

# COUNCIL NEWS

MAY 2013



**KNYSNA**  
Municipality

## STORMWATER AND SEWER CONNECTION AUDIT BEGINS

A door-to-door audit of Knysna's stormwater and sewerage connections started late last month. The audit is a key project within the ongoing Knysna Estuary Pollution Action Plan, which was launched by the municipality in association with several other stakeholders last year to reduce pollution into the Knysna Lagoon.

Knysna Municipal Manager Lauren Waring, who is also the chairperson of the Knysna Estuary Pollution Control Task Committee, said the audit was aimed at detecting and correcting illegal stormwater and sewer connections as well as determining the overall status of these systems in and around town.

"During the compilation of the Estuary Action Plan, the stormwater system was identified as one of the main sources of pollution into the lagoon. This was mainly because of illegal sewer connections that fed into the stormwater systems, as well as other unlawful connections to stormwater such as swimming pool pumps and rainwater outlets.

"As the Garden Route is an all-year rainfall area that experiences significant amounts of rain at a time, stormwater can be substantial in built-up areas. When it rains, up to seven times more water runs into the sewers than should be the case based on the water that is released from the Water Treatment Works. This extra water causes overflows of the sewerage system," said Waring.

The first phase of the audit focusses on areas in and around Central Knysna including Paradise, Heuwelkruin, the Knysna CBD, Lelieskloof, residential areas just above the Knysna CBD and White Location.

Survey personnel, accompanied by a person who owns or lives on the premises, record details of all water and sewerage connections on a pre-determined survey form. Homes and premises of which all connections are legal and in order are signed off. Incorrect or illegal connections are identified and the owner presented with a list of corrections that will have to be made to ensure compliance with the relevant bylaws. The owner is required to rectify all illegal connections on the property, possibly with the assistance of a qualified plumber, within three weeks from the date that he or she was notified of the illegal and incorrect connections.

Non-compliant properties are re-inspected about three weeks after the first site visit. Premises on which connections were corrected are signed off. Owners who do not comply after the three-week amnesty period will be fined per illegal connection, according to the bylaw fine structure. The auditors will be accompanied by law enforcement officers, who will issue fines on the spot. Fines range from R750 to R1500 depending on the transgression.

Should there be no person on site when auditors visit a particular property, auditors leave a slip on the premises requesting an appointment to visit the site for inspection.

Ms Waring appealed to all residents and businesses to co-operate with auditors, and to make every effort to ensure that stormwater and sewerage connections are legal and correct. "The correction of the stormwater connections in central Knysna will significantly reduce the impact on the Knysna Lagoon. This is a way in which every resident can directly contribute to the long term sustainability of our town. The fact is, our town is very dependent on the health of the lagoon and it is ultimately up to every resident and business to do its part in making this town work," she said.

The Stormwater and Sewer Connection Audit is performed on behalf of the municipality by consultants Royal HaskoningDHV. Auditing personnel have been carefully screened for security purposes and have been sufficiently trained in the relevant technical requirements. In some cases, law enforcement officers may accompany auditing personnel. Regular reports of the audit results and actions to comply will be submitted to Council, and acted upon where applicable. Inquiries can be directed to the consultants at 044 302 4900.

*Detailed press releases and information regarding the Knysna Estuary Pollution Action Plan can be obtained at [www.knysna.gov.za/lagoon/](http://www.knysna.gov.za/lagoon/).*

*Audit personnel (from left) Xolile Sam, Vuyiswa Khontsiwe, Loyiso Krewusha and Sylvia Kedama.*



## LOCALS PREPARE FOR 'BABOON SEASON'

As winter approaches and food in the veld and forests decline, local baboon populations are increasingly encroaching on residential areas in the Knysna municipal area in search of other sources of sustenance.



While the Knysna Municipality is working together with residents associations and conservation agencies to come up with a baboon management plan for its municipal area, Knysna Municipal Manager Lauren Waring asked local residents to do their part in dealing with the related issues.

"Residents can help a lot by not feeding baboons, locking up food waste and not leaving pet food outside. Residents on the edges of town in particular should accept that they have chosen their properties

because they wanted to live in natural surroundings, and with that comes wild animals. The reality of this choice includes accepting that you cannot have vegetable gardens or fruit trees on your property or keep feeders for wild birds, as these attract baboons," she said.

Ms Waring said the municipality had met with conservation authority CapeNature and local residents associations to discuss an integrated and sustainable approach to baboon management. "We encourage all affected residents, housing estates and associations to join the Knysna Baboon Action Group, who is behind several initiatives to track and report problem baboons as well as the proposed baboon management plan. This kind of issue is best addressed when all affected parties work together. It is not a simple matter with a simple solution, but other communities have in the past been successful with collective efforts and we believe that we can be too," said Waring.

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## FEATURING WARD 6: COUNCILLOR CLIVE WITBOOI

Few people know that Councillor Clive Witbooi had studied engineering in Johannesburg before he went into politics. "It was the early 1990s and to be quite honest, being part of a new democracy's politics and labour unions was just so much more exciting!"

Born and bred in Knysna, Councillor Witbooi returned home in 1995 and has been part of local politics ever since. He is very proud to be a ward councillor and is actively involved in church activities and youth development. "Knysna has changed a lot over the years, some of it for the better. There is always more that can be done, which is why I choose to work among the people," he says.



**THE PLAY PARK IN HLALANI WAS PAID FOR BY WARD ALLOCATION MONEY.**

"Ward 6 combines many interesting communities and the issues are diverse and complex. It may take some time for them all to be addressed, but I know that we can all work together to make our town a better place to live," says Councillor Witbooi.

Like all the wards, Ward 6 received R200 000 in the 2012/13 financial year to spend on capital projects. Ward allocation funding is aimed at paying for projects that may not be suitable to be covered in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) process, and is usually identified by the community via the ward councillor and ward committees.



**WHILE HOUSES ARE BEING BUILT FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN OUPAD, THE BENEFICIARIES HAD TO RELOCATE TO MAKE WAY FOR EARTH WORKS AND BUILDING OPERATIONS. THE MUNICIPALITY HAS PROVIDED TEMPORARY STRUCTURES AND SANITATION FOR THE DURATION OF THE BUILDING PROJECT. LOCAL COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER BONGINKOSI TINI AND COUNCILLOR CLIVE WITBOOI VISIT THE SITE REGULARLY.**

In Ward 6, ward allocation money has paid for retaining walls in Hornlee, guard rails, a children's play park in Hlalane and wheelchair ramps. Operational funding from the ward allocation also paid towards transport for promising local school pupils who visited several tertiary institutions in the Western Cape to assist them in their post-matric decisions.

"The new financial year starts in July 2013 and I am confident that we will be able to cover a few other projects that will make our people's lives a bit easier."



**A COMPLICATED WHEELCHAIR RAMP, PAID FOR WITH WARD ALLOCATION FUNDING, HAS BEEN BUILT OUTSIDE THE STEEPLY SITUATED HOME OF HORNLEE RESIDENT MARY HARKER. PICTURED HERE, HER SON HENRY ARENDSE AND NEPHEW MARCUS ARENDSE CONTINUE TO ASSIST HER DOWN THE STEEP INCLINE.**

In addition to ward allocation funding, Councillor Witbooi has also gained assistance and sponsorship for local children and residents that are sick or disabled. "Local businesses and individuals have assisted with practical items such as carpets and food for local crèches. I am currently trying to secure better living conditions for a woman and her Down's Syndrome child who live in a dilapidated shack in Hlalane. Any assistance will be greatly appreciated," said Councillor Witbooi.

Ward 6 comprises the areas of Hlalani, Wing Street, Charlie Levack Street, Chapel Street, Fontein Street, Geelbekkloof Street, Davidson Street, Calender Street and Botha Street.

Councillor Witbooi can be contacted on 071 014 9125 or cwitbooi@knysna.gov.za

**COUNCILLOR WITBOOI OUTSIDE THE HOME OF ALISTOR APPELS. THE STEEP ENTRANCE TO THE 19-YEAR-OLD MAN'S FAMILY HOME IN HORNLEE HAS BEEN CEMENTED TO MAKE MANOEUVRING UP AND DOWN THE HILL WITH HIS WHEELCHAIR A BIT EASIER.**



### 'BABOON SEASON' CONTINUED...

She appealed to residents to not use illegal means to chase baboons, such as shooting or poisoning, as it could pose risks to other persons and animals, and carry stiff penalties. "When the Knysna Baboon Management Plan is in place, problem baboons in particular can under certain circumstances be legally euthanised. Until then, we can take precautionary steps and turn the hosepipe on them as they hate getting wet," said Waring.

The Knysna Baboon Action Group website <http://baboons.myknysna.co.za/> records baboon movements and provides useful information. Contact them on [knysnababoons@gmail.com](mailto:knysnababoons@gmail.com)

CapeNature can be contacted at 044 802 5300.

## FREEDOM DAY

### MAYOR CALLS ON RESIDENTS TO 'DO MORE THAN COMPLAIN'.

Knysna Executive Mayor Georlene Wolmarans called on residents to become part of the town's solution and to "do more than just complain."

Addressing crowds at Freedom Day celebrations at the Hornlee Sports Ground on Saturday, Ms Wolmarans said she realised that it could be frustrating when things did not work out the way people expected them to, but there were often things individuals could do to solve the problems.

**"As much as government wants to be the solution to all the issues in this country, the reality is that we may then wait for a very long time.** In Knysna, we don't want to wait until someone else decides our fate. And, while the Knysna Municipality will do everything in its power to deliver its mandate as effectively and efficiently as possible, there are a range of challenges that sometimes make it very difficult to get even the basics done.



"However, that being said, I believe that the people of Knysna can be their own solution. I believe we can work together to find other ways to get the work done. You, as members of the community, are in the best position to find practical solutions to the little and the big challenges our communities face every day. Because you walk through the streets and talk to people, you may see something or meet someone who just has the right plan or resources.

"When you come up with a good idea, mention it to your ward councillor. He or she may know someone else who can add to the process. If you have a specific talent or if you can help someone, let the people around you and your ward councillor know. Every bit of help and willingness can make a difference.



"If we can succeed in changing the way we perceive Government, we have a better chance to turn the ship around. That does not mean that we should stop pointing out the things that are wrong, but it most certainly is time that we do more than just complain.

"Of course, at the simplest level, it is every community member's responsibility to pay for the services he receives. If we all throw our money and resources together, we are all in a much better position to benefit from them," said Ms Wolmarans.

She also had a special message for 'born frees', persons born in 1994, who would have their first opportunity to vote next year. "I encourage you to register as voters and to go and vote on Election Day. This way, you become part of South Africa's history, and you make your wishes regarding governance known."

Ms Wolmarans encouraged the older generation to continue to vote, even if it sometimes felt that their lives had not improved much since 1994. "You may feel that your vote may make no difference, but what if your vote was the one that could have made all the difference? We all know that the Western Cape is a heavily contested province... and even one vote may tip the scale.

"I also ask that you participate in the governance of this town via your Ward Councillor and Ward Committees, as well as through Public Participation Processes such as Integrated Development Planning (IDP) meetings. Ward Councillors and Ward Committees were elected by you to represent your community. Speak to them about your needs and report to them the issues that concern you," said Ms Wolmarans.



The Knysna Municipality hosted a music and entertainment day at the Hornlee Sport Fields to celebrate Freedom Day on Saturday 27 April 2013.

The three-hour programme was opened with a parade, showcasing Sunridge Primary drum majorettes, Knysna sea cadets, municipal protection services staff and the St James Brigade Brass Band.

Several local groups entertained crowds with music, drama and song.



### WINNING POEM

Freedom Day is great  
It includes no hate  
Everyone is close together  
For always and forever  
My parents are glad apartheid is done  
And peace came without need for a gun,  
Now that it's over we can celebrate  
And live in a world free from hate

The municipality also hosted a poetry competition, which was won by independent entry Jocelyn Holton, aged 10, of Knysna, pictured above.

## MUNICIPALITY TAKES ACTION ON ABSENTEE LANDLORD'S PREMISES

Ongoing mismanagement of a vacant property in Knysna's Hedge Street has prompted action against the absentee landlord including criminal prosecution and law enforcement raids on the premises.

Knysna Municipal Manager Lauren Waring said the municipality was experiencing increasing problems with land owners who were allowing vacant properties to fall into ruin, which in turn encouraged vagrancy and criminal activities and raised concerns regarding devaluation of surrounding properties and fears regarding public safety.

"In the case of the Hedge Street property, the Knysna Municipality has appointed an advocate to seek demolition of some of the structures on the property while the Eden District Municipality has laid a formal criminal charge in terms of the National Health Act. On 23 April, the Knysna Municipality, the SAPS and Eden District Health Services took part in a crime prevention operation on the property. Police confiscated suspected drugs and related paraphernalia on the premises.

"It is unacceptable that any property owner will allow such degradation and neglect on his or her property, and the municipality will continue to place pressure on all such absentee landlords to remedy any such situation or potential situation."



EDEN DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY HEALTH SERVICES ASSISTANT HEAD FOR KNYSNA, JAMES MCCARTHY, AND (LEFT) KNYSNA MUNICIPALITY COMMUNITY SAFETY MANAGER STEVEN LANGLANDS (SECOND FROM LEFT) WERE AMONG THE PARTICIPANTS IN A JOINT CRIME PREVENTION OPERATION ON MISMANAGED PROPERTY IN HEDGE STREET, KNYSNA.

## JAPANESE ROTARY EXCHANGE PROGRAMME VISITS KNYSNA



*Knysna Rotary recently hosted young professionals from Japan as part of the organisation's ongoing exchange programme. The Knysna Municipality Mayoral Committee hosted the young Rotarians recently, explaining to them the workings of local government.*

## PROMISING LOCAL YOUTHS OFF TO CAPE TOWN

Eleven youths from the Knysna municipal area have joined the Chrysalis Academy in Cape Town for a three-month army-style training course aimed at developing physical, psychological and spiritual skills in promising individuals.



The men, aged between 17 and 25, had to complete a written test and physical assessment to qualify. Knysna Executive Mayor Georlene Wolmarans congratulated the successful candidates and encouraged them to stick with the course. "Of the participating municipalities, Knysna had the most candidates qualify. We are extremely proud of our youth whom we believe will return with skills that they can in turn pass on to others. Ultimately, young people who would otherwise have been qualified as 'youth at risk' will now be known as 'youth with a future,'" she said.

The Knysna Municipality provided logical support for the programme, which was locally driven by the Eden District Municipality, and assisted with transport for the young men to Cape Town. The municipality also donated stationary packs while municipal staff collected funds to assist with other relevant personal items required to participate at the academy. Ms Wolmarans and Head of Disaster Management and Social Services, Richard Meyer, handed them their stationary packs before their departure last month.

## CARING COUNCILLOR



A newspaper article about a crèche in Concordia so touched the heart of Deputy Executive Mayor Esmé Edge that she has since become a regular visitor and supporter of Magdaleentjie Crèche. In addition to looking after several local kids, community leader Magdaleen Moos also hosts a weekly tea for the neighbourhood's elderly. But, since it is actually meant for kids, there were little proper seating for big people - until Councillor Edge donated personal funds to buy 20 brand new plastic chairs, which can now be used to seat everyone more comfortably.