



**CENTRAL OUTER WEST
RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION**

**COWRA
Newsletter**

September 2013

FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK

IN THIS ISSUE

Chairman's Annual Report

by Alan Smaldon

2013 AGM report

Some positive items have occurred this past year, one of them being an increase in the Senior Citizen Rebate which equates to R19 per month; that is a 7.3% jump which does mean the Municipality has our interests at heart. Then we have the widening of Stockville Road which is well under way at the present time; please, should you use this means of access to the N3 drive carefully for the detour roads are very narrow and not really suited to the vehicles of today.

Thanks to Councillor Crouch's effort the pedestrian crossing in Old Main Road, Kloof has been re-instated and we have also managed to have some of the other crossings re-painted, although the new style of markings is not too my liking. Ward 10 has one of the best and most active ward committee's in the municipality; again this is mainly due

to the efforts of our councillor who, by the way, was elected Councillor of the Year in 2012 by his colleagues in the DA Caucus. All in all, when one reads reports on how other municipalities in South Africa are faring, most of our city departments are functioning reasonably well. There are a few who could do with some fine tuning, notably eThekweni Transport Authorities who just refuse to consider lowering speed limits on certain roads in the Outer West. I recently read that the City Manager is making it a priority to clean and maintain the city environs as they leave a lot to be desired.

eThekweni is the largest city in this province and the third largest city in the country. It is a cosmopolitan city of just under 3.5 million people of which just over a million are employed, half a million unemployed and 822000 not economically active.



COWRA

CENTRAL OUTER WEST
RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

COWRA AGM REPORT

Page 1



Horse Patrols

Page 3



Our Roads

Page 4

Is it any wonder then that crime is making itself a very disturbing factor to a number of residents? eThekweni Municipality has declared that by 2030 Durban will enjoy the reputation of being Africa's most caring and live-able City, where all citizens live in harmony. However I cannot see this happening due to the predominance of the aforementioned crime in the Outer West which is certainly causing a lot of friction between people living in the suburbs legally and those living in rural areas whilst we also have illegal residents living nearby. Our rates base has only increased by 1% meaning only 4000 additional ratepayers this past year whilst it appears our rate randage is of the highest in South Africa.

A R20 billion transformation of Durban's public transport system over the next seven years is expected to connect 600 000 commuters across the city to nine public transport corridors.

The network will integrate bus, rail and taxi transportation. The aim is to offer reliable and cheap commuter transport. It will be known as the eThekweni Integrated Rapid Public Transport Network; work has already commenced on the first phase which is expected to cost an estimated R10 billion over the next five years. However it will not be until at least 2020 before we see any of these routes coming up our way Bus shelters, dedicated bus and taxi lanes, pedestrian walkways and feeder routes are expected to reach Pinetown and other inner suburbs by 2018.

Farmers Market: this is to be moved to another area down Shongweni Road near to the waterfall, the owners of the present site are awaiting the outcome of an Appeal against the original decision. It is

hoped to obtain commercial zoning in order a developer will then be appointed to build a shopping centre there.

Rehabilitation of the M13 continues; the WB lanes should be completed by October when work will then commence on the eastbound lanes. However, please expect disruptions and lane closures which I will do my best to keep you informed of.

Despite the efforts of our councillor illegal businesses are still in existence within Ward 10; should you be aware of some in your area please let Councillor Crouch or myself know the details.

Squatters on private land: we have 2 obvious cases at the moment, one at 2 Old Main Road in Gillitts and the other adjacent to Glenwood Road on the edge of Stockville Valley. Vacant lots should be inspected by owners at regular intervals for, once squatters gain a foothold, it will take more than just court action to have them removed. There are considerable illegal electrical connections in the Stockville camp which were removed with the aid of Metro Police but were simply re-connected the next day; recently a young child died after sustaining severe burns allegedly through one of these self-same connections.

Ingonyama Trust, millions in unpaid rates and services owed by residents of this could be written off; R257 million! It is going to have to go to the Finance Committee and I trust this write-off will not be allowed and that the Revenue Department will try their utmost to get these outstanding payments.

With regards to reading your own electricity members I had word from 2 members they have been doing this for some time with no problems; this could result in a saving for, as I

mentioned, electricity tariffs increase in July whilst the Municipality reads meters every 3 months so should yours be read in July you could find yourself paying part of the May and June usage at the new rate!

This year saw 4 new members join our committee, I would certainly like to thank them for assisting us and, of course, to thank the other stalwarts who have been with me for so long.

COWRA

Who we are

Central Outer West
Ratepayers Association.

Serving Kloof, Gillitts, St. Helier, Everton, Forest Hills, Stockville, Winston Park, and other areas.

Our principal aim is to curb the encroachment of commerce and industry into Kloof, Stockville, Everton, Gillitts and Winston Park.

We tackle issues such as municipal rates, crime, roads and developments head-on with the local councils, speaking as the voice of the residents. For those who subscribe to the association, we e-mail crime information for the Outer West on a weekly basis.

Please join our Association.
With numbers our voice grows stronger.

Horse Patrols

by Richard Hancox

UPDATE ON THE MOUNTED RANGERS:

The weather on Sunday 8 September 2013 was ideal for the first road patrol to be carried out by our trial team. It was a warm bright sunny spring morning in Everton. As expected for a weekend, the traffic volume was light at fewer than twenty cars between 10 00 am and noon.

The plan for the ride was first explained to the SESK / Chubb security guard on duty, and traffic warning signs (Caution ! Horse Patrol Ahead) were placed along the route.

The exercise started from the paddock at the home of Team Captain Cherie accompanied by her groom Harrison, mounted on her horses Mint and Kipling.

The route followed the old Ingweni Trail eastwards until the path led up to the top of Ocean View Drive. Turning right into Forest View Drive and past the Everton Community Park where the horses have been grazing for a couple of weeks (and where they now indicated that they



Horse Patrol along Everton Road and Acutts Drive

would appreciate a tea-time snack), there was a little traffic along Pearson Road.

After a short photo opportunity below the Chubb cameras at the Everton Road T-junction the traffic built up through the bends over the Mpithi River bridge and up to the Acutts Drive T-junction. Here the team turned right to continue along the single-lane Everton Road through its closely-hedged S-Bend where there is ongoing electrical cable maintenance.

The back-up car accompanied the riders closely along the sections where the pedestrian verge is narrow

or non-existent. The passing vehicle drivers gave the team appropriate consideration.

The return to the home base was completed in a little less than two hours at a walking pace.

If you have appropriate riding experience and are interested in taking part in this type of neighbourhood watch activity, or would simply like to support the venture, please contact me as below.

Richard Hancox
082 343 0928 031 767 3342
richardhx@ananzi.co.za:

Our Roads and Environment

Let's keep our area well maintained. We need everyone's assistance to ensure the correct departments are notified of issues in our area.

It is the responsibility of the council to install and maintain adequate road-signage for the guidance and safety of motorists and other road users.

While we as residents may not have much to do with the ordering and placing of signage, we can certainly assist the council by pointing out areas that need improvement or maintenance.

Alan Smaldon is the chairman of COWRA, and works tirelessly by keeping the council's attention on important matters, and ensuring that issues are addressed timeously.

Some of the issues that Alan has recently brought to the attention of the council recently includes: Missing street signs, faded or missing road markings, reports of squatter invasions, investigating possible



Who stops, who goes?

illegal building activities in the area, condition of bridges and watercourses, street lights and many other issues related to service delivery by our local council.

Issues addressed during September:

60kph residential speed limit.

Investigation into development in Roosevelt Avenue

Excavation in Everton Road

Clearing of Azaleas along Old Main Road

Storm drain cover broken outside Winston Park garage

Various street lights in Hillcrest, Winston Park, Gillitts and Kloof

Work progress updates on Stockville road

Faulty traffic lights

Road markings in Stockville Valley

Watercourses and low-level bridges in Stockville Valley

Road signage in Gillitts

Trench across Kloof Falls Road

Road marking and signage: Gillitts, Everton

Street name signs in Gillitts

Potholes in various streets and areas

Street lights in Kloof Falls Road and Bridle Road.

These are but summaries of a few of the incidents addressed during the last month.

Here's how we can all assist: Please send information of issues you think may need attention to admin@cowra.co.za, including as much detail as you can gather, including pictures, dates, and any previous correspondence.

Website and Facebook

The COWRA website can be found at: <http://www.cowra.co.za> and our facebook page is at: <https://www.facebook.com/CentralOuterWest>

We provide regular crime reports on the facebook page, and on the website you may find such information as past AGM reports, reports of speakers and other useful information. We also provide a link to the area councilor's website, where lots of further useful information can be found.

Membership

COWRA membership is only a small annual fee. These fees are applied mostly to administration costs, and as contribution to NTU (National Taxpayer's Union). Please support us by becoming a member. Email admin@cowra.co.za for information.