

# Ashburton cheers safer milestone

By Mick Jensen  
Ashburton has celebrated the achievement of Safe Community accreditation at a ceremony at Hakatere Marae.

Representatives from 27 local agencies had input into the six-month accreditation process, including those involved with crime prevention, injury prevention, alcohol and drug-related harm, family harm, falls prevention, road safety, rural safety, emergency services and education.

A number of contributors attended the accreditation ceremony, as well as



**Signing the Safe Community agreement were, from back left, Ashburton mayor Donna Favel, Liz McMillan, NZ Police senior sergeant for the Mid Canterbury supervisory area Leigh Jenkins, Judd Baker from ACC, Safer Ashburton Trust chair Don McLeod and, seated, Safe Communities Foundation of NZ director Tania Peters.**

Rangitata MP Andrew Falloon, Ashburton mayor Donna Favel and Ashburton councillors.

It started with a powhiri and the singing of the waiata, Te Aroha, and was followed by lunch and the ceremony formalities.

The accreditation process has been led by Safer Ashburton, with funding provided by the Ashburton District Council and ACC.

Safe Communities Ashburton District Steering Group chair Liz McMillan said the process had enabled the district to identify areas where the district

could be “safer”.

Areas of particular concern included falls in older people, road crashes, family harm, theft and suicide.

“The beauty of the Safe Community model is that it brings agencies together to apply their collective ‘weight’ in reducing injury and crime statistics over time.

“Agencies working together will have much more impact than agencies working alone. Accreditation is a great beginning to our journey towards a safer district and improved quality of living for everyone in the district.”

Ashburton mayor Donna Favel said all the hard work and collective input had paid off.

She said the saying “alone we can do nothing, together we can achieve so much”, certainly applied in the area of community safety.

Ashburton now joins 21 other councils in New Zealand as an accredited Safe Community and the first under the new four-part system of collaborative governance, priority setting, effective strategies and shared learnings.

Programmes to enhance community safety will be implemented, measured and reported back.