



COWIES HILL ESTATE GAZETTE

HELLO MEMBERS! WELCOME TO
THE COWIES HILL COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

DEAR FELLOW COWIES HILL MEMBERS

We are back on track with our communication plan, and this is the first of our quarterly newsletters updating the CHE members on developments, news and events in the area.

The key driver of people becoming members of the CHE are security, a sense of community and connectedness and the aesthetics and fauna and flora in the area – and so we will use these as the basis from which we will report via this newsletter.

We would welcome any ideas for information you would like us to share on this platform – which you can email to estatemanager@cowieshill.co.za

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YOUR COWIES HILL ESTATE HOME?**

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SECURITY UPDATE

The CHE Management Team and Board receive a monthly pack on the security statistics and we keep a close look out for anomalies, issues and causes for concern. What is of interest to us is how we benchmark ourselves against other areas.

[Click here to view the Crime statistics](#)

Salient points to gather from these stats taken from when the CHE came into being in 2020 are: (Note our 2023 stats will be “skewed” as we only have statistics until August).

Overall - the crime rate in the area has “flatlined”

-  Housebreaking, house robbery, vandalism, attempted crime, malicious damage to property, trespassing, and even theft have been reduced through the years. The most important observation from this slide is that contact crimes have decreased, which is the most important crimes we want to reduce. It is almost impossible to eradicate all crime from an area entirely, and with the current crime situation, pettier crimes still may occur.
-  We have highlighted the crime per road which shows that the majority of Roads within the Cowies Hill Estate Precinct have had a reduction in crime at 72% of the Roads. 16% have had no crime, 8% have remained static, and only 2% have had a crime increase.
-  Theft of property remains the highest crime recorded.
-  Out of 25 roads of the 36 we have in the CHE, that have had “incidents” since 2020, 13 of these have had NO incidents in 2023.
-  The 2023 comparison of CHE incidents to surrounding areas – it is very clear that we have the security of the area very much in hand.



ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

We have an extensive update on our Environment and Infrastructure portfolio managed by Paul Brink. Paul works with the CHE “Green Team” which includes three part-time staff and assistance from landscaper Margaret Daniel.

We remind you that we are formally registered as a Conservancy area with the Conservancies KZN (Communities in Conservation) and all CHE members are encouraged to attend the eThekweni Conservancies Forum’s informative and fun activities. We will be letting members know when these are.

One of the main objectives of our environmental portfolio is to promote and restore biodiversity, and we are pleased to report that we are moving steadily ahead with our Biodiversity Restoration Project (BRP).

The project includes the establishment and maintenance of our 5 Conservancy Sites as well as indigenous Beautification Gardens at all prominent road intersections in our area.

Avon Conservancy Park and the **Tunbridge Conservancy Park**, have already been established by CHE, and require monitoring for Alien Invasive Plants, and litter.

The **Cowies Hill Bridge Conservancy Area** includes all open space alongside the M13 from the onramp (below SASOL), along the embankment below Cheshire, the **Dudley Road Park**, the MacDonald Rd wetland and berm, and around the Morewood Crescent/MacDonald intersection. The plan is to achieve a continuous belt of appropriate indigenous vegetation whilst also achieving aesthetically pleasing landscaped features. But there is still much work to be done including a plan to plant indigenous thorny “barrier” plants (“living fence”) as a longer-term security measure for the residents around the site. The Green Team have been busy clearing the Dudley Road Park and we await the first good Spring rains before planting later this month.

The **Comrades Corner** is located on the upper part of Josiah Gumede Road. The long-term plan is to remove both alien invasive and undesirable exotic trees and to re-establish the critically endangered KwaZulu-Natal Sandstone Sourveld (KZNSS) ecosystem on the western embankments all the way to Kloof View Road. We have begun our AIP eradication programme and the first section of the indigenous forest has been planted.

The **Palmiet River & Tributaries** is our fifth Conservancy project which we are working on. In conjunction with and under the guidance of the eThekweni Municipality’s Transformative Riverine Management Programme (TRMP) we intend to restore indigenous vegetation along all streams and drainage corridors. Apart from promoting biodiversity, a carefully managed catchment will greatly alleviate the extent of flood damage to properties and infrastructure as experienced in the 2022 and 2023 floods.



Our CHE Beautification sites are landscaped and formally planted out indigenous gardens promise to improve the overall aesthetic appeal of Cowies Hill. The Green Team is responsible for weeding and tidying these sites.

We encourage residential properties to join us in attempting to restore the area's biodiversity so these Beautification Sites can extend along street verges and within abutting properties. Paul is happy to advise those who want to do this.

Going forward the team has prioritised three beautification sites which are Belvedere Boom (Belvedere/ Josiah Gumede intersection), Catherine Avenue Triangle (wedge between Catherine Ave and Ernest Whitcutt Rd) and Ernest Whitcutt Entrance (Ernest Whitcutt / Josiah Gumede intersection).



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & AWARENESS

We are happy to advise members on alien invasive plant identification and eradication as well as appropriate planting of endemic indigenous species. This will help towards the general restoration of the biodiversity.

LITTER COLLECTION AND REFUSE BINS

Generally, the litter in the CHE is kept to the minimum, but to improve the general aesthetic we collect litter every Wednesday predominantly along Josiah Gumede Rd, Norfolk Crescent embankment, and along the M13 and the on/off ramps. These are roads with high pedestrian and taxi pick-up points have been worst affected by littering and our refuse bins sponsored by Meondo Holdings (Pty) Ltd have proved to be very successful in preventing littering.

MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

It is common knowledge that “Service Delivery” is becoming increasingly problematic throughout the eThekweni Municipality. Over the past 3 years, the need to address issues around municipal infrastructure and services has become increasingly important for our CHE members.

Whilst the CHE is not mandated to repair or maintain municipal assets nor responsible for maintaining verges and overgrowth, we are currently working on improving the communication process for reporting municipal faults, obtaining fault reference numbers as well as monitoring remedial actions, and reporting back to our CHE members.

ANIMALS IN THE CHE

We are keen to try to monitor the wildlife in the area and would love members to keep us informed of what they are seeing (or hearing). The recent killing, in Hillcrest, of a Crowned Eagle – a rare and protected species – is a reminder we need to be vigilant in helping to protect the natural habitats in which we live – for the health of the environment and our world.



**WATER
MONGOOSE**
*Atilax
Paludinosus*

Recently some reports have come in – a water mongoose was spotted a few months back in Tunbridge Drive in the dawn hours, the Crowned Eagles in the area are having a fine time, and the juvenile is constantly calling – making itself known. Egyptian Geese, as annoying as they may be, are sporting some goslings, and an eel was reported in the Palmiet River. The birdlife has woken up to spring and the Green Woodhoopoes aka iNhlekabafazi are cackling away and the distinct calls of the Purple Crested Turacos abound.

INCENTIVE FOR CURRENT MEMBERS

Help sign up
friends and
neighbours in
the CHE area



The benefits of living within the CHE are obvious: we live with peace of mind in a secure area with effective security patrol, response, and monitoring, the area is clean and beautiful, and we feel proud to be living here - and this is working well for us as a community. Out of the 776 properties in the area – we have 478 signed onto the CHE – that's 61% of potential properties signed up. Going forward and to ensure more security, more infrastructure maintenance, greening, and aesthetics, we ideally would like that number to be higher. There is safety in numbers – right?

We know that there are many people living in the area who benefit from the CHE without contributing as members. We don't begrudge them this, but seeing as most would also be signed up to security companies, and possibly paying high premiums for this service, it would make sense for them to join the CHE with all its added benefits.

What a lot of people don't realise is that by joining the CHE – a PBO - you can get a tax rebate calculated on the donation element of the invoiced amount of R900 of the R1100 monthly fee. Something a private security company cannot offer.

With this in mind and to encourage more people in the area to join in solidarity, we would like to offer current members who sign up a new member, a three-month respite on their contribution. Please contact Kim at the CHE to enquire about how you can help sign someone up.



*The Estate
Management Team*

THANK YOU