

Wishing you peace & joy over the festive season

A message from Executive Mayor, Dudley Coetzee

One thing I can say with certainty: None of us is bound to forget 2020 anytime soon. When last we wished one another a prosperous and happy new year, none of us could foresee what lay around the corner.

Twenty-twenty turned out to be a very trying year indeed, but I am most thankful to say that in true Overstrand spirit, everyone – yes, everyone – stepped in and did their utmost to help their fellowman where and however they could.

I am especially thankful to our dedicated corps of municipal officials and workers who never once shied away from rendering those essential services our residents are dependent on, despite the severe risks to their personal wellbeing.

A special word of thanks to my fellow Councillors, too: Yes, our plans to tackle several challenges in the course of 2020 were thwarted to a degree, but your willingness to unite and rethink our strategic direction for the remainder of the current five-

year Integrated Development Plan is much appreciated. I think you did a splendid job!

Thankfully, most major capital projects – particularly the provisioning of housing and upgrading of infrastructure – are back on track and will be delivered as planned, albeit a little later than anticipated.

Unfortunately, having no option but to delay these projects will cause some inconvenience over the busiest time of the year, but we thank those affected for their patience and understanding.

Looking ahead, some major adjustments had to be made to the municipal budget in an attempt to not add any additional stress to a populace already faced with severe financial challenges. In particular, the hospitality industry – by and large the backbone of Overstrand's economy – has suffered major losses and, seemingly, will remain under pressure for the foreseeable future.

On a positive note, though: Having been unable to visit with family and friends for many

months, we can now look forward to a time where we can reconnect. By all means, make the most of the balmy days ahead by enjoying the great outdoors or taking a dip in the ocean, but please be sure to always put your safety and the safety of your loved ones first.

If we all obey the laws and regulations and behave like responsible citizens, everyone can have a great time and be afforded a well-deserved breather so that we can recharge our batteries and be ready to tackle 2021 with renewed fervour.

To our matriculants, one thing is sure: You will have many a story to tell your grandkids one day! Jokes aside, your tenacity will serve as a great inspiration for those who follow in your footsteps, and I am sure your perseverance will earn great results. Well done!

In parting, as eager as we are to welcome 2021 and its promises of recovery, let us not forget the lessons 2020 taught us: Do not neglect family and friends, take care of yourself and make time to reflect.



**Executive Mayor
Ald. Dudley Coetzee**

**On behalf of
Overstrand
Municipality's Council
and staff, I wish you and
your loved ones a safe,
peaceful and joyful
Christmas and
a Happy New Year.**

SUCCESSFUL CONTAINMENT OF SUBSURFACE PEAT FIRE



DESERVING OF TOP NATIONAL AWARD

Overstrand Municipality's Environmental Management Services team: (l-r) Penelope Aplon, Benjamin Kondokter, Tamzyn Zweig, Senior Environmental Manager: Liezl de Villiers, Tarron Dry (back), Heloise Fortune, Arno Harmse, Darryl Isaacs, Stephen Müller, Timothy Europa, Dean Gardiner, Marco Cornelius and Michael Henn

In January 2019, a veld fire ignited desiccated peat along a section of the Onrus River wetlands situated on the property of the Camphill School and Farm, resulting in subsurface and occasional surface fires.

Several valiant attempts by Overstrand's Fire Services to extinguish hotspots were thwarted since desiccated peat is hydrophobic and can, therefore, not be rewetted from the surface. Clearly, if the wetland was to be saved, some expert advice had to be called in, and this is where senior environmental manager, Liezl de Villiers, stepped in. She turned to peat fire specialist, Martin Bolton, who has deployed his invention – the spike branch – with great success to combat peat fires in Indonesia with the aid of specialist teams operating under the auspices of South Africa's Working on Fire (WoF) programme.

In short, a spike branch is a pipe with holes (a sprout) that sprays water under pressure below the peat surface to rewet the peat in order to dose/suppress peat fires.

Installing these is no easy feat, though, and requires skilled teams that are equipped to handle highly perilous conditions. It took the teams 52 days to get the peat fire in the Onrus River wetlands under control and 90 days to contain and close the fire incident.

In recognition of her tenacity to orchestrate a coordinated attempt to save and preserve the Onrus River wetlands, a National Wetlands Stewardship Award was recently bestowed upon Ms De Villiers – an award she graciously accepted but with full recognition that she does so on behalf of everyone who had a hand in this tremendous effort. "We still have a long way to go to restore the Onrus peat wetland system. This is bound to be a lengthy and expensive process that will, yet again, require the full cooperation of governing bodies and landowners. But, rest assured, several plans are afoot and we will not hesitate to call in the experts as and when required," she said.



Fighting smoldering hotspots is a perilous affair.

**As from 1 November 2020,
Overstrand Municipality has
a new municipal manager:
Dean Gabriël Ian O'Neill.**



Dean O'Neill

A self-confessed lifelong learner, Mr O'Neill originally set out to pursue career in civil engineering, but after having served in technical capacities – first at Vredendal and then Matzikama – he changed tack and began pursuing a career in public administration in earnest.

Today, he holds a Master's degree in Public Administration and is currently busy with a thesis towards PhD in Public Administration and is an Accredited Municipal Manager – a distinction very few people in the country can boast with.

O'Neill has been serving as Cape Agulhas' municipal manager since 2013 and regards the fact that he and his team managed to obtain unqualified audit reports consecutively for the past five years as a major accomplishment.

"Rapid changes in the Western Cape's political landscape necessitate resilience and the ability to adapt to an ever-changing environment," O'Neill said "I regard teamwork as the key and firmly believe that every individual's input, no matter how insignificant it may sound, is crucial to attaining a common goal."

It was with a heavy heart that the Bredasdorp community bid the O'Neill family farewell since they took such a lively interest in local affairs, served on school governing bodies and played an active part in their local parish.

The Overstrand community welcomes Mr O'Neill and looks forward to establishing a long and fruitful working relationship with him.

THE FIRE SEASON IS UPON US!

Can your home withstand a wildfire?

As much as it is a pleasure to virtually share your backyard with pristine, fynbos-bedecked mountains, this privilege comes at a price: The risk of being exposed to raging wildfires.

All too often, people who build their homes in wildlife-urban interface areas fail to take the necessary precautions to protect their properties against wildfires – sometimes with devastating consequences.

According to Louise Wessels, manager of the Greater Overberg Fire Protection Association (goFPA), living in a wildlife-urban interface area necessitates certain precautions against raging wildfires.

Her views are supported by Reinard Geldenhuys, Fire Chief of the Overberg District Municipality, who also cautioned that as much as fire-fighting teams will do their utmost to keep people and their properties safe, climate change has caused wildfires to burn faster, hotter and more frequently nowadays – a situation which is exacerbated by the copious amount of fuel (i.e. plant debris) that feed these fires.

"We urge everyone who have made their home in the Overstrand, and especially those who live in the interface between urban and wildlife, to take the necessary steps to safeguard their properties," Wessels said. "The steps are rather simple and straightforward, and taking the trouble to employ them may just save your home and all that you value."

1. **Keep your roof and gutters clean** – plant debris accumulating on roofs and in gutters are highly combustible and can cause fire-resistant roofing material to be less effective
2. **Close openings, vents and eaves** – where possible, use wire mesh to prevent smouldering embers from entering your home
3. **Store combustibles at a safe distance from your home** – flammable material such as firewood should not be stored below decks or verandas
4. **Trim your trees** – crown fires can cause embers to land on roofs and can cause other trees in the vicinity to ignite
5. **Keep vegetation in check and your yard debris-free** – be sure to trim your lawn and to create firebreaks along the driveway or walkway
6. **Keep the garden hose connected and the pool, if you have one, filled**

For more advice on how you can safeguard your home, visit <https://overbergfpa.co.za/wildfireready/>



**Protect your home against wildfires:
Keep the gutters clean and the yard rubble-free**

OFFICE CLOSURE OVER FESTIVE SEASON

Municipal offices, including libraries but excluding essential services, will be closed from 13:00 on Thursday, 24 December 2020 to re-open on Monday, 28 December 2020 at 07:45. The offices will again be closed from 13:00 on Thursday, 31 December 2020 till 07:45 on Monday, 4 January 2021.

Office closures despite, do keep in mind that municipal accounts can be settled at any time via an electronic fund transfer or by making use of the Pay@ and Easy Pay systems available at most chain stores.

Likewise, pre-paid electricity can be bought online at any time via a banking or mobile app (downloadable via Play Store), or from retailers such as Pick 'n Pay, Checkers, Spar and Engen.

- * Should you experience an emergency that relates to basic services (municipal infrastructure), please contact Overstrand's 24-hour Control Room at 028 313 8111.
- * In case of a fire, flood or medical emergency, call Fire & Rescue directly on 028 312 2400.
- * For emergencies relating to law enforcement, security and safety, call 028 313 8980 or call 028 313 8996 to lodge a general, less urgent complaint.
- * For general enquiries, i.e. to enquire about the status of your Municipal account, call 028 313 8000.
- * To report issues with baboons, call the baboon hotline on 072 028 0008.

Please note that Overstrand Municipality's Facebook page is purely used as a platform where information is shared and is not regarded as a formal communication channel to lodge a complaint.

IDP AND BUDGET REVIEW PROCESS:

Jobs, safety and wellbeing now take precedence

At the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 28 October 2020, Executive Mayor Ald. Dudley Coetzee confirmed that the municipality is busy with the fourth and final review of the current five-year Integrated Development Plan (IDP) for 2021/22.

In his address, Mayor Coetzee reminded Councillors that an IDP is a municipality's five-year development plan and needs to be reviewed annually.

Such a review affords Council the opportunity to "pause and assess" whether it is still on track to attain the strategic direction set out in the initial five-year IDP that covers the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2022.

Overstrand's executive management team (EMT) collectively agreed that the strategic direction and objectives as well as the vision and mission should be retained, but that it is incumbent upon every councillor and member of staff to embody the municipality's vision, namely to be a centre of excellence for the community.

"Service excellence must drive what we do," the Mayor said, urging everyone to re-embed two simple questions – "How can I help? / Friend, what can I do for you?" – in Overstrand's organisational culture.

He continued by saying, "This year, our IDP review and budget compilation processes have been influenced by an unsure future due to Covid-19 and the negative effect the lockdown had on our economy, post-Covid-19 recovery plans and the possibility of a second wave. Globally, the effect of Covid-19 is devastating. Closer to home, at least 2.2 million South Africans have lost their jobs and the country's fragile economy has fallen into a deep recession with a 8.2% contraction expected for 2020.

"The drafting and implementation of Overstrand's post-Covid-19 recovery plans will be aligned with the three focus areas (jobs, safety and wellbeing) contained in the Western Cape Government's recovery plan. Consequently, during the strategic review sessions, the team deliberated the status quo of these focus areas and possible new initiatives for the coming financial year.

"One of the discussion points in this regard focused on how big companies can be attracted to our area. To this end, the team agreed that the municipality should continue to foster its relationships with existing businesses and look at what other municipalities are doing to attract investment, particularly investors that do not require large pieces of land. Furthermore, every effort should be made to expedite the elimination of unnecessary red tape.

"The team also concurred that tourism is extremely important to Overstrand's economy and that for this reason, particular attention should be paid to promoting attractions that will draw tourists to the area year round."

With reference to job creation, the Mayor said that the possibility of larger infrastructure projects' contribution in this regard ought to be re-examined, and that extending Wi-Fi connectivity to those areas not yet covered must be prioritised where ever possible.

Moving on to the draft budget for 2021/22, the Mayor cautioned that as much as the IDP informs the municipal budget, the outcomes of Overstrand's post Covid-19 recovery plan are bound to have an impact on the review process.

"The Covid-19 virus is still with us and this has left us with a difficult economic climate in which to budget," Coetzee said. "Consequently, very stringent budget guidelines have been issued to the administration: All expense items that can be controlled by the municipality must reflect a zero increase and, at this stage, tariff increases must be limited to 3.5%."

Both the draft 2021/22 IDP review and draft 2021/22 budget will serve before Council in March 2021 for consideration, where after the public will be afforded an opportunity to submit their written comments in the course of April 2021.

Meanwhile, all stakeholders are urged to participate and to engage in the platforms created for the IDP and budget review process. Visit Overstrand's official website www.overstrand.gov.za to learn more.

STREETLIGHT ON THE BLINK?

Due to the initial lockdown and the restrictions still being imposed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, fixing faulty streetlights might have fallen behind.

To help us attend to this matter, please be sure to state your street address and/or the street corner closest to you when next lodging a complaint about a faulty streetlight with your local administration:

Hermanus: 028 313 8000 or 028 316 2630

Kleinmond: 028 271 8404 or 028 271 8484

Gansbaai: 028 384 8300 or 028 384 8358

Stanford: 028 384 8500 or 028 384 8376

Also remember to ask for a reference number and to quote this number in all follow-up correspondence.



FIREWORKS PROHIBITED

Overstrand Municipality kindly reminds residents and visitors that no fireworks or fire crackers may be discharged anywhere at any time – not in your own backyard and not on a beach.

Note, too, that the use of Chinese (sky) lanterns and/or flares for any purpose other than an emergency is prohibited by law.

Retailers and street vendors are also reminded that the sale of fireworks in the Overstrand municipal area is forbidden and that they will be prosecuted if found guilty of transgressing the applicable municipal by-laws. For the sake of everyone's safety and a peaceful festive season, please adhere to this rule.

BEACHES RETAIN BLUE FLAG STATUS

Grotto, Hawston, Kleinmond and Castle Beach will, once again, proudly fly their Blue Flags for the duration of the 2020/2021 season, while Onrus Beach retains its pilot status for the second year running.

The Blue Flag season officially opens on 1 December which means that lifeguards will be on duty from that date and that dogs will not be allowed on these beaches for the duration.

As in the past, beach wheelchairs will be available at Grotto and Kleinmond, and people living with disabilities who wish to make use of this facility are welcome to ask the lifeguards on duty for assistance.

On those beaches where dogs are still allowed, owners are requested not to bury dog poop in the sand or to throw it out to sea. Please pick it up and dispose thereof in an appropriate and hygienic manner.



TINY PLASTIC PELLETS LATEST THREAT TO OUR SHORES

Since end October, beginning November, copious amounts of tiny plastic pellets have been washing up along the Overstrand coast – particularly in the vicinity of Gansbaai and Pearly Beach but, more recently, also in the vicinity of Voëlklip.

These pellets, also called nurdles, are the raw material nearly all plastic products are made of and are about the size and shape of a lentil.

This type of pollution poses a serious threat to marine life and, armed with buckets and sieves, several volunteers turned up on beaches where nurdles were spotted to help counter a potential environmental disaster.

Since most nurdles and micro-plastic will float in water, a quick way to separate them is to simply dump scooped up nurdles, sand and other debris in a bucket of water and then to scoop up the nurdles floating on top.

For obvious reasons, nurdles collected in this manner cannot be disposed of in the usual manner and must be dumped in the designated wheelie bins placed at strategic points along the affected coastline.

Should you spot a load of nurdles, please be sure to call any of the following as a matter of urgency and to state the exact location:

- 🌊 Overstrand Fire and Rescue – 028 312 2400
- 🌊 African Penguin and Seabird Sanctuary – 072 598 7117
- 🌊 Overstrand: Environmental Department y – 028 316 3724
- 🌊 Dyer Island Conservation Trust – 082 907 5607



Nurdles found at Kammabaai, near Voëlklip beach.

BE VIGILANT!

With the summer holidays around the corner, Overstrand Municipality would like to caution all residents and holiday-makers to be extra careful and to always put safety first. Opportunistic criminals are always lurking. Don't make it easy for them:

- Do not attract unwanted attention by openly displaying cash, cameras or other valuables.
- Valuables should also not be left on car seats where they are clearly visible.
- Never leave your valuables (mobiles, wallets, et cetera) unattended.
- Walking and texting at the same time can be dangerous. *This is especially true when you approach a road or are about to cross it since your attention will be elsewhere and you will be paying less attention to what is happening around you.*
- Best not to go cycling or hiking on your own. If you do, be sure to tell somebody where you are going and when to expect you back.
- Be sure to save the following emergency numbers on your mobile:

📞 OVERSTRAND FIRE & RESCUE – 028 312 2400

📞 OVERSTRAND LAW ENFORCEMENT – 028 313 8980

Remember: Rather err on the side of caution than regret the consequences later.



Kleinmond Librarian, Vanda de Jager, about to return some disinfected material to the shelves

YOUNG AND OLD INVITED TO RETURN TO OUR LIBRARIES

As reported in the previous edition of Bulletin, all public libraries in Overstrand are yet again accessible to the public.

In addition to the basic rule – “no mask, no access” – the following measures will be applied to maintain social distancing and to ensure everyone's safety:

- 🕒 Time spent in the library will be limited to 30 minutes per patron
- 🕒 Internet slots limited to 30 minutes each must be booked in advance
- 🕒 Borrowed material must be returned in sealed bags and placed in bins/boxes at the entrances to the libraries

For obvious reasons, reading rooms and study areas will remain closed for the most part till further notice.

Temporary COVID-19 library hours:

GANSBAAI • Mondays to Fridays from 09:30 – 17:30

BUFFELJAGSBAAI • Mondays to Fridays from 09:30 – 17:30

ELUXOLWENI • Mondays to Fridays from 09:00 – 17:00

STANFORD • Mondays to Fridays from 09:00 – 16:30

KLEINMOND • Mondays to Thursdays from 10:00 – 15:30 and Fridays 10:00 – 15:00

BETTY'S BAY • Mondays to Thursdays from 10:00 – 15:30 and Fridays 10:00 – 15:00

HERMANUS • Mondays to Thursdays from 10:00 – 15:30 and Fridays 10:00 – 15:00

HAWSTON • Mondays to Fridays from 10:00 – 15:30

MOUNT PLEASANT • Mondays to Fridays from 10:00 – 15:30

SAY “NO” TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

With the tarring of Galjoen and Perlemoen Streets in Sandbaai, residents had every reason to celebrate because, fifty years later, gravel roads are now finally a thing of the past.

There to celebrate this momentous occasion were members of the Ward 7 Committee, the responsible Municipal officials and, of course, residents and their family and friends.



Lenie van Wyk cuts the ribbon while Cllr David Botha looks on.

The honour to cut the ribbon to open the newly tarred roads was bestowed on Lenie van Wyk. She is the widow of former Overstrand Mayor, Gideon van Wyk, and has worked tirelessly for many years to raise funds for this neighbourhood project.

Also attending the ribbon cutting ceremony was Ward 7 Councillor, David Botha, who remarked that the time has now come to move on to other worthy projects such as installing more streetlights and traffic calming measures and to upgrade various parking areas along the Sandbaai coast.

"Completion of the work on the Tekkies Pool parking area at the southern end of Main Road will be completed by the end of the year," Botha promised.



Ward 7 Councillor David Botha and long-time Sandbaai resident Lenie van Wyk accompanied by members of the ward committee, Municipal officials and family and friends were there to celebrate the tarring of the last two gravel roads in Sandbaai.

UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF MICRO-ENTERPRISES



To encourage owners of micro-enterprises to take up the funding available via TREP, Overstrand Municipality recently hosted a number of information sessions in Protea dorp, Kleinmond, and in Mount Pleasant.

In conjunction with the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD), Overstrand's directorate Local Economic Development and Tourism recently hosted a series of workshops aimed at enabling micro-enterprises to place their businesses on a sound financial footing.

All too often, the likes of township-based spaza-shop owners, fruit and vegetable vendors, mechanics, hairdressers and seamstresses find it difficult to sustain their enterprises due to a lack of financial support.

Under the auspices of the DSBD, the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) and the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA) have now stepped in, which means it is now possible for micro-enterprises to apply for funding via the Township and Rural Enterprise Programme (TREP).

For more information, contact the LED projects coordinator, Luvo Bomvana, on 028 313 5071 or email lbomvana@overstrand.gov.za. Alternatively, visit Vuyani Yisa of the SEDA at Shop 44, Gateway Centre, Hermanus or contact him on 028 312 2359 / 079 154 7234 or email vyisa@seda.org.za.



STORM-WATER UPGRADE ON TRACK

The contractor assigned to upgrade the storm-water system in the Hermanus CBD (Main Road, Marine Drive and High Street) as well as in the industrial area (Mimosa and Prellwitz Streets) says everything is going according to plan and that no significant challenges have been experienced to date.

The anticipated completion date for this project is 30 April 2021.

HERewith THE PROJECT STATUS REPORT:

Phase 1 – Area 1 (Marine Drive and parking): Construction along Marine Drive 90% completed and parking area open for vehicles. Pedestrian access and movement possible.

Phase 1 – Area 2 (Hamewith building): Construction 80% completed with only the storm-water connection point, from Main Road to entrance of the building, still to be completed.

Phase 1 – Area 3a (Main Road): 70% of construction works completed and Main Road re-opened.

Phase 1 – Area 3b (Dirkie Uys Street): Construction works commenced

Phase 2 – Area 2 & 3 (High Street): Construction works commenced



SAVE OUR BABOONS: DON'T FEED THEM

Baboons are resourceful and have learnt to associate humans with food. They know that human-derived food means that they do not have to spend hours foraging the mountains to find their own.

The sad truth is that human-derived food poses a serious threat to baboons and can cause serious, irreversible damage to their health, notably diabetes and dental decay.

Living in the Kogelberg Biosphere and along the Klein River mountain range requires that residents and visitors take heed of the wildlife that share their space and adapt their lifestyles accordingly.

Don't create a problem animal: Obey the law

All too often, problem animals are the result of human behaviour.

As a consequence, Kleinmond, Betty's Bay, Rooi Els, Pringle Bay, Voëlkop, Fernkloof (including the Golf Estate), Hermanus Heights, Eastcliff and Kwaiwater had to be declared problem-animal areas.

In these areas, all households must make use of animal-proof bins to dispose of their waste and strictly adhere to the provisions set out in Overstrand Municipality's By-law on Integrated Solid Waste Management.

Failure to do so will result in hefty fines.

Dispose of household waste in an environmentally friendly and baboon-proof fashion:

- No household waste may be left out on the pavement prior to the day of collection [see schedule below].
- All waste containers must be secured with baboon-proof locking devices.
- In all instances, excess refuse should be taken to the nearest transfer station and not dumped next to municipal bins.
- In the case of weekenders and holidaymakers, arrangements should be made with a nearby neighbour to dispose of household waste on the scheduled day.



Take precautions to protect your home against marauding baboons

A marauding baboon troop can cause serious havoc and even pose a threat to young children and pets. Keeping in mind that baboons can wiggle through even the smallest gap and have no problem opening doors, please be sure to secure all doors and windows and to set the alarm before you leave your home.

It is also advisable to not leave ripe fruit and vegetables in plain sight, and to keep dog bowls and bird feeders well without reach.

React appropriately when confronted with a marauding baboon:

- Make sure that young children and pets are safely secured in an enclosed room.
- Then, rather than confronting the animal, give it some space to exit unhindered.
- Also remember that it would be unwise to confront a cornered animal in an attempt to recover any food/items it has "stolen".
- In the aftermath, be sure to disinfect the affected areas and to use gloves when removing baboon poop.

To report baboon incidents, call the baboon hotline on 072 028 0008. All reports will be most appreciated.