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Newly elected Speaker for George Council, Sean Snyman, Executive Mayor Leon Van Wyk and Deputy Mayor Raybin Figland seen here at the Inaugural Council Meeting held on 22 November 2021.

# Festive Message



**Executive Mayor, Leon Van Wyk**

The year 2021 has provided further challenges for all of us. The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on all our lives, with many citizens being affected through illness along with families and friends losing loved ones. The economy has been harmed with some sectors suffering more than others. Jobs and employment opportunities have been lost leaving many families destitute.

The municipality has within its means, provided assistance to vulnerable residents experiencing hunger, the loss of dignity and increased levels of concern about safety.

The George Municipality welcomes all visitors to George over the summer holiday season and wishes them excellent weather, safety (while on the roads and while swimming) and good times enjoyed with friends and family.

We ask all residents and visitors to stay safe and continue wearing masks, washing hands, applying social distancing and staying home when sick.

**Good wishes to all residents and visitors!**

As at the end of November we are faced with risks about a further wave of the pandemic.

We therefore need to continue to take the necessary precautions to remain safe.

During 2021 various actions have been taken within the Municipality to improve levels of service delivery, improve management capacity and to attend to infrastructure maintenance and improvements in capacity to allow for increases in economic activity.

As we approach our traditional holiday season, we have taken note of the numerous positive signals where sectors of the economy are embarking on efforts to rebuild the economic activity. It is therefore important that we all assist our broader tourism sector in the recovery phase.

We wish to thank all our employees and our citizens for all their sacrifices and patience during this year as we learn more about the “new normal” behavioural patterns.

We also welcome all holidaymakers and visitors to George over the summer holiday season.

We should all remember to adhere to the health and safety guidelines during the holiday season.

We are all together as we face these challenges. Where possible, we should assist those less fortunate than ourselves.

**We send good wishes to all residents and visitors.**



**Acting Municipal Manager, Dr Michele Gratz**

## Blue flag for Wilderness Beach

Deputy Mayor Raybin Figland, together with Ward Councillor Marlene Barnardt and Acting Municipal Manager Dr Michele Gratz proudly inspect the facilities at Wilderness beach that have been readied for the hoisting of the Blue Flag for the 2021/22 summer season. Nosidima Vuminda Manager Parks and Recreation for George Municipality accompanied the trio during their site inspection of the public facilities.

Wilderness Beach has full Blue Flag status and Victoria Bay and Herold's Bay both gained Pilot status. Blue Flag is an international coastal management programme that accredits beaches that meet standards of excellence in water quality, environmental management, environmental education and information

as well as safety and services. In South Africa the programme is implemented by the Wildlife Environmental Society of South Africa (WESSA).

Blue Flag status offers many benefits including improved tourism facilities, enhanced management of coastal ecosystems, increased awareness of the coast and capacity building of coastal municipalities as well as carrying significant international merit.

The Blue Flag season runs from 1 December 2021 to 31 January 2022. Compliance includes high standards of water quality monitoring, public safety and lifeguard services, and well-maintained coastal amenities. South Africa has participated in the Blue Flag programme since 2001.



Proudly holding up the Wilderness Blue Flag are from left Manager Parks and Recreation, Nosidima Vuminda; Acting Municipal Manager, Dr Michele Gratz; Ward 4 Councillor Marlene Barnardt; Deputy Mayor Raybin Figland; Portfolio Councillor Electrotechnical Services, Nosicelo Mbete; Project Coordinator Environmental Services, Grace Notshokuvo and Chief Clerk Environmental Services, Yolanda Mail.



Dr Michele Gratz, Ms Vuminda, Deputy Mayor Raybin Figland and Cllr Barnardt inspect the recently updated public facilities readied for the 2021 festive season and Blue Flag status.





# Ensuring a safe 2021 Festive Season for George

George Municipality will focus on safety and service delivery for the 2021 Festive Season. To ensure a smooth festive season, a multi-disciplinary Season Committee will meet daily Monday to Friday, to discuss all problems being experienced and to find immediate and reasonable solutions where possible. The Season Committee starts on 1 December and will continue operations to mid-January 2022.

Municipal departments will all be represented and meet daily with role players, including SAPS, Tourism and other tourism-related role players, SanParks, NSRI, Lifeguard representatives, to ensure optimal service delivery standards during the festive season and to ensure the safety of residents and visitors to George and surrounds. Topics will include lifesavers, parking issues, safety, service delivery in terms of refuse collection, water and electricity, traffic and management of beaches.

## OPEN OVER FESTIVE SEASON

The municipal offices will remain open throughout the Festive Season operating Monday to Friday from 07h30– 16h30 apart from weekend and Public Holidays:

- 16 December 2021 – Public Holiday and offices are closed.
- 27 December – Public Holiday and offices are closed

Please note Covid-19 Regulations apply and offices will clearly indicate the number of persons allowed in at any given time. Where possible, the public is encouraged to continue using our online services.

All essential services will be provided during this time. The Municipal Call Centre will be operational and all service delivery matters can be reported either on the **Municipal App, 044 801 9111 or gmun@george.gov.za. Emergencies must be reported to 044 801 6300 and Fire to 044 801 6311.**

## LIFEGUARDS

Lifeguards will be deployed at Gwaing Beach, Herold's Bay, Victoria Bay, Wilderness Leentjiesklip and Wilderness Salina's on a fulltime daily basis from 1 December 2021 to 31 January 2021.

## TRAFFIC

George Traffic Services will actively patrol all municipal areas in collaboration with Western Cape Provincial Traffic over the festive season with regular roadblocks to be set up at various strategic points in and around George. We appeal to motorists and road users to always obey all road and traffic rules and to exercise patience during peak traffic, especially during the busy holiday period.

George Municipal Protection Services directorate has employed 30 Pointsmen / women for the period 1 November to 31 January 2022.

George Traffic Department will identify the most congested intersections on a daily basis, and the flexibility of having an additional 30 officials will allow the traffic department to move the pointsmen to where they are most needed.

Pointsmen are there to assist with traffic flow and we ask that their friendly smiles and waves are responded to and that all motorists on the road during the busy festive season, be considerate and spare a thought for the people out there making your life just that little bit easier and safer.

## BEACH MONITORS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

George Municipality will strictly enforce no alcohol allowed on our beaches and the George law enforcement officers will be augmented by at least 30 Beach Monitors who will start service as of the second week of December to assist with beach patrols and bag checks. We encourage all beachgoers to assist our officials in ensuring that their day at the beach is a safe and pleasant experience. Neighbourhood Watches, Community Police Forums as well as the SAPS also work closely with the Municipality with regards to Community Safety.

## DOGS

The following beach areas under the control of the George Municipality which include Herold's Bay, Gwaing River

Mouth, Victoria Bay and the Leentjiesklip areas do not allow dogs on the beach although dogs are allowed on the sidewalks of the beach areas but must be on a leash.

Wilderness Beach from the estuary onwards falls under the control of SANPARKS and as such they have an infographic which clearly demarcates where dogs are allowed and where not. (See below.) In terms of the Municipal Bylaw no dog or other animal may be in any public street or public space (any open public space the public has access to which falls under the George Municipal jurisdiction for example parks, sport fields, beachfronts (not on the sand) and sidewalks) unless on a leash and under control.

## FIREWORKS

Due to the high fire risk, there is a general ban on the setting off, selling and possession of fireworks, fire-crackers, flares, paper lanterns and other such paraphernalia in the George municipal area. Fines of R300 may apply, all fireworks will be confiscated. **Report Fireworks to Law Enforcement on 044 801 6350/6300 and Fires to 044 801 6311.**

## REFUSE COLLECTION

Refuse Collection black, blue and green bags will continue throughout the festive season **including on public holidays**. The CBD cleaning crews will work throughout with an extension of their hours as and when required.

As with previous years, an additional Saturday Refuse Collection for businesses (restaurants) will start on 1 December and end 1 January 2022.



To accommodate all users of the beach this beautiful 17km stretch of beach has been zoned into three distinct dog walking areas.

Every dog loves a good run on the beach... but unfortunately no seabird enjoys being chased... or finding its eggs destroyed or its helpless chicks killed by free-running dogs!

People enjoy going to the beach... but not if they have un-controlled dogs jumping up on them or having a dog-fight break out next to their children!

The three zones are:

**GREEN** zones where dogs are welcome.

**ORANGE** zones where dogs can be on the beach but must be leashed, (all the time on SANParks beaches and between 9am and 5pm on the Municipal beach).

**RED** zones where **NO** dogs are allowed. (These are breeding areas for endangered birds and the Blue Flag Beach, etc.)

See the zones and their conditions overleaf...



Code of Conduct for people walking dogs on beaches in the Wilderness Section of the Garden Route National Park

1. Dogs must be under voice or signal control at all times.
2. Dog handlers must always carry a leash.
3. Dogs must be leashed:
  - If the handler is unable to control the dog or if it is vicious.
  - While passing through any demarcated area.
  - At the start of a walk, e.g. car parks and access points.
  - While passing through picnic and braai sites.
  - When the handler sees indigenous wild life.
  - On reasonable request by other beach/vlei users.
  - Upon instruction from a Park official.
4. Dog handlers must not allow their dogs to interfere with the pleasure of others using the beach/Park.
5. When meeting a leashed dog, the handler of an unleashed dog must provide space for dogs to pass without incident.
6. Unleashed dogs must be prevented from running up to leashed dogs. Vicious dogs must be muzzled.
7. Give right of way to people unaccompanied by dogs.
8. Dog handlers must remove and bin their dog's faeces.
9. Bitches in heat may not be walked on the beach/vlei.
10. Dog handlers must ensure that their dogs do not chase or injure wild life.
11. Park notices must be complied with.
12. Dogs and handlers are to remain on Park-approved paths and tracks at all times.





# Directorates – it’s a wrap! 2021



## Planning and Development Director, Lauren Waring

It was with great joy that I commenced employment at George Municipality in May 2021. Besides being my hometown, George has a profusion of opportunities and delights to offer residents, businesses and visitors. Within the Directorate: Planning and Development there is a wealth of talented, creative, experienced and highly skilled staff who are a joy to work with. I express my appreciation

to my colleagues for their dedication, commitment, and service to our community. The outstanding work you perform each day meeting the needs of our communities enhances their quality of life.

Since May the Directorate has seen a few changes, particularly with regards to human capacity and other process efficiencies. It has been a source of great concern to property owners and developers the amount of time it has taken to receive land use or building plan authorisation. The source of the delays was a serious lack of capacity within the two divisions, but since July I am pleased that we have an additional 8 permanent staff members in our Development Management Division and 3 new Assistant Building Control Officers in the Building Control Division.

We successfully applied for external funds for the automation of several authorisation processes within the Directorate, which ultimately will expedite processes and improve service delivery.

As we all look forward to new and exciting opportunities in the year ahead, we remain working cooperatively with our community to make George the best place to live, work, play, visit and raise a family.

## Human Settlements Acting Director, Lauren Waring

The Directorate: Human Settlements has been focused on providing accommodation to the people of George. The work of the Directorate ranges from the provision of basic services to Informal Settlements, the development of new housing, the development and facilitation of affordable housing and support to the indigent.

The Golden Valley Housing project will deliver 136 housing opportunities. To date, 58 houses have been handed over to the most deserving beneficiaries who form part of this project. In the past year the Directorate Human Settlements managed to transfer 109 properties to beneficiaries in the Golden Valley housing development ensuring that when individuals receive their house, the title deed is also handed to them. Providing ownership to individuals is a way of restoring dignity to individuals by creating a sense of worthiness. The Erf 325-East housing development is one of the Western Cape Department of Human Settlements catalytic projects which will ultimately yield 1650 subsidy housing opportunities of which 504 houses have been handed over to qualifying beneficiaries by the Directorate Human Settlements. In this

housing development 199 properties have been registered which is an achievement as the transfers were done in a very short time. An agreement between George Municipality and the Social Housing Regulatory Authority (SHRA) will run for five years in which George Municipality will receive free technical advice and other support in order to implement the Social Housing programme. As a first phase, an amount of R750 000 was made available to undertake a feasibility study.

Human Settlements is a highly complex and often charged environment, where staff is striving to provide dignity to the most vulnerable amongst us.

The provision of a home brings relief to people who for years may have been living in overcrowded and informal environments, often under-served and with limited resources. To the beneficiaries, it is probably the most important milestone of their lives.

To the dedicated and committed staff: we have emerged from the year filled with many challenges that we have mostly overcome. We have learnt valuable lessons that we are taking forward into the New Year. May you and your loved ones have a most restful and peaceful festive season, filled with love and prosperity.

## Community Services Director, Allen Pause

Since I commenced work at George Municipality on the 2nd of January 2021 as Acting Director Community Services, I encountered two very pertinent problems, one being the vacancy of senior personnel which had a negative impact at management level in the directorate, and secondly the non-performance of the existing recycling tender to collect blue and green bags. The resulting effect was a citizenry unhappy with basic service delivery such as refuse collection.

The awarding of a new tender for recycling, together with the employment

of 107 EPWP workers, has had a significant impact on service delivery levels.

Another significant achievement was the attainment of full blue flag status for Wilderness beach and pilot blue flag status for Herold’s Bay and Victoria Bay beaches. The blue flag will be hoisted on 1 December 2021. In order to obtain blue flag status for any beach, the following must be complied with; Water quality, Environmental education and information, Environmental management and Safety and services.

The attainment of blue flag status is not only a status issue for the town, but

the economic spin-off for the town is immeasurable. It places George and the Garden Route region on the map as a prime tourist destination. We will continue to make significant improvements to the infrastructure in order to obtain full blue flag status for Herold’s bay and Victoria Bay in the future.

I want to thank the entire Directorate for their cooperation and assistance to perform and fulfil the mandate entrusted to the Directorate of Community Services. I can truly say that everybody in the directorate is now following a work ethos and ethic that has propelled the Directorate to unprecedented heights.



## Electrotechnical Services Director, Bongani Mandla

The Electrotechnical Services Directorate has made strides to realize its objective and significantly improve service delivery. The team has been instrumental in achieving the following:

- The signing of the first use of system’s agreement with participant (Wheeling agreement for George Municipality).
- Installing and Commission the first 300 kilo-Watt Peak Grid-tied PV plant for George Civic Centre.
- More than 4364 Prepaid Meter that have already completed the TID Rollover.
- Electrification and new connection of more than 1000 houses and within informal settlements.

- Being amongst the first Municipalities to have their cost of supply tariffs approved by NERSA.
- The official Sod-Turn of the new Thembaletu Substation, that will see an addition of 40 MVA to the George Municipality network.
- Equipping MeulRivier and Schaapkop Pump Stations with standby Generators.
- Upgrading of Streetlights on Beachfront Road in Herold’s Bay as well as additional Streetlights installed in Haarlem Main Road.

This year has had some low lights, where the directorate suffered significantly due to loss of excellent, critical and in some cases senior employees through demise and resignations. Resource constraints within the

directorate led to the inability to meet all of the maintenance requirements, thus creating a significant backlog. This maintenance backlog has been further negatively impacted by the increase in theft, vandalism and damage to Municipal Infrastructure costly millions of rands in replacement costs.

With all those challenges, the Electrotechnical Service team has been resilient and resolute in the efforts to deliver excellent service. In the last few months, the focus has been to fix the basics and capacitate the directorate as we lay a foundation to deliver excellent service to our beloved customers. I would further like to take this opportunity to wish all our residents, colleagues, Council a blessed and safe festive season.

## Finance CFO, Riaan Du Plessis

It has been a privilege for me to join the ranks of George Municipality from 1 August 2021.

I personally wish to thank all finance officials, councillors, and colleagues for welcoming me to the team and for your support since my appointment. In the few months that I have been here, it has become apparent that there is a committed team of officials that are prepared to go the extra mile to serve the citizens of George.

We have reached that time of the year when we need to take stock of our achievements, professional and personal. There have been many changes and

challenges this year, which included the municipal elections. Several excellent colleagues have either left or are soon leaving our service.

These officials’ years of diligent service to George Municipality is a testimony of commitment and we thank them and wish them well for the years ahead.

The municipality is currently in the process of the external audit and I want to thank all of our officials for assisting with the audit. As we reach the end of 2021, we need to spend quality time with our family and friends. I wish all my finance colleagues, a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year, may God protect you on your travels and keep you safe.



## Protection Services Director, Steven Erasmus

The Covid-19 pandemic not only stretched our resources and our resilience, but sadly and more importantly claimed many lives including that of our staff. Despite these challenges service delivery continued under difficult circumstances. A Joint Operations Centre was established to coordinate various service delivery-related matters and is still functioning and doing sterling work.

Instead of continuously questioning our current reality and think of what could have been, we can only fix our gaze on our Creator and draw strength from Him.

I wish to thank our staff for their commitment and hard work during an extremely challenging year and wish them, our councillors, everyone in the Administration as well as our citizens good health, a blessed Christmas, and a prosperous new year.





# Directorates – it’s a wrap! 2021

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**Civil Engineering Services**  
**Acting Director, Lionel Daniels**  
Firstly, my sincere thanks to all Civil Engineering Staff for their continuous assistance during a difficult time for this Directorate, especially before the Local Government Elections. I can always depend on the staff and

it is just a pleasure to work together. They make the work of Management easier because they are skilled and knowledgeable in their work.

The Directorate of Civil Engineering has concluded lengthy planning for the implementation of various large and technically complex projects that will commence with construction early in 2022.

These projects are key to ensuring the sustainability of service provision and accommodating growth and development. The critical personnel capacity is being systematically addressed and various key appointments have been made in the directorate, with more to follow in the next few months.

The Directorate has faced significant challenges with major water disruptions this year and which was exacerbated by loadshedding.

The patience and support of the entire community in George has been exceptional, and the Directorate can only apologise for water disruptions and the inconvenience suffered.

As Acting Director, I again want to thank the personnel in the water department who dedicated additional time to manage these crises while ensuring that service levels, in general, were maintained throughout the municipal area.

Load shedding seems to be projected to continue and has presented many new challenges. Planning is underway to manage these considerable impacts.

Weather has regrettably caused delays to the upgrade of Market Street, but the final product will bring about a significant improvement to the CBD and business owners with a welcome aesthetic improvement, and pedestrian facilities complying with universal accessibility principles.

The rainfall that George has experienced commenced soon after the spillway and dam wall construction was concluded, which has also meant that the final survey of the final raised dam level has not been possible (this requires that the historic dam level be at about 75% to allow survey access) and the final volume has not yet been surveyed accurately. The current new level is based on accurate information but must be verified by a formal survey to conclude on the Department Water and Sanitation dam registration process.

**Corporate Services Director, Siphiso James**

The past year has been very challenging, but despite many difficulties and loss, we have persevered under difficult circumstances. The Corporate Services Team pulled through and still managed to deliver services internally to the organisation and the public. I wish to thank our staff for their dedication, resourcefulness, willingness and hard work which helped us reach our goals.

Our general assistants were trained in the process of deep cleaning and disinfection in order to curb costs for the organisation. Those officials who were unable to continue in their usual positions were re-deployed to assist with the back scanning of records to migrate from hard copies to digital. The Human Resources Team provided and continue to provide excellent employee assistance during the Covid-19 pandemic.

I wish all staff and citizens a peaceful and joyous Christmas time. May your heart be filled with the peace and joy that Christmas represents.



The Garden Route Dam overflowed for the first time since its spillway had been raised in 2019. The award-winning bill-shaped design increased the dam’s overall capacity by 25% by raising the spillway by only 2.5m. Photo: Wessel van Heerden



## Innovative engineering wins the day as Garden Route Dam overflows

**George Municipality and the engineering community recently celebrated the success of the award-winning Garden Route Dam spillway as the dam overflowed for the first time since the spillway and dam wall was raised in 2019/20.**

George Municipality Civil Engineering Services Acting Director Lionel Daniels said the heavy rainfall and flash floods that occurred had understandably overshadowed the dam’s overflowing on the same day (22 November 2021), but it remained a significant milestone in the city’s long-term water security.

“There are many reasons we are celebrating this project including an increased capacity of 25% by raising the full supply level of the dam by only 2.5 metres. The ingenious duckbill-shaped spillway design improved the dam’s safety in a practical and cost-effective way that earned the designers, Zutari (formerly Aurecon), a win in the Technical Excellence category at the South African Institute of Civil Engineering (SAICE) Awards in November 2020.

“The design is relatively new in the engineering world, and as far as we

know is not being used in this way in South Africa. It was extensively researched and tested at the University of Tshwane and its shape is designed to slow down water flow using basic physics principles. The design is brilliant in its simplicity and it was a real victory to see the dam overflow and the spillway working so effectively,” said Mr Daniels.

The Garden Route Dam, situated just outside the north-east urban edge of George, is the main source of potable water for the city and its capacity had become a concern as the municipal area continued to grow exponentially since the early 2000s.

In addition, the Southern Cape had experienced two major droughts in seven years, which had been unheard of in this prolific all-year rainfall area. The dam recorded its lowest ever level of 16.9% in February 2010 and again dropped to 41,2% in September 2017.

The Garden Route Dam spillway and wall project was completed in January 2020 and increased the dam storage capacity by 25% from 10 million cubic metres to an estimated new capacity of 12,5 million cubic metres.

**Project details:**

The previous Garden Route spillway was 25m wide, which was extended to 80m by curving the spillway in the upstream direction.

The new spillway consists of a reinforced concrete cantilever structure, which is unusual for hydraulic structures of this type, as these are normally self-stable by their mass. To enhance the stability, the structure is provided with rockfill on the upstream side of the wall footing, in addition to rock anchors.

Although the full supply level (FSL) of the dam was raised by 2.5 m, due to the local terrain the tallest portion of the new spillway wall is 4.9 m tall. A total of 1,780 m3 of concrete was used (750 m3 mass concrete, 300 m3 for the walls, 390 m3 for the wall footing, and 340 m3 for the channel).

The main dam wall was also raised by 1.76m to prevent overtopping by placing earth fill on top of the existing embankment.

Selected material was placed as follows: general fill (12,500 m3), rip-rap (2,500 m3), filter sand (750 m3), and topsoil (2,050 m3).





# GO GEORGE DISABILITY RIGHTS AWARENESS MONTH: What is universal access?

**Universal access**  
“Universal access” (UA) is a familiar term in the sphere of disability and certainly a buzz word in the public transport industry, including the GO GEORGE bus service. If you don’t move in these circles, you might think that it refers to access to anywhere in the universe.

It is, however, important that every citizen should understand the term and how they fit into the picture and expectations for society to create and provide “universal access”.

Universal access refers to the ability of all people to have equal opportunity and access to a service or product from which they can benefit, regardless of their social class, ethnicity, ancestry as well as their age, gender and whether or not they have a disability. In this framework, the universal accessibility of public transport can be critical for different purposes such as commuting to work, joining in entertainment activities, or buying products and services.

Under South African law and in terms of international commitments that have been made, passengers with different ways of moving (children, young people, the elderly, people with disabilities, people carrying babies or shopping, pregnant women, etc.) must be able to use public transport services in comfort, safety, speed and capacity; in other words, with dignity.

## How is GO GEORGE implementing UA?

According to James Robb, GO GEORGE Manager, being universally accessible

is about much more than being able to get on the bus. “Most people know that we provide accessible boarding through the ramps and hoists on our buses, and that priority seats are reserved for passengers with special needs. However, we also need to consider the condition of the sidewalks that people have to use to get to the bus, the placing of shelters on narrow sidewalks and the space left for people using mobility devices.

“We have to consider the legibility of the bus stop sign and as a matter of fact, all our communication products, such as the font types, colour contrasts and descriptors of visual material on our website. Tactile paving at the bus stop communicates to passengers who are blind where to wait, at the same time not causing obstruction.

“We have to take into account the proximity of bus stops to pedestrian crossings, and in the future, we must look at the planning of our city to make sure people can easily access their destinations. We have to consider making public space safe, easy and pleasant to use, including contrasting colours on what we call ‘street furniture’ and wayfinding signage, to maximise visibility.

“Finally, we have to sensitise our service providers to be responsive and considerate. We have a very committed driver and customer care team due to an innovative training approach. Passengers must be able to experience improvements in the service and know that we will respond where we have got it

wrong. Behind the scenes, we are continually striving to adapt the way professional teams deliver services so that they implement improvements in a coordinated fashion, using universal design.

“Universal access is more complex than many people think, but it is a challenge that GO GEORGE gladly accepts and tackles with enthusiasm.”

Anyone interested to know more about universal access and how it is applied within the public transport industry, is welcome to contact GO GEORGE by phoning the Call Centre on 0800 044 044 or sending an email to [info@gogearge.org.za](mailto:info@gogearge.org.za).



George sidewalks are progressively being upgraded to be more accessible. Pedestrian crossings have kerb drops which are accessible to people with mobility impairments.



The minibus has been equipped with a hydraulic hoist giving access to passengers with mobility impairment.

## Legacy kids visit with Georgie!

It has become an institution at Legacy Centre in Denneoord that the GO GEORGE mascot Georgie will pay a visit during November, Disability Rights Awareness Month.

The happy youngsters with different kinds of challenges attending the centre excitedly compete for a selfie with their “friendly bus” friend and enjoy dancing and singing along with his merry tunes.

In between all the fun and laughter, important rules about safety in and around the buses were shared with the kids and judging by the way some eager beavers were prompting the presenter, the message had struck home before and stayed there.



Fun and laughter, singing and dancing, and of course ... photos with Georgie! That’s what a visit from GO GEORGE to Legacy Centre is all about.

## Disability Awareness for Touwsranten

George Municipality Gender and Disability subsection and APD (Association for Persons with Disabilities) raised awareness of what it means to be an inclusive society where the rights of persons with disabilities are upheld.

Ejustley Boshoff, Coordinator of the Gender and Disability subsection said the purpose of the outreach was not only to raise awareness about the rights of people with disabilities, but also to collect data. The group used the outreach to sensitize the children about disability matters, a positive self-image, sexuality and more.



Ejustley Boshoff speaks to young children about disability issues.



# Integrated approach to keep CBD clean and safe

George Municipality Protection and Community Services directorates have stepped up operations in the central business district to address impacts associated with vagrancy, homelessness, and illegal trading. Ongoing efforts include cooperation from other stakeholders including national and local government departments, SAPS, NGOs, welfare organisations, and local business.

George Acting Municipal Manager Dr Michele Gratz said the state of the CBD was important for the socio-economic well-being of the city. "The municipality's mandate for law enforcement and social services are limited as the bulk of these functions reside with SAPS and the national Department of Social Development. Municipal departments, however, have longstanding relationships with all relevant stakeholders and work with them continuously to collectively address these complex issues," said Dr Gratz.

George Municipality Acting Director Protection Services Vernon Petersen said it had recently restructured its shift system to extend patrolling hours for Law Enforcement and Anti-Land Invasion officers beyond normal working hours to increase visibility during times when homeless people settle in for the night and vagrants move in.

Informal trading on sidewalks in the CBD is legislated, including an annual permit system, and Law Enforcement patrols there

every weekday to ensure compliance to municipal bylaws.

"Several street cleaning teams are focussed on the CBD and main arterials into the city while refuse removal regularly empty litter bins and identify possible illegal dumping spots for clearing and preventative actions."

"The Community Development department established a People Living on the Streets Committee in 2018 to address the many factors associated with vagrancy and the homeless. The committee meets monthly and includes representatives from George Municipality Community Services departments, SAPS, Kids Stop (street children), Cremhog (homeless adults), and national Departments of Social Development, Health, Labour and Internal Affairs.

Community Development keeps a register of homeless people as a starting point to the possible reintroduction into society where possible. The municipal department also has a monthly outreach at night to identify new people or those who had returned to the streets after being reunited with family or society.

People and organisations interested in getting involved in long-term, sustainable, holistic solutions to issues surrounding the homeless, vagrancy and illegal trading are invited to contact Community Development on 044 802 2000 during office hours.



At the sod turning ceremony of the new Thembaletu 66 kV substation, back from left to right: Deon Esterhuysen (George Municipality), Chris Spies (George Municipality), Alwyn Huisamen (VE Reticulation), Electrotechnical Services Portfolio Councillor Nosicelo Mbete, Jurgens Bosman (VE Reticulation), Executive Mayor Alderman Leon van Wyk, Joubert Theart (Zutari) and Danie de Vries (BDE Consulting), and front from left are George Municipality Electrotechnical Services Director Bongani Mandla and Kevin Grunewald (BDE Consulting).

## Thembaletu 66kV

George Municipality held a sod-turning ceremony in early October, to signal the beginning of construction of a 66/11 kV 40 MVA electrical substation in Thembaletu, one of the largest of its kind in the Southern Cape and a major bulk infrastructure milestone for the city.

The new substation would alleviate load on the substations that were currently supplying Thembaletu and therefore served as an important catalyst for investment funding from both the state and business.

George Municipality is a key growth area for many investors, but it requires certain very expensive bulk infrastructure to support the growth. The allocation of supportive funding from the national Department of Mineral Resources and Energy to build this substation signals trust in the local authority to facilitate growth and service delivery. In turn, the municipality can provide the kind of infrastructure required for outside manufacturers and business to invest and for housing supportive facilities to be developed across the municipal area.

Municipality Director Electrotechnical Services Bungani Mandla said the completed Thembaletu substation would be one of the largest 66/11 kV

substations in the Southern Cape. "It will provide power to Thembaletu and other suburbs east of the N2 that are currently supplied from substations across the highway. The overall impact on the city's grid will be adequate capacity for a growing city and more reliable supply to especially the eastern areas," said Mr Mandla.

Construction on the Thembaletu 66kV substation commences this month (October 2021) and will run across three financial years. The first phase, costing about R30-million, is funded two thirds by the municipality and the rest by the Integrated National Electrification Programme grant (INEP) of the national Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. The entire project is costed at an estimated R58 million.

The substation's construction consists mostly of the manufacturing, supply and installation of 11 kV and 66 kV equipment, two new 66/11 kV 20MVA power transformers and ancillary protection and control equipment.

The first phase of the substation, which will include the commissioning of the 66 kV yard, first power transformer and 11 kV switchgear, is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2023.

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Ald Van Wyk watch an elated Ncumisa Ntsendwana switch on her electricity.

## Short Term Urgent Electrification projects - Ten homes for Blondi Electrified

The electrification of 10 homes in Blondi Informal Settlement is the second of the three Short Term Urgent Electrification projects that were prioritized by Council (March 2021) in terms of the R800 000 available budget for the 2020/21 Financial year.

The cost per structure for electrification is between R10 000 - R13 000 which includes a prepaid meter. Each resident received their own electrical prepaid

meter, in their own name with power supply of 40 amps.

Nandipha Botman and her brother Xolani Mguzula were incredibly happy at the difference this would make in their day to day lives. "This will make our lives a little easier. The children will be coming in the holidays.

"They can now do their schoolwork and we will now be able to cook. It just makes everything so much safer," said Mguzulu.



Representatives from Landmark Foundation and LGE Waste, George Municipality, staff from Kwakhanya, Mzomhle, Masibambane, Illingelethu and Isiseko Creches.

## Recycling training for Municipal creches and Food garden coordinators

The Community Development Food Gardens and Creches subsection, in partnership with Landmark Foundation and LGE Waste provided recycling training to ten municipal creche employees and ten Food Garden Co-ordinators recently. The two training sessions were recently held at the Illingulethu creche in Thembaletu and at Rosedale Educare

According to Allen Paulse, Director: Community Services, during the training, creche employees were taught alternative ways to manage their refuse.

Notes were provided on what can be recycled and what not. All the creches that participated were registered in the Landmark Foundation's Creches Recycling programme and also received resources which they can use to assist them on their recycling journey. All staff were also encouraged to involve the learners in the process as much as possible.

Once the creches have begun their recycling programme successfully, further training with regards to Food Gardens will also take place. Landmark foundation will conduct the gardening training as well.



Representatives from Landmark Foundation, George Municipality and principals from Golden Valley, Kekkel en Kraai, Pophuis, Rosedale Nursery and Rosedale Educare.



# George blazes a trail - First non-metro ever to receive BFI Funding

George Municipality has successfully applied for a Budget Facility for Infrastructure funding (“BFI”), the first non-metro municipality to ever receive such a grant in South Africa. The overall funding required for the project is R1.197 billion, to be formally gazetted, and which will be provided over the next forty (40) months for the full phases of the Potable Water Security and Remedial Works projects.

The BFI funding is allocated to George Municipality through the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant managed by the Department of Water and Sanitation. Acting Municipal Manager Dr Michele Gratz said that the impact of this funding will be immense for George and the 212 120 residents we service.

“The Department of Water and Sanitation in a meeting noted that George Municipality is extremely privileged and a trailblazer being the first B-municipality to receive such a grant.

Out of a total of 17 applicants which included government departments, George Local Municipality was the only approved application.”The potable Water Security and Remedial Works projects include a new sludge treatment plant; new 20 Ml/d Water Treatment Works (“WTW”) Plant upgrade; refurbishment of the existing sludge discharge system; upgrade of Garden Route Dam outlet supply; new generator for Garden Route Dam pump station to ease supply of raw water during power failures; new 30Ml Balancing Dam and pipeline to New Water Treatment Plant; rehabilitation of Old water treatment works; replacement for Kaaimans River Pump station pumps; new Pacaltsdorp (West) Reservoir; new Pacaltsdorp (East) Reservoir, Tower and pump station; new Thembaletu (West) Reservoir and Pump station and a new Thembaletu (East) Reservoir, Tower and pump station.

Executive Mayor Leon van Wyk made the announcement of the successful application in the Ordinary Council of

Friday 26th November during the tabling of the Adjustment Budget 2021/22. “We are grateful for the show of National Treasury’s faith in the municipality as a responsible recipient of grant allocation funds and are committed to provide services in line with the city’s ongoing needs as one of the fastest growing municipalities in the country.

“This is a major milestone project for the sustainability of our city that will stimulate housing and economic development that had to be halted in recent years as bulk water and sanitation infrastructure has reached capacity. The project will also eradicate the current sludge spillage in municipality’s river and dam water sources, in turn, improving the water quality of the municipality. Water security is a key component of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2019 – 2021 (MTSF) which calls for increased investment in water infrastructure funded by both the public and private sector. Water security is required to improve the quality and amount of investment to support growth and job creation.”

This project is aligned with the South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan specifically in relation to investment in infrastructure , employment creation and support of tourism recovery and growth by a) maintaining the planned level of investment in the public sector b) ensuring that local communities particularly historically marginalised communities are removed from the cycle of under-development and c) strengthening the production capacity of the economy.

“The Council of George can rightly be proud of the team of senior management and officials who put together this funding application at short notice and the subsequent approval is a testament to the skilled and innovative Civil Engineering Services planning staff we have in George,” said Executive Mayor Leon Van Wyk.

The BFI funding will extend the water treatment capacity and will be



implemented in two phases over three years (2022 – 2025): Phase 1 and 2 is an additional 20 Mℓ/day extension to the New George WTW and Phase 3 is an additional 30 Mℓ raw water balancing dam at the New George WTW.

The first allocation approved of the total amount of R1.197 billion, is R81.345 million and this amount was included in the 2021/22 Adjustments Budget tabled at the Ordinary Council of Friday 26th November.

The municipality has started the procurement processes for the development of major drinking water infrastructure projects in anticipation of national funding over the next few years.

The BFI was introduced in 2016 to cater for large strategic infrastructure projects.

It is well-known that there is widespread concern about the state of water and waste-water infrastructure in South Africa and that significant amounts of funding will be required to rehabilitate this infrastructure within municipalities.

The George management team recognised that the capital expenditure required for this project would be significant and place enormous strain on the municipality’s financial resources. The initiative was taken to approach National Treasury to search for a solution.

This approach culminated in the application being launched. In being awarded the BFI facility, George becomes the flag-bearer among non-metro municipalities to lead the restoration of water treatment as well as waste-water facilities in the country.

# Rosedale Jamboree – taking services to the people

George Municipality held a Jamboree at the Rosedale Community Centre/Area Office in October to bring services closer to the people of Rosedale.

The departments from George Municipality represented were Human Settlements, Community Development, Cleansing, Libraries, Civil Engineering (water, sewage and roads), Finance, Electrotechnical Services and GO GEORGE. They had tables or stalls at the venue where they answered the public’s questions, gave information and helped with complaints.

According to Ms Lauren Waring, Acting Director Human Settlements. "The Rosedale area was chosen for this jamboree because there is a new housing development, which usually generates many challenges, so we decided instead of everyone having to come to town, let's take the services to the people.

"It was a great success. We will initially have these

jamborees at new housing developments across the municipal area and then arrange jamborees in other areas.”

Waring said the municipality did consumer education with people moving into new houses, but people still had questions or challenges afterwards.

“Once you are in a new home, it comes with responsibilities like electricity and other services. People must know how to deal with their accounts, what is the owner’s responsibility and what is the municipality’s responsibility.

Human Settlement officials assisted the community



with mostly water and roof leakages, general housing faults, ownership queries, waiting list applications and more.

Electrotechnical Services assisted with electrical

complaints while Finance assisted with Indigent applications, and more.

Cleansing informed the public about the dangers of illegal dumping and how to deal with hazardous waste.

Rachel Williams, Manager George Library, said she and her team promoted reading that made people relax.

"In October we focus on mental health and encourage adults and

children alike to read fiction if they struggle with any mental related issues, insomnia etc. Covid-19 has a negative emotional effect on most people and this is how the libraries can assist our communities."



Mayor Leon van Wyk holds a healthy cabbage from one of the food gardens that is now under the guidance of the Community Development section of the Municipality. From left are Lizel Arnold, Food Garden coordinator: Rosedale, Janine Adams, Community Development, Bernedene Afrika, Food Garden Coordinator: Conville and Willbedine Jordaan, Community Development.

LEFT: Rachel Williams and Malibongwe Luyenge from George Library Services with Libby, (green mascot). In front are Sandy Claassen (14) from Pacaltsdorp High School, Elmar Heyens (4) and Sihle Papali (13) from Pacaltsdorp Primary School interested what in the Library stall had to offer.



# THINGS TO DO IN GEORGE, WILDERNESS & UNIONDALE



## FESTIVE SEASON EVENTS

**02-05 Dec** George Tens, Outeniqua Park  
**02-19 Dec** Rapunzel - The Pantomime, Oakhurst Insurance Arts Theatre  
**03 Dec** Barry Hilton, Bush Lapa  
**08 Dec** Danie Reenwolf (Van Spoegwolf), Bush Lapa  
**10 Dec** Matthew Mole, Bush Lapa  
**10 Dec** Nightlife & Night Market, Garden Route Botanical Gardens  
**10-22 Dec** Kersmark, NG Moederkerk  
**11 Dec** Early B, Bush Lapa  
**11 Dec** Bianca Buitendag Girls Social Surf  
**12 Dec** Wesso Concert, Garden Route Botanical Gardens  
**16-22 Dec** Boerevintage Gift Market, Redberry Farm  
**17 Dec** Jack Parow, Bush Lapa  
**18 Dec** Joshua Na Die Reen, Cornerstone Creek  
**18 Dec** Albert Frost Live, Houtbosch Wines & Craft Beer  
**19 Dec** Die Heuwels Fantasties, Bush Lapa  
**19 Dec** Cinema de la Luna, Wilderness Commonage Lawn  
**20 Dec** US Kids Garden Route Local Tour, Kingswood Golf Estate  
**20 Dec** Demi-Lee Moore, Bush Lapa  
**20-21 Dec** Art in the Park, Cornerstone Creek  
**21 Dec** Carols by Candlelight, Redberry Farm  
**21 Dec** Elandre, Bush Lapa  
**22 Dec** House Concert, Cornerstone Creek  
**22 Dec** Jakkie Louw, Bush Lapa  
**22 Dec** Bottomless Coffee Band, Cornerstone Creek  
**23 Dec** Fatman, Bush Lapa  
**27 Dec** Pacaltsdorp Night Race  
**27-28 Dec** Juan Boucher, Bush Lapa  
**28 Dec** Jesse Clegg Live, Fancourt  
**29 Dec** Nightlife & Night Market, Garden Route Botanical Gardens  
**29 Dec** Francois Van Coke, Bush Lapa  
**30 Dec** Jo Black, Bush Lapa  
**02 Jan** Prime Circle, Cornerstone Creek  
**03 Jan** Jesse Clegg, Cornerstone Creek  
**08 Jan** Red Men Trail Run, Herold Wines



## WINE, FOOD AND PREMIER PRODUCE

From fine dining to al fresco casual meals, there is a restaurant for every appetite. Enjoy oyster shucking, coffee, wine and craft beer tasting and pairing experiences. Visit farm stalls, the Saturday market and learn a thing or two at a culinary cooking class.



## OUTDOOR ADVENTURES AND FAMILY FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

Make time to make memories this holiday. You won't be sorry after spending a day canyoning through the magnificent Kaaimans gorge, after taking a leisurely boat ride down the Touw River or once you've explored the forest and farmlands on horseback. These are the memories that will last you, your family and friends a lifetime.

**Options include:** Paragliding • Canoeing / Kayaking • Canyoning • Abseiling • Rock Climbing • e-Bikes • Horse Riding • Segway • Stand Up Paddle Boarding (SUP) • Helicopter Flips • Quad Biking • Tree Top Aerial Obstacle Courses • Power Van • Scenic Drives • Strawberry Picking • Child Friendly Farm Activities • Trampoline Park • Go Cart Track • Indoor Play Centres • Lake and River Boat Rides



## FOR THE SPORTY

The area's natural environment lends itself to a range of active, outdoor sports and activities, which can be enjoyed solo or with a professional guide. There are over 2,000km of trails for trail running, hiking and mountain biking. Popular hiking routes include the Pepsi Pools, Kingfisher trail, Uniondale fort, George peak and the railway line to Toorwater gorge. Golfers can enjoy a round at several clubs in the George area, which include highly ranked championship courses. Don a wetsuit and learn to surf at renowned Victoria Bay with local surf schools. Uniondale's open plains and passes are popular for 4x4 enthusiasts en route to the iconic Prince Alfred Pass.



## REJUVENATING NATURE

Soak up the sun at one of George's warm, Indian Ocean beaches, which have recently been awarded 3 Blue Flags with full status at Wilderness beach and pilot status at Victoria Bay and Herolds Bay. The Map of Africa and Dolphin's Point are iconic viewpoints where you can snap a gorgeous photo. Enjoy the range of water activities, picnic spots, fishing and bird-watching opportunities in our natural paradise—from the Kaaimans and Touw Rivers to the Garden Route National Park, Woodville Big Tree, Island Lake and the Garden Route Botanical Gardens.



## INSPIRING ART, CULTURE & HISTORY

For a true cultural experience, book a night with Dine with a Local. Discover history at one of George's museums, or visit historical points of interest on a guided tour to some of the oldest sites. Did you know that Uniondale has four Anglo Boer War forts dating back to 1899 and San rock art is still visible today in both Uniondale and Herold. There are a multitude of galleries across the destination, as well as an art meander in Wilderness. And you can never go wrong when purchasing a festive season handmade pottery gift from iconic Wonki Ware.



## VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES

Get in touch with our tourism offices for more information and a comprehensive list of things to do, restaurants and places to stay.  
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