

The municipality strikes again on the rates front. It appears that they believe we have a public service infrastructure that is on a par with George, so they intend to withdraw our additional 5% rebate on rates payable. We will be lodging our objection to this, but also encourage our members to submit an objection to Mr LH Fourie, Director of Finance, George Municipality, PO Box 19, George 6530, with a copy to the Executive Mayor at the same address. Objections must be received at the municipality by **15th May 2009**. It is short notice, but this information was only imparted to us at the IDP and Budget meeting held at the Wilderness Beach Hotel last Tuesday. Further feedback includes the following proposed tariff increases: Rates - 9%; Electricity - 29%; Water - 12%; Sewerage - 9%; Other Services - 9%. There is also a proposed 82% increase in capital contribution charges for new sewerage projects, from a current R8.400 to R15.240 on the 1st July. We are also objecting to this as being an exorbitant increase to apply in one go.

The level of crime in Wilderness remains high, although success was achieved through the vigilance of Wayne Nel of Palms, that resulted in the arrest of sixteen individuals from a Pacaltsdorp crime syndicate, so this will hopefully bring the crime rate back down again. However, we still urge you to be conscious of security in your own homes, and to immediately report any suspicious people or activity in your vicinity to the SAPS. With regard to the vagrants and “car guards” in the village, our poster campaign among the businesses is achieving some success, and we ask for your assistance in discouraging begging by declining to hand out cash. To combat the intimidation experienced by a number of tourists, the security company Msec agreed to station a vehicle in the village during their stand down periods to discourage such behaviour. Our thanks go to Msec for providing this service to us.

The Association has lodged formal complaints with the Executive Mayor against several officials in the Town Planning Department. Our complaints relate to their apparent failure to apply proper plan approval procedures, and then an apparent failure to ensure buildings conform to plans.

As a reminder, water restrictions are still in place and we urge you to abide by them now so that we can possibly avoid harsher measures being imposed in future.

Gardens may only be watered with a handheld hose (no irrigation systems) from 19:00 to 21:00 on Mondays and Thursdays for dwellings with even numbers, and on Tuesdays and Fridays for uneven numbers. A fine of up to R1000 applies for non-compliance. The use of hosepipes for car washing is also prohibited.

Parking remains a problem in the village although with our support, and some considerable cajoling from Kelly Murdy and her colleagues at Sotherbys, the Traffic Department and local Taxi Association have agreed to look for a temporary site that will not be quite so disruptive as at present.

The Oakhurst Autumn market will be held on 30th May, and a percentage of the proceeds will be donated to Christine Bertsch, who suffers from Gilliam-Barre disease. For more information or directions please contact Claire on 082 461 7669 or 044 850 1173.