

“Run Walk Ashburton”, in conjunction with the Ashburton Hakatere River Trail Committee have prepared the below submission to be considered by Council as part of the Long-Term Plan 2021-31.

We do not wish to speak in support of this submission at the hearing.

The community volunteer-based groups that comprise this committee provide countless hours towards the progression of walking, cycling, horse-riding, 4WD and motorbike tracks that follow the course of the Ashburton River. This group originally had strong support from council when the committee was formed 10 years ago, including a robust and dedicated budget allocated specifically to these developments.

Run Walk Ashburton has been involved with the AHR Trail since the beginning and its members have been involved with track spraying and maintenance from Trevors Road to Hakatere twice a year since. Representatives have attended committee meetings and have participated in the positivity and enthusiasm associated with the ongoing development of the Trail.

Initially the AHR Trail committee meetings were attended by a District Councillor, Open Spaces Manager and Secretary, and were held in the District Council Board Room. Latterly we have met at the Open Spaces Office with secretarial assistance from that department. ECAN is represented on the committee and is very supportive of the Trail by providing goods and services.

We would like the Trail to have the support of Ashburton District Council through the Open Spaces Department.

We believe Council recommitting to this time-proven successful and popular development would have immense benefits for a vast portion of the community, as such aligning with the values in the Long-Term Plan as detailed below:

- Residents will achieve a sense of community and belonging through the opportunity to contribute to the development of a valuable community asset that is the riverside tracks.
- The riverside tracks form part of our district's great spaces and places - they are the ultimate natural-environment recreational space to assist in promoting a healthy lifestyle.
- Many of the groups working alongside the river have a strong environmental focus. Through native planting we are helping to promote a sustainable resource that can be enjoyed by many generations to come.
- The tracks we have developed attract visitors to our area thus assisting with the economic development of the district. Cycling in particular is enjoying a significant increase in popularity amongst several different age groups nationwide with multiple regions already recognizing this and working to support it. We believe this market is currently untapped within Mid-Canterbury as a whole. As an example, Run Walk members have spoken to motorcyclists from as far afield as Amberley and Oamaru and cyclists, walkers and runners from Timaru to Rangiora, using and commenting positively about the Trail and its various uses, right on the town's door step.

We believe the preceding combined efforts of Council and volunteer groups should be preserved and further enhanced by way of an ongoing partnership and maintenance program. The success of this

partnership will require a financial commitment from Council, in conjunction with transparent and open communication between the groups as we work to further enhance the facility.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission, and trust Council will consider all points with the best interests of the community in mind.

Noel Batty / David Strong – “Run Walk Ashburton” Representatives, Ashburton Hakatere River Trail Committee.

Ian Broadbelt President - Run Walk Ashburton