym

Over two years ago during a family discussion about driving all the way to Palmerston North after a full day's work to go to the gym, we decided to take the plunge and open a gym right here. After searching for a building suitable enough and having no luck, we almost gave up until our current location came up. We jumped at the opportunity and worked quickly with the building owner to secure it. After many hours of planning we had a clear vision—fitness is for everyone regardless of age or fitness level and it needs to be affordable for everyone. Hours of cleaning, demolition, painting and sourcing the gear, we had our space, and we were ready to share it. We had our share of setbacks (often morale crushing) but we persevered.

We want to foster a community-focused, health-conscious service that provides a safe space for everyone.

### About Us

Bex and I moved to the area in 2014 and lived up the valley on a small rural lifestyle property. We then made a move to the South Island for a couple of years, but the pull of the Manawātū was too great, and we returned in

2020, only to find that house prices had skyrocketed so we settled in Palmerston North for two years until a property came up in Ashhurst. We purchased our house which we quickly made our home with a large back yard (Ashhurst is famous for them) and we settled back into rural town life. We both work full time and are raising a young family and we manage the gym between us, along with Eden and Josh (Conscious Health Collective) who are Personal Health and Development Coaches. We are fortunate to have the support of our amazing community, and as we grow and develop the facility, we will look for input from our members to make this a gym we can all be proud of.

Our mission is to provide a fitness space where everyone feels empowered to achieve their health and fitness goals.

Our vision is to be Ashhurst's leading fitness provider, recognized for fostering a community-focused, health-conscious environment.

At The Gym, we offer a top-tier fitness experience with state-of-the-art equipment from Life Fitness,

*Continued on next page*

## JustOnePlease

Super kia ora. The Justoneplease item for the Safe House for February 2026 is *hand soap*.

Kindest regards.

Contact Louise Bowe on 020 410 86128 for more information.

### Steady As You Go

Steady As You Go—A falls prevention programme. One hour of slow purposeful exercises for Seniors, aimed at strengthening weakened leg muscles and helping to improve balance. \$2 per session. Otangaki Lodge, 69 Oxford Street, Ashhurst

Contact Age Concern phone 355 2832 for more details.

### Manawātū Toy Library

200 Church Street, Palmerston North  
Hundreds of toys to borrow.

Open 9.30 -12.30 Mon, Thu, Sat.

Visit our website to join, view our toys and learn more.

[www.manawatutoylibrary.co.nz](http://www.manawatutoylibrary.co.nz)

### Ashhurst Ladies Coffee Group

10.00 am—11.30 am at The Village Coffee & Co, 62 Cambridge Avenue, Ashhurst. A regular Thursday weekly coffee group, for ladies of all ages in Ashhurst for some social time, a few laughs and new friendships.

### Ashhurst Foodbank

Open 2.30pm-3.30pm every Thursday. Methodist Church, Bamfield Street, Ashhurst.

Contact: Marianne 027 627 2054

Have Some FUN with CLAY - right here in Ashhurst!



**Pottery Workshops:** Join in on a class or get your crew together for a private event—day or evening.

**Paint-A-Pot:** Not keen on getting muddy but need some relaxing/creative time? Choose a bisque-fired piece and decorate it in our lovely art space.

**Have-A-Go Wheel Experiences:** Give it a whirl!

Visit my casual verandah shop anytime and discover quality, hand-crafted pottery at Suzanne McAllen Pottery, 181 Oxford Street, Ashhurst

For further information, pricing or to book contact Suzanne at [create@inspire.net.nz](mailto:create@inspire.net.nz) or text/call 021 163 9396

Gift vouchers also available. Follow me on Insta/FB @suzannemcallenpottery

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## Awahou Pohangina Playgroup

'A lovely country playgroup' est. 1967. Meet every Wednesday during term time 9.30am-12.00pm.

Location: Awahou School Hall, 518 Pohangina East Valley Road.

Drop in for a visit, enjoy a cuppa, morning tea and chat. Contact: Arna Taylor—[samnarna@outlook.com](mailto:samnarna@outlook.com)

## Ashhurst Memorial R.S.A. Inc

74 Cambridge Avenue, Ashhurst.

Phone: 326 8296

Monday 3.00 pm - 6.00 pm

Tuesday 3.00 pm - 6.00 pm/when

Bingo is on 3.00 pm - 9.00 pm

Wednesday 3.00 pm - 6.00 pm/when

darts are on 3.00 pm - 10.00 pm

Thursday 3.00 pm-6.00 pm/when

food carts 3.00 pm - 7.00 pm

Friday 3.00 pm-9.00 pm/when darts

are on 3.00 pm - 11.00 pm

Saturday 2.00 pm - 6.00 pm

Sunday 2.00 pm - 6.00 pm

Hours are subject to change due to demand.

## Manawatū Rangitikei Methodist Parish—Ashhurst, Bunnythorpe and Pohangina Congregation

Ashhurst Devonport Worship and Community Centre

10.30 am 1st Sunday each month

Pohangina Community Church

10.30 am 3rd Sunday

Contacts: John Brock 329 4834

## Ashhurst Bowling Club

67 Stanford Street.

New bowlers or anyone thinking about playing please either come along and have a go or get more info from Adrienne on 027 2836317.

## The Story Behind Our Gym

alongside an excellent selection of free weights and dumbbells. Unlike large corporate gyms, you'll enjoy working out in a spacious, uncrowded environment, no long waits, just great

workouts. A community focused safe space for members to work out on quality equipment with 24-hour access.

**Dave and Bex**



Photo: Left - right Eden, Josh, Dave and Bex

## Book Review: Mother Mary Comes to Me

*Mother Mary Comes to Me* by Arundhati Roy

Booker Prize winner for her novel *The God of Small Things*, Roy has also written non-fiction and this book is her own personal life story featuring her mother in the central role.

The reader will soon get to understand why her mother is the star of the memoir as their true story unfolds. Quote from the author "In these pages my mother, my gangster, shall live". Arundhati Roy is a very

political woman and as we read her story (she is now in her 60's) we learn about her family background in Delhi, India, along with caste systems, Facism and empires.

The writer refers to her mother as Mrs Roy, which seems appropriate as she ran a large school for many years. She ruled her school fairly and diligently but with an iron fist and a kind heart (when she felt disposed to do so). The kindness did not happen in

*Continued on next page*



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# Book Review: *Mother Mary Comes to Me*

equal amounts. With many abrupt departures and unannounced returns home, daughter Arundhati was an independent and strident young woman (her mother's daughter) who struck out on her own at a very young age. She grew protective armour when women were never equal and had very few legal rights in India.

well on in her career but always felt this was her destination. Her mother appeared to agree with her on this point.

A fascinating true tale. A memoir unlike any other I have read. She brings a mother and daughter to life, warts and all, with breathtaking honesty and clarity.

**Robyn Dare**

## Dienas' Journey to The Local Backyard Cafe

From the bustling floors of Sky City Hamilton to the quiet charm of Ashhurst, Diena's path to owning The Local Backyard Cafe feels less like a career change and more like a homecoming.

Raised in Palmerston North, Diena's passion for hospitality was forged from the ground up. Her nine-year tenure at Sky City was a masterclass in the industry, seeing her rise from Food & Beverage attendant to Duty Manager, and finally to Food & Beverage Manager. She carried that expertise to Hamilton Lake, juggling the roles of Events Manager and cafe operator, before the pull of family brought her back to Palmy as a Conference Manager.

Yet, the rhythm of a corporate hotel, while rewarding, couldn't compete with the soul of a community hub. That truth became clear during a single weekend shift at The Local Backyard

Cafe. Helping out a family friend, Diena didn't just see a small-town cafe; she saw potential, warmth, and a future. She made her interest known: if the chance ever came, she'd buy it.

In March 2021, destiny obliged. Diena became the new owner, closing for just two frantic days to redecorate before reopening the doors. The cafe wasn't just a business acquisition; it was a canvas for her philosophy: serve only food you genuinely love. "Why sell something you don't like?" is her simple, delicious creed.

Running the cafe is a true family affair, the cornerstone of its success. Her parents are the backbone—Mum in the kitchen, Dad on maintenance. Her brother is the tech guru, her cousins handle cooking and front-of-house, and her partner, Justin, is her unwavering #1 supporter. Even the "furbabies," Major and Nala, are part of the welcoming, dog-friendly atmosphere.

For Diena, the long hours—cooking (she is a foodie who loves visiting other cafes for inspiration), accounting, menu planning—aren't a burden but a labor of love. There are no regrets, only the constant hum of new ideas: testing recipes, dreaming up the next catering venture, ( out



Photo: Left - right Some of the Team—Savien (front of house entertainer), Lim (cook), Diena (everything else that needs to be done), Socheath (cook)

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**Strength and Balance Ashhurst**

Move it—or Lose it! Join our friendly group for a gentle, low impact exercise class, (no floor exercises) with an emphasis on fun. Optional—go for coffee afterwards.

Village Valley Centre, Monday mornings, 9.45am-10.45am.

Cost: \$10 per class.

Enquiries: Maria—phone 329 4166

**Ashhurst Budgeting Service**

Thursday 9.30am-1.00pm.

Operating from St Mary Magdalene Anglican Church, 67 Cambridge Street, Ashhurst.

For Appointments contact: Manawatu Home Budgeting Service. Phone: 358 2279; Cell: 0800-228 343.

**Pohangina Rubbish Collection**

Rubbish is collected every Wednesday. Bags out by 7.30am

**Ashhurst Pohangina Lions**

The Ashhurst Pohangina Lions meet every second Thursday of the month at the R.S.A. Clubrooms at 6.30 pm. This established and friendly Lions Club is community oriented.

**Contacts:**

Jack Zwart (President) 326 8958

[standishzwart@gmail.com](mailto:standishzwart@gmail.com)

Brent Besley (Secretary) 329 4891

[brent.liz@inspire.net.nz](mailto:brent.liz@inspire.net.nz)

Mike Forlong (Memberships) 329 4741

[forlong@inspire.net.nz](mailto:forlong@inspire.net.nz)

**Dienas' Journey to The Local Backyard Cafe**

catering is welcomed) and ensuring every customer feels like part of the family.

Ashhurst isn't just home to a cafe; it's home to a heart. In Diena and her team, the village has found a smiling,

dedicated crew who pour their passion onto every plate and into every cup, proving that the best businesses are built not just on good food, but on genuine love.

**Cicadas**

Summertime in many New Zealand forests is synonymous with the sound of cicadas singing during the daytime. Sometimes the sound emanating from hundreds of cicadas can be so loud it is almost deafening. Most of the noise, perhaps best described as a combination of buzzing and chirping, comes from the males attempting to attract females which then sometimes respond with their own clicks.

There are more than 40 known species of cicada in New Zealand, almost all of them being native, but they vary considerably in size and some are found only in restricted geographical areas. The largest (and noisiest) are the Clapping Cicadas with a body length of about 25 mm. This group includes three species known as the Chorus, Clapping, and Chirping Cicadas. Only the first two species are found in this part of the country. Photo one shows an example of a Chorus Cicada.

The largest group of cicadas are the Kikihi cicadas with at least 16 known species, about half of which can be found in the southern North Island. It is believed there are many other species in this group yet to be formally



described. The Kikihi cicadas are relatively small (15-20 mm) and are divided into several sub-groups, some living mainly in forests, others on the forest margin, and still others in grassland. Photo two shows an example of a Kikihi Cicada called the April Green Cicada, and photo three shows one called the Variable Cicada, in this case a mating pair.

There is another group of small cicadas known as the Black Cicadas but only one of those species, the Iolanthe Cicada, is found in the southern North Island. It is typically found on bare ground and shrubs. And

*Continued on next page*



Photos: Left - Chorus Cicada, Right top - Kikihi Cicada, Right bottom - Variable Cicada

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## Cicadas

a couple of other species, the Clay Bank Cicada and the Redtail Cicada, can sometimes be found on grass and

shrubs in coastal locations.

**Grey Smith**

## Gorge Quarter

Sitting at the mouth of Te Āpiti—Manawatū, Gorge Quarter is a charming little hub where Kiwi nostalgia, natural beauty and a homely, country feel all come together. Part coffee spot, part ice cream stop, part curated retail store, it's the kind of place that instantly loosens your shoulders and reconnects you to the land.

Dreamed up many years ago, by Amy (nee Shannon) and Mark Anderson, Gorge Quarter began as a way for Amy and Mark to share the family farm with others and keep it thriving for generations to come. At its heart is a simple idea: bringing people closer to the land, creating a genuine link between town and country and offering a space where community can

grow naturally.

The setting is as honest as it gets. Salvaged materials tell stories of the area—rocks from the gorge slip that closed the old road, sheep rails from a woolshed, old brass switches and other finds that give the building its bespoke rustic, lived-in feel. Beyond the walls, sweeping views look out to the Manawatū and Pohangina Rivers, with the dramatic Ruahine and Tararua Ranges framing the backdrop. Tracks and trails begin right at the doorstep, making this a perfect stop before or after an adventure.

The offerings are delicious and thoughtfully local. Organic Kōkako coffee, scoops of Kāpiti cream, and homemade bites that feel like a treat from the farm kitchen—think dark chocolate and pistachio cookies or berry-custard brioche. The retail shelves are curated with intention: nature books, handmade pieces, pottery crafted from on-site clay, and a line-up of local and NZ-made brands Amy has personally connected with over time.

More than a café or store, Gorge Quarter is fast becoming a community in its own right. Kids arrive on bikes, get muddy, eat ice

*Continued on next page*



## St. Columba's Catholic Church

St. Columba's Catholic Church would like to welcome you to join us for Vigil Mass, celebrated every Saturday at 5.00 pm.

## Ashhurst Scouting

Keas (Mon 5.30 pm-6.30 pm), Cubs (Wed 6.00 pm-7.30 pm) and Scouts (Mon 6.45 pm-8.15 pm), during school terms.

Contact Julie (Group Leader) on [ashhurst@group.scouts.nz](mailto:ashhurst@group.scouts.nz) for more info.

## Ashhurst Village Radio

Your Community FM Radio Station Broadcasting 24/7

Community notices are free.

Businesses advertisements 30 second \$5.00

Free training for volunteers joining the staff.

Contact: 027 752 5077

[ashhurstvillageradio@gmail.com](mailto:ashhurstvillageradio@gmail.com)

## Ashhurst Music Club

Live original music in your back yard Our club is open to all ages and skill levels.

The first club night is the first Thursday of the month, 6.00 pm - 8.00 pm.

February—Thursday, 5th

March—Thursday, 5th

April—Thursday, 2nd and so on.

Contact Grant - 0274-327-658 or [kiwifieldcrew@inspire.net.nz](mailto:kiwifieldcrew@inspire.net.nz)

**Manawatu Contracting**  
& Drainage Ltd

### Ashhurst's LANDSCAPE SUPPLY YARD

- |                       |                |                                 |
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| ✓ Topsoil/Compost Mix | ✓ Bark Nugget  | ✓ 5mm Screened Sand             |
| ✓ Organic Compost     | ✓ Lime         | ✓ 20mm Washed Stone             |
| ✓ Organic Lawn Mix    | ✓ Pea Straw    | ✓ Kaikoura White Chip           |
| ✓ Topsoil (screened)  | ✓ Pea Metal    | ✓ Crushed Rotten Rock           |
| ✓ Weedmat 1 & 2m      | ✓ Crusher Dust | ✓ AP20 Top Course               |
| ✓ Mulch               | ✓ Builders Mix | ✓ AP40 Base Course              |
| ✓ Organic Garden Mix  | ✓ Nova Coil    | ✓ Cement Bags 20kg              |
|                       |                | ✓ RTU 45 Min Concrete Bags 20kg |

Contact: Greg 027 557 8809

[greg@manawatucontracting.com](mailto:greg@manawatucontracting.com)

Hours: Mon-Fri 7.30am-5.00pm; Sat: 9.00am-3.00pm; Sun: 9.30am-2.30pm

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Monday 10.30 am-2.30pm

Tuesday and Thursday 9.00 am-1.00 pm. 118 Stanford Street, Ashhurst

**Ashhurst Clay Target Club (claybird shooting)**

Meets the last Sunday of every month from 9.30 am at 651 Valley Road.

Anyone welcome to join us

Queries: Ken Simonsen,

Phone: 329-4800

**Ashhurst and District Senior Citizens Association Inc**

Meet on the first Thursday of each month in the Ashhurst Village Valley Centre, at 2.00 pm. We invite you to come along and enjoy an afternoon of friendship and entertainment.

Contact: Stephanie Madgwick—Secretary 021 025 99382

**Local Justices of the Peace**

Mrs AK Rutherford—Available by appointment—027 404 8551

Mr F Saua

Pohangina Road RD 14—029 254 3206

Mr JC Culling

Pohangina Road—027 289 5252

J Wakeford

Hiwinui—022 319 0434

**Craft on Cambridge**

At the Chapman Hall, Anglican Church, Cambridge Avenue, on Monday afternoons 1.30 pm - 3.30 pm and Wednesday mornings 9.30 am-11.30 am. B.Y.O. craft and the cost is \$2 each time.

A friendly, relaxed group who can help with your UFOs!

Contact: Marianne Crawford 027 627 2054

**Matwork Pilates Sessions**

Tuesdays at 6.00 pm—55 minutes. Centennial Room at the Village Valley Centre.

Free first session. Bring a mat or \$12 mats available.

"In 10 sessions you will feel the difference, in 20 you will see the difference, and in 30 you will have a new body." Joseph Pilates

To register contact Narrelle 021 2673676

**Gorge Quarter**

cream with messy faces and roam freely. Travellers trade stories with locals at shared tables. It's the kind of authentic New Zealand experience visitors hope to find and locals are proud to share.

There's plenty on the horizon, too. A growing calendar of events, school visits, self-contained camping trials and long-term plans for a larger precinct with multiple businesses and an event venue in the onsite 50-year-

old nut orchard. Gorge Quarter may be small for now, but the vision is big, organic refined and deeply, beautifully New Zealand.

**Upcoming Events:**

Run Club—every Sunday morning 8.00 am (rain, hail or shine).

Ode to Summer—Saturday, 21st February, 11.00 am - 6.00 pm ish

**Amy Anderson**

**Changes to Bus Fares**

From 19th January 2026, bus fares across Connect – Horizons Regional Transport services will increase for the first time since 2011.

This is the first phase of a stepped plan to increase fare revenue, to meet new policy requirements.

"From 19 January 2026, fares will increase by 10%. A further 15% increase will take place in phase two, in the 2026/27 financial year. The 25% increase is a response to a national directive from New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA)," Mark Read says.

"This change will bring our fares in line with government expectations along with our own funding policy."

"We're adjusting fare pricing to meet NZTA requirements, not as a result of recent or upcoming network changes. This means our fare zones, transfers between services and users who

currently ride fare-free will all remain unchanged."

Mr Read says Horizons acknowledges fare increases, especially in relation with cost of living pressures, will impact households.

People who usually pay cash fares can save money by getting a Bee Card and using that to pay for bus trips, says Mr Read.

"Bee Card fares are cheaper than cash fares. Using a Bee Card also enables people to access fare capping, where they only have to pay for a certain number of trips each week before the rest of their trips are free."

For more information about the fare changes, visit our website here: <https://www.horizons.govt.nz/buses-transport/fares-information>

**Molly Herbert—Communications Advisor**

**Emergency Management Website Launched**

Manawātū-Whanganui Emergency Management Group is excited to launch its new website, giving people in the region another trusted source of information before, during and after emergencies.

The new website, which has the web address [mwcdem.govt.nz](http://mwcdem.govt.nz), provides a one-stop shop for emergency management information.

"Until now, emergency management information for the region has been housed on Horizons Regional Council's

website. Having a standalone emergency management website is best practice, bringing us in line with other emergency management groups across the motu."

The new website gives enhanced options for displaying information, says Mr Hook.

"The website will update automatically when MetService issues weather alerts, while people can get information about smaller-scale

*Continued on next page*



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Saturday: 7.30am—8.00pm

Sunday: 8.00am—8.00pm

Public Holidays: 8.00am—8.00pm

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## Emergency Management Website Launched

emergencies via a Regional Alerts section."

"The homepage also features a situation map, which will update in real time with information such as the MetService alerts, New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi State Highway road closures, and tsunami evacuation zones."

While the website will generally feature preparedness information, including district-by-district information recognising the unique features of each part of the Manawatū-Whanganui Region, there is also the option to flip the website into an 'emergency response mode' during large-scale emergencies, says Mr Hook.

"This emergency response mode will strip out the preparedness information and a lot of imagery, instead prioritising the most urgent information about the specific emergency event. This ensures people get the most important information immediately. It also reduces the data load on people's devices."

"We can then put the website back into its original mode once we are through a response and transitioning into the recovery phase of an emergency."

Effect, the New Zealand company which built the website, has provided

a hosting solution which gives an extremely high level of reliability.

"This helps to mitigate the risk of the website going down when people need to access it most."

The new website is just one method which will be used to communicate information before, during and after emergencies, says Mr Hook.

"Councils in our region will also continue to use their communications channels to keep their communities informed."

People who have feedback about the new website can email [help@horizons.govt.nz](mailto:help@horizons.govt.nz) with the subject "MWCDM website", or send a direct message to the Civil Defence Manawatū Whanganui Facebook page.

### **Jono Galuszka—Media and Communications Manager**

Horizons Regional Council administers the Manawatū-Whanganui Emergency Management Group. This includes providing staff to ensure the functioning of the group's office, and staff during emergency events to run the region's Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC).

You can learn more about Horizons' civil defence functions via the Horizons website.

## **Anglican Parish of Pohangina St Mary Magdalene's Church, Ashhurst**

8.00 am First Sunday of the Month  
10.00 am every Sunday

### **St Bartholomew's Church, Komako**

10.00 am 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays.

Contact the Parish office for further information: Phone 326 8543 or

Email: [info@parishofpohangina.co.nz](mailto:info@parishofpohangina.co.nz)

Web: [www.parishofpohangina.co.nz](http://www.parishofpohangina.co.nz)

Our office is currently not attended. Please email us if you need to contact us.

## **Ashhurst Pohangina Squash Club**

Club night is Monday, from 6.00 pm. Come along and give squash a go! All members and newcomers welcome.

Courts are located at the rear of the Village Valley Centre on Guildford Street

Contact Braydon on 027 390 5611, [ashpohsquashclub@inspire.net.nz](mailto:ashpohsquashclub@inspire.net.nz), or find us on Facebook.

## **Meditation Class**

Overcoming Stress and Anxiety. Please note that weekly classes, every Thursday from 10.00 am - 11.00 am, will recommence on 12th February. Suggested donation: \$7. Join us in the lounge of the Village Valley Centre. No special clothing required. Everyone welcome. For more information, go to [www.meditateinpalmerstonnorth.org](http://www.meditateinpalmerstonnorth.org).

## **Ashhurst Library**

Hi everyone, we hope you have had a great start to the year and had some wonderful holiday time. We are currently planning for 2026 and hope to have many special events throughout the year.

February

Come along every Friday during term time for a cuppa and a friendly chat. Everybody is welcome! There will even be tea, coffee and the odd biscuit provided, but if you want to bring along some home baking, you are very welcome.

### **Village Valley Centre Bookings**

We have bookings flooding in for the Village Valley Centre for 2026. If you have an upcoming event and would like to use the facility, please get in touch with us as soon as you can.

### **Summer Reading 2025-26**

A huge well done to kids and parents for their work on the Summer Reading and iRead programmes over the holidays. It was great fun with our book chats, and we hope everyone involved enjoyed the experience.

### **Ashhurst Elevenses**

First session for 2026 – Friday 13th



Come and see the team at Kauri Physio for all your ACC and non ACC injuries

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## Kids 'n Motion

Now in its 24th year of providing music and movement for 0 - 5 year olds within Ashhurst and the surrounding community.

Every Friday 9.45 am - 11.15 am during school terms at the Village Valley Centre, Guildford Street, Ashhurst.  
Cost: Gold coin donation.

Contact: Cherie O'Leary, Ph: 326 9688  
Check out our Facebook page and like us! Kids 'n Motion is such a great group to come along to—see you there!

## Pohangina Yoga Classes

Sundays 9.30 am  
\$10 per class or \$50 for six classes.  
Suitable for beginners and those with more experience of yoga.

Contact Catherine: [hauorayoga@gmail.com](mailto:hauorayoga@gmail.com), 021 0270 4400, [www.hauorayoga.co.nz](http://www.hauorayoga.co.nz), Facebook: Hauora Yoga

## Pohangina Local Christian Radio

3ABN Radio is now broadcasting in Pohangina Township on 107.7FM. Offering lifestyle radio with a difference! Broadcast 24 Hours, 7 Days a week for the 'Best News Ever!'

[www.3abn.org](http://www.3abn.org)

Contact Rex 06 356 1141 for Free Bible Studies, Books and DVD's.

## River Church

We meet at 131 Cambridge Avenue each Sunday at 10.00am. All welcome. Pastors Dave and Kellie Ross. Phone 027 247 2179 or 328 4864 (evening)  
[www.riverchurch.nz](http://www.riverchurch.nz)



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## Ashhurst Library

### Ashhurst Mighty Kids

Ashhurst Mighty Kids is our preschool programme of stories, songs and crafts. As ever, we hope to be able to have special guests throughout the year and look forward to another fun year.

First session for 2026:

Wednesday, 11th February 10.30am

## Ashhurst Clay Target Club

During the last few months of 2025 our club had some really successful shoots, With new members signing up and up to eight or nine squads each month, which is a great number.

Our club's annual A.G.M. was also held and the club wholeheartedly welcomed the life membership honour to both Ken Simonsen and Andrew Turner—acknowledging many years of membership and committee positions, coaching, working bees, etc.

Our annual Mario Stella Memorial Trophy was won by no other than Joby Stella. To top it all off, at our December Xmas shoot there was a great turnout.

The side-by-side shoot once again proved challenging for many, except

Wednesday, 25th February 10.30am

### Ashhurst Library Facebook

Just a reminder that if you want to keep up to date with all our latest news, events or announcements, just visit us at <https://www.facebook.com/AshhurstLibrary> and click "Like".

**Ross Meads—Ashhurst Librarian**

Joby Stella who won this. Have I mentioned him before?

At the December club shoot it was great that the landowner's extended family joined us.

### Karen Pawson—Secretary



## Ashhurst Rainfall

21 mm of rain fell in November 2025, below the monthly long-term average of 87.9 mm.

Rain was recorded on 9 days, with the highest one-day rainfall of 6 mm on the 19th of November.

The total annual rainfall for the period from 1st of January to the 30th November is now 874.2 mm, which is below the long-term average for this period of 1023.5 mm. The total rainfall for this period according to Phil's records is 681mm.

83.5 mm of rain fell in December 2025, below the monthly long-term average of 100.4 mm.

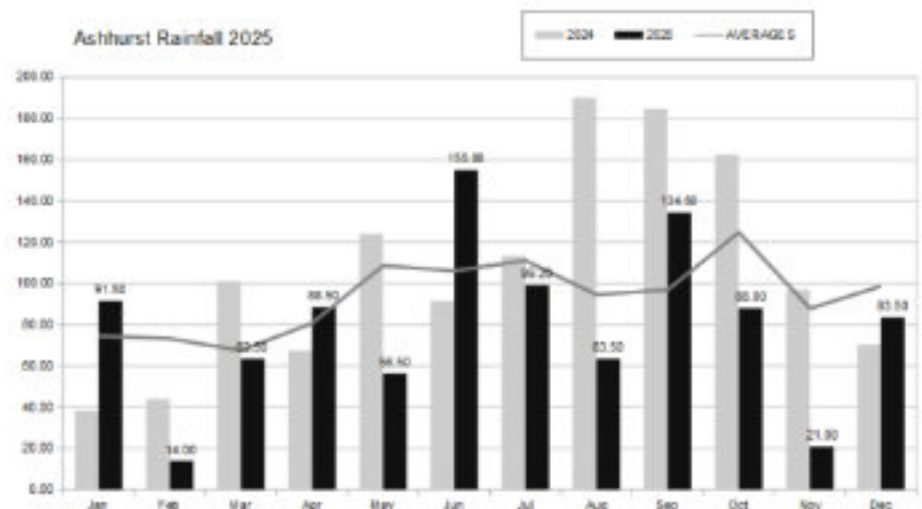
Rain was recorded on 15 days, with the highest one-day rainfall of 10.5 mm

on the 31st of December.

The total annual rainfall for the period from 1st of January to the 31st December is now 957.7 mm, which is below the long-term average for this period of 1123.9 mm. The total rainfall for this period according to Phil's records is 764.5mm.

### Phil Pirie

*Editor's note: We have included this year's data from Phil records to compare with the current year's data provided by our former rain data provider Quang Mai. This is to give a general idea of the difference between the locations (although rain will be different between different locations even within Ashhurst)*





# Kia ora!

**We hope you and your whānau are having a great start to 2026 after a relaxing break. There is still plenty of summer left and lots happening around our city if you're planning outings from the village. Coming up, we have our international Festival of Cultures on 19 February, Explore Esplanade Day on 1 March and the NZ Rural Games from 13 March. These are all good chances to enjoy food, culture, sport, and time together. You can find out more on our website.**

With the new year here remember that if you're a SuperGold Card holder that lives in Palmerston North, it's a great time to pop into our Customer Service Centre at The Square to pick up your 2026 SuperGold parking permit. Please bring your SuperGold Card, your car's registration number, and proof of address. Permits cost just \$10 and allow free parking in the city centre from Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm.

Have you checked out the Palmy Proud magazine with the feature on Ashhurst yet? We've had rave reviews, and a little birdy even told us we hear that Amy from Gorge Quarter was even asked to autograph a copy. Grab yours from the library today!

The sunshine is also a good reminder of our voluntary summer water use programme which has helped us avoid water restrictions for five years! The programme is like level one water restrictions and asks you to only use unattended hoses and sprinklers on lawns and gardens every second day, and only between 7pm and 9pm- until April. Speaking of water, over the coming weeks our crew will complete the final stage of work to address discoloured water in Ashhurst's supply by flushing the village's water pipes. You may recall the first step was bringing the new \$2.1 million filtration plant online at the bore late last year. While the plant now removes the manganese and iron that cause discoloured water at the bore, sediment remains built up in the village's pipes from before. Flushing the pipes is the final step to reduce the risk of discoloured water. You'll get letter when this flushing occurs near you.

There is a lot happening on your roads this summer too. Reseal work is planned on Cambridge Avenue, Lincoln Street, Salisbury Street, Saddle Road and the Ashhurst Domain carpark. These jobs

help keep the roads safe and smooth for everyone. The New Zealand Transport Agency has agreed to fund about \$700,000 of repairs to roads that were used as detours after the Manawatū Gorge closed in 2017. Now that the Manawatū Tararua Highway - Te Ahu a Turanga is open, these roads have returned to council control, and the funding will help bring them back to a good standard. We're confirming the details of this work and will keep you updated.

The rebuild on Wyndham Street is also progressing. Since the Higgins crew has returned in the new year, they're focusing on the stormwater parts of the project. This is important because it reduces the risk of flooding when we get heavy rain. The work between Oxford Street and Cambridge Avenue is expected to be finished in the middle of 2026. The end result will be a safer and more reliable street for years to come – including a wider road, repairs to the Oxford Street intersection, and new kerb and channel, footpaths and vehicle crossings. Thank you to the residents who live and travel through this area for your ongoing cooperation and understanding.

Remember, if you would like to stay up to date with what's happening around the city, you can sign up to Palmy Matters online newsletter by scanning the QR code here. It is a simple way to receive news about infrastructure projects, events, consultations and council decisions straight to your inbox.

You're also welcome to get in touch with me, your City Mayor, or your elected members at any time. Our details are on the council website.

Ngā mihi nui

**Grant Smith JP**

Mayor of Palmerston North City



## ASHHURST COMMUNITY LIBRARY

### Open days

Monday	2pm - 5pm
Tuesday - Friday	10am - 5pm
Saturday	10am - 1pm
Sunday	Closed

Access the full range of library digital resources at: [citylibrary.pncc.govt.nz](http://citylibrary.pncc.govt.nz)

## SPLASHHURST! COMMUNITY POOL

### Normal hours

Tuesday - Friday	6am - 9am + 1pm - 7pm during school term 6am - 7pm during school holidays
Saturday	8am - 6pm
Sunday - Monday	Closed

[clmnz.co.nz/splashhurst](http://clmnz.co.nz/splashhurst)

## ASHHURST RUBBISH + RECYCLING

Rubbish bag and bin collection  
Tuesday morning. Bags out by 7.30am.

Recycling Bin	Glass Crate
10 Feb	3 Feb
24 Feb	17 Feb
	3 Mar

## MULGRAVE ST TRANSFER STATION

Recycling, green waste and general rubbish disposal.

### Open days

Tuesday	1pm - 3pm
Saturday	10am - 4pm

\*no changes to Ashhurst collections or transfer station this holiday period

Council's 24/7 contacts are **06 356 8199**, the Council Facebook page, [pncc.govt.nz](http://pncc.govt.nz) and the **Snap Send Solve** app to quickly report anything that needs attention or fixing.

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## Published by The Ashhurst Village Voice Society Inc.

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[rgcsmith@inspire.net.nz](mailto:rgcsmith@inspire.net.nz)

Proof-reader: Vivienne Dalgleish

### Letters to the Editor

Letters under 200 words are preferred.

The writer's contact details are required on all letters (not for publication), including address, email and phone number. We may need to contact you to clarify minor details.

The editor reserves the right to edit, abridge or decline letters or articles without explanation. Pen names or letters submitted elsewhere are not acceptable.

If supplying images, high resolution images are required. Please feel free to contact the editor if you are unable to email images.

We do not accept flyers or pamphlets for publication. Contents need to be provided as articles for publication.

### Advertising Rates & Information

Articles and community notices are free. Adverts can vary from a few lines in the side column to a double business card size. Conditions apply. A 15% discount is offered if you pay in advance for a full year (11 issues). A business card size advert is to be 60mm by 100mm at 300dpi and costs \$55.

The cost varies proportionally for smaller and larger sized adverts.

For further information on advertising costs and payments please contact Grey Smith.

Advertisers, we prefer that you supply files in pdf format. Please note that files supplied in .pdf format are unable to be adjusted from our end. Adverts can be created by the Editor for a small additional cost. These can be adjusted as required.

### Village Voice Deadline

Deadline for articles and advertising submissions for the next edition is:

**5.00 pm Friday, 20th February 2026.**

We cannot guarantee your submission will be included after this date.

## Ashhurst Bowling Club

I think the less said about the weather the better, but I have to also be fair and say we have been able to play most of the programmed events.

The Nissan Triples was played on a windy morning which deteriorated into a wet, windy and cold afternoon. After lunch it was decided to call it a day so there was a table of yummy food and prize giving. Winners were: first equal between Jim Harding's team from Dannevirke and Jen Brown's team from Ashhurst. Fay Jones team from Himatangi was third. Well done to all players who battled the elements. Nissan have sponsored this tournament for some years and we thank them hugely.

Another overcast day with a few showers did not deter the players in the BBQ Triples played on December 27th. Two games were played and then a meal was served at the R.S.A. where everyone gathered for a social time. Winners were Mike Ansell's team from Himatangi with Jim Harding's team second and Mike Lahood's team third—both from Dannevirke. A huge thank you to our dual sponsors Ashhurst Engineering and Village Valley Automotive.

Coming up is the Julia Wallace 2x4x2 tournament on 4th February and then our major two day Property Brokers tournament on the 7th and 8th February. These are both well supported events and we just need the weather gods to play kindly for us. More info in March.

Our Club Year 1/2 Championship was eventually won by Lorraine after some really good games played. Runner up was Nola. Plenty of supporters for all these players.

In February we have our 2x4x2 mixed pairs Championship on the 13th and 14th. Club Drawn Fours is on the 19th and the Club Over 65 year Singles on the 28th and on the 1st March.

Skogs and Elizabeth Walker are underway and more results from that next month.

Club Day continues to be on a Thursday with names in by 1.15 pm. If you would like to come along and try out bowling please join us then and you will be very welcome.

We must make mention of the passing of one of our bowlers who passed away on the 16th January. Roger Senior played at Ashhurst and was responsible for organising so many grants we applied for to keep our club functioning and improving. We thank you Roger and wish you peace.

In finishing it would be nice to have some settled fine weather here in the Manawatū. Our thoughts must be with those caught by the terrible events further North and such devastation and heartbreak is just too awful to think about for too long.

Keep smiling and of course Happy New Year to all.

**Adrianne Harding—Secretary.**

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