



Mayoral Inauguration 2024

Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis was officially inaugurated as the new Mayor for George on 21 June 2024. "We can only make George Municipality the place we want it to be if we do this together. So, as we move our secondary city into a new direction, I want all of you to know that my primary goal is that we work together to get things done for the betterment of all residents within George Municipality." Seen here on the day with members of her new Mayoral Committee from left: MMC for Electro-Technical Services Donovan Gultig, MMC for Human Resources Nosicelo Mbete, Chief Whip Theresa Jeyi, MMC for Civil Engineering Services Brown Johnson, MMC for Community Safety Brendon Adams, Ald Von Brandis, MMC for Human Settlements Jean Safers, MMC for Community Development Melvin Roelfse, MMC for Community Services Marchell Kleynhans, MMC for Planning and Development Marlene Barnardt and MMC for Financial Services Marais Kruger.

Big splash for "George Naturally" Brand

George Tourism proudly launched its new concept, "George Naturally," at a well-attended Business Chamber meeting in August. The chilly evening drew a large crowd and featured a keynote address by Dr. Ivan Meyer, Western Cape MEC for Agriculture, Economic Development, and Tourism.

Joan Shaw, Tourism Manager, introduced the "George Naturally" concept, explaining that in 2018, the George Tourism Office had been permitted to develop a destination logo separate from the George Municipality's branding, which focused on Wilderness, George, and Uniondale Tourism. Over time, however, there was a recognized need for a more inspirational logo that captures the essence of the destination rather than just naming its main hubs. The aesthetic required an upgrade to represent a destination brand worthy of George's unique appeal.

"Many people think of George primarily as a business hub," Shaw explained, "but few immediately think of the exquisite

natural environment that offers a natural playground for residents and visitors alike.

This realization led to the birth of the 'George Naturally' concept. We are extremely proud that this concept was both conceived and designed locally."

The "George Naturally" brand is a dual-purpose concept. On one hand, it describes the pristine environment that the area is known for; on the other, it is a clever play on words, positioning George as the natural choice for business, pleasure, and lifestyle.

The brand encompasses every sight, activity, and offering available in the greater George area (including Wilderness, Uniondale and other small villages), highlighting not only its natural beauty but also the world-class services and facilities available to residents and visitors.

Marlene Barnardt, MMC for Planning and Development, expressed her enthusiasm for the new branding. "I believe it epitomizes everything that George and its surroundings have to offer—naturally. The



Attending the launch of the "George Naturally" Brand are from left MMC Corporate Services Nosicelo Mbete, Tourism Manager Joan Shaw, MMC Finance Marais Kruger, MEC for Agriculture, Economic Development, and Tourism Dr Ivan Meyer, Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis, MMC Planning and Development (Tourism) Marlene Barnardt, MMC Civil Engineering Brown Johnson, MMC Community Development Melvin Roelfse and Chief Whip Teresa Jeyi.

play on words is clever, and let's hope this inspires people to make George their first choice for a holiday destination, business location, or relocation—naturally."

"George Naturally" represents not just

a brand, but a new chapter for George Tourism, one that highlights the natural beauty, business opportunities, and exceptional lifestyle that the area has to offer.



Dr Ivan Meyer, Minister of Agriculture, Apostle Abe De Celly (a beneficiary on the day), Cllr Melvin Roelfse, MMC of Community Development, Ald Jackie von Brandis, Cllr Marchell Kleynhans, MMC of Community Services, Mayor Andrew Stroebe from Garden Route District Municipality, Dr Mogale Sebope, Head of the Department of Agriculture and Julian Williams from South African Breweries stand with the food that was handed to beneficiaries on the day.

World Food Day Celebration

Uniondale Showground buzzed with activity on Friday 11 October, as the Western Cape Department of Agriculture hosted an early celebration of World Food Day, officially recognized on October 16. The event highlighted George Municipality's efforts to combat hunger and improve access to nutrition for vulnerable residents.

During her address, Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis emphasised the support given to 117 nutritional centres,

including six in Uniondale, as well as community food gardens aimed at sustainable food sources. Minister Ivan Meyer was thanked for his contributions to agriculture, tourism, and economic development.

Plans for a pilot project to establish community food gardens in areas affected by illegal dumping were also announced, showcasing proactive efforts to address local challenges. Food parcels were handed over to Early Childhood Development centres, nutritional centres and churches.

Update on BFI Water Projects

George Municipality received a Budget Facility for Infrastructure Funding (BFI) grant to the value of R1.115 billion from National Treasury in the 2021/22 financial year and the BFI project with its various project components, has shown significant progress and expenditure up to the first quarter of the 2024/25 financial year. The full BFI project is planned to be completed by November 2025.

George Municipality currently provides water services to over 294 942 residents from 85 931 households across 28 wards including the coastal areas of Kleinkrantz, Wilderness, Victoria Bay, Herold's Bay and Gwaing in the city of George area as per STATSSA 2022.

The objectives of the project are to ensure adequate potable water supply to meet the demand of the current population and to provide security for future development, both social and economic, as well as to reduce pollution of certain main water courses.

The project consists of 12 components, some of which will be executed in more than one construction phase.

COMPONENT 1 AND 2

The 20 Mℓ/day (20 million litres per day) extension to the New Water Treatment Works (New WTW) and the new WTW Residuals Treatment facility are components 1 and 2 of the project. The completion of this project will significantly enhance the purified water treatment capacity of the Municipality to a total daily production capacity of 60 Mℓ/d. It will also eliminate the current problematic practise of discharging residuals (settled "sludge") into the sewer system by means of the new WTW Residuals Treatment facility, which will effectively treat it to produce dry mass that will be disposed of at an appropriate solid waste disposal site.

Status: The construction of the first contract, valued at R284 million, for the civil engineering works is scheduled for completion by December 2024. The progress status of construction and installation of the mechanical, electrical and instrumentation (MEI) works to the value of R217 million, is at 85% and scheduled for completion by early 2025. It will be thoroughly tested through a series of trial operational sessions in order to ensure that the purified water will be in full compliance with the required standards, before it will be supplied to the residents.

COMPONENT 3

The upgrade of three sewer pumpstations, being Eden, Meul and Schaapkop Pumpstations, will improve the long-term capacity and reliability of the aged pump stations.

Status: Construction of the first phase has reached completion at the Meul and Eden Pump Stations

- Phase 1: The first phase of the upgrading and refurbishment of the Meul Sewage Pumpstation was completed in June 2023, which inter-alia included a new standby generator and motor control centre. This



Kaaimans River Pumpstation

is also the case for the new motor control centre at the Eden Sewage Pumpstation.

- Phase 2: The construction of a sewer pipeline at the Meul Pumpstation has been completed and the Contractor to which the Mechanical and Electrical works has been awarded, is currently finalising detailed workshop drawings and manufacturing the equipment.

At the Eden pumpstation the bulk earthworks for the civil works are underway. The Mechanical and Electrical works contract has been awarded and will commence late October 2024. At the Schaapkop pumpstation the bulk earthworks and retaining walls are progressing well. The progress of the Mechanical and Electrical works is at 4%, with finalising of detailed workshop drawings and manufacturing of equipment being done. A third part of the works consist of a pipe bridge across the river, for which environmental and geotechnical investigations are being done.

COMPONENT 4

The upgrading of the Garden Route Dam Outlet and Supply project includes the replacement of the existing 600 mm diameter raw water pipeline from the intake tower at the Garden Route Dam to the raw water pumpstations, with a new 800 mm diameter stainless steel pipeline and a section consisting of a 900 mm diameter HDPE pipe, to accommodate a higher flowrate in accordance with the future raw water flow requirements. The project also includes upgrading of a section of the pump pipeline from one of the raw water pumpstations to improve flow and reduce risk of pipe failures.

Status: The construction contract was awarded for an amount of R 34.2 million in May 2023. Construction progress is currently at 90%. The estimated completion date for the project is November 2024.

COMPONENT 5 - COMPLETED

Two 1250 kVA generators have been installed at the Garden Route Dam raw water pumpstation. These generators are ensuring that during any other power outage, raw



Thembaletu East Tower shaft

water can continue to be pumped uninterrupted to the Water Treatment Works for processing for drinking water supply.

Status: The generators automatically start and can operate during load-shedding.

COMPONENT 6

An additional 40 million litre (40 Mℓ) raw water storage and balancing dam is being constructed, as well as a 340m long 800mm diameter raw water outlet pipeline and a 1000mm diameter raw water pump main extension, to secure sufficient raw water storage capacity to supply the 20Mℓ/day extension to the Water Treatment Works and the existing two treatment plants.

The new raw water dam will supplement the existing storage dams that provide raw water to the two water treatment plants.

Status: The project construction contract was awarded for an amount of R 93,1 million in December 2023. Construction progress is currently at 38%, with the key activities being the excavation of the dam, placing, shaping and compacting the spoil material and pipe laying. The estimated completion date for the project is August 2025.

COMPONENT 7 - COMPLETED

The rehabilitation of the Old Water Treatment Works, located at 9th Avenue Denneoord consisted of the refurbishment of the existing treatment modules.

COMPONENT 8

Refurbishment of the Kaaimans River Pumpstation equipment included the installation of six (6) new robust pumps in the sump in the river, a strainer system and six new high pressure pumps and included the replacement of the electrical control equipment. The Kaaimans Pumpstation discharges into the Garden Route Dam and contributes significantly to the George raw water resource requirements. It operates fully automated and the operational personnel will monitor it daily through the SCADA telemetry system.

Status: The project construction contract was awarded for an amount of R 16.5 million in June 2023. Construction progress is currently at 90%, with the main scope of work completed and the pumpstation undergoing trial operations since mid September 2024. The estimated completion date for the project is November 2024.

COMPONENT 9

The new 14,5 Mℓ Pacaltsdorp West Reservoir and Pumpstation will address



20 Mld WTW Chemicals Silos

the current inadequate emergency and balancing potable water storage and provide adequate water security for the medium term future developments in the western area of Pacaltsdorp.

Status: The project construction contract was awarded for an amount of R 106,9 million in January 2024. Construction commenced on site in May 2024 after receiving all statutory approvals. Construction progress is currently at 32%. The estimated completion date for the project is November 2025.

COMPONENT 10

The new 3 Mℓ Pacaltsdorp East Reservoir, 300 kl Tower and pumpstation will address the inadequate emergency and balancing potable water storage in the eastern area of Pacaltsdorp.

Status: The project construction contract was awarded for an amount of R 59,9 million in December 2023. Construction commenced on site in May 2024 after receiving all statutory approvals. Construction progress is currently at 38%. The estimated completion date for the project is July 2025.

COMPONENT 11

A new pumpstation and control valves will be provided at the existing Thembaletu West Reservoir and Tower and an existing bulk supply pipeline will be upgraded to ensure adequate potable water storage and increased security of potable water supply to the western area of Thembaletu, as well as provide capacity to meet future development water demands.

Status: Two construction contracts were awarded for a total amount of R 23,9 million on December 2023 and March 2024. Construction commenced on site in May 2024 after receiving all statutory approvals. Construction progress is currently at 80% and 40% for the respective contracts. The estimated completion date for the project is June 2025.

COMPONENT 12

A new 8 Mℓ Thembaletu East Reservoir, 1000 kl Tower and Pumpstation will be provided to ensure adequate potable water storage and increased security of potable water supply to the eastern area of Thembaletu, as well as provide capacity to meet future development water demands.

Status: The project construction contract was awarded for an amount of R 106,5 million February 2023. Construction commenced on site in April 2024. Construction progress is currently at 41%. The estimated completion date for the project is June 2025.



WTW New Clean Water Pumps

GEORGE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY COUNCILLORS



Ald Jackie von Brandis, Executive Mayor, Ward 26 (DA)



Cllr Raybin Figland, Executive Deputy Mayor PR (DA)



Cllr Sean Snyman, Speaker, Ward 28 (DA)



Cllr Theresa Jeyi, Chief Whip, Ward 16 (DA)



Cllr Brendon Adams, MMC Community Safety, Ward 17 (DA)



Cllr Marlene Barnardt, MMC Planning and Development, Ward 4 (DA)



Cllr Johan Du Toit, MMC Corporate Services, PR (ACDP)



Cllr Donovan Gultig, MMC Electro-Technical Services, Ward 18 (DA)



Cllr Brown Johnson, MMC Civil Engineering Services, Ward 23 (DA)



Cllr Marchell Kleynhans, MMC Community Services, Ward 27 (DA)



Cllr Marais Kruger, MMC Financial Services, Ward 22 (DA)



Cllr Nosicelo Mbete, MMC Human Resources, PR (DA)



Cllr Melvin Roelfse, MMC Community Development, Ward 14 (DA)



Cllr Jean Safers, MMC Human Settlements, Ward 1 (DA)



Cllr Daniel Cronje, Ward 2 (DA)



Cllr Erika Brown, Ward 3 (DA)



Cllr Monique Simmers, Ward 5 (DA)



Cllr Jayzee Jantjies, Ward 6 (DA)



Cllr Vulindlela Mruqhli, Ward 7 (ANC)



Cllr Samuel Vorster, Ward 8 (PA)



Cllr Thembinkosi Lento, Ward 9 (ANC)



Cllr Zukile Gom, Ward 10 (ANC)



Cllr Sifiso Ntondini, Ward 11 (ANC)



Cllr Eric Mdaka, Ward 12 (ANC)



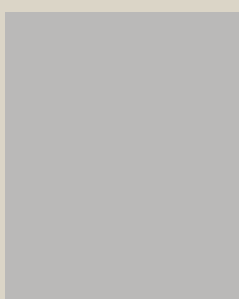
Cllr Simphiwe Toto, Ward 13 (ANC)



Cllr Bonisile Hani, Ward 15 (ANC)



Ald Iona Kritzinger, Ward 19 (DA)



Cllr Rita Gregory, Ward 20 (PA)



Cllr Siphelo Manxele, Ward 21 (ANC)



Cllr Justin Fry, Chairperson GIPTN S79, Ward 24 (DA)



Cllr Jarques Esau, Ward 25 (ANC)



Cllr Ebrahim America, PR (DA)



Cllr Edmund Bussack, PR (PBI)



Cllr Vivian Desmond Carolus, PR (PBI)



Cllr Charlotte Clarke, PR (DA)



Cllr Darryl Coeries, PR (PBI)



Cllr Enrico Figland, PR (VF+)



Cllr Morton Gericke, PR (PBI)



Cllr Maria Greeff, PR (PBI)



Cllr Marelna Gultig, PR (DA)



Cllr Chantell Kyd, PR (GOOD)



Cllr Deon Leminie, PR (EFF)



Cllr Khayaletu Lose, PR (DA)



Cllr Rosa Louw, Chairperson MPAC S79, PR (GOOD)



Cllr Given Masase, PR (DA)



Cllr Faith Mdaka, PR (ANC)



Cllr Christiaan Neethling, PR (VF+)



Cllr Gert Niehaus, PR (VF+)



Cllr Pheliswa Qampi, PR (EFF)



Cllr Thandiswa Qatana, PR (DA)



Cllr Sedric Smart, PR (PA)



Cllr Johan Stander, PR (DA)



Ald Gert Van Niekerk, PR (VF+)



Cllr Roxaan Vorster, PR (GOOD)



Cllr Regina Windwaai, PR (DA)



George Municipality Unveils Ilisolethu Precinct

George Municipality is pleased to announce the Thembalethu Node Development Project to create a vibrant and sustainable community hub in Thembalethu. This initiative branded "Ilisolethu" (which means, "Our Eye", in IsiXhosa), aims to attract new investments and stimulate economic growth in the precinct area along Nelson Mandela Boulevard (NMB), including the Thembalethu Central Business District (CBD).

In partnership with National Treasury, George Municipality has initiated the Thembalethu Node 1 Development Project to attract new investments and stimulate economic activity in the area.

The Ilisolethu precinct includes the following eleven projects:

PROJECT 1: Nelson Mandela Boulevard Multi-Purpose Identity Route

This project aims to redesign and upgrade Nelson Mandela Boulevard to improve traffic mobility and support public transport. It will also create a pedestrian-priority space, support Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMME) traders, and increase open spaces through pocket parks.

PROJECT 2: Ilisolethu Interchange Gateway Development

This development will provide economic opportunities through factory outlets and add residential options, creating a mixed-use, live-work-play node. High-density residential development opportunities will also be created.

PROJECT 3: Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Village

The project aims to create a high-density, mixed-use activity core supporting economic opportunities and housing for working-class adults and students.

PROJECT 4: Dlabs, SafeHub Facility and Call Centre (Old Hospital / Clinic)

This precinct will address community needs through community-based solutions, including the establishment of a Safe Hub in partnership with the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) and Amandla. The Dlabs facility will also link to the development of sports initiatives and will include the construction of an artificial turf soccer field and sport-support facility on the Thembalethu Sports field as part of Project 7.

PROJECT 5: Inkubeko (Embark in Knowledge) Youth and Science Centre Extension

The Centre plans to expand its services on additional Council land to include science and educational programs, additional classrooms, a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) laboratory and an exhibition centre.

PROJECT 6: SMME (Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises) and Recycling Hub

This project will develop a trading space for trade in the vehicle industry and urban manufacturing and service trades, incorporating a recycling facility.

PROJECT 7: Park Run and Trim Park Recreation Route

The recreation route will integrate the area through a 5km recreational route for Park Run events, supporting a weekend market facility, upgrading of the existing sports field and multifunctional public open space.

PROJECT 8: NMB Multi-Purpose Public Open Spaces

This project aims to formalise two areas zoned for open space purposes into active parks and community spaces, and to redevelop encroaching informal settlement areas into micro-flat developments.

PROJECT 9: NMB Sports Node

The sports node relates to an undeveloped section of land along Nelson Mandela Boulevard and the development intent is to provide additional sports and recreational facilities, supporting community services and SMME trading facilities.

PROJECT 10: NMB SMME Trading Areas

This project will establish integrated and well-designed trading spaces, supporting the livelihoods of local traders.

PROJECT 11: Multimodal Transport and Social Cluster

The cluster will serve as a concentration point for social and community services, integrating non-motorized- and public transport modes within the sub-precinct design

The George Municipality secured funding from the National Treasury through the Neighbourhood Development Partnership Programme to initiate the technical investigation stage.

The project aims to facilitate economic



Photographed at the new gate and fence of Thembalethu Sports Stadium are from left: Granville Campher (Manager Sport Development in the George Municipality); Melvin Roelfse (MMC for Community Development); Lynette Groenewald (Senior Spatial Planner); Councillor Simphiwe Toto (Ward 13 in Thembalethu); Executive Mayor Jackie Von Brandis; Councillor Thandiswa Qatana; Marchelle Kleynhans (MMC for Community Services: Parks, Refuse and Environment) and Henko Lourens (Spatial Planner). The NDP Ilisolethu Framework identified the upgrading of the sports field (Project 7) as part of the recreation route project. The new fence includes a motorised vehicle access gate and two pedestrian gates to ensure sufficient, controlled sports field access. This project cost R2.1 m, which forms part of the R74 million committed thus far to the Ilisolethu Precinct by the investment partners of the Municipality - including the Development Bank of South Africa and the National Treasury.



Ald Jackie von Brandis tested out the new gym trim equipment installed at the Thembalethu sportsfield with members of her Mayoral Committee and officials. The outdoor gym equipment was installed in June at a cost of R453 200 and forms a part of the R74 million committed thus far to the Ilisolethu Precinct by the investment partners of the Municipality.

opportunities that are inclusive, create high-quality public spaces, and link funders to catalytic projects that will benefit Thembalethu residents and entrepreneurs. Funding for implementation will be sourced from various tiers of government and from private sector partners.

The aim is to roll out the project over a 5-year period, subject to the availability of funding and commitment from investment partners, and, once completed, this groundbreaking regeneration initiative will be a valuable asset to the community of Thembalethu and benefit the entire region.



Project 1: NMB multipurpose identity route

The road design provides a conceptual design based on the principles. Although it aimed to apply certain engineering standards, it is not a technical concept plan that necessarily meets engineering specifications.



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Braving the cold weather, Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis, George Municipal Councillors, beneficiaries, community members, and officials, gathered to celebrate the new homeowners during the joyous housing handover at Erf 325.

78 New Homes, Rosedale Erf 325

Songs of praise and jubilation filled the air in August, as 78 families received the keys to their new homes during an official housing handover ceremony at the Erf 325 East Housing Development in Rosedale, Pacaltsdorp.

The Executive Mayor of George, Alderman Jackie von Brandis, led the handover of the houses to the 78 beneficiaries, joined by the Member of

the Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Human Settlements, Jean Safers, and Ward 14 Councillor, Melvin Roelfse, who served as the programme director. The ceremony was also attended by MMCs from various portfolio committees, councillors, municipal officials, Ward Committee members, and home-based care workers. Ald. von Brandis officially marked the handover by cutting the ribbon at one of

the houses. Addressing the attendees, she thanked everyone involved in the construction and administration of the houses.

The Erf 325 East Pacaltsdorp Housing Project is a catalytic initiative funded by the Provincial Department of Infrastructure. This mixed-use development, which began in 2018, is part of the 1,091 Breaking New Ground

(BNG) units, including double-storey, semi-detached, and freestanding units. It also comprises 147 Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP) units, 32 units for persons with disabilities, and 30 units for military veterans. The project will also provide one general residential erf, four crèches, three churches, one community centre, and seven commercial/business erven.

New Nutritional Centre for Metrogrounds

The George Municipality supplied a brand-new nutritional centre, that will be run by Maggie (Mona) Sampson, at Metrogrounds Housing Project with a hamper that can feed up to 100 people, 3 days per week.

George Municipality currently operates 117 municipal nutritional centres which operate from private homes in vulnerable communities across the municipal area are the backbone of feeding programmes.

Individuals and organisations wanting to continue supporting soup kitchens can drop off food and supplies at the municipality's Community Development offices or call the number below.

Soup kitchen enquiries: 044 802 2000
Food and supplies donation deliveries to: George Municipality Community Development offices (8am-4pm) or c/o Varing and St Johns Streets (diagonally behind main building).



At the handover of the hamper from left, Willbedine Jordaan (Community Development), Elizabeth Goldman (volunteer at the nutritional centre), Maggie Sampson (coordinator of the nutritional centre), Sophie Bewee (volunteer at the nutritional centre), Veronique Ferndale (Community Development), Cllr Melvin Roelfse (MMC Community Development), Khanyisile Fortuin (Community Development) and Cllr Darryl Coeries.



Metrogrounds handover

Cllr Jean Safers, MMC for Human Settlements, Johan and Suzette Andrews (beneficiaries with their house documents), Sheen-Wayne Kiewitz, Brumilda Kirchner, Velencia Botha (also a beneficiary) Mayor Jackie von Brandis and Rayleen Petrus at the handover of eight houses at Metro grounds in August. At this stage, 55 of the 436 units of the entire project have already been handed over. According to Zinobia

Spies, acting manager: Human Settlements at George Municipality, the beneficiaries who have received the eight houses come from various Informal Settlements and the names were registered on the Western Cape Housing Database. The beneficiaries are selected from those who are the longest on the waiting list, 60 years and over, the disabled, farm workers and persons living in informal settlements.



George Municipality Celebrates National Recycling Day with Key Stakeholders.

National Recycling Day celebrated

The George Municipality, in partnership with Henque Waste, EWASA (EPR Waste Association of South Africa), and PETCO, celebrated National Recycling Day in September in Lawaakamp. The event attracted about 70 participants, including Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs), litter pickers, and potential waste pickers, all of whom were educated about the importance of recycling.

National Recycling Day serves to raise awareness about recycling's vital role in environmental preservation. By reducing waste and conserving resources such as water used in manufacturing, recycling is essential for sustainable development.

Henque Waste, a municipal recycler, expressed excitement about participating in the event.

"It was a phenomenal day that brought the Municipality, service providers, and the community together. We've recognised the value in waste, and by working together, we can eradicate illegal dumping, reduce

landfilling, and promote environmental conservation," said Henque Waste. "We are eager to establish partnerships with waste pickers, SMMEs, and businesses committed to fighting waste."

EWASA echoed these sentiments, emphasizing the need to empower communities to embrace recycling. "We aim to put people at the forefront of waste-related issues, transforming waste from a challenge into an opportunity," said eWASA. "Through collaboration with George Municipality and other stakeholders, we can build resilient, sustainable societies."

The George Municipality reaffirmed its commitment to creating opportunities for SMMEs to engage in the circular and green economy through waste management initiatives.

The event underscores the municipality's dedication to advancing recycling efforts and fostering a more sustainable future for all.



Energy-Saving Smart Lighting Pilot

George Municipality is testing a new smart energy-saving system for streetlights in partnership with leading supplier Beka Schröder. The pilot project aims to replace current lights with advanced technology that monitors performance and adjusts brightness based on traffic levels, further enhancing the efficiency of existing LED lights. According to Daniel Greeff, Deputy Director of the Electrotechnical Services Department, the project promises to improve safety, reduce lighting failures, and boost community pride. The system's use of open standards ensures flexibility and compatibility with future technologies. If successful, the pilot may be expanded to cover main roads and other areas, positioning George as a leader in sustainable urban development.

Renewable Energy Projects

The George Municipality continues to pursue its vision to enhance energy resilience and reduce electricity demand through renewable energy initiatives.

The primary goal of these projects is to meet some of the municipality's energy requirements, thereby decreasing dependence on Eskom.

This reduction in electricity purchases from Eskom will lower the municipality's electricity bill, with the savings ultimately benefiting customers.

Completed Projects

- Civic Centre: 300 kWp system, operational since September 2021.
- Outeniqua Wastewater Treatment Facility: 400-kilowatt peak (kWp) photovoltaic (PV) system.
- Gwaing Wastewater Treatment Facility: 500 kWp PV system.
- Municipal Land (ERF464): 1 megawatt peak (MWp) solar farm

Ongoing Renewable Energy Projects

- Tourism Site: Completed, with some equipment changes necessitated by a fire.
- Battery Storage System: 3 megawatt-hours (MWh) battery storage system spread

across three sites (Civic Centre building, Outeniqua, and Gwaing wastewater treatment works), construction is expected to begin in September 2024.

Future Plans and Initiatives

George Municipality intends to continue exploring alternative electricity supply solutions such as Small-Scale Embedded Energy Generation (SSEG) and Wheeling agreements. The municipality will also focus on procuring electricity from Independent Power Producers (IPPs). George Municipality will work in collaboration with the Western Cape Premier's office relating to the appointment of IPP's, which is already coordinating similar solutions in the province.

IPPs will create an effective competitive market space for Eskom, moving away from the current monopoly. This is seen as the economic solution to the current energy crisis in South Africa, and George Municipality will support the Western Cape government in leading the necessary changes for a stable electricity supply future.

The municipality remains committed to finding sustainable solutions to the current electricity crisis, contributing to both local and national energy resilience.

Peace Officer and Warden Training

Seventeen members of George Municipality's Community Safety division have successfully completed a Peace Officer and Warden Training course, held over three weeks in June 2024. The training, presented by the City of Cape Town's Metro Police Services, aimed to equip land invasion and law enforcement officers with the skills to enforce by-laws.

Senior Manager for Community Safety, Lee-Anne Meiring, highlighted the significance of the certified course, which covered professional conduct, peace officer duties, and traffic warden responsibilities. "This training enables the Municipality to appoint more Peace Officers with the authority to enforce by-laws," Meiring said. All participants were found competent upon completion.



Front row from left: Adam Roelfse (Officer), Daniellia Laws (Officer), Sgt. T van Schalkwyk (Training facilitator), Verona Botha (Officer) and Xoliswa Zokoza (Officer). Middle Row from left: Curtley Joseph (Officer), Ashely Joseph (Officer), Andre Baartman (Officer), Jan Adams (Officer), Africa Mpenbe (Officer), Adrian Jansen (Officer), Fadiel Luiters (Officer), and Roland Hardnick (Inspector). Back Row from left: Wyatt Crowly (Officer), Nathan Jonas (Officer), Charwin van Wyk (Officer), Heinrico Standers (Officer) and Juandre Prins (Officer).



George Law Enforcement Officials from left Roland Hardnick, Sinovuyo Robile, Cllr Brendon Adams (MMC for Community Safety), Nosipho Yawani and Qhamani Nqoko.

George Hosts Safety and Security Expo

The George Mayor's Safety and Security Expo, held in early October at the George Civic Centre, brought together local government officials, law enforcement agencies, and community members in a united front against crime.

The event, led by Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis, aimed to foster collaboration and information sharing to boost safety in the city.

Key attendees included representatives from the Western Cape Provincial Government, South African Police Service (SAPS), Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM), the Department of Correctional Services, Department of Police – Oversight, Western Cape Department of Health and Wellness, and the Western Cape Liquor Authority as well as community safety groups like Community Policing Forums, Community in Blue, Neighbourhood Watch, and residents of George.

Ald von Brandis emphasized the importance of unity, stating, "As the largest secondary city in our province, we must prioritize safety and tackle crime head-on as a united community."

Senior Manager for Community Safety, Lee-Anne Meiring, introduced George's Strategy for Community Safety, highlighting technology integration, partnerships, and the development of an Operational Command Centre.

The expo also featured presentations from various stakeholders on topics such as sustainable safety partnerships, the impact of crime on health services, and local initiatives by the Western Cape Liquor Authority.

The event, a collaborative effort between George Municipality, the Western Cape Provincial Government, and GRDM concluded with a powerful call from Mayor von Brandis: "No to crime, no to violence, and no to living in fear!"

George unveils new integrated Community Safety Strategy

George Municipality is ramping up public safety with the launch of its Integrated Community Safety Strategy. This new initiative, which brings together multiple law enforcement agencies including SAPS, aims to address the city's growing safety challenges through advanced technology, stronger partnerships, and enhanced infrastructure.

Key to the strategy is a newly refurbished Integrated Operational Command Centre, a R5 million investment, designed to centralize safety operations.

The facility will serve as a hub for coordinating law enforcement, traffic services, emergency response, and disaster management, with 24/7 call-taking and dispatching capabilities. It also features an expanded network of over 700 CCTV cameras across the city, helping monitor crime and safeguard public spaces.

Mayor Jackie von Brandis praised the project, stating,



MMC for Community Safety Brendon Adams and Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis at the CCTV room.

"This is a major step toward our vision of a safer, cleaner George."

The strategy emphasizes collaboration with SAPS, development of a dedicated response unit, and piloting business intelligence and

analytics tools to enhance crime prevention efforts.

By fostering partnerships across sectors, George Municipality aims to ensure the safety of residents, visitors, and businesses as the city continues to grow.



Front row, from left: Cllr Marlene Barnardt (MMC Planning and Development), Cllr Marchell Kleynhans (MMC Community Services), Lee-Anne Meiring (Senior Manager for Community Safety), Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis, Cllr Brendon Adams (MMC Community Safety), Cllr Johan du Toit (MMC Corporate Services), and Cllr Melvin Roelfse (MMC Community Development). Back row, from left: Cllr Nosicelo Mbete (MMC Human Resources), Executive Deputy Mayor Raybin Figland, Brown Johnson (MMC Civil Engineering Services), Cllr Jean Safers (MMC Human Settlements), Marais Kruger (MMC Financial Services) and Speaker Sean Snyman.



In the photograph are clockwise from left, Estelle Fredericks, Coordinator of the Forum and Project Hope for people living on the Streets, Zelda Barnard (Stop Trafficking), Brian Faul (SAHARA), Freddy Trout (Community Wellness programme), Enrico Tarentaal (Department of Social Development), Asavela Mandongana (Social Worker: George Municipality), Jonathan Gelderbloem (Manager: Kidstop and Chairperson of the Forum), Cllr Melvin Roelfse, MMC for Community Development, Thandabathu Ndamase, (Department of Education), Indiphile Mngcomela (Department of Education, Andries de Swardt (Department of Justice), Asiphe Zanywa (Department of Education) and Leigh-Main Jacobs (Department of Education).

Project Hope:

Addressing homelessness in George

Project Hope, a local initiative dedicated to supporting homeless individuals, continues to achieve success through a series of impactful programmes. Recent efforts have focused on skill development, employment, and reunification with families.

Parent Training Programme
The second session of the parent training programme, run by Kidstop in partnership with Youth for Christ, was recently held. Twelve participants, all living on the streets, received valuable parenting skills, particularly in interacting with children in foster or family care. Local businesses and the George Municipality supported the programme by providing meals.

Jobseekers Programme
Project Hope has employed three formerly homeless individuals as peer educators through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). These individuals will assist with fieldwork and surveys designed to further reduce homelessness.

Soup Drive
During winter, Project Hope held weekly soup drives, serving 120 homeless individuals. This initiative, supported by Genevafontein Old Age Home and other organisations like Stop Trafficking and SAHARA, also provided scarves and blankets. The soup drives aimed to address immediate needs while gathering data on the broader issue of homelessness.

Reunification
Since July 2024, Project Hope has reunited six individuals with their families. The organisation also provided counselling services to two people and made eleven referrals to external support organisations. With its comprehensive approach, including the employment of peer educators and ongoing support programmes, Project Hope remains committed to reducing homelessness and offering long-term solutions for vulnerable residents in George.



Winter Soup Outreach.

“Adopt a person”

George Municipality as part of the PLOTS Forum invites businesses, NGOs, and community members to participate in our new "Adopt a Person" initiative. Instead of giving cash directly to individuals, you can donate R25 to the George Night Shelter.

This donation provides a person with one night of accommodation, including a meal and shower. For more information, please contact the George Night Shelter at 044 873 2787 or George Municipality at 044 802 2000.

Sewing Project empowers homeless residents



Antionette du Preez from Mossel Clay Pottery Studio, was very impressed on receiving her order of 10 aprons made by S&D Creations.

In a bid to support economic empowerment among the homeless population, George Municipality has launched a new sewing project (S&D Creations).
The initiative, led by Estelle Fredericks, a Social Auxiliary Worker in the Community Development Services department, trains a group of seven homeless individuals in sewing, enabling them to craft a range of handmade products using donated materials. The participants, who meet at the Community Development offices daily, have created items such as handbags, sling bags, and indoor and outdoor aprons for sale. Despite remaining homeless, the project aims to provide economic opportunities and, eventually, help participants transition off the streets. Profits from sales will go towards purchasing additional sewing machines, allowing more homeless individuals to join the project. A woodwork initiative is also in the works, which will expand the range of products available. The public can support the project by visiting the Community Development offices at Varing and St John’s Street. Purchases can be made directly from the participants during their work hours, or customers can discuss their own design preferences and place custom orders. Apart from handbags and aprons, the group also offers curtain production and clothing repair and alteration services.

For more information on purchases or material donations, contact Estelle Fredericks at 044 802 2000.



George Municipality’s local sewing group, S&D Creations, is being supported by local George businesses including This is Me, Bleu Forest Books, West Coast Fisheries and Tastebuds Eatery.



Estelle and sewing products.



The development of the transfer precinct at the Garden Route Mall offers a sheltered terminal facility with seating, and six shelters at bus stops. The existing smart card kiosk was integrated into the design.

GO GEORGE celebrates milestones during Transport Month

Almost 10 years ago, GO GEORGE rolled out the first four bus routes to Rosemoor, Denneoord, Loerie Park and the Garden Route Mall with a fleet of 12 buses. Today, the GO GEORGE bus service transports almost 20 000 passengers per weekday with a fleet of 133 buses, over a network of 33 routes and 465 km.

Celebrating National Transport Month in October, GO GEORGE Manager, Morné Lakay, expressed his gratitude for the progress and growth of the past year. "Nothing gives us greater pleasure than seeing the community benefitting from our services, increasingly using this convenient and affordable way of travelling to work, school and wherever they need to go," he said.

"The crowning achievement for the past year is undoubtedly the roll-out of a first route to Thembalethu. With the construction of the Thembalethu/N2 bridge completed recently, a second route transporting residents to the industrial area where many work, is set to be activated soon. More routes will continually be rolled out as capacity and circumstances allow."

Infrastructure development

The development of the transfer precinct at the Garden Route Mall comprised construction of a sheltered terminal facility with seating, encompassing the existing Smart Card kiosk. The modern design was based on that of the George Transport Hub in the city centre. The project also included the installation of six bus shelters - two of which were special shelters to accommodate the high volume of passengers; construction of universally accessible sidewalks, electrical works for lighting within the shelters and terminal facility, and the supply and installation of a UPS system to power the entire transfer location.

Road upgrades

Municipal road upgrades are continuously



Rehabilitation and upgrading of Golf Street in Parkdene were completed recently. Pedestrian safety and universal accessibility are important features of the project.

being done on roads all over town as funding allows.

This includes roads currently being used to provide the public transport service as well as roads that will be needed for the service in future.

Rehabilitation and upgrading of Golf Street in Parkdene and Hope Street in George South were completed recently, while construction in Ngcakani Street and Tabata Street in Thembalethu, and several roads in Rosemoor and Pacaltsdorp are underway or starting soon.

Enhanced online features

An exciting addition to the customer-service offering is the new-look GO GEORGE website which is being promoted as a one-stop source of information, accessible through the scanning of a QR code, or by entering the web address www.gogeorget.org.za.

Enhanced features include timetables fed directly from the system database and a stop explorer where a stop number or name can be entered to provide the user with all the routes servicing a specific stop, as well as the times the bus is scheduled to depart at that stop.

The use of QR codes leading users to the website has been introduced and explained to passengers and will eventually also be displayed at bus stops for easy access to stop-specific information.

Customer care continues existing services through communication champions, an info kiosk and the Call Centre where passengers who require additional guidance or information can phone 0800 044 044 to speak to an agent seven days a week, from 05:00 until 20:00.

Aside from the new features, the website www.gogeorget.org.za offers detailed information regarding the use of the system, while the GO GEORGE Facebook page provides in-time service notifications and handy tips about using the service.

Municipal LGBTQIA+ Help Desk

Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis met with Khanyisile Fortuin, Special Programmes & Project Coordinator for George Social Development, and Gita November, Health Advocacy Officer for Gender Dynamix, to promote participation in A Queer and Trans Imbizo held in September, which culminated in a Pride Parade and evening entertainment at Rosemoor Stadium.

Two days of workshops featured Dr. Nicole Chillimagras and Elliot Kotze, two medical practitioners specializing in gender-affirming healthcare.

Their services are commissioned by Gender Dynamix, Africa's leading organization for the transgender and gender-diverse community, as part of efforts to bring gender-affirming healthcare to local primary care facilities.

The George Municipal Social Development LGBTQIA+ Help Desk, established in May 2022, has grown significantly in its ability to assist the

community. Through the Reactors Programme, facilitated by Gender Dynamix and the Social Health and Empowerment (SHE) Organization, the Help Desk offers psychosocial support, advice, and referrals for those facing human rights violations.

Services offered include one-on-one sessions with social workers, monthly support group meetings, referrals to safe spaces, human rights advocacy, ongoing education on rights and safe sex practices (including sensitization training and condom distribution), visibility in the community, and community outreach to assist those in need of advice or support.

The Help Desk also supports special events such as Pride Month in June, Human Rights Day, Freedom Day, and World AIDS Day.

For more information, contact the Community Development Section at 044 802 2000 or visit their offices at the corner of Varing and St. John's Streets.



Meeting the Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis are on left Khanyisile Fortuin, Special Programmes & Project Coordinator for George Municipal Social Development, and right Gita November, Health Advocacy Officer for Gender Dynamix

Retaining walls and improved access

MMC for Human Settlements, Jean Safers and Ward 16 Cllr Theresa Jeyi and an official from the Human Settlements Department visited the New Dawn Park Retaining walls project in July this year. The project entailed the provision of retaining walls and improved access to properties and to channel and re-route run-off water during rainfall.

The Western Cape Department of Infrastructure approved funding for

the construction of retaining walls at 155 identified erven in New Dawn Park. The project was implemented during May 2023 with the first 132 erven completed in October 2023. The remaining 24 erven were completed by 30 June 2024.

Each property was assessed by an engineer who provided a report with recommendations and solutions on how to mitigate to alleviate the problem.



From left at the access stairs to the home of Piet Booysen from Sierrissie Street are from left Mbulelo Suping from the Directorate of Human Settlements, Ward Councillor for Ward 16, Cllr Theresa Jeyi, Booysen, the homeowner and MMC of Human Settlements, Cllr Jean Safers.



From left to right: Edward Ganza (Deputy Director Administration, Corporate Services), Cllr Browen Johnson (MMC Civil Engineering Services), Theresa Jeyi (Chief Whip), Marais Kruger (MMC Financial Services), Pastor Allen Spies (Chairperson Pacaltsdorp Minister's Fraternal), Cllr Melvin Roelse (MMC Community Department) Adam Lewie (Thusong Centre Manager) and Phildene Fortuin (Programme Director, Corporate Services Department).

Pacaltsdorp Satellite Thusong Service Centre

The Pacaltsdorp Satellite Thusong Service Centre, located at the Old Tourism Information Building on Mission Street, was officially launched in September. The event was attended by Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis, local councillors, stakeholders from various organizations, government representatives, entrepreneurs, community leaders, and members of the Pacaltsdorp community.

Mayor von Brandis expressed her enthusiasm, stating, "It's an absolute privilege to open this centre today... to witness the start of bringing services closer to where they are needed most." The new centre will host key government services, including the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), the Department of Labour, the Department of Home Affairs, and the Department of Social Development, among others.

Thusong Facilities serve as one-stop, integrated community centres, allowing residents to access vital government information and services.

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residents to access vital government information and services. The establishment of this facility was identified as a key priority in the Municipality's Integrated Development Plan (IDP) to address the community's pressing needs.

The maintenance of the Pacaltsdorp centre is supported by a grant from the Western Cape Department of Local Government. With this addition, the George Municipality now has three Thusong Centres (Themba lethu and Touwsrante) significantly enhancing service coverage across the community.

The launch coincided with the Annual Thusong Service Centre Week from September 16 to 20, which emphasizes the critical role these centres play in improving community access to services.

Mayor von Brandis thanked all officials involved in the project and urged residents to protect the centre, affirming, "It belongs to you as much as it belongs to us."



Councillors, stakeholders and community at the opening of the Pacaltsdorp Thusong Centre.

George Municipality Extends Outreach to Rural Communities

Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis at her inauguration on 21 June this year noted her determination to bring services to all rural areas that fall under George. "Our rural areas like Kleinkrantz, Geelhoutboom, Haarlem, Noll, and other rural communities will be visited. We will advertise the dates and locations in advance so that as many rural residents as possible can attend the outreaches."

George Municipality conducted multiple service delivery outreaches over the past few months aimed at addressing the needs of rural communities within the region. These initiatives were designed to bring municipal services closer to areas that often experience limited access to essential services.



Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis with Anette Glade from the Touwsrante Clinic.

Uniondale Outreach (August 2024)
The outreach to Uniondale marked the first of several planned engagements with rural areas. The initiative was well-received, with over 200 residents attending.

Haarlem Outreach (September 2024)
The municipality next visited Haarlem, where approximately 175–200 residents from Ward 24 gathered to discuss pressing issues. Concerns raised



Outside the Uniondale community hall is Ward 24 Councillor, Justin Fry, with his ward committee member Calvin Mongo, and Ward 14 Councillor Roelfse, who is also MMC for Community Development.

included stormwater management, road maintenance, and housing. The outreach also featured a visit to the Proteaville informal settlement, where Mayor von Brandis, alongside Councillor Jean Safers, addressed issues such as sanitation and electricity. Given the area's challenging terrain, discussions revolved around innovative solutions like mobile toilets to tackle the lack of traditional facilities. The visit also included a personal inspection of stormwater flooding at a resident's home.

Touwsrante Outreach (October 2024)
A third outreach took place in Touwsrante, about 30 km east of George. Despite bad weather, local residents gathered at the community hall to engage directly with municipal officials. Departments including Human Settlements, Civil Engineering Services, and Financial Services, alongside the Garden Route District Municipality's (GRDM) roads team, addressed local concerns. Mayor von Brandis expressed enthusiasm for continued outreach programs to ensure rural areas remain connected with essential municipal services.

These initiatives highlight George Municipality's proactive approach in responding to the needs of its rural constituents, ensuring improved service delivery and stronger community ties.



In the photo is the Executive Mayor, accompanied by Cllr Justin Fry (Ward 25, Haarlem) and Cllr Browen Johnson, MMC Civil Engineering Services, visiting a resident's house, Evelyn Thyse. Thyse has an issue with the stormwater pipes in the photo, which often cause flooding on her property. Deon de Jager, Deputy Director of Civil Engineering Services, was also part of the delegation to make recommendations.



Rosemoor tartan track progressing well

George Municipality is spearheading the multi-million-rand upgrade of the Rosemoor Stadium, a key multi-code sports facility located in the heart of the community, and will turn it into a world-class venue.

The new tartan athletic track will not only meet international standards but also ensure that the times and achievements of athletes

are officially recognised. This upgrade is expected to enhance the overall sports infrastructure in the region, fostering greater participation and development in athletics.

The aim is to host various athletic events and serving as a central hub for local sports clubs and schools. The cost of the total upgrade calculates to R40,590,000.00. Construction on the site commenced in

May 2024 and the planned completion of specifically the tartan track is January 2025. Upon completion, the upgraded Rosemoor Stadium will be equipped with a state-of-the-art athletic track and facilities which will enable the stadium to host regional, national, and potentially international events, boosting the local economy and promoting sports tourism.



In the photograph from left Chief Fire Officer and Instructor Neels Barnard, Divisional Commander Johan Brand, Station Commander Santa Sternsdorf, Firefighter Brad Bussack, Junior Firefighter Richard Bruinders and Firefighter and Instructor, Johan Troskie.

Sea Training to enhance Water Rescue Unit

In preparation for bolstering the Water Rescue Unit ahead of the upcoming festive season, four dedicated officials from the George Fire Brigade underwent rigorous sea training earlier this year.

The training included crucial sea hours necessary for obtaining their skipper's licenses.

Under the expert guidance of Instructors Chief Fire Officer Neels Barnard and Fire Official Johan Troskie, the officials honed their skills at Wilderness Beach.

This intensive training will allow five (5) fire and rescue officials to obtain their skippers tickets.

This marks a significant

step in strengthening our emergency response capabilities, ensuring swift and effective assistance to those in need, particularly in water-related emergencies.

George Municipality remains committed to prioritizing the safety and well-being of our community, especially during peak periods of activity.

IGTM 2024, Lisbon

George, Wilderness and Uniondale Tourism made a notable impact at the International Golf Travel Market (IGTM) in Lisbon which took place from 14 to 17 October 2024, presenting the best of George and the Garden Route's golf and leisure offerings. Sharing space on the South African Tourism stand alongside prominent exhibitors, including Fancourt, the George representative promoted the destination's world-class golf courses and diverse leisure activities to an international audience.

George, located in the heart of the Garden Route, is home to several of South Africa's most acclaimed golf courses, including the iconic Fancourt, Oubaai, George and Kingswood, and the promotion at IGTM highlighted its position as the premier golfing destination of the country. The event provided an ideal platform to meet with international tour operators and travel professionals, fostering new relationships and strengthening existing partnerships. Sharon House, Senior Tourism Officer of George Municipality, commented on the success of the event, saying, "The response to George and the Garden Route was overwhelmingly positive. Many in the trade were not previously aware of the breadth of offerings in the region, and those already selling it appreciated the refresher and updates on our fantastic golf courses. Additionally, they were introduced to the incredible range of leisure experiences, from culture and gastronomy to adventure activities. We noticed a growing trend where fewer tour operators

focus solely on daily golf. Instead, they are combining golf with leisure, recognizing that South Africa is a diverse destination with so many extraordinary experiences that can't be missed."

George, Wilderness and Uniondale Tourism was thrilled to engage with travel professionals from across the globe, particularly in Europe, the US, and Asia. The feedback from international tour operators suggests a growing interest in combining golf with other leisure activities, creating dynamic packages that attract high-end travellers.

The event also fostered stronger collaboration between George, Wilderness and Uniondale Tourism and other key exhibitors, reinforcing the Garden Route's position as a premier destination for world-class golf and diverse leisure experiences.

About Tourism in George Municipality: George, Wilderness and Uniondale Tourism is dedicated to showcasing the unique charm of the George region and the wider Garden Route as a leading destination for global travellers. With its award-winning golf courses, stunning natural landscapes, and diverse leisure offerings, George provides an unforgettable experience for visitors.

By engaging with international markets through key events like IGTM, George, Wilderness and Uniondale Tourism aims to grow its presence and attract tourists seeking a balanced mix of relaxation, adventure, and world-class golf.



Lizel Trimm from Wesgro seen with Sharon House, Senior Tourism Officer for George Municipality at the International Golf Travel Market (IGTM).



Imizamo Yethu Secondary School made a remarkable comeback at the 2024 Funda Mzansi National Reading Championship, winning three major awards in their first participation in nine years. With first and second places in the Spelling Bee and third in the national reading competition, the students' dedication shines through. Proudly supported by the Western Cape Provincial Department of Sports, Arts and Culture Libraries, their achievements set a new standard for future competitions. George Municipality ensured the success of the event by hosting and maintaining competition venues. Seen with the proud team of learners are from the left Mrs Matya and Mrs Business Biyela, both teachers from Imizamo Yethu Secondary. Standing at the back is Mr Jongi Mbanga, Assistant Director Library Services for the Western Cape.

Funda Mzantzi 2024 a huge success!

Sharon Eland-Lewis, local George author who overcame pain, suffering and lots of trials and tribulations to get her first book, *Slegs 'n enkele kans* published, spoke at the opening ceremony for the 14th Annual Funda Mzantzi competition hosted in George.

Her Afrikaans book published by The National Library of South Africa, an agency of the Department of Arts and Culture was selected as the Afrikaans book for the competition. Ms Lewis gifted the Minister for Correctional Services, Dr Groenewald with a signed copy of her book.



Seen here from the left; Garden Route District Municipality's Speaker, Alderlady Georlene Wolmarans, Executive Deputy Mayor Raybin-Gibb Figland, National Minister of Correctional Services Dr Pieter Groenewald, Sharon Eland-Lewis, National Commissioner for the Department of Correctional Services Mr MS Thobakgale and Melvin Roelfse, MMC Community Development.



Megan Wolhuter, Georgina Philander, MMC for Community Development, Cllr Melvin Roelfse, Robyn Parks, Nancy Benjamin, Executive Mayor Jackie von Brandis and Cllr Erika Brown at the event. In front is Nozipho Stone.

Youth Day - Uniondale and Haarlem

George Municipality Youth Office in Uniondale celebrated National Youth Day in Uniondale and Haarlem in June. The Municipality held two successful events in collaboration with SAPS, Cape Nature, the Department of Social Development and Nikwe Enterprise.

According to Christal Jansen, Coordinator of the Youth Office in Uniondale, the programmes included motivational speakers, entertainment, indigenous games, and sports. Jansen said both events were very well attended by the youth with approximately 450 youngsters in attendance.



Games at Haarlem Youth Day event.

George Municipality celebrates Women's Month

George Municipality hosted a Women's Month event in August at Borchards Youth for Christ Hall, gathering 50 local women to commemorate the 1956 anti-pass law protests. Themed "Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress," the event emphasized the importance of gender equality, women's leadership, and collective social action.

Organized by the Gender and Disability subsection of Community Development, the event provided practical insights and networking opportunities for women, including mothers of children in the Kidstop

programme. Key speakers, such as Nancy Benjamin—a survivor of gender-based violence turned entrepreneur—shared powerful stories of empowerment. Social workers from the Department of Social Development and Child Welfare addressed critical issues like gender-based violence, substance abuse, and child protection.

Supported by the Executive Mayor, Ald Jackie von Brandis, and other community leaders, the event highlighted the ongoing efforts to support women in George.

SASKO George contributed to the day's success.



The Uniondale Junior dance group entertaining the youngsters at the event.