

SAFE COMMUNITIES ASHBURTON DISTRICT: BUSINESS PLAN, 2024-2027

Introduction

The Safe Communities Ashburton Programme has been funded by the Ashburton District Council and ACC since its accreditation as a Safe Community in 2019.

The Programme's vision is *"Ashburton District, our place, a safe place to live, work and play, free from preventable injury and harm."*

Research, data analysis, and community consultation ahead of seeking accreditation in 2019 told us that for our District falls in older people, leading to both fatal and non-fatal injury, family harm, road crashes and theft/burglary were of particular concern (see Appendix 1 for data used to inform the Programme about safety issues of concern to the Ashburton community).

When setting priorities, the Safe Communities Programme takes into account other existing networks already addressing some of the identified safety concerns (for example, the Road Safety Co-ordinating Committee and the Family Violence Network).

While the Programme is small in terms of funding and therefore reach, it aims to make an impact on local community awareness about key safety concerns by agencies working collaboratively and pooling resources. The local focus also allows for new safety issues of concern to be addressed as they arise, for example scams and theft/burglary rates in the District; and ACC-reported injury rates from skiing/snowboarding for Ashburton children 5-14 years.

What is a "safe community"?

- A safe community is a place that is attractive to live in, work in and visit. A safe community is a livable community, where people can go about their daily activities in an environment without fear, risk of harm or injury. Homes, roads, public spaces and the workplace are safe for everyone to enjoy

- Community safety is not only about reducing and preventing injury and violence. It is about building strong, cohesive and vibrant communities, where people take pride in their community and are aware of community safety and how to look after themselves and others. The ability to access quality, up-to-date information is key to achieve this
- A safe community encourages people and families to move to the District and stay, contributing to the social, cultural and economic richness of the District
- Community safety is important to the people of Ashburton District – satisfaction with Council’s role in helping keep the community safe has been consistently high since 2017 (89% - 2022/23 Residents Survey)
- Most community-based injuries and accidents are preventable and predictable (for example, falls in the home)

Collaboration is the Key to Better Reach and Impact

In 2019, 27 agencies committed to working together to raise awareness of and find solutions for local safety concerns, supported by a part-time Co-ordinator.

As well as the Safe Communities Steering Group of 27 agencies, there are a number of successful collaborations in place, which allow other agencies with an interest in a particular safety topic or issue to work together for better reach and impact. These collaborations are outlined in the 2024-2027 Business Plans below:

Business Plan – 2024-2025

Safety Issue/Objective	Project(s)	Partners (L – lead)	Measure
<p>Reduce rural/social isolation – as Ashburton District has no public transport service, provide a community transport service to transport people from around the District into Ashburton Township for medical/dental appointments, to see family and friends, shopping, etc</p>	<p>Mid Canterbury Connector community transport service</p> <p>Partnership with the Rakaia Community Association to provide a community vehicle for Rakaia and Methven residents</p>	<p>Mid Canterbury Community Vehicle Trust (L); ECAN; Safe Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of passengers transported • Kms travelled • Volunteer driver hours
<p>Falls and fractures in older adults – like all districts across New Zealand, Ashburton has a high number of falls related injuries in people aged over 65 years of age.</p> <p>This collaboration aims to prevent falls and fractures in older adults by promoting Live Stronger for Longer/ACC messages and initiatives (eg NYMBL app) and local strength and balance classes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “April Falls” promotion • October promotion supporting/celebrating International Day of Older Persons (1st October each year) • Run more “Ageing Well” sessions at Ashburton Library and around the District 	<p>Safe Communities (L); Age Concern Ashburton; Presbyterian Support; ACC; Sport Canterbury; EA Networks Centre; Ashburton Library; Waitaha Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper feature pages in the Ashburton Courier promoting local strength and balance classes (1 per annum) • Numbers visiting the Falls Prevention stand at the Age Concern Ashburton Positive Ageing Expo, March 2025 and March, 2027

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 “Ageing Well” sessions delivered per annum
<p>Age Friendly Ashburton Strategy and Plan – Ashburton District has a higher than national average population of people aged 65 years and over and an ageing population.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Reference/Steering Group of agencies involved with older people • Create an Age Friendly Plan for the district, which will enable a focus on identifying the strengths of Ashburton as a place where older adults feel fully part of the community and projects where improvements could be made • The Plan will cover eight elements of community life – social participation; housing; diversity and culture; civic participation and employment; community support and health services; communications and information; outdoor spaces and buildings; and transportation 	<p>Safe Communities (L); agencies and government departments involved with older people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age Friendly Ashburton Strategy and Plan completed by 30 June, 2025
<p>Theft/burglary rates in the District – this focus developed</p>	<p>Awareness/ Education Programme:</p>	<p>Mid Canterbury Neighbourhood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular articles in local community

<p>from advice from Mid Canterbury Neighbourhood Support and local Police about rising rates of theft and burglary in the District and the need to make people more aware of how to keep homes, tools, vehicles and commercial properties safe and secure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper campaign • Distribute and promote flyers on theft/burglary from residential and commercial properties, vehicles, and theft of tools (tradies) • Displays in local venues (eg Rakaia Library) • Community talks by NS Co-ordinator 	<p>Support (L); Police; Safe Communities</p>	<p>newspapers on theft/burglary concerns, showing crime data for local areas and promoting information flyers</p>
<p>Scams/fraud – a rising issue nationally and internationally, in particular, bank. investment, phone, online purchase of goods and romance scams and the increasing use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to impersonate individuals</p>	<p>Awareness/education programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A “roadshow” taking messages and information around local communities • Newspaper adverts in support of the “roadshow” • Community talks by NS Co-ordinator and Digital Waitahah Co-ordinator • Information and displays at Ashburton Library and other 	<p>Safe Communities (L); Mid Canterbury Neighbourhood Support; Citizens Advice Bureau; Ashburton Public Library; ASB Bank; Digital Waitaha</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 community talks per annum

	community venues around the district		
<p>Positive parenting – ensure parents and caregivers in Ashburton District are capable and confident carers, giving our children and young people the best start in life</p>	<p>Utilise results of the Parent/Parenting Agency Research to address gaps/needs for services and information</p>	<p>ACADS /Safe Communities (L); Plunket Mid Canterbury; Digital Waitaha; Waitaha Health; Presbyterian Support; Citizens Advice Bureau; Family Wellbeing Programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop information sessions for parents/caregivers on most requested topics – parenting skills; health services; managing finances; healthy relationships; work/life balance • Develop information sessions for parents/caregivers on topical issues – eg effects of vaping and smoking on children and young people • Research the need and support for the establishment of a Big Brothers, Big Sisters mentoring programme for the district

<p>Ski and snowboard safety - Ski/snowboard injuries are higher in Ashburton District than other parts of the country and the top sporting injury for 5-14 year olds</p>	<p>Run an annual one-day roadshow around 3-4 local schools in July, ahead of the schools' annual trip to Mt Hutt Ski Field</p>	<p>Safe Communities (L); Mt Hutt Ski Field staff; local schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual one-day roadshow run
<p>Unintentional Injury to Children/Home Safety – provide information and advice to parents/caregivers and older children about hazards in the home which commonly cause unintentional injury to children (for example, accessing medicines, poisons, swallowing button batteries, choking, etc)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run safety sessions for parents/caregivers at local Plunket groups, preschools, playcentres, etc, utilising the Safekids Toolkit and other resources • Provide parents/caregivers with a Home Safety Checklist at the end of the session • Partner with a local hardware retailer to develop information about how to rectify hazards in the home 	<p>Safer Mid Canterbury Family Wellbeing programme (L); ACC; Safe Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of parents/caregivers and older children attending safety sessions • Partnership with a local hardware retailer established and safety information developed about how to rectify hazards in the home

<p>Road Safety Awareness and Cycle/Scooter Skills – the Ashburton District Council’s Walking and Cycling Strategy identified the need for a safe, off-road space for children and adults to learn to ride safely and to learn about road safety and road rules. This is of particular importance in Ashburton Township, where children need to cross the main highway and railway tracks to get to school.</p>	<p>Establish a bike skills park on Ashburton Domain</p>	<p>Safe Communities (L); Sport Canterbury; Ashburton District Council; local service clubs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek funding for the detailed design and build of the facility • Construct the facility
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<p>Collaborate to promote safety messages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate other options (ie apart from the Safety Village at the Ashburton A and P Show) to partner with a number of local safety agencies to promote safety messages to the public • Options could be local “Community Safety Days” in different townships/areas of the district OR and annual expo which district schools visit over 2-3 days <p>Ashburton Courier newspaper monthly column</p> <p>Facebook postings</p>	<p>Safe Communities (L); ACADS; Fire and Emergency NZ; Safer Mid Canterbury; Neighbourhood Support; Rural Women; Civil Defence/Emergency Services (Ashburton District Council); Presbyterian Support; Waitaha Health; Birthright</p>	<p>Monthly column for safety messages from SCAD and Safe Communities Steering Group members</p> <p>Regular</p>
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Business Plan: 2025-2026

This year will see the continuation of the 2024-2025 Plan, plus developments from existing programmes, and new initiatives.

- Developments from existing programmes will include:

1. Investigation by the Mid Canterbury Community Vehicle Trust of the need for **another community vehicle, to be based in Methven**
 2. **Completion and opening of the Bike Skills Park** on Ashburton Domain
- New initiatives will include:
 1. Undertaking work to seek **reaccreditation** for the Safe Communities Ashburton Programme from the Safer Aotearoa National Programme
 2. Rolling out projects identified through the **Ageing Well Ashburton Strategy and Plan** which will seek to improve the wellbeing and participation in community life of older Ashburton residents

Business Plan: 2026-2027

This year will also see the continuation of the 2024-2026 Plan, plus developments from existing programmes and new initiatives.

APPENDIX 1:

Data On Key Issues of Concern Informing the Ashburton Safe Communities Programme:

- In the seven-year period from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2022, there were 73 fatalities due to injury or accident, a rate of 205.46 per 100,000. This compares with a national rate of 143.34 per 100,000 for the same period nationally. Of the 75 people who died due to injury or accident over the 7-year period, over half (n=40) were aged 65 years and older. Compared to national rates of fatality by age group, older people were significantly over-represented in fatalities in Ashburton district.
- Of fatalities between the start of 2016 and the end of 2022, nearly half were due to loss of balance or control (34 /73), with the next most common cause being knocked over by an object or collision (21.9%), medical treatment (11.0%) and loss of control of a motor vehicle (5.5%).
- In 2022 there were 2,104 ACC claims made involving at least one hospital visit, up from 1,945 in 2021 and 1,785 in 2020. Of accident-related hospital visits, 21.4% were for people aged 65 years and over, 7.9% for children aged under 15 years, 16.2% for young people aged 15-24 years, while 54.5% were for adults aged 25-64 years. Over a third of accidents involving hospitalisation involved loss of balance / personal control (34.4%), with the next-most common causes being puncture (7.0%), lifting, carrying or strain (7.0%), being struck by a person or animal (6.9%), twisting movement (6.5%) or tripping/stumbling (5.8%).
- 2022 – 3 fatal crashes and 16 crashes resulting in serious injury compared to 2 fatal and 4 serious crashes in 2021.
- Of drivers in death and serious injury crashes in 2022 in Ashburton District, 39.1% were aged 15-24 years, 26.1% in their 30s, 21.7% aged in their 50s and 13% aged 60 years or over.
- Alcohol was the top cause of death and seriously injured crashes and drivers in 2022 (identified as a factor in 11 death and serious crashes), as it also was the previous year.
- For the year to March 31, 2022, Police recorded 92 victimisations for assault by a family member, lower than the 97 recorded in the year to March 31, 2020: data for the year to March 31, 2021, was not available for comparison.

- For the year ended 31 March 2022, Police recorded 930 crime victimisations, down from 1,023 the previous year; 67.4% of reported crimes were theft and related offences, similar to the proportion of victimisations the previous year. Violence accounted for around a third of all victimisations in the year to March 31, 2022. In addition to the 92 assaults on a person in a family relationship, these included 53 assaults on a child and 9 male assaults female victimisations.
- Unintentional injury to children – in 2022 ACC received 1,655 injury claims for children under 15 years, compared to 1,816 in 2021, 1,868 in 2020, 2,151 in 2019 and 2,166 in 2018. The most common sports injury for children 5-14 years is skiing/snowboarding (127 injuries in 2022) and consistently over the past five years. This is followed by rugby union (83 in 2022).