

Press Release :

For immediate release

Tourism Safety Monitors on patrols in Knysna area

A long-time safety challenge has been the visitor's parking just off Tourism Lane in Knysna. Since commencing as the General Manager of Visit Knysna under WESGRO, Colleen Durant has had concerns for the ongoing vehicle break-ins that were happening in this car park. "With AestAs Guest House behind us, we now have a gardener twice a week and he regularly tends to this area to try and keep it clean and weed-free", said Colleen. "However, the problem was deteriorating quickly. A further challenge for us has become safety at Noetzie Beach. The Noetzie Ratepayers have scheduled a few meetings with me to discuss their concerns."

At a Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) meeting that was held in Knysna, the industry were advised of the Tourism Safety Monitors programme to be run by the National Department of Tourism (NDT). Visit Knysna immediately engaged with the Western Cape's Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT) to identify a way of possibly securing some of these monitors for the greater Knysna area.

After meeting with the Knysna Municipality's Economic Development Department to identify possible hotspot areas, including the Visit Knysna Information & Promotion Office, a request for consideration was submitted to the national department: the initial application included Noetzie, Tourism Lane and Waterfront Drive. After a site inspection by the national department, 4 safety monitors were to be allocated to the greater Knysna area.

In October 2019 they commenced their training by a consultant appointed by NDT, this alongside other monitors allocated to various locations within the Western Cape. Whilst on contract, the locally allocated monitors will report to the Knysna Municipality's Department of Public Safety. The safety monitors reported for duty at the end of November to patrol between Tourism Lane and Waterfront Drive, with Knysna Municipality's Law Enforcement Department having committed to patrols of the Noetzie area.

The function of the monitors is to be a point of reference and assistance whilst creating a secure presence for tourists. They have been kitted out with visibly bright orange jackets and sun hats for ease of identification. Their appointment is until the end of October 2020, although they will do a further 2 weeks of training in February before returning for duty. Keep an eye out for them while they do their patrols.

Picture

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2019-12-04