



MEDIA RELEASE

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EMBARGO: Immediate

Main Street Market (and its traders) to get an upgrade

A new collaboration between the Knysna Municipality and the owner of the Woodmill Lane Shopping Centre have resulted in much needed upgrades to the trading area on Knysna's main road previously known as Templemen Square which will now be rebranded as Main Street Market.

"I am very excited about this partnership," said Knysna Executive Mayor Georlene Wolmarans. "The stalls' shade-cloth roofing were replaced, the paving cleaned and regularly maintained, and loose brickwork will be repaired. The gardens will be tended and maintained and more plants will be introduced to beautify the area. Visible security will include guards patrolling the area and CCTV coverage."

"Even more exciting than the upgrade to the market, is the developmental assistance that the traders will receive," she explained. "Woodmill Lane Shopping Centre will work with the Hands Design Collective Cooperation and the municipality to develop the entrepreneurs' products. Along with product development, market development and business development will also be addressed."

"Main Street Market holds immense potential value in terms of tourism traffic within Knysna's central business district," she continued. "Not only is this square highly visible to motorists travelling through Knysna, but many tourist busses and coaches stop nearby and the intention is to improve the product offering to unique and Knysna made quality merchandise. By making the square and immediate area more visually appealing and pleasing, we hope to extend tourists' time spent in the CBD, which should lead to greater expenditure. I know that I'm more likely to spend time in an area that looks good - and I'm more likely to spend my money if there are shops and beautiful products to buy!"

The opportunities for the traders were advertised and applicants were invited to submit their forms in line with criteria relating to the unique, handmade and tourist related goods and services. A total of 18 trading opportunities exist at the market.

As part of the Integrated Strategic Development Framework (ISDF) process, discussions were held with various property owners early in 2014. These discussions were specific to urban redevelopment and areas that require attention from a spatial planning and economic perspective. Main Street Market, as one of Knysna's informal trading zones, was identified as one such an area. This area will remain a trading zone, but will be earmarked for specific types of goods. The leasing of trading spaces will still be administered by Knysna Municipality, in accordance with the Street Trading By-Law and Informal Trading Policy.

"I often say that we need more partnerships between the municipality and the private sector. This alliance between Knysna Municipality and Woodmill Lane Shopping Centre is going to result in a stunning market area and the development of informal business entrepreneurs. With more tourists spending more time in the centre of town, it will result in more money entering our local economy," Wolmarans concluded. "This is a sterling example of the ISDF at work, and of how we can create a town where people and nature prosper by working together."

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