Knysna Executive Mayor Georlene Wolmarans dedicated the greater Knysna’s three Blue Flags to the hundreds of people involved in the logistics surrounding the Kiani Satu cargo ship drama earlier this year.

The municipality secured Blue Flags for Buffalo Bay and Brenton-on-Sea beaches for the second consecutive year while Thesen Islands became the region’s first Blue Flag Marina.

Speaking at the handing over of the flags on Thesen Islands on 5 November, Ms Wolmarans said the municipality’s three blue flags were not being taken for granted, particularly in light of the fact that only three months before all three shores were under threat. Read more on p3.

Walkways at Coney Glen have been closed temporarily in the interest of public safety.

Municipal Manager Lauren Waring said harsh weather conditions had taken its toll on the structures and were now too dangerous for passing. “It is inaccessible and dangerous at the moment and we urge the public to not venture across the cordoned-off area. We expect repairs to commence shortly and believe the walkways will be open before the peak holiday season starts. This will be done with the assistance of SANParks Working for Coast Programme.

“Coney Glen is a key recreational and tourism spot and we are looking forward to restored walkways that our locals and visitors can use to explore this stunning area properly. In the meantime, we ask the public to respect the cordoned-off area for their own safety, and thank them in advance for their patience and cooperation,” said Waring.
Some of the oldest communities in Knysna are situated in Ward 6 but, according to Councillor Migiel Lizwani, they are also among those communities who have been waiting the longest for houses and services. “I understand the frustrations, especially when delivery dates are postponed all the time and funding from national government is not forthcoming. The dates and targets that we present to our people are not honoured. We want to create an atmosphere of hope but time and time again we have to see disappointment on people’s faces.”

But there is good news in this ward too, for the first time, there are two major projects underway – one for housing and another to provide bulk services and infrastructure. “But even this is not straightforward as ongoing education is required. People ask why we give them pipes if they want houses. They do not understand that if the infrastructure is not in place, the houses will never come.”

He says the Ward’s needs are diverse and range from roads that are accessible and in good condition. Every person he meets wants to know when they will get their houses and services. “Roads remain a huge priority and I will not rest until all the roads are accessible and in good condition. Every person should know that they are important enough to feel proud of where they live.”

Ward 3 includes the areas of Dam-se-Bos, Nekkies and Brackenhill. Councillor Lizwani can be contacted on 083 770 2703 and mlizwani@knysna.gov.za

The ward allocation funding in the previous financial year went towards the paving of Sonqayi Street in Dam-se-Bos, an important main road that leads to the community centre. “Roads remain a huge priority and I will not rest until all the roads are accessible and in good condition. Every person should know that they are important enough to feel proud of where they live.”

A section of Sunridge Road, Hornlee, has been closed for safety reasons after unapproved excavations on behalf of the National Department of Public Works at Knysna Secondary School have impacted on the road surface.

Acting Municipal Manager Bevan Ellman said the road surface was showing signs of a soil slip beneath the road which could ultimately lead to the road collapsing.

“While it is not the municipality doing the construction work there, it is taking precautionary measures in the interest of public safety. We are of the opinion that there are serious shortcomings in terms of safety and adherence to building regulations on the site, including the incorrect construction of a retaining wall on the school premises, and we are immensely concerned about the safety of our road users in this vicinity,” said Ellman.

He explained that a legal loophole allowed State Departments to build without obtaining approval for construction on State-owned premises, but that the municipality still required ‘courtesy plans’ to ensure that local building regulations and related safety precautions were adhered to. This was not done in this case.

Ellman said the situation was unacceptable and the municipality’s legal department had already lodged its concerns to the National Department of Public Works and the Western Cape Department of Education. “The municipality will also insist that the State fit the bill for any damage incurred to municipal property as a result of incorrect and unsafe construction on this site.

“We also ask the public to take care in the vicinity of the construction site, and ask parents and teachers to warn children to stay away from the area in which construction is taking place,” said Ellman.

A more detailed press release on this matter is available on www.knysna.gov.za
**16 Days of Activism**

The Knysna Municipality supports 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, which runs from 25 November to 10 December.

If you are a child that is being abused, or if you know of such a child, please contact Childline on 0800 055 555. Abused women can contact Lifeline on 0861 322 322 or the Stop Gender-Based Violence Helpline on 0800 150 150.

There are Victim Support Rooms in most police stations in the Knysna Municipal Area. However, should there not be someone there to assist when you arrive there, phone FAMSA on 044 382 5129 and they will make a plan to help you.

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**Cuppa for CANCA**

Executive Mayor Georlene Wolmarans (fourth from left) hosted a Cuppa for Cansa tea in the Knysna Municipal Council Chambers on Thursday 31 October. The event raised R4 500 towards the fight against breast cancer. Local cancer survivors shared their inspiring stories as part of the proceedings. Pictured from left are event organiser Veronique Klein, guest speakers Louise Yoko, David Klein, Jenny Olfsen and Barbara Getliffe.

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**Rhoda Kadalie visits Knysna**

Well-known columnist, academic and Executive Director of Impumelelo Social Innovations Centre, Rhoda Kadalie, hosted a Best Practice Master Class for government and NGOs at the Knysna Municipality on 30 October. The day-long workshop was aimed at sharing and analysing best practices in Energy, Water and Waste Management, Pollution Control and Sanitation.

Pictured with Ms Kadalie (in blue) are specialist speakers (from left) John Parkin, David Wilson, Chris Fenemore, Teddy Gounden and Robert Abbu. Knysna Portfolio Committee Chairman for Planning and Development, Louise Hart, is second from right.

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**Weedbusters!**

BioWise, Knysna Correctional Services, Knysna Municipality, Oakhill School, SANParks, Stepping Stones School and Working for Water joined forces during Weedbuster Week recently to tackle alien infestation in the catchment area above Pledge Nature Reserve.

Members of the public wanting to join such projects in future can contact Oakhill School, which runs regular environmental projects as part of their participation in the national Eco Schools project.

The black wattle and blackwood trees removed during clean-ups are delivered to the local Department of Correctional Services where inmates make an array of beautiful items including furniture and screens.