

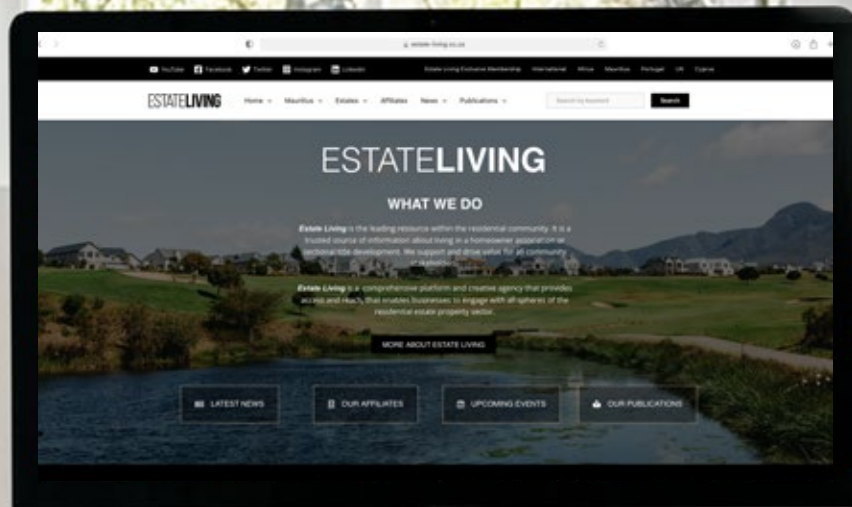
KINGSWOOD BUZZARD

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION



ISSUE#14 MAY 2024

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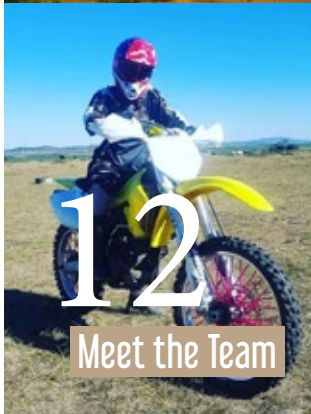


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From the CEO

Autumn is upon us! The first quarter of 2024 has already come and gone, with much activity and excitement on our beautiful estate.



With a new year ahead of us, efforts on maintenance and projects started from the get-go, including our new Community Centre / Clubhouse project that finally kicked off with a soil-turning ceremony on 4 March 2024, attended by the mayor of George. More on this and the very successful community function of 2 March further on in the newsletter.

The HOA operational team has started implementing various infrastructural maintenance and improvement projects to ensure that Kingswood remains the most sought-after residential golf estate on the Garden Route. Our roads master plan is currently being updated, and various road maintenance projects will commence shortly.

Our estate held up well during the recent heavy rainstorms that caused havoc in many areas of George and surrounds. Both our low-water bridges in Brookside and Kingsbrooke roads were flooded for a few hours. We are happy to report that neither of the bridges suffered any damage. For the first time in many months, the Garden Route Dam overflowed and, shortly after that, the municipality announced a reduction in the existing water restrictions which have been in place for some years now. Water remains an extremely valuable resource and we request homeowners to immediately report suspected water leaks or abuse.

After a few dry months, we finally received the rain we needed to allow the golf course to bloom at its full glory. The course maintenance staff worked tirelessly to ensure that our beautiful golf course can put its best foot forward for residents and visitors alike. We have some winter projects planned on the course, such as the improvement of drainage at holes 16 and 8. If you have not played the course in a while, please book a round and enjoy all that our magnificent course has to offer; you will not be disappointed.



With the tremendous growth in resident numbers on the estate, the board felt it necessary to enhance the community liaison and communication function by appointing Jolene Smit to fulfil this role; read more about Jolene further on in this newsletter. We welcome Jolene and are confident that she will prove to be an invaluable member of the Kingswood family.

June is almost upon us and that means it's nearly AGM time. The board has identified **24 June as the most likely date for our 2024 AGM**, so please save the date. More information on the AGM will be circulated to homeowners in due course. A subcommittee of the Board of Trustees was appointed to revise and update the Kingswood constitution, in anticipation of the development period ending in the foreseeable future. Once the subcommittee has completed its work, a draft of the amended constitution will be circulated to homeowners for perusal and comment. Once the trustees are satisfied that we have a final version of the document, a special general meeting will be called to vote on and accept the amended constitution.

The security upgrade projects for 2024 were presented to and approved by the trustees. Work on these projects has already begun; see more about the security projects further on in this newsletter. Security remains the responsibility of each resident at Kingswood and we request that each resident report suspicious and/or unsafe activity to security as soon as it has been observed. Help us keep Kingswood the safe haven we all expect and deserve it to be.

Our landscaping service provider, Turfworx, having been appointed 18 months ago at Kingswood, having proved themselves worthy, have now become a welcome addition to our valued service providers. There are some exciting landscaping winter projects planned, aimed at improving our beautiful Kingswood landscape even more.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *The BUZZard*.

Kingswood greetings,

Willem Jacobs

Kingswood Community Centre/Clubhouse Project celebrated in street-party style and with

OFFICIAL APLOMB

After nearly two decades of envisioning such a facility, the Kingswood Community Centre/Clubhouse (CC/C) Project is now a reality. This fact was fêted during an informal gathering of Kingswood residents on Saturday 2 March, while an official soil-turning ceremony was held with George's first citizen as special guest on Monday the 4th.

When gathering on the morning of 4 March at the site where Kingswood's new community centre will be constructed over the next year-plus, CEO Willem Jacobs was relieved that thunderstorms forecast for early that Monday would hold off till the afternoon.

Arriving on site in a golf cart, George mayor Leon van Wyk was heartily welcomed by a core contingent of Kingswood trustees and representatives of committees and companies involved with the CC/C Project. The mayor was impressed by the location and ready to bless the soil-turning occasion with his words and best wishes.

But first to share succinct information on the subject was Kingswood trustee Jonathan Witts-Hewinson, who provided background and a future vision of the facility's multipurpose role. Not only would it benefit resident families and visitors to Kingswood, he said, but it would also be a significant new addition to the George and Greater Garden Route golfing community.

In brief

Jonathan listed the significance of the project as follows:

* The availability at Kingswood of the proper community centre and clubhouse so eagerly anticipated by homeowners for 17 years. 'This is now becoming a reality, so homeowners will finally be able to foster a real community spirit in a space to be enjoyed by all families, golfers and non-golfers alike.'

* Secondly, the facility will enable Kingswood to take great strides towards its strategic goal of becoming the preferred residential golf estate on the Garden Route. 'Safe and family-friendly, it will add both value and status to Kingswood as a residential golf estate.'

* Thirdly, the availability of a proper clubhouse for players will considerably enhance the golfing experience and so enable Kingswood, as a world-class golfing



From LHS: Dawie Viljoen, Hannes Louren, Wihan Lombard and Cathy Avierinos

destination, to take its proper place as full member of the Garden Route golf family.

'Not only Kingswood, but also the City of George stands to celebrate what we have sought to achieve, and what is now becoming a reality.'

Jonathan emphasised the ease of engagements between Kingswood HOA and its professional project team when dealing with George Municipality. 'These interactions have been nothing but exemplary, and it is heartwarming to know that we have such a proficient and dedicated team at our municipality.'



From LHS: Tony Jacobsen, Werner Pons, Jonathan Witts-Hewinson

Mic to the mayor

Before tackling the official business of turning the first spade of soil that symbolically starts the construction process, mayor Leon van Wyk mentioned multimillion rand projects now on the go in George – and congratulated all in attendance on the success of Kingswood's community centre development.

The mayor called Kingswood a key feature within George, and in the context of local developments explained the intricacies of engagements between the municipality and Western Cape Development Forum, which strives to improve relations between local and national government and the private sector.



From LHS: Marina Fleur, Amorie Daubern, Francois Piek, Fourie Du Pleez

‘The next WCDF conference is in May, and we have already seen a massive difference in the Western Cape – it took 15 years of the project in action for our province to get where we are today.

‘When I became mayor, our biggest problems involved infrastructure, which resulted in service delivery protests,’ said Van Wyk, adding that various projects were initiated at the time – and that the fruits of these labours are evident today. ‘We worked hard at pushing infrastructure, and are now nearing completion of our R500 million waterworks project.’

He concluded with a heads-up that the Western Cape economy is cooking, supported by a huge increase in national and international flights to Cape Town International and George airports, the latter located but a hop and a skip from Kingswood. ‘You are already an icon in George, and this development will enable our citizens from within and outside of Kingswood to enjoy your new facility.’

The people’s party

No, this is not a party political advertisement – it’s the part about Kingwood’s residents celebrating the CC/C Project on Saturday 2 March. MC once more, Jonathan Witts-Hewinson emphasised that the shindig on the new centre’s site was held in anticipation of the fact that young and old will be able to enjoy the facility.

‘By August next year, we will be holding another gathering to celebrate the opening of our community centre and clubhouse,’ he said. And if it took a little longer than expected, it was to serve the best interests of homeowners and ensure that the project would be delivered within budget.

Jonathan thanked the small subcommittee of Tony Jacobson, CEO Willem Jacobs, and financial manager Marina Fleur for being pillars of strength for almost 18 months. Paying tribute to everyone willing to assist with many aspects of the project, it was necessary to single out Stan ‘the action man’ Barbour for his dedication.

Apart from Stan and his wife Jenni, other families thanked for their valuable assistance were the Schoombies, Coetzees and Dames, and Marie Pienaar. Cathy Ahlers provided music on the night, Outeniqua Brew donated product, Highveld Toilet Hire supplied portaloos, and Knell Electrical contributed a generator and lights.

Men’s Golf captain Ymke Schutte helped with the gazebos, Liesel Quinn of Kingswood Golf Operations provided tables and chairs, and Dawie Visser set up temporary fencing to keep happy partygoers from stepping into holes. Jonathan expressed the ‘sincere belief that the finalisation of our community centre and clubhouse will afford all homeowners a much-improved lifestyle at Kingswood.’



CEO William Jacobs regaling a fishing story about the size of the one that got away



From LHS: Michelle Witts-Hewinson and Catherine Gericke



The Kingswood braai masters at work

Where we stand today

Since the above events, a site handover meeting to the appointed contractor took place on 12 March, and the construction process has since moved ahead apace. Now all residents have to do is sit back and relax and watch this family-friendly facility come to life.

A takeaway from the above is that people of all ages will be encouraged to use the new facility, which will exude a distinctly different atmosphere when compared with what is presently on offer at the gatehouse.

In future editions of *The BUZZard*, more news will be shared about the centre's new restaurant and other attractions for the whole family ... watch this space!



Jonathan Witts-Hewinson starts the proceeding with a welcome address

SECURITY PLAN on track

The BUZZard was again fortunate to score an audience with Willem Scholtz on matters related to the grand security plan currently being rolled out at Kingswood Golf Estate. Security fundi and founder of Scholtz Consulting, Willem provided a fresh update immediately after a meeting with fellow members of the risk and security subcommittee chaired by KGE trustee Gerrit 'Fielies' Nieuwoudt.

Do you remember ...?

During the first quarter of last year, Phase 1 of Kingswood's five-tiered security project was approved, its main objectives including an upgrade of the perimeter fence, off-site monitoring of security cameras, and tighter access control at all gates.

The latter aspect was reported upon in detail in the previous edition of *The BUZZard*, providing details of the new systems in place that now allow for more efficient monitoring of access to homeowners, contractors, delivery companies and guests.

By the time that Season 2023/4 dawned, Fielies and Willem concurred that the process to secure the estate's 10km perimeter fence was completely on track; now they are celebrating the crossing of another hurdle as the new access system, which required all residents to download and register the relevant app on their mobile phones, has been implemented successfully since its onset in December '23.

Ongoing tweaks

Willem Scholtz says it's gratifying that the task at hand currently mostly concerns fine-tuning and tweaking. 'When it comes to the electric fence, for instance, we are preparing for another independent inspection – just to make one hundred per cent sure that all certificates are in place, and that we've really covered every aspect imaginable.

'He describes the new electronic systems and how people have been adapting to it in the context of human-change management: 'We went from zero access control in the not so distant past to very high security access control. Lots of time is being spent on integrating our operational guarding services with the tech side of things.'

So another ongoing process is the interaction of Willem and the team with guards at all access points to thrash out any problems experienced on a day-to-day basis. Fortunately, no significant incidents have been reported on this front.

'I believe we've come a very long way. In terms of resident access control alone, we're dealing with around 2,000 people daily, and our Kingswood residents have been working very well with the new systems.

'Willem says that there are still ongoing communications to process and register new residents or those not yet on the system, but that everyone is working together to ensure that no one is left out in the cold. 'Please remember to let us know if you are experiencing any niggles – if you don't get in touch, we won't be aware of problems.'

New era for the estate

More exciting news on the security front is that all service-level agreements have now been concluded; apart from Scholtz Consulting, ZA Projects has been appointed along with other contractors that work together to do daily preventative maintenance and repairs where needed.

'Further efforts to ensure the system's smooth running involve representatives from ZA Projects being available on site and going the extra mile by driving with residents to ensure that they know the procedures. Praise is also due to Caron Manchest, permanently appointed early this year to manage the ongoing registration of all traffic entering the estate.

'This is, of course, an ongoing process when considering the ever-changing influx of builders and other service providers, but under Caron's firm hand it has been quite seamless. The HOA must take credit for making the decision to appoint her, even



if it wasn't planned in the initial outlay – it's working out perfectly.' With standard operating procedures adjusted as they go, all players involved are focused on the process all the time. 'We are very far down the road from a year ago, and I would like to believe that the value we add from a consultancy point of view is visible. It's a new era for the estate in terms of access control, but given the many knowledgeable people involved, Kingswood is in very good hands,' says Willem.

The year ahead

For the remainder of 2024, the team will focus on increasing tech on the perimeter fence. 'We've implemented mobile solutions that are used in areas regarded as high risk. This technology is highly mobile and can be moved as dictated by circumstances. For instance, if any new activity is detected in a certain spot, we can change the position of cameras.' Willem says the area currently being focused on in this context is the estate's eastern border, where construction of the extensive Mediclinic precinct is now in full swing. Another potential hotspot is being monitored in the Rooi River area. 'We are increasing tech on the perimeter within the approved budget, and so far it's proving very successful.'





Meet the team

Liaise, communicate, market: the latest Kingswood team member does the lot!

Jolene Smit joined the Kingswood HOA fray in April, so here's a nutshell introduction to this able lady responsible for keeping good relations all round.

Her full job title is Client Liaison, Communications and Marketing Manager for Kingswood Golf Estate HOA – a new career opportunity that Jolene Smit has embraced with gusto from the start of her contract on 8 April.

'I will be assisting residents with estate-related queries while also handling the marketing and organising of events on the estate. I look forward to meeting all the residents and creating a fun social environment at Kingswood,' she says.

No stranger to the Garden Route commercial scene, Jolene has owned three of her own businesses – two

of which she's successfully sold, but the third being too close to her heart to consider letting it go.

'I still own Amari Bridal Boutique and make wedding dresses in my free time. One has to be extremely dedicated, but I just love creating beautiful wedding gowns.' A quick trawl of the internet shows that Amari (www.amaribridal.co.za) also provides a comprehensive package of wedding services.

Multitalented Mother of the Year

Jolene is the proud mom of two preteen boys and two fur babies: a Border Collie called Skye and a Lab aptly named Buddy. 'I also ride dirt bikes and skateboard with my boys whenever time allows,' she says, adding that biking is an old favourite pastime.

'I raced dirt bikes in Cape Town and came first in the regional ladies' championships at the time. Racing took me out of my comfort zone and ensured that I focused on the here and now. It taught me to handle situations and obstacles as they happen.'

Jolene says it's one of the best feelings in the world to be the mother of boys Luke, nine, and Joshua, six. 'From slugs in my salad to mud in my washing machine, I wouldn't change it for the world. I live for my children and everything I do is for the boys. I want my children to be proud of their mom, and I dedicate my life to ensuring that I never let them down.'

Climbing the ladder from the first rung up

When meeting the confident lady now in charge of Kingswood PR and marketing, it's hard to imagine that things have not always been easy for Jolene Smit. 'I come from a tough background. I know what it's like to sleep on a cold garage floor and have nothing to eat.'

'But I strive every day to become better than I was the day before, and if I can motivate others to live their best life, that is what I will do. I'm extremely passionate about helping people to reach their full potential.'

It's clear that Jolene loves working with people and helping where possible. But setting her apart from the rest is an attitude that lifts spirits along the way. 'Everything I do in life is with a smile on my face and a heart full of gratitude.'



Guilty pleasures

'I love eating – sometimes too much! – and I love experiencing new things. I have an urge to try everything in life at least once, never letting fear stand in my way, no matter what I do. I am driven and passionate.'

Originally from Durban, Jolene grew up in Great Brak River; she was schooled at Outeniqua Primary in George and matriculated at Mossel Bay's Point High School. 'I moved to Cape Town the same day I wrote my last matric exam and started creating a life for myself there.'

But the call of the Southern Cape prevailed and Jolene returned to Mossel Bay in 2021 when the boys had to start school. 'I wanted to give them the lifestyle I enjoyed, growing up in a smaller town.'

'More about me? My favourite colour is pink. I absolutely love the ocean and wish I were a mermaid. When I am stressed, I go and sit beside the sea. That's my happy place.'

The Kingswood family welcomes Jolene and looks forward to a long association with this passionate young working mother.





Build@KINGWOOD

The Kingswood Estate plant list has been meticulously curated to pinpoint precisely what thrives in Kingswood gardens.

The BUZZard tracked down horticulturist Sanet Maritz for a chat and a short tour of the estate, during which she pointed out where remedial work has had eye-pleasing results, as well as in-between bits where the team's green expertise is currently being put into motion.

'Actually, a gardener's work is never done,' says Sanet. 'You can put in all the effort required to create a lovely garden, but if you leave it unattended for a year, you'll be right back to where you started.'

Circles, roundabouts and where the buck stops

Sanet says when she first gained the Kingswood contract, her immediate concern was the estate's entrances. 'Whether you're a resident, a golfer or potential buyer,



the entrance is your first impression. Vegetation at all gates was in a poor condition, so we got started on these high-profile areas at once.

'While it is wonderful to live in harmony with the buck, our gardens don't always agree. For example, planting Agapanthus in the parking area near the clubhouse provided our furry friends with a delicious breakfast.'

Sanet says for that reason these sought-after plants are placed in areas less frequented by the buck, using the estate's underpass as an example. Kingswood gardeners will know that springbok and other small game may stay away from roadsides and tunnels, but have no qualms about entering gardens for a snack. (See the list below for plants disliked by buck.)

Plant tech on tap

'What we do in the estate's gardens is what homeowners can apply to their private gardens,' says Sanet.

'Evaluate gardens to check on aspects such as the 80/20 indigenous/exotic ideal as described in the KGE guidelines. When this ratio is out of proportion, the Kingswood garden team can make recommendations as to filling the right spots with the right indigenous species.'



Traffic circles were transplanted with the type of vegetation that can tolerate heat and drought, because they are located between roads that reflect lots of heat on the plants. (Before photo, opposite page after photo)

'Another reason why the estate's gardens have improved so much is that we only use organic fertiliser,' she explains. 'A good variety is available locally, and it works much better than chemical products in the Southern Cape soil. We apply these fertilisers twice a year, in November and March. To contribute to the quality of our estate lawns we do an annual spring treatment, which includes scarifying and fertilising during September.'

Drive-by plant and people tour

While driving around the estate, Sanet remarks that in the first year of working with Kingswood, the gardens were overgrown, with poor soil conditions. 'Lots of time was allocated to restoring appeal back into these gardens. Compost and bark chips play a significant role by providing an ideal growing environment for the plants.'

The extent of the team's management of lawns along our route is clear – the grass literally shines with green energy. Whenever we encounter members of Sanet's garden army – some spraying, some cutting or planting – everyone waves enthusiastically.

'They know I'm very particular and will not hesitate to point out when quality standards are not met. I believe in constructive criticism, in motivation and praise and pride in your work.'



Sanet Maritz and landscaper Esmeralda Maart share a deep love of plants.

Meet Esmeralda

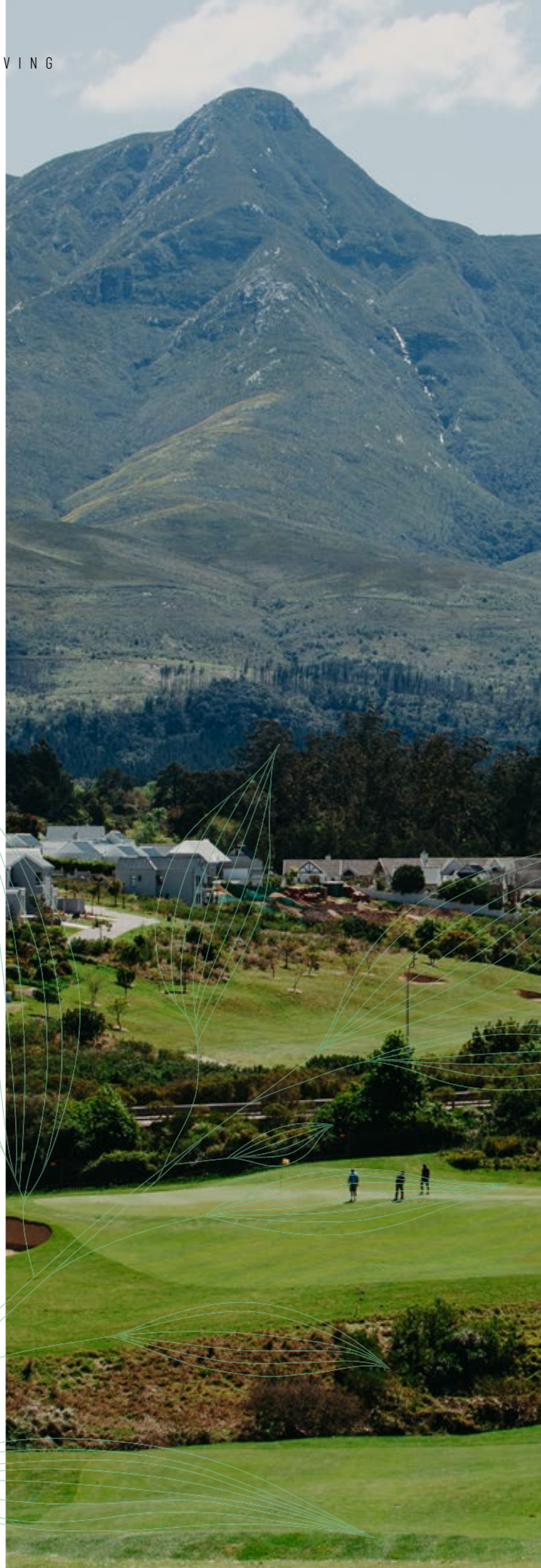
At Kingswood, Sanet's right-hand lady is Esmeralda Maart – a budding landscaper who was spotted by Sanet as a clear candidate for taking the reins of garden teams at the estate.

'You've got to have the love,' says Esmeralda, adding that she treats plants like people, and beams positive energy to these floral charges for best results. Chatting with Sanet over the day's progress, Esmeralda mentions that 300 plants used in the new phase four development were obtained from their on-site nursery.

A Mexican wave of colours

The mini estates within the estate, such as Kingswood Gardens, Hamlet, Crest and Manor, have been a particular focus of the team. 'At Gardens, for instance, wild-growing gardens were reduced to make way for patches of lawn where kids could have some play areas. At Crest, nothing would grow next to the perimeter wall, so we planted water-wise specimens that gave the results we had aimed for,' explains Sanet.

'I love what you can do with colour at different times of the year to ensure that there is always something in bloom.' Pointing to a nearby groundcover, she reminds us that these underrated protectors of the soil also come in an array of different colours and textures.





'Their greens, reds and yellows work well with all kinds of flowering plants. Attention to detail is key, and when you get the timing right, you can have a wide variety of colour all year round.'

No buck feed...

Sanet provided this list of 20-odd plants that are the safest when considering hungry buck and other small game. 'It's important to mention that younger plants must be protected for a while, because the foliage is often still soft and easily edible.'

Cotyledon orbiculata (pig's ears), *Carex comans* (Amazon mist), *C. berggrenii* and *C. testacea*, *Carissa macrocarpa* (green carpet, num-num), *Festuca ovina* and *F. glauca* (fescue grass), *Coleonema album* and *C. pulchellum* (pink confetti bush), *Crassula ovata* (jade plant) and *C. multicava* (fairy crassula), *Salvia aurea* (beach salvia/bruinsalie) and *S. chamelaeagnea* (bloublomsalie), *Euryops virgineus* (honey marguerite), Aloes (in bloom when other plants stop flowering), *Chondropetalum ebracteatum* and *C. tectorum* (thatch reed/dekriet), *Chlorophytum saundersiae* (weeping anthericum), *Pennisetum setaceum* 'Purpureum' (purple fountain grass), *Tulbaghia violacea* (silver lace).

'I didn't include proteas, cone bushes or pincushions on this list because they serve for an interesting topic in our next article.'



GOLF COURSE update

We may only have one agronomist, but KGE course rakes in the compliments

A brief sit-down with Kingswood greenkeeper Ivan van Heerden is of the essence when wanting to know how it's really going on the golf course.

With each quarterly chat for *BUZZard* purposes, it's interesting to look back at work done on the course since the previous edition's update – that's before getting down to the gossip of who was seen at Kingswood and who said what in the wonderful world of golf.

On cleaning and draining

Ivan says their efforts at cleaning the river have had the desired effects, and ditto for the dozens of sandbags installed on an embankment at the seventh hole late last year, both of which helped a lot with effective





drainage and so lessened the risk of water damming up after extensive showers.

'The settlement worked well – we have received so much rain but have suffered no damage. Drainage is a different challenge, however; our remedial work helped to some extent, but there is always a new vein that opens elsewhere. You can drain what you can see, but in a couple of months a new thing pops out, as was the case at hole seven.' He took photos to document the impact of the heavy downpours experienced all over town around Tuesday 9 April, when 70mm was measured in a 24-hour period. It rained heavily over five days, including the preceding weekend, and from Tuesday to Wednesday 110mm was notched up.

'We were quite lucky, as the area towards Geelhoutboom and beyond had much fiercer downpours. We now know well what 70mm a day does to the course. But when you hear about the 100–300mm that fell closer to the mountains, you have to wonder what *that* looked like!'

30 million litres sounds like a lot, right?

As far as aesthetics go, the rain was a great help, says Ivan: 'The green is back, the definition is back, our dams are full. At this rate of precipitation, with all dams filled to capacity, we have 30 million litres in storage.' But this capacity is placed in context when he explains that, if the sprinklers everywhere on the course were turned on for irrigation purposes, then a staggering 2 million litres are used per day – that's enough for but half a month.

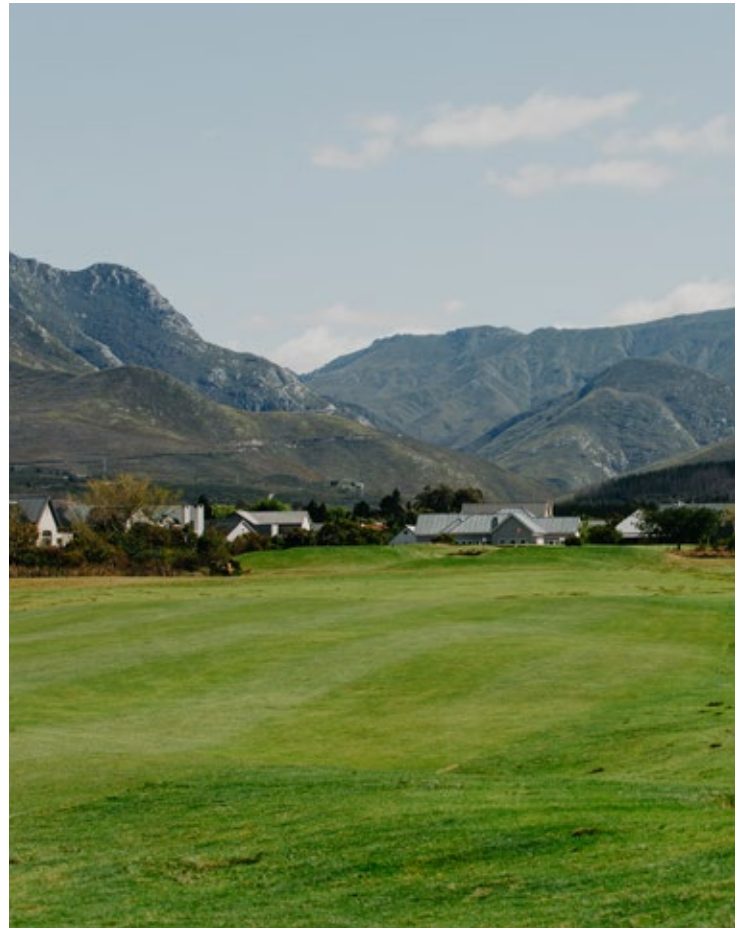
'So I must save water for the greens and tees. People are quick to say, after the rain, "the definition is beautiful – try to keep it that way". I play a regular round of golf with a group of gentlemen every Wednesday, and last week they remarked how lovely the dams looked. But when I explained that they only hold water for 15 days, everyone was amazed.'

Playgrounds of the rich and famous

With the last edition of the Masters played at Augusta golf course just recently, the subject of those hallowed fairways came up for discussion. Ivan reminded that Augusta's course is closed from October each year, giving it six months to rest and be pampered without a single round being played during that time. 'Yes, I'm plying my trade at Kingswood with a great team, but at Augusta there is a qualified agronomist for every three holes, so six agronomists on site for the course's 18 holes. And that's not to mention the number of cutters and other equipment!' Apart from SA's Masters contenders over the ages, other South Africans that have played at Augusta include but a handful of the richest of most famous. And when it comes to the former, Ivan remembers an encounter with Johann Rupert during an Alfred Dunhill Championship at the legendary Leopard Creek years ago.

'I was visiting my friend Darron Brown, who was responsible for the signage and some other on-course facets during this famous event. The Ruperts were very aware of environmental impacts and the effect of signboards and other man-made objects on the course. It was important for everything to blend in – so Darron decided to use earth-coloured picket fences, rather than the traditional white, to keep it natural.

'The Rupert heli had hardly landed before Darron got radioed. Johann said "Hello Darron" and Daron said "Hullo Sir", and then came the question: "Why does my course look like a *** cattle kraal?!" He wasn't being mean, but he knew





what he wanted, and would come back to shake your hand and say “thanks for a job well done”.’ When it comes to famous South Africans teeing off at Kingswood so far this year, there’s been the normal contingent of rugby greats such as Heinrich Brüssow and co. But impressive new kid on the UFC block Cameron Saaiman was also recently spotted on the Kingswood course.

‘He played here before heading to the States for his fight in Las Vegas on 23 March. Cameron is an exciting up-and-coming fighter, now starting to make his name in the Ultimate Fighting Championship,’ explains Ivan. What’s next ... Dricus at the driving range?

Here’s to the weather being just right

Ivan says it’s going swimmingly with his team on the course, and that the ground staff in general is doing an excellent job, deserving of the many compliments received on the course of late – ‘not least of which during my weekly Wednesday round with the gents,’ he jokes.

‘Actually, we’ve been getting great feedback for the past quarter. So we’re really looking forward to the good weather that’s being forecast for the next month in George.’

Of course, good weather means different things to different people. For greenkeeper Ivan, it’s all got to do with getting just enough rain – but no flooding, please – and getting just the right amount of sunshine in-between to keep our fairways, tees and greens in glittering shape.

GOLF @KINGSWOOD

Action on the course and Friday night excitement with KING OF CLUBS



When perusing weekly newsletters disseminated by the able team at Kingswood Golf Operations, it's clear that there truly is an event included in the monthly lineup for every skills level and preference. It's important to keep your eye on the KGO calendar to book your spot in time.

Off the course, the Friday night dinner specials and exciting King of Clubs competition are firm favourites among Kingswood residents and members – more on the rules and history of this 'lucky draw with a twist' lower down in this report.

Golf attractions in May

Ladies golfers are reminded that Saturday tee times are available for you to hit the course and unwind. Contact the Pro Shop to book under the 'Ladies' Saturday Game' and reserve your time to tee off the weekend in style. Please take note that the next Sunday Mixed Competition has been moved from 12 May to 5 May.

All members are invited to diarise these dates:

- Saturday 4 – Handicaps League 2
- Sunday 5 – Sunday Mixed Competition
- Thursday 9 – John Bland Trophy (the event moves to George Golf Club on the 10th)

Battle Royale: Saturday 11 May. Teeing off in the ultimate showdown once again are the English Bulldogs versus the Afrikaanse Boerboele – but who will reign supreme on the greens this time? Book at the Pro Shop.

Kingswood Junior Open: Sunday 12 May. As is always the case, the Kingswood Junior Open on 12 May promises to be an exciting day filled with youthful fun and healthy competition among the best of junior players.

Rainbow Riders Golf Day: Tuesday 14 May. 'Gallop for Good' by supporting the four-legged champions of the track on Kingswood's fairways and greens. Proceeds of your participation will benefit the budding local horse-riding community.

Standard Bank International Pairs: Wednesday 15 May. Entries are now open for the Standard Bank International Pairs Club Qualifier. Entry fee is only R100 per player and



Ladies' Competition winners on 15 February were Paula Bester, Lucia Jonck, Shirley Pressley and Gwen Rothman on 120 points. Second in the medal stakes were Aletta du Preez, Jenny Barbour and Kathy Ahlers on 115 points.



Ladies' Competition 24 January: first place on 87 points were Carey Dodds, Sandra Jacobsen, Daleen Rowea and Sandra Miano-Konrad.



King of Ages Event 23 and 24 February: Swinging into success on the greens!

pairings include your choice of two males, two females, or mixed pairs. Take note: clubs can host up to four thrilling qualifiers; one pair progresses for every 30 players; you will receive two golf balls upon registration.

More than just a 'lucky draw':

The King of Clubs competition has become a stalwart of Friday night attractions at the Kingswood restaurant. Generally credited with conceptualising the event for KGE's purposes is Men's Golf Captain Ymke Schutte, whom *The BUZZard* managed to catch for a quick reference before he hit the road to foreign shores last week.

Past month's bragging rights

Congratulations to some of those players who came out tops on the course during regular events in April:

13 April – Meat Competition

Arno Crous and Danie Obermeyer – 43pts c/i
 Lizette Leewner and Marlene Botha – 43pts c/o
 Ben Viljoen and Jean Wilson – 43pts c/o

16 April – Tuesday Competition

Willem 'Tat' Brummer, Theuns Wolmarans, Rankin Burger and George Payne – 94pts
 ISP Winner: George Payne – 41pts

17 April – Wednesday Competition

Arno Crous and Danie Obermeyer – 43pts
 Mark Radermacher and Clifflie Botha – 41pts
 Fannie D and Roger Grant – 40pts c/i

20 April – Saturday Competition

Johan Barkhuizen and Llewellyn Rheeder – 42pts c/o
 GP Steyn and Jacques Snyman – 42pts c/o
 Justin Thomas and Ross Templeton – 41pts c/i

20 April – Meat Competition

Dawie Jansen van Vuuren and Pierre Durant – 44pts c/i
 Jaco Plek and Francois Jordaan – 44pts c/o
 Johan Barkhuizen and Llewellyn Rheeder – 44pts c/i



These lucky winners took the pot in April 2023 and March 2024 respectively.



Well done our Thursday 18 April winner, on 35 points, Karen Schoombie, pictured here with Fran Kirsten of Kingswood Golf Ops on the right.

Says Ymke: 'Golf director Peter Yzelle is responsible to a large extent for the event's success, having been involved from its origination at Kingswood, and continuing to play an integral role in its organisation.' An effervescent source of fresh news when it comes to happenings on and off the course, Peter was keen to fill us in.

'The concept is, of course, not unique to Kingswood, since many other clubs offer a similar competition for members. But we decided to design our own version to create a platform for people to come together: players, non-golfing homeowners and golf members not resident on the estate.

'This type of competition is often referred to as a "Joker Draw", but we decided to call our version King of Clubs to include the Kingswood brand as well as all meanings of the word "club". After its onset two years ago, the first winner was drawn on 14 April last year, and we had our second winner in March.'

Peter says the rules were adjusted over time to offer more chances to more potential winners: 'In the past, only one number was drawn and the holder went to select a card. If they did not choose a card, they received R200. Now,

two numbers are drawn and the first person can choose a card or 10% of the evening's income. If that person takes the money, a second person will have the choice between card and cash.'

For those not yet in the know, tickets cost R100 and sales open at 17:30 every Friday; the last tickets are sold at 18:50 for the draw to take place at 19:00 sharp.

'We retain 10% of every draw to add to the next pot, which means it's not empty in case there's a next lucky winner the follow Friday,' explains Peter. 'I must also mention that no one profits from the King of Clubs. Takings either go to the winner or are held back to make the next pot more attractive.'

He reminds that only people who are in good standing at the club are allowed to participate, and not only residents and golf club members but also those who rent on the estate long term are encouraged to enter. For previous winners' privacy we won't mention names here, but Peter says they look forward to congratulating their third lucky winner in the very near future.

Rands and rules

As an indication of amounts involved, consider that by 24 April the pot was standing at R70,111 (that's about R65,000 for the taking). And before the most recent winner got



Ladies@Home 22 February. Blooming success ... Golf day Blossoms!

lucky late in March, the jackpot had hit R298,300! Can you afford not to try your luck? After all, the chance of winning big is but a card-flip away ...

It's already a jolly affair when joining Friday night dinner special revellers for delights such as fresh fish and chips or hearty lasagne, and there's always live music to ensure great vibes. The evening's muso is also responsible for the draw – invariably a source of much hilarity. See the rules elsewhere on this page and call KGO on 086 172 7170 or visit the website for details.

King of Clubs rules

The King of Clubs is only open to Kingswood Golf members and Kingswood homeowners. The winner will be verified before the money is handed over. Each week two names are drawn:

- A. The first person drawn gets to choose between the Money and the Box.
 - i. Pick the MONEY and you get 10% of the collections on the evening (guaranteed).
 - ii. Pick the BOX and you get to play King of Clubs and pick a card for the main pot.
- B. The second name drawn will automatically qualify for the option NOT selected by the first person in the Money or the Box. Depending on the first person's decision, you could walk away with 10% of the

takings on the evening OR you could take a chance at the main pot.

The percentage of the collections each Friday night carried over to the next pot, which will increase with every R100,000 as the main pot grows, is as follows:

- a. From R0 to R100,000 – 10% of collections will carry over
- b. R100,000 to R200,000 – 15% of collections will carry over
- c. R200,000 to R300,000 – 20% of collections will carry over
- d. R300,000 to R400,000 – 30% of collections will carry over
- e. Each additional R100,000 will add 10% to the carry-over.



MASTERING THE rental journey

Insights for tenants and homeowners

As the dynamics of property ownership evolve, the surge in demand for rental accommodations prompts both tenants and homeowners to tread the rental path with utmost care and thoroughness. Andrew Schaefer, MD of Trafalgar, underscores the significance of this endeavour, stressing the need for informed decision-making in the rental domain.



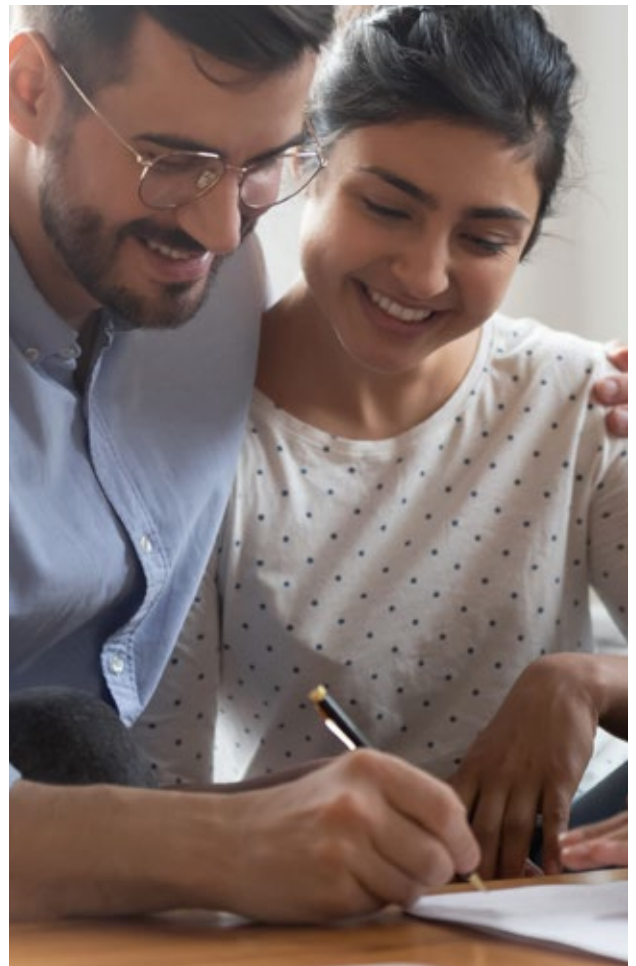
'In today's rental market, navigating the landscape requires meticulous attention to detail and informed choices,' notes Schaefer. 'Tenants and homeowners alike must approach the process with diligence to ensure a seamless and mutually beneficial rental experience.'

For both parties involved, here are the top five considerations:

For tenants

Budgeting mastery: Define a realistic budget encompassing rent, utilities, maintenance, and a deposit, prioritising financial stability for a balanced lifestyle.

Location evaluation: Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the desired area, considering safety, proximity to amenities, and overall ambiance to align with personal preferences.





Property inspection protocol: Prioritise an on-site visit to inspect for damages, pests, or maintenance issues, testing appliances and utilities for functionality and reliability.

Lease understanding: Thoroughly review the lease agreement – focusing on clauses pertaining to rent adjustments, maintenance responsibilities, and termination protocols – to avoid misunderstandings.

Community compliance: Familiarise yourself with community scheme regulations regarding noise, pets, parking, and common area usage to maintain harmony within the community



For homeowners

Tenant vetting vigilance: Conduct rigorous screening of potential tenants to ensure alignment with community guidelines, fostering a living environment conducive to all residents.

Comprehensive lease contracts: Craft detailed lease agreements delineating rights, obligations, and dispute resolution mechanisms for enhanced clarity and transparency.

Maintenance eminence: Uphold meticulous maintenance standards for rental properties, addressing issues promptly to bolster tenant satisfaction and retention.

Insurance assurance: Secure adequate insurance coverage for property damage, liability claims, and potential loss of rental income due to unforeseen circumstances, safeguarding against financial risks.

Communication cohesion: Establish clear communication channels with tenants, fostering transparency and trust in property management practices to nurture positive landlord-tenant relationships.

Louise Martin, CEO of Estate Living, emphasises the importance of informed decision-making in the rental process, stressing the need for collaboration between tenants and homeowners to ensure a harmonious living environment in community schemes.

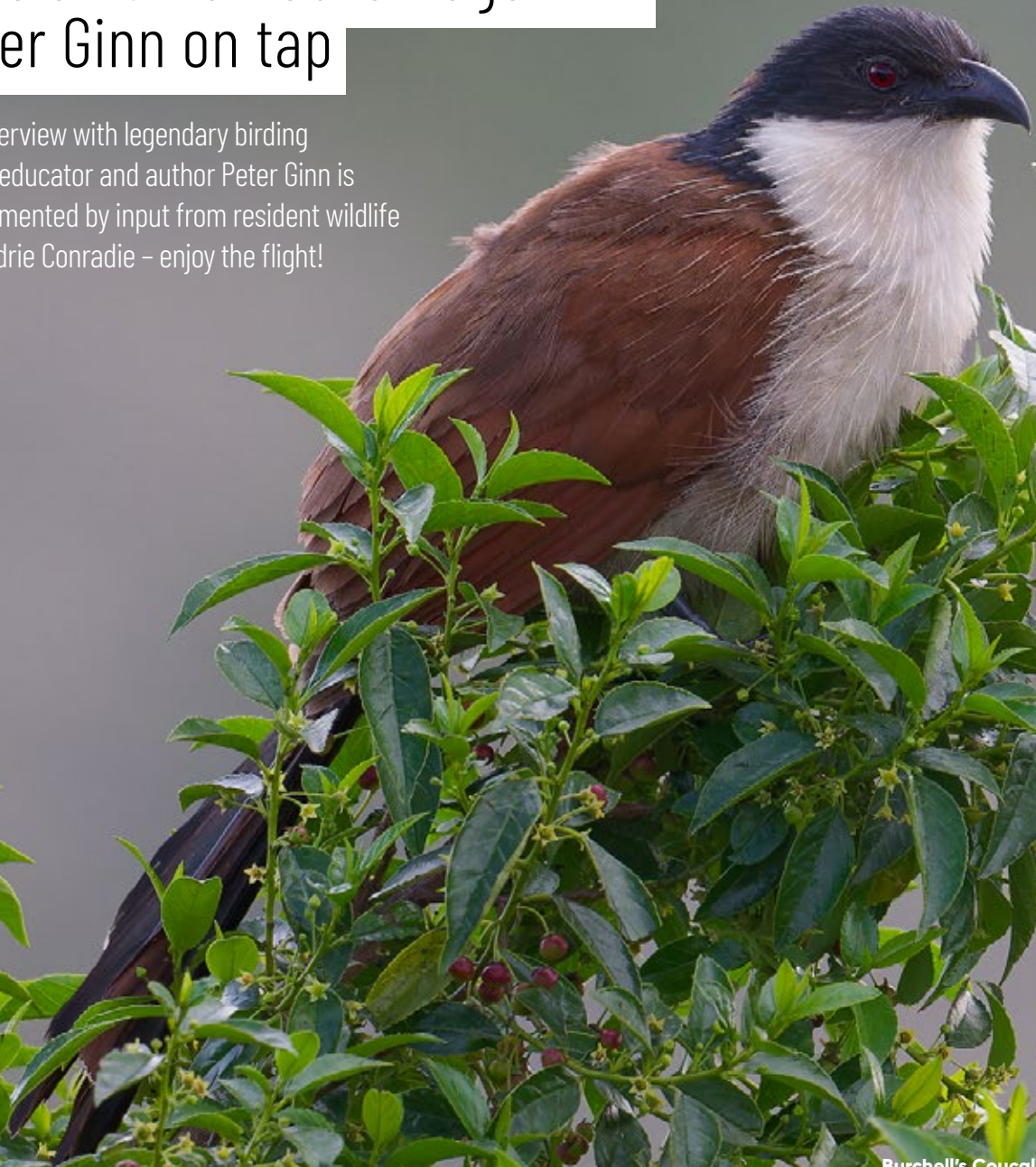
‘Renting in a community scheme demands a mutual understanding of rights, responsibilities, and community regulations,’ Martin remarks. ‘By fostering open communication and adherence to guidelines, tenants and homeowners can cultivate a harmonious community where everyone thrives.’



KINGSWOOD'S BIRDERS

have an unfair advantage with
Peter Ginn on tap

This interview with legendary birding expert, educator and author Peter Ginn is complemented by input from resident wildlife fundi Adrie Conradie – enjoy the flight!



The *BUZZard* has featured Kingswood resident Karen Schoombie before on the subject of feathery things. For this update, she shared the news that birding is alive and well among the estate's many enthusiasts, and introduced us to two gentlemen who contribute greatly to the exchange of information on the subject.

'We meet every third Monday at the clubhouse, and Peter Ginn presents all the talks – a great privilege, as he is one of South Africa's top birding experts. Our resident connoisseur is Adrie Conradie, who knows everything about Kingswood's birds and lots about its wildlife,' says Karen.

Birding is a hobby, but I'm no ornithologist

Author of *The Complete Book of Southern African Birds* (1989), *The Ultimate Companion for Birding in Southern Africa* (2014), and a slew of other books and booklets published since the early 1970s, one has to wonder how Peter Ginn became impassioned about birding in the first place.

'My father was a squadron leader in the SAAF in World War II and was stationed at Robert's Heights outside Pretoria. We lived below the aerodrome and quite close to Swartkops Golf Course. We did not have enough petrol to get me to school, so I rather ran wild on the surrounding farms. My uncle was also in the



Karoo Prinia



African Hoopoe

SAAF and lived close by. He encouraged me to collect birds' eggs and get to know how to identify birds. He became my mentor after Father died in North Africa.'

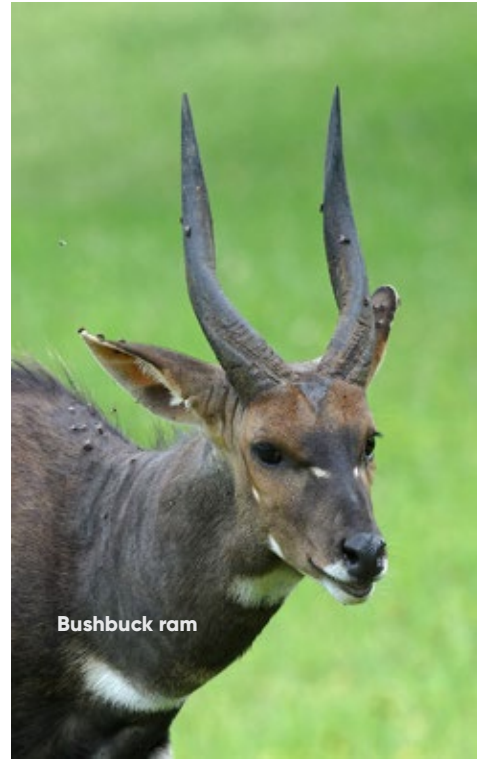
Peter says they would go to his uncle's farm, Nylsvlei, during the August holidays. 'Here I continued to watch birds and collect eggs.' Birds remained a hobby through school at St Andrews Prep and College, but Peter took a break during varsity years.

'After varsity I spent a year working in the wilds of Botswana as a geologist. But living on my own was not my scene, so I resigned at the end of 1961. Liz and I got married and I started teaching Geography and Geology at Peterhouse in Zimbabwe in January 1962' Peter ran the Natural History Society at Peterhouse and led annual school expeditions to Botswana, where the youngsters learnt about birds, small mammals, plants and conservation. This culminated in the development of Goshu Park on the Springvale site – the primary school now part of the Peterhouse Group.

'Birding, and especially bird photography, flourished in Goshu, because our hides were safe there – but that's a whole different story. I'm passionate about people learning about and conserving the natural world we live in. I am a people person who knows a lot about birds and their behaviour. Unlike ornithologists, I don't study birds systematically.



Cape Grassbird



Bushbuck ram



Red Bishop

'Birds and birding have always been a hobby but my passion is people and teaching them about nature, especially birds – initially as a school teacher, but since 1992 as a bird guide. A number of Kingswood residents, including Karen and Eugene Schoombie, John Strauss and Adrie Conradie, have been on my Birding Adventures at Khoisan Karoo Conservancy near Hanover.'

Pre-COVID-19 Kingswood history

Peter started doing his thing at Kingswood well before COVID-19, saying those early talks on individual topics were held in the clubhouse and arranged by Wendy Thompson. 'We then moved to Wendy's house, where we had bring-and-share suppers after the talk. When Wendy moved to Groenvlei, we moved back to the clubhouse and Karen Schoombie took over organisation at Kingswood.'

'I also organised a more formal programme, called "Birds and their nests". The talks are arranged so that similar nests are categorised, and should last us well into next



Red-knobbed Coot

year.' Peter says apart from his monthly talks, some residents have joined his bird walks and meanders open to members from Kingswood and Groenvlei. He thanks Karen, Adrie and John for facilitating and contributing to the success of his monthly presentations, and everyone who attends the talks so regularly.

A creatures' paradise

Adrie Conradie says the estate offers exiting opportunities to witness animals in their natural environment. 'As our gardens mature and construction activities come to an end, homeowners will increasingly be treated to the splendour of nature.

'When considering wildlife on Southern Cape golf estates, species that spring to mind are Egyptian Geese, Hadedda and Sacred Ibis, Helmeted Guineafowl, Red-knobbed Coot and springbok. But Kingswood offers much more due to its ideal location bordering Fancourt, Outeniqua Research Farm and George Golf Club.

'What's more, we have the Witfontein and Rooi rivers supporting various habitats such as dams, fynbos, grassland, thicket, large trees, and bird-friendly gardens. So the Kingswood bird list comprises about 130 species, and expands as new species arrive to

explore.' Adrie says one of the estate's success stories is the Spotted Eagle Owls that breed year after year in the same flowerbox and successfully raise their chicks. With resident bird and raptor species too numerous to list here, he singles out a handful of special visitors.

'Birds expand their ranges and visit certain areas due to suitable habitat being created by human activity. Examples at Kingswood include visits from a Black-collared Barbet, Black Cuckoo-shrikes, and the Sombre Greenbuls that are now heard and seen more frequently. The White-faced Whistling Duck currently breeding on the estate is another instance of this behaviour.'

Adrie adds that, on the small game front, resident bushbuck like to shelter in the thicket, especially close to the rivers, and occasionally one of the rams will be seen in the open. 'The other smaller mammals on the estate are more secretive, so count yourself lucky if you catch a glimpse of the porcupines, water mongoose, Cape clawless otter, otomys or vlei rats, and Cape spiny mouse. A caracal was also seen on the estate some time ago!'

Thank you Adrie for the incredible bird images. The next birders' gathering is on 20 May – call Karen on 083 553 1655 for details.

FOUR TIPS TO SAFEGUARD YOUR ESTATE FROM VANDALISM

When it comes to vandalism, prevention is far better than cure

Picture this: a pristine neighbourhood, its streets lined with elegant homes and lush greenery, suddenly marred by graffiti scrawled across walls, shattered windows, and defaced public spaces. Senseless vandalism not only tarnishes the aesthetic appeal of a residential estate but also undermines the sense of security, breeding fear, eroding trust, and diminishing the sense of pride residents take in their homes and surroundings.

Such scenes of vandalism are not merely cosmetic nuisances but also symbols of a deeper malaise. They signal a breach in the social fabric, a breakdown in the respect for communal spaces, and a threat to the wellbeing of residents.

Here are four simple steps estate managers can follow to combat this pervasive menace.

1. Set out the rules straight away

One of the most insidious aspects of vandalism is its contagious nature. A single act of mischief can embolden others to follow suit, leading to a spiral of deterioration if left unchecked. It's a vicious cycle wherein neglect begets more vandalism, perpetuating a climate of insecurity and despondency.

Education is pivotal here. Consider raising awareness about the repercussions of vandalism by drawing attention to the estate rules, the potential of fines, and the possibility of increased levies to cover repair costs.





2. Foster a strong sense of community

When residents feel a connection to their neighbours and surroundings, they are more likely to take ownership of their environment and be vigilant against acts of vandalism. Addressing the root causes of vandalism, particularly among disenfranchised youth, is essential. Providing constructive outlets for creativity and recreation – such as art workshops, sports facilities, and community gardens – can channel their energies in positive directions and foster a sense of belonging within the community.



3. Adopt a prompt, robust response

It is one thing to set out the rules, but another to stick to them. Swift and effective responses to incidents of vandalism are crucial in maintaining the integrity of residential estates. Prompt repairs and cleanup not only restore the affected areas but also send a clear message that vandalism will not be tolerated. Engaging residents in these efforts can further reinforce the collective resolve to preserve the beauty and harmony of their surroundings.

4. Boost your security offering

Investing in security measures can serve as a deterrent to would-be vandals. Surveillance cameras, motion-sensor lighting, and strategically placed barriers in public areas can help fortify residential estates against intrusions and acts of vandalism. While these measures may entail initial costs, the long-term benefits in terms of deterrence and peace of mind for residents far outweigh the expenses.

Ultimately, safeguarding residential estates against vandalism requires a concerted effort from residents and estate managers alike. It's not merely a matter of protecting property, but safeguarding the very essence of community life – a shared space where residents can thrive, bond, and find solace amid the chaos of the world.

LOCAL N Iekka

Helping families to be healthy and feel fabulous is this young doc's raison d'être

New Kingswood resident Dr Dané van den Berg is a long-time George local who recently returned to the town where her parents and grandparents still live, and where she now shares her extensive healthcare experience with patients young and old.

When chatting to Dané van den Berg, it's clear that this doctor is not just passing through. Having lived in George since her parents moved here in 2006, she matriculated at Outeniqua Hoërskool and is proud to be an 'old Kwagga'.

Initially moving to the Free State for her medical studies, this is also where she first bumped into her now better half; then fast forward to 2023, when their young family moved back to George in August last year.

'I've spent the last 10 years in Bloemfontein, where I gained experience in military and private medicine as well as casualties, and the physical rehabilitation of post-op patients or those who had suffered strokes.'

She says that working with everything from military to private casualties was a very worthwhile learning curve. 'My qualifications now include not only what normal GPs would do, but also advanced trauma, advanced



paediatric, and advanced cardiac life support.' Dané has earned her colours, too, at the American Association of Aesthetic Medicine and Surgery, so is qualified to beautify patients with medical peels, fillers, botox and the many other treatments that help to turn frowns upside down.

'After 10 years in Bloem, we had the opportunity last August to move back to George, where most of my family still live. We had our hearts set on Kingswood so bought a house here as soon as possible. It was our dream to live on an estate that is beautiful and safe for our children.'

Working within a team

Soon after settling in George, Dané got involved at Groenkloof's physical rehab centre, where she's the doctor in charge of patients who had endured strokes, spinal surgery, knee or hip replacements and the like. 'I'm supported by a whole team of therapists – from physio to occupational, social and speech therapists. Together,

we focus on our patients' physical rehabilitation and aim for full recovery.'

She does her rounds in the morning before heading to her practice at 27 on York, across the road from Virgin Active. 'My rooms are in the gym's previous building, which I now share with Discovery and other offices. At Groenkloof, we are a team and I can live out my passion of caring for older people; in my practice, I'm committed to women's and children's health, but also the entire family's wellbeing.'

One-stop shop, non-stop ideals

Although she does 'all the normal GP stuff' at her practice, Dané strives to turn her 27 on York premises into a one-stop shop for all your healthcare needs. Think: Mom with sick kids being examined, and getting a quick filler at the same time. 'And if grandma comes along not feeling 100%, I can take care of her ailments as well.'

Dané adds that her accident and trauma training allows her to have all the necessary drips on hand – essential for patients suffering gastro, dehydration or an iron deficiency, but also vitamin boost drips.

Other services include wound care and suturing, pap smears and breast examinations, drawing blood and ECGs. 'There's a procedure room for monitoring and I also do Vitality health tests and medical insurance examinations. My aim is to offer the full range of treatments to save patients from driving all over town.'



Personal touch

One of the biggest factors that sets Dané's practice apart is the personal service provided: you don't step into this space and see a different doctor each time. 'I walk a personal and unique path with the patient. Come and see me for a personal consultation, or for as long as we need to address everything from A to Z, to fix everything that bugs.'

Dané also does virtual appointments, on condition that she'd already seen the patient in the flesh. 'After the first meeting, I can do telephone consultations for patients who are sick at home. But everything else can be addressed at my rooms.'

'It's a personal journey where we look physically and emotionally at all aspects of your health. Whether it's growth development for kids or the treatment of allergies, my mission is to help whole families to be as healthy as possible and to feel as good as humanly possible.'

Nothing flat about Kingswood

The Van den Bergs love their home at the Oval with its extensive views of the mighty Outeniquas. 'Looking out on the mountains every day at Kingswood is just wonderful. What's more, the estate is so close to town and just a five-minute drive to my practice.'

'It's safe and family-friendly, so in the evenings we can go cycling and walking with our kids – a boy aged four, and three-year-old girl – with all these beautiful views as backdrop. We just love living there! I've been playing golf since school days, and so has my husband, so we hope to get back onto the course when the kids are a little older.' Apart from being 'Dad', Dané's husband JJ farms with sheep, cattle and crops. Her parents still live in George and her mom works as an auditor in the same building as Dané's practice at 27 on York. 'My grandparents live at Blue Mountain and it's a huge privilege to be so close to so many members of our family. We feel blessed to be a part of this special George community.'

Get hold of Dr Dané van den Berg on 044 110 0307 or at admin@drvandenber.net or pop in at her 27 York Street health hub.

Empowering Communities

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHEMES

In the intricate landscape of communal housing development, effective infrastructure management serves as the bedrock of resilience. Stormwater planning, in particular, emerges as a pivotal element, safeguarding the longevity and vitality of residential estates.

'As custodians of community living, it's imperative for estate managers to proactively address stormwater challenges,' affirms Louise Martin, CEO of Estate Living. 'By implementing robust preventive measures and ensuring comprehensive insurance coverage, we empower communities to weather any storm.'



Jason Mansfield, owner of Mansfield Property Solutions, underscores the importance of pre-emptive action in slowing down stormwater risks. 'Water attenuation ponds have long been a mainstay among estate managers, mitigating runoff water between roofs and paved areas,' he notes. Yet, the arsenal of preventive measures extends beyond convention.

Immediate preventive steps

Mansfield advocates for anticipatory actions in the face of overwhelmed stormwater infrastructure. For sloped landscapes, anchoring paved roads with concrete beams every 10 to 15 metres safeguards against erosion. Alternatively, drainage grids and deeper drainage ports help to expedite water outflow from rooftops, especially on steep terrains.

In low-lying areas, enhancing building drainage becomes paramount. 'Abnormally high rains necessitate subsoil drainage installations to redirect water away from structures to drains,' Mansfield adds. Additionally, for expansive green spaces, installing perforated pipes buried below the surface aids in water absorption, offering a cost-effective solution.

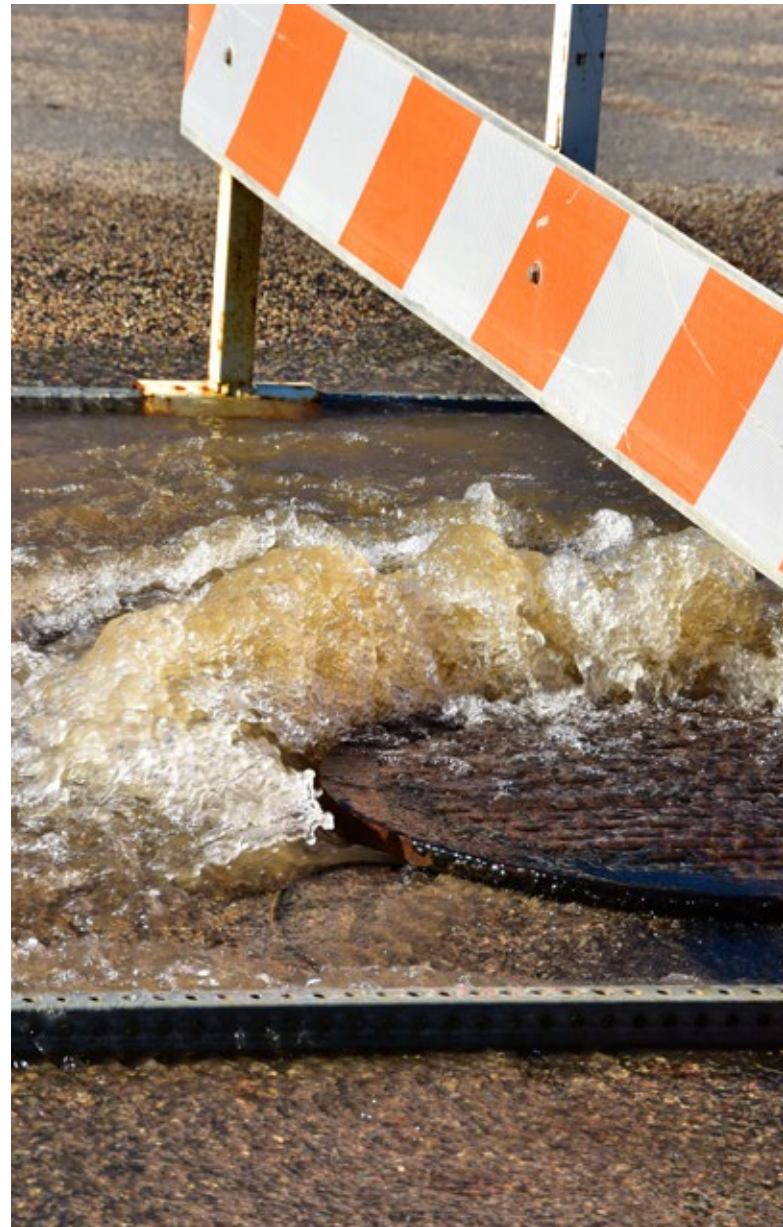
Insurance policy insights

A key importance is understanding insurance coverage comprehensively. While most policies cover weather-related incidents, exclusions may exist, requiring diligent scrutiny. Ensure adequate coverage for potential scenarios, including debris removal, rebuilding costs, and loss of income due to property closure, for example.

From a business perspective it's important to emphasise the necessity of business insurance extensions for potential income loss. This ensures coverage for damaged units, whether tenanted or owner-occupied, offering financial support during reinstatement or repair periods.

Know your responsibilities

Clarifying responsibilities between homeowners and estate management is paramount. While homeowners oversee tasks like roof maintenance and gutter cleaning, estate management shoulders communal upkeep, including tree trimming and debris removal. During adverse weather, additional protective measures, such



as sandbags and electricity supply management, fall within the purview of estate management.

As we navigate the complexities of stormwater management and insurance, collaboration between homeowners, estate managers and insurers becomes indispensable. By adopting proactive measures and comprehensive insurance coverage, community schemes can fortify their resilience against inclement weather, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of residents.

Smart Towns

COMBAT LOADSHEDDING BY BECOMING ESKOM-PROOF



In the face of South Africa's persistent loadshedding crisis, small towns across the country are pioneering solutions to liberate themselves from dependence on Eskom, our only national power supplier. The recent endeavours of towns like Riversdale and Clarens are not only transforming local energy landscapes but also reshaping the prospects of tourism and sustainable living in South Africa.

40 Riversdale's journey towards loadshedding freedom

Determined to make the province loadshedding-free, the Western Cape Government pledged to allocate around R7 billion towards projects that will make it self-reliant and improve its energy resilience. The challenge of the Energy Resilience Programme is not only how it will be rolled out, but also how the local government will collaborate with the 25 municipalities.

In 2023, Riversdale, a quaint little town in the picturesque Garden Route region, unveiled its ambitious plan to bid farewell to the scourge of loadshedding. With the support of the Western Cape Government, Riversdale aims to implement a groundbreaking renewable energy



project valued at R210 million over the next three years. This project encompasses the installation of 10 megawatt hours (MWh) of solar photovoltaic capacity and a battery energy storage system capable of producing around 15 million kilowatt hours of energy annually, which can be stored on lithium-ion batteries and sold back into the grid for consumption during non-peak periods. Coupled with this, the project comprises advanced monitoring and control mechanisms that deliver real-time tracking.

The significance of this initiative extends far beyond uninterrupted power supply. By ensuring stable electricity, Riversdale not only safeguards critical infrastructure and essential services but also nurtures an environment conducive to economic growth. With over 22,000 residents set to benefit from this transformation, Riversdale is poised to emerge as a beacon of resilience and progress in the face of energy challenges.

In a press statement, Alan Winde, Premier of the Western Cape, expressed his optimism about the Riversdale pilot 'experiment' and hinted at future projects in the pipeline, such as the construction of three 75MW solar farms in the Touws River area, another including 20,000 ground solar panels, and more.

How and why Clarens became the first 'smart' town

Meanwhile, in the heart of the Free State, Clarens has scripted a similar tale of self-reliance. Through innovative load curtailment strategies, Clarens has become South Africa's inaugural town where residents actively manage their own electricity consumption.

Spearheaded by Eskom in collaboration with the local community, this initiative empowers residents through 'voluntary curtailment' by leveraging an application-based load management system, which was created especially for this project by Augos, a tech company that specialises in advanced cloud data tracking and monitoring.

'A meter was installed at the town's main point of supply,' said Gert Kruger, the nominated curtailment coordinator for Clarens. 'Every 60 seconds the meter sends real-time statistics of the town's current demand, prompting further reduction if required.'

Once load curtailment has been called, the appointed group coordinator engages the community. Together decisions are made regarding the regulation of equipment or businesses that could be shut down to alleviate strain on the national grid during critical periods when consumption is high.



According to Eskom, the electricity demand should be reduced by 10% to 20% during curtailment Stages 1 to 4. The power utility constantly monitors the curtailment process, under threat of reinstating loadshedding where three instances of non-compliance have been found.

The town has further readied itself for curtailment in the form of various types of small-scale embedded generators (SSEGs), smart meters, electrical vehicle charging stations, and home-based power management systems.

By embracing smart technologies and fostering an attitude of voluntary participation, Clarens sets a precedent for sustainable energy management across the country.

Economic resilience through independence

The transition towards loadshedding-free towns holds immense promise for South Africa, especially where tourism is a big economic driver. Small towns like Riversdale and Clarens, endowed with natural beauty and cultural richness, stand to attract a greater influx of visitors who are drawn to uninterrupted leisure experiences. The absence of power disruptions not only enhances visitor satisfaction but also bolsters local businesses, which serve as the lifeblood of these communities.

'In Riversdale and the surrounding Hessequa region, tourism is one of the biggest economic contributors and a priority sector for development and investment,' explains Riaan Malan, Senior Tourism and Development Officer. 'The loadshedding experienced over the last decade has negatively impacted tourism, as travellers prefer destinations with a reliable electricity source. Navigating loadshedding would improve the destination's tourism status, increase visitor figures, and invite much-needed investment.'

The ripple effects of energy independence extend beyond tourism. By reducing reliance on Eskom and integrating renewable energy solutions, small towns mitigate the burden on the national power grid. This decentralisation of energy production optimises grid usage and maintains a more equitable distribution of energy resources across regions.

ESTATE LIVING



ABOUT ESTATE LIVING

Estate Living is the go-to resource for residential community living, providing trusted information and value for all stakeholders. Our network channels engage investors, developers, businesses, residents, and management within all types of community schemes.

WEBSITE

With a monthly reach of 100,000, our website serves as a comprehensive resource for Estate Living information, catering to diverse audiences including investors, estates, developers, management, suppliers, and homeowners

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

Our social media platforms extend our reach to 2 million users annually, while our email newsletters reach 60,000 subscribers and approx. 160'000 via our partnerships.

EVENTS AND WEBINARS

Estate Living hosts industry events and webinars featuring insider education, expert speakers, and networking opportunities for stakeholders through our #ExpertInsight series.

PUBLICATIONS

Estate Living Magazine, distributed quarterly to the top 232 estates, provides valuable insights for residents, management, developers, and investors. Additionally, our Residential Estate Industry Journal, in partnership with ARC, promotes best practices and innovation for community management, directors, and trustees.

Join our community at www.estate-living.co.za or follow us on social media. Estate Living; Everything you need to know about estate life under one roof!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
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