



Ashhurst Village Voice

*Informing the communities of
Ashhurst & Pohangina*

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March 2026

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Community Comment

Ashhurst has experienced some obvious repairs and maintenance in past weeks. Some footpath repairs are ongoing in limited scope. Work on the Wyndham Street footpaths is still in progress. The humpback railway bridge had extensive work on its pedestrian safety rails. The old ones likely dated to their installation and were falling over the banks due to age or erratic driver behaviour. Replacement posts and rails are now in place, with a pristine white paint job too.

Stormwater maintenance contractors are working through the village to clean out the sediment sumps below the gutters. Supposedly an annual process, this work helps to maintain an operational stormwater system. It will take some time to complete the work, but cleaned sumps are identified with a blue dab of paint.

Horizons contractors have been busy too, with some significant drainage maintenance on the stream at McCrae's Bush. This is likely a result of a need to remediate the flooding risk of this river terrace which damaged properties a few years ago. Some observers may have been aghast at the initial destruction on the edge of the stream. Horizons' staff and contractors worked with RECAP and council staff to minimise damage, while

still enabling the 13 tonne digger, with its long reach arm, to perform its work safely. This required a wide access track beside the stream to remove weed, sludge and silt, which was impeding water flow. Some self-sown trees were removed, but flaxes and some shrubs were moved to a higher location. Unwanted weeds and other growth were mulched in place. Hay has been laid to protect the the stream edge and grass seed sown for a quick recovery.

This work was completed just before the red weather warning, in which residents on River and Saddle Roads were evacuated due to the flooding risk. While the Pohangina River was very high, the heavy rain storm did not cross the mountains and cause problems here. Instead, it headed south to lash the Wellington and Canterbury regions. We understand that evacuated Ashhurst residents were well cared for at the Village Valley Centre.

This work comes at a cost to the regional authorities. The City Council has been grappling with its budget plans, which forecast a rates increase of 8.5% in its long-term plan. Several cuts in projects have been made resulting in a proposed average rates increase of a more managable 4.9%. The annual plan consultation documents for the city's budget will be available on the Council web pages, or in its libraries. Submissions will be open from 10th March - 10th April for city residents to have their say on how their rates are used.

The February meeting of Council approved a number of fee increases for its services. Of particular note for Ashhurst, are the increase in fees at the Ashhurst

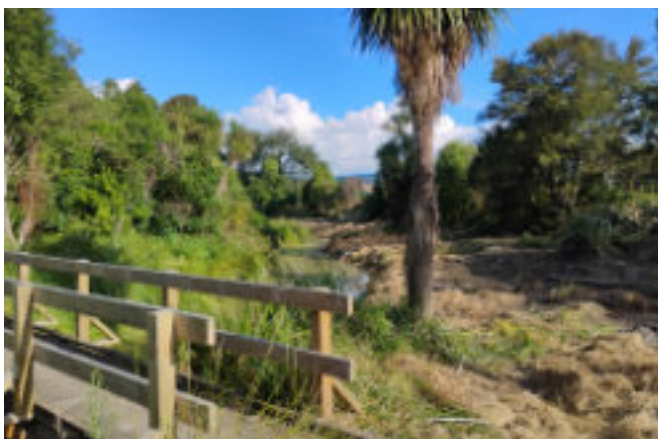


Photo: McCrae's Bush stream maintenance

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Deadline for March Issue—Friday, 20th March 2026

Letter From the Editor

Welcome to the March issue of the Ashhurst Village Voice.

Next month we will be racing to get our issue out before Easter weekend, so a special request to everyone to get their articles in early.

Currently, the Reserve Bank is requesting the public for feedback on a proposal that banks must provide a minimum level of cash services so people, businesses, and community groups can withdraw cash, deposit cash, and get change free-of-charge close to where they live. Consultation opens 25th February 2026 for six weeks, closing Friday, 10th April 2026.

Being a semi-rural and rural area, this is something that directly affects our community.

For more information go to <https://www.rbnz.govt.nz/money-and-cash/access-to-cash>.

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.

Community Comment

transfer station. Council agreed to impose the increases over a two year period, despite a shortfall of \$13,000 to cover operating costs. Possibilities of increased fly-tipping was considered. They were careful to ensure that cheaper disposal charges in Ashhurst

did not attract usage of the limited capability of the transfer station by non-Ashhurst residents. New charges will be phased in over two years beginning 1st July.

Harvey Jones

Prima Facie in Pohangina

A powerful night of theatre is coming to Pohangina Hall

The Pohangina Hall is proud to present *Prima Facie*, an acclaimed and deeply affecting one-woman play, on Sunday, 8th March 2026 at 7.00 pm. The performance will be followed by a Q & A session and supper, offering audiences a chance to reflect and talk together after the show.

Written by award-winning playwright Suzie Miller, *Prima Facie* is directed by Michael Hurst and performed by Cassandra Woodhouse, bringing world-class theatre to our local stage.

The play follows Tessa Ensler, a brilliant criminal defence barrister who has worked her way up from a working-class background to the top of her profession. Sharp, confident and highly

successful, Tessa believes passionately in the legal principle of innocent until proven guilty. She has built her career defending those accused of serious crimes, including rape and sexual assault, and trusts completely in the justice system she operates within.

However, an unexpected and life-changing event forces Tessa to confront that very system from the other side. As she navigates a legal framework shaped by patriarchal power structures and rigid rules of evidence, the gap between the law and the lived experience of sexual assault survivors becomes painfully clear.

Prima Facie is an Oliver and Tony Award-winning play, widely praised for its intelligence, emotional power and urgency. It is an unforgettable piece of storytelling that questions how justice is administered and asks audiences to consider where emotion, experience and the law collide.

Directed by New Zealand acting royalty Michael Hurst and performed by the remarkable Cassandra Woodhouse, New Zealand Theatre Company in association with Arts on Tour is honoured to bring *Prima Facie* to
Continued on next page



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Sunday: 8.00am—8.00pm
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Prima Facie in Pohangina

communities around Aotearoa, continuing a global call to action sparked by this extraordinary work.

Tickets are \$25 and are available now from pohanginavalley.nz/tickets

This promises to be a thought-provoking and memorable evening of theatre—one that will resonate long after the final curtain.

Ashhurst Volunteer Fire Brigade

Kia Ora Ashhurst and Pohangina,

Hope y'all had a good Christmas/New Years and survived the recent wild weather!

Who else saw our 2025 call stats? They're on our Facebook page. I was personally surprised at the total of 88 callouts—I didn't think it'd be that high. I was also surprised at 30 motor vehicle crashes too with the new road opening and all. The five structure fires weren't full-blown house fires either, mostly alarm activations or false alarms. 25 miscellaneous fires includes rubbish fires, trusty car fires and bonfires. Ship fires thankfully remain at zero too. Something's gone horribly wrong if that

number goes up for us!

A number I'm personally proud of is the 30 home fire safety visits our brigade conducted within the community. It shows our dedication to prevention and education and your commitment to keeping your loved ones and property safe. If you're interested in a home fire safety visit simply sign up at <https://www.fireandemergency.nz/hfsv/> or ring 0800 693 473 and we'll send a team of our local Firefighters around to put up some smoke alarms and give you some other tips to be fire safe.

Cheers,

**Matt Clark—Secretary
Fire Risk Management Officer**

Changes at the Ashhurst Foodbank

Over the holiday season, I researched the origins of the Ashhurst Food Bank and was interested to find out that it began in the early 1980s at the instigation of Eddie Chapman and a group of representatives from each of the local churches, for people needing emergency support. While the nature of the Food Bank has changed since then, it still serves the people of the Ashhurst Village and the Pohangina Valley, and until now this has been the criteria to be eligible for a food parcel.

As I have mentioned previously, the number of consumers using the Ashhurst Food Bank has been steadily increasing, so the supplies that we receive from all sources must stretch further. To make sure our resources are going to the people most in need, we have introduced some additional questions for our consumers, so that we can put them in one of four categories. These categories allow each family to visit between once a month and four times a month, depending upon their answers to the questions.

At the same time, we have renewed

contact with Moneywise Manawatū, who are pleased to be able to help anyone who would like budgeting advice, not just Food Bank consumers. Last month a Moneymates course started during the day, so if you were unable to join this group or would like an evening course, please text me and it can be arranged. The course is a peer-led discussion group on specific topics: our attitude towards money, needs vs wants, setting achievable financial goals, keeping track of your money, creating a sustainable budget, borrowing sensibly, dealing with debt, and understanding insurance. No personal details are discussed.

In conclusion, I would like to sincerely thank all those who contribute to the Food Bank - the volunteers, the Ashhurst Pohangina Lions and groups who assist with the Food Drive, Ashhurst Engineering, the people of the St Mary Magdalene and River churches, Palmerston North Methodist Social Services, and those individuals in the community who donate money either into the ACT Food Bank account or in

Continued on next page

JustOnePlease

Super kia ora. The Justoneplease item for the Safe House for March 2026 is *Milo*.

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.

Manawatū Toy Library

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

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

Volunteering Opportunity: Help Us Save the Giant Maidenhair Fern

Join a group of friendly locals for an easy working bee to help preserve the environment of this endangered plant.

When: 4th Sunday of each month

Time: 10.00 am - 12.00 pm

Where: Ashhurst Domain (meet in the Barbecue area by the playground).

Bring: Drinks, sun protection, gardening gloves, snacks and sturdy shoes, and perhaps a picnic to enjoy in the Domain afterwards.

NB: This is a weather dependent activity and updates will be provided via the Ashhurst Chat Facebook Group

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 or text/call 021 163 9396

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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

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 Adriane on 027 2836317.

Changes at the Ashhurst Foodbank

cash, and those who deliver their excess produce to the Methodist Hall on Thursday afternoons. However you regard your contribution, every bit helps

and you are truly making a difference in our community.

Kind regards

Marianne Crawford

Ashhurst Memorial R.S.A.

It has been a banger year for the Ashhurst Memorial R.S.A., and as we look toward the changing of the seasons, the energy around our club has never been higher. From the lively crowds enjoying our outdoor licensed area, our Friday Night raffles, the Ode of Remembrance, members draw, to the buzz of local music, we've had a lot to celebrate.

Now, we want to share that success—and our vision for the future—with all of you.

Annual General Meeting: Your Voice Matters

We officially invite all members to attend our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Sunday, 29th March, from 1.00 pm - 2.00 pm.

This is a vital time for the club as we call for nominations for all office and committee positions. We are pleased to announce that Tracey Kereama-Graham will serve as the Returning Officer for this year's elections. Whether you are looking to step into a leadership role or simply want to hear the good news about our recent achievements, we look forward to seeing you there.

Engines Roaring and Markets Calling

Mark your calendars for Sunday, 12th April. Our upcoming Car Show and Market Day is already generating

massive buzz. To date, over 250 car owners have expressed interest, promising a spectacular turnout of classic and custom vehicles.

With the bands Two Tones and Desert Road providing the soundtrack, it's set to be a highlight of the year. Keep "your other eye out" for more specific details as we get closer to the date!

What's On: Mark Your Calendars

We have a packed schedule of events designed to bring our community together:

- Saturday, 21st and Sunday, 22nd February - Darts Tournament
- Sunday, 8th March - Live Music: Two Tones
- Sunday, 29th March - A.G.M. (1.00 pm - 2.00 pm)
- Sunday, 12th April - Car Show, Market Day and Two Tones
- Saturday, 25th April - ANZAC Day Services and Live Band
- Tuesday, 28th April - Super Bingo
- Every Tuesday - Weekly Bingo

Looking Ahead to ANZAC Day

Preparations are already well underway for ANZAC Day. This remains the most significant day on our calendar as we pause to remember and honor

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Ashhurst R.S.A.

those who served. Following the services, we will have a live band to keep the spirit of comradeship going throughout the afternoon.

Join the Family

Being a member of the Ashhurst R.S.A. is about more than just a local club; it grants you reciprocal rights to all other R.S.A.s and affiliated clubs across New Zealand. It's a great way to stay connected, no matter where you travel.

We are all hoping the weather settles down so we can enjoy a beautiful late summer in our outdoor area. In the meantime, please follow our Facebook page to stay up to date with the latest news and photos.

I look forward to catching up with old friends and meeting new faces at our upcoming events. See you at the club!

Peter Knight—President

Ashhurst Pohangina Rugby Football Club

The Ashhurst Pohangina Rugby Football Club is a proud, community-based club fielding both junior and senior teams, competing annually in the Manawatū Rugby Competition. With a strong history of developing talented junior players and competitive senior sides, the Ashhurst Pohangina Rugby Football Club continues to build a positive, family-friendly culture where players and their whānau are at the heart of the club.

We believe rugby teaches valuable life skills such as commitment, teamwork, respect, resilience, and fair play, helping shape positive contributors to our community. Our 2026 vision is to have the Ashhurst Pohangina Rugby Football Club recognised as one of the top clubs in the Manawatū by developing our players to their full potential with strong community support, while excelling across all competitive grades.

The Ashhurst Pohangina Rugby Football Club is gearing up for an exciting 2026 season—and we want *you* to be part of it! Registrations are now open for both Junior and Senior teams,

whether you're a seasoned player or keen to pull on the boots for the first time. The Senior season kicks off on 11th April, with pre-season games in March. Our Junior season caters for ages 4 – 6 (Rippa) and 7 – 13 (Tackle), kicks off on 9th May, with registrations closing 10th April. All registrations are completed online through Rugby Xplorer: [https://myaccount.rugbyexplorer.com.au/choose-registration?name=Ashhurst-Pohangina%20\(Junior\)](https://myaccount.rugbyexplorer.com.au/choose-registration?name=Ashhurst-Pohangina%20(Junior)).

We are also seeking coaches, volunteers, managers, and sponsors to help grow our club. Without the community's support our grassroots club will not continue to operate, so please come get involved.

For enquiries,
email aprcccommittee@gmail.com,

Or contact:
Amanda (Junior) on 021 034 2359,
Jason (Senior) on 027 580 6330. Join us and help make 2026 our strongest season yet!

Amanda Gardner—Secretary and Junior Convenor

Ashhurst Senior Citizens Association

The February meeting of the Ashhurst and Districts Senior Citizens was an outing to Longwood Gardens in Kelvin Grove. What used to be a horse paddock with 15 pine trees at the back of the 3.5 acre property has undergone a long-term transformation and is now covered in beautiful gardens. Hosts Yvonne and Peter Long also provided an exceptional afternoon tea that was a highlight of the outing! Many thanks to Yvonne and Peter from us.

We are having new members and/or guests join each month which is wonderful to see. A reminder you do not have to be a senior to attend the monthly social meetings so why not come along and see if its something you may be interested in. Also, people are invited not just from Ashhurst but from the surrounding districts, including Pohangina, so do not feel you can't attend because you live outside of

Continued on next page

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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: Manawatū 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

Brent Besley (Secretary) 329 4891

brent.liz@inspire.net.nz

Mike Forlong (Memberships) 329 4741

forlong@inspire.net.nz

Ashhurst Senior Citizens Association

Ashhurst. The club has been running for 51 years so we're doing something right! You may meet some new people or catch up with some friends or familiar faces, as well as enjoying a delicious afternoon tea.

The March meeting will be hosted by members of our local Ashhurst Drama group and this promises to be a very entertaining afternoon!

Suzanne McAllen: A Life Shaped by Clay

Suzanne McAllen's introduction to clay happened by accident. As a child growing up in South Auckland, she walked a long way to the banks of the Weymouth Estuary carrying a carefully fashioned—and entirely non-functional—fishing rod made from a length of bamboo. As she clambered down the muddy bank, she discovered wet, sloshy orange clay.

Excited and curious, she took some home to experiment with.

Without a wheel, she improvised. In the garage rumpus room she put the clay on the family record player and tried to form a pot as it spun. It was the first of many muddy experiments—and her mother, understandably concerned about both safety and the record player, was not impressed—but the fascination had begun.

Family holidays visiting potteries

Our April meeting will be hosted by members of the local Anglican church.

If transport is an issue, please contact our President, Trish Beattie, on 06 326 8363.

We meet on the first Thursday of the month, 2.00 pm, at the Valley Village Centre. We look forward to seeing you!

Stephanie Madgwick—Secretary

around Northland and the Coromandel strengthened that early pull. She was captivated watching clay rise under steady hands—a soft lump becoming a vessel with purpose. It wasn't decoration that interested her most, but the way shape, weight and balance came together to create something both beautiful and useful.

In her twenties, after several years of community night classes, Suzanne took the opportunity to commit fully to pottery. She spent five formative years living and training with ceramic artist Mirek Smíšek, OBE, and his wife, Pamella Annsouth, on their Te Horo Railway Station property. It was less an apprenticeship and more an immersion in a creative way of life.

Mirek was jovial, generous and unwavering in his belief that creativity was essential. He impressed upon everyone he met that being creative mattered. Living and working alongside Mirek and Pamella, the relationship grew into something more like family. There was laughter, conversation, long days at the wheel and long nights firing the kilns. Those years shaped Suzanne not only in skill, but in outlook—that creativity is essential, that it grows through practice, and that it brings deep satisfaction.

Nine years ago, Suzanne and her partner Rangī bought their Ashhurst property specifically to establish a working studio. From there she now produces wheel-thrown and hand-built pottery, selling her work directly from a verandah shop at the front of the property, open to the public.

Continued on next page



Photo: Suzanne in her studio


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Suzanne McAllen: A Life Shaped by Clay

Alongside her own practice, Suzanne runs pottery workshops, wheel experiences and a dedicated Paint-A-Pot space for the local community. The philosophy she absorbed years ago continues here. She encourages people to come along, even if they feel unsure. Clay requires focus, but it gives back buckets of freedom. It draws people into a rhythm where phones and distractions

are set aside and hours pass unnoticed. What they leave with is more than a finished piece—it is calm, confidence and the simple relief of having stepped away from the rush of everyday life.

What began as a muddy discovery on an estuary bank has become a working studio built on skill, generosity and a belief that creativity practised by hand enriches both the soul and everyday life.

County Fayre Update

County Fayre has been closed since mid-December due to our Kitchen being fully renovated. The renovation progressed well and I am hoping by the time you are reading this we are back open and running again. We look forward to welcoming our regulars back and anyone else looking for an afternoon outing. Our thanks to Guy and his team from Rowdy Builders Limited, local to Ashhurst, for undertaking this renovation for us.

The County Fayre Annual General Meeting was held in February and I retained the role of President along with Val, as Secretary and Kim, as Treasurer. We also welcomed two new committee members, Annette and Jenny. If you would like to join County Fayre as a volunteer to help in the kitchen once a month on a Sunday afternoon, please drop in on a Sunday afternoon and speak with one of our lovely volunteers or contact us via countyfayre@inspire.net.nz, everyone is welcome. If you would like to become one of our friends on Facebook, send us a friends request via <https://www.facebook.com/>

[CountyFayre.](#)

And here is my Presidential report for 2025.

Presidents Report, 2025

Another year has passed and with it many activities have continued to keep the sound of voices bouncing off the walls in County Fayre. We supported the usual annual occasions of Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Anzac Day; hosted a district farewell gathering for Craig Knight, and luncheons and afternoon teas for several Clubs. We also said farewell to committee members Jill Walcroft and Amy Lenard. Amy, husband Hugh and son, Artie had all become a big part of the County Fayre Family, who headed off from our shores. We welcomed the Art Trail Manawatū, showcasing the work of local artists and it was a great success. Our signature event the Downhill Walk, was once more another great success.

We were a place where people came together to celebrate an engagement, birthdays, a wedding and a memorial

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 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

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 @ St Mary's Magdalene
Church Hall

March—Thursday, 5th

April—Thursday, 2nd and so on.

Contact Grant - 0274-327-648 or
kiwifieldcrew@inspire.net.nz

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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

County Fayre Update

service to remember a loved one passed. County Fayre was also a venue to many community meetings and gatherings.

We re-registered as a society under the new Incorporated Societies Act 2022, a task that, at times, felt fairly ominous but one that was necessary.

The Art Gallery was revamped and the kitchen windows were replaced. More recently the kitchen upgrade is underway and moving close to completion. With a new year come new beginnings and I look forward to seeing this outstanding place continue to be involved in many more events.

Our scones continue to be a favourite

with our visitors, many thanks to Claire Brock who continues to supply these, long may it continue.

A heartfelt thank you to the County Fayre Committee and the Volunteers who have given their time, energy and enthusiasm to make County Fayre such a success. Your dedication, hard work and community spirit are noticed and truly appreciated. County Fayre would simply not exist or be possible without your commitment.

On behalf of the whole community, I thank you, each and every one of you, for everything you contribute.

Looking forward to seeing you here.

Jo Morris-Kynoch—President

Book Review: Yesterday When I Was Young

Yesterday When I Was Young by Suzanne Lynch

If you remember The Chicks, Mr Lee Grant, Larrys Rebels, Ray Columbus, Peter Sinclair (C'mon). The Keil Isles. Larry Morris. Peter Posa and Shane. This book is for you!

A very enjoyable memoir from Suzanne of The Chicks with many old photos from her childhood and later singing career, Suzanne and her sister Judy started their professional performing at the age of 14 and 17. So young and keen, they were talented singers but were also exceptionally lucky to have the opportunities offered to them in the early days of TV in New Zealand. This is also a story of the music, fashions and lifestyle of the era the girls were born into. Baby Boomers all.

Many people may not be familiar with Suzanne's later career in the United Kingdom and her international tours as a

backing and support singer for the likes of Cat Stevens and Charles Aznavour, She also appeared on the Val Doonican show and toured with Neil Sedaka in his 1974 United Kingdom concert.

An interesting and warm personality, Suzanne is well known these days as one of the "Lady Killers" or "When The Cats Away". She also acts as a mentor and adviser to younger singers.

In 1977 Suzanne did two tours as a backing singer with the great French singer and songwriter Charles Aznavour, composer of her signature song "When I was Young". A hit for her when she recorded it at 17. It was a great honour for her to meet and work with the writer of her hit song.

A unique and long career story, packed with anecdotes and stories of the many performers and personalities Suzanne befriended over decades.

Robyn Dare

Hiwinui School Highlights

What a fantastic start to 2026! Our classes are humming with excitement as students settle into routines with their new teachers and in their new learning spaces. It is so nice to see the positive atmosphere here at Hiwinui. We are all looking forward to the year ahead.

The sun shone on Wednesday, 18th February, for our annual School

Triathlon. It was inspiring to see our students out in force, showing incredible resilience and determination. The highlight for us was seeing the genuine awahi and support our children showed toward one another—cheering on their mates and encouraging the younger students who were trying the event for

Continued on next page

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Hiwinui School Highlights

the first time. It was a wonderful day full of energy and smiles.

We want to extend a massive thank you to the wider community for supporting our annual Hay Fundraiser. In the baking heat of late December and early February, parents collected over 9,000 bales of hay. This hard work allows the funds raised to go directly toward providing new technology and equipment for our students.

For the past eight years, Hiwinui School has been strictly egg-free to ensure the safety of a student with severe allergies. As this student moves on, the family wishes to publicly thank the wider Hiwinui community for the kindness and respect shown during this time. It truly takes a village to keep our children safe. With this chapter closing,

eggs are now permitted on Hiwinui school grounds once again.

Congratulations to the Blair family, who won our recent firewood raffle! The proceeds from this are going to our newly established Student Council to help them plan events and improve our play areas. Our senior student leaders are excited to be a part of this new team.

Term One also sees our newly created choir and dance clubs getting ready for events in Terms Two and Three. We have plenty of other exciting events still to come, including:

- Footprints in the Sand Fun Run
- Kainui Senior and Junior Swimming Sports
- Weet-Bix Kids TRYathlon
- Mt Biggs Tough Kids

Anna Hagan—Principal

Ashhurst School

Welcome back to the 2026 school year. It was a long summer break and we are all really excited to get back into all that good learning, fun times, memory making, friendship building, pushing ourselves, and trying new things.

Since starting back at school, the sun has decided to show up and Tamanui-te-rā has been scorching hot.

We welcomed all of our new students and whānau on the morning of the 9th February with a beautiful mihi whakataua led by our wonderful Pā Damian McGregor. It was lovely to see so many new faces.

school to chat with teachers, look around classrooms, or catch up with friends in the playground during drop offs and pickups.

The Unveiling of 'He Pou Kōrero'

This special event happened on Monday, 2nd February 2026 after a year of deep diving into the geography, history, and cultural heritage of our local area. Throughout 2025, our school collaborated with artists, historians, environmental experts, and iwi Māori knowledge holders. This collective effort has culminated in a new resource that will anchor our curriculum and enrich the

We always welcome whānau into

Continued on next page

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

Web: 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, or find us on Facebook.

Meditation Class

Overcoming Stress and Anxiety.
Every Thursday from 10.00 am - 11.00 am.

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.

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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, 021 0270 4400, www.hauorayoga.co.nz, Facebook: Hauora Yoga

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



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Ashhurst School

Ashhurst community for years to come.

The Installation

We are proud to introduce four 2-metre-tall Pou Kōrero (pillars of knowledge) located near the school office. Standing central to these is 'Manu Toi', a large sculpture honoring the late John Bevan Ford, a legendary artist and former Ashhurst resident, who will oversee the space.

We gathered at 4:30 AM as in our Māori worldview, the moments just before and during the break of dawn are

sacred. It is a time when the "veil" is thinnest, bringing us closest to our ancestors and those who have passed.

As we transition from Te Pō (the realm of the unseen) to Te Ao Mārama (the world of light), it provides the perfect reflective atmosphere to unveil these works and honor the centuries of history they represent.

We are excited to embark on this new chapter of our school's identity with all the significance that He Pou Kōrero encompasses.

Ashhurst Library

Hi everyone, we are thrilled to have Beth back with us while Jill has been seconded to the main library. Come on in to say welcome back or introduce yourself, she is loving being back.

Heritage Festival 2026

Tuesday, 10th March, 1.30 pm – 2.30 pm

As part of the City Library's Heritage festival you are most welcome to join us on an adventure to Ashhurst School and discover the recently installed He Pou Kōrero. These four two-metre-tall pou (pillars) bring insight to the significance of the surrounding environment: its unique geography, flora and fauna, history, and cultural heritage. Learn about the history of Ashhurst School and the diverse stories that have emerged over the past 147 years.

A huge thank you to Ashhurst School for hosting this wonderful event

Ashhurst Elevenses

Every Friday at 11.00 am during term time

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.

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 there may be a few sessions in some very special locations.

Wednesday, 11th March 10.30 am

Wednesday, 25th March 10.30 am

(Easter Session)

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".

Volunteers

We are greatly enjoying having our volunteers helping us out, whether they be students, gardeners or genealogists. It contributes greatly to what we can achieve here and the service we provide.

Ross Meads—Ashhurst Librarian

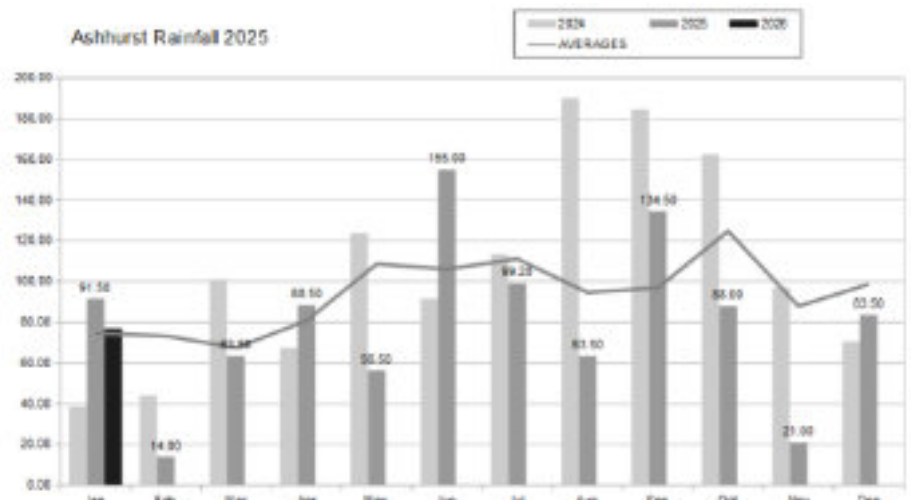
Ashhurst Rainfall

77.5 mm of rain fell in January 2026, below the monthly long-term average of 100.6 mm.

Rain was recorded on 13 days, with the highest one-day rainfall of 35 mm on the 15th of January.

The total annual rainfall for the period from 1st of January to the 31st January is now 77.5 mm, which is below the long-term average for this period of 100.6 mm.

Phil Pirie



Kia ora!

It's been a mixed bag summer wise for us, but I hope you've had the chance to get in some sunshine. It's been great to see how busy Ashhurst has been with people using their summer holidays to explore the variety of different pathways you have on offer, and of course to grab a cuppa nearby too.

I do want to also give a big thanks to the Ashhurst community and especially the River Rd and Saddle Rd residents who needed to evacuate during the bad weather mid- Feb. Our Emergency Management team shared with me how great it was to see the community take the warnings so seriously. We always say "it's not a matter of if, but when" and this was another reminder of the importance of being prepared for any emergency and having a family plan in place.

Onto other topics now, last year I shared that I'd give you an update on the Manawatū Regional Freight Ring Road feedback. More than 70 Ashhurst residents gave feedback on the proposed during a community expo session in December. You were part of a wider process, with more than 500 people from across the city attending expos and workshops as we sought feedback on possible route options. That feedback has now been summarised in a report which you can read at pncc.govt.nz/ringroad. The feedback will be brought back to Council for Elected Members shortly as part of a wider project update.

On the ground, work continues on the upgrade of Wyndham Street. Before Christmas, most of the new footpath on the northern side of the street was completed. Since the start of the year, Higgins has moved to the southern side to complete stormwater and drainage work.

From late February, the crew will begin widening the road and adjusting different sections so the street drains well in heavy rain. This stage is expected to take around two months. Thank you to residents and businesses for your patience while this important upgrade is completed — I know many in the community have been advocating strongly for this work, and it's great to see it progressing.

Over the next few weeks, you'll also have a chance to have your say on the Annual Budget, which sets our priorities and spending for the next 12 months. Consultation opens on March 11. In our Long Term Plan we had proposed an 8.5% increase this year, but we've worked hard to bring that down to 4.9% for your consideration. Like always, during our consultation period you will be able to head to our website and see what your specific proposed property rates will be. This is the final year of phasing to a full 50/50 Capital Value/Land Value model too, so that may have some affect too based on your property. You'll be able to make a submission on our website or at our Customer Service Centre.

Separately to the Annual Budget, Council also looked at Fees and Charges from July and some will be going up to reflect the ongoing cost pressures in these areas. This will include increases to the fees to use the swimming pools. Our under 5's swim free with a caregiver remains in place though. We also need to increase fees at the Ashhurst Transfer station and will do this over a phased approach over the next two years.

I know any change to fees is sensitive, especially as we're all feeling cost pressures. Council has to make careful decisions about what is funded by users and what is funded through rates. These are both user based fees.

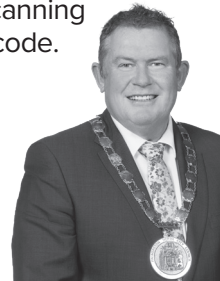
Ashhurst has a strong record of getting involved and speaking up, and that makes a real difference to Council decisions. I encourage you to keep asking questions and making submissions on things that affect you. If you have any questions about anything in this column or any other Council matter, please get in touch with myself and your other elected members (their details are on the council website) or through our Customer Service Centre, by phone, online or through our social media. We're always happy to help. You can also stay in the loop by signing up



to our monthly email newsletter, Palmy Matters, which you can do by scanning the QR code.

Ngā mihi nui

Mayor
Grant Smith JP



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

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

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ASHHURST RUBBISH + RECYCLING

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

Recycling Bin	Glass Crate
10 March	17 March
24 March	31 March

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Tuesday	1pm - 3pm
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rgcasmith@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 March 2026.

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

Ashhurst Bowling Club

What a busy time it has been with lots of events completed successfully, both Club and Open Tournaments.

We played the Drawn Fours and eventual winners were Tony, Lee, Kynn and Nola with Runner up team of Wayne, Wendy, Tony R and Arnie. Well done to all who played in very trying conditions especially in the afternoon.

The Tararua Quad was played at Ashhurst who were the winners on the day. Next round is at Woodville in April.

The 2x4x2 mixed Pairs Championship was won by Tony and Donna from Margie and Tony R. Some fantastic games in this event with absolutely nail biting play. Close results and last end wins—great for the many supporters to watch.

The One to Five Singles Championship was another event where the games were so close and really exciting to watch. Winner was Lorraine with Nola the Runner up. Really well done to all players.

Ashhurst Club hosted the Division Three Interclub finals and this was a full weekend of really competitive play. Dannevirke were the eventual winners with Bowls Palmerston North runners up. Everyone was so impressed with the green and organisation. A great time.

Skogs and Elizabeth Walker competitions are continuing to challenge all players with some wins and losses.

Club Day continues on Thursday afternoons, names in by 1.15 pm. Anyone welcome to come and have a go. Just wear flat soled shoes.

Two major events were the Julia Wallace 2x4x2 and The Property Brokers Fours. Both huge events with a full green and players from far and

wide.

Chrissy, who has been our major supporter and organiser of sponsorship from Julia Wallace is retiring and off to adventures with her husband in their motorhome. As usual she was there for prizegiving and handed out goodies to Steve and Paul from Hokowhitu first, Carla and Helen from Northend second and Wayne and Jacqui from Ashhurst third. The scores were so close that it came down to winners of ends to determine positions. A fabulous tournament and we wish Chrissy all the very best.

The other major is the Property Brokers Fours and this year both Emma and Chloe were there to support the club and give out the prizes. A huge weekend with very competitive play and lots of cheerful camaraderie. This is always a major on our calendar. Top Qualifier from day one was Fletch Christian's team and day two saw Section A won by Ian Jamieson's team from Bowls Palmerston North with Des Meyer's team second and Fletch's team third. In Section B first equal was Colin Carter's team and Lesley Findlay's team. Third was Kevin Curry's team from Dannevirke.

As always, we say a huge thank you to our sponsors and hope when needed our readers support these businesses. Without their support our wonderful and well attended tournaments just could not happen.

Lots more coming up in March, Club Championships and our final tournaments—the Ashhurst R.S.A. Triples on the 8th and the Cotton Triples on the 18th.

Hoping for more fine and sunny days. Keep safe, happy and smiling.

Adrienne Harding—Secretary.

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