



Bushman's Kariega Estuary Management Forum

We Care For Our Estuaries -The Heart of Our Community

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON Wednesday 23rd
DECEMBER 2015 IN THE KENTON TOWN HALL AT 10h00**

Present approximately 95 members and visitors

Welcome:

The Chairman Ted Gilfillan opened the meeting by extending a warm welcome to all members and visitors.

Apologies:

Trish Milliken, Doug Walters, Pam Matthews, Rob and Margaret Snodgrass, Bill and Annabelle Northrop, Dot Cohead.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the AGM December 2014

The minutes of the 2014 Annual General Meeting had been published on the web site after approval by the committee at their meeting held in January 2014.

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

Chairman's report for the AGM on 23rd December 2015

It is a great pleasure to welcome you all to our Annual General Meeting. Estuary Care via its committee has continued to be active on both the Kariega and the Bushman's rivers and the paths and banks serving both rivers. It has also been involved in the monitoring of pollution, recycling and rubbish disposal, and of property development, all of which affect the health of the river systems.

The Committee

I wish to thank all members of the committee and other members of Estuary Care who have contributed to our efforts this past year. The committee is drawn from local people, from representatives of the Ndlambe Municipality, The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and from S A National Parks. Our thanks also go to Dr Angus Paterson who has continued to act as a consultant to

Estuary Care on Environmental issues. During the year, George Poole, Kieran Bremner and Andrew Murray resigned. We thank them for their contributions to Estuary Care. The committee met eight times during the year. It has continued to operate on a “portfolio” system with various members of the committee taking on different duties. I shall introduce them separately and ask them to stand.

- Chester Wilmot has undertaken much work on towpaths, beach front walls, slipways and jetties. This year Chester has continued to focus on trying to find a workable solution to the problem of the ingress of sand up the Bushman’s River and also Dry Bones Valley.
- Dr Bill Northrop looks after river signage, channel markers and Bushman’s River paths.
- Trish Milliken (who is presently overseas) fulfils the role of Communication, which carries with it the maintenance of the web site, and the production of News Letters.
- Daphne McNeil performs a vital interlinking role with SST and its associated Education groups. She also checks on the cleanliness of our towpaths.
- Dr Dirk Meiring has acted as a watchdog looking after the interests of his community.
- My wife Rem is our secretary for committee meetings and has taken on the project of the beautification of the Bushman’s River bridge embankment.
- Siyanda Ngqina is employed by Estuary Care on a part time basis.
- Dot Cohead looked after the sale of boat licences with our agents.
- Johan Grobler keeps a watch on property developments.
- Dr Tony Ribbink heads up the Sustainable Seas Trust and has joined our committee as an associate.

Each of these people deserves special mention for the results they have achieved this past year.

Here is a brief overview of our activities:

Dry Bones valley & siltation of Bushman’s River mouth

Chester Wilmot has given freely of his time and energy to involvement in the on-going Dry Bones Valley project. He has travelled extensively to gather information on the problem and has sought to advise and influence Municipal, Provincial and National authorities about the nature and seriousness of the

problem. He has also addressed meetings of concerned property owners and interested people. This subject has been extensively covered on our website www.estuarycare.co.za It would take too much time to expand on it here, but I urge interested people to study the articles, including the historical ones. The Municipality and a group of concerned homeowners are engaged in trying to find a solution and a way forward.

Construction, Repair and Maintenance

We continue to maintain the towpaths along the banks of the Kariega and Bushman's estuaries. This involves repairs to the curbing and surface of the path as well as attention to the drains and Chester Wilmot has done a magnificent job on upgrading the Kariega west bank towpath. We engaged a local contractor who, on a regular basis, has trimmed the bush along the Bushman's east bank towpath.

We recently had occasion to call in the Green Scorpions, a Government body charged with looking after the environment, to check on illegal cutting of indigenous bush along the banks of the Bushman's estuary.

We, together with Kenton Ratepayers Association (KOSRA) and Bushman's River Mouth Ratepayers Organisation (BBRAG), look after the upkeep of paths and stairways leading down to both estuaries.

Clearing of rubbish along the banks of the Bushman's and Kariega Rivers

Estuary Care continues to support the efforts of concerned Bushman's residents who undertake a regular clean up along the banks of the river. Our thanks go especially to Doran Herringer and his team.

The Sale of Boat Licences

We continued to act as an agent for the Ndlambe Municipality up to the end of June 2015. Sadly the Municipality has not seen fit to reappoint us as their agent for the sale of boat licences.

Despite Ndlambe Municipality's withdrawal of Estuary Care's facilitation in the sale of boat licences (which incidentally contributed about 35 % of our income) we have revised and organized the printing of the boat licence rules in

our boating pamphlet. Special thanks to Seeff Properties Kenton on Sea and Sibuya Game Reserve for their sponsorship of the pamphlet.

All boat licences are now sold through the Kenton-on-Sea Municipal Offices during office hours.

River Signage and Channel markers

Bill Northrop has recently upgraded channel markers and boating signs at the slipways and up the estuaries. These signs are invaluable guides to boaters using the estuaries. We consult with regular users of the rivers as to the placement and content of the signs. Our thanks go to Sibuya and to Johann Smuts for the use of their boats and expertise in the placing of river signs. Other people/organizations who have also helped are: BPT for the loan of the water pumps, The Kenton Marina, Garry Kenny for the maintenance of rock warning signs on the Kariega, Jerome and Tatum Walker for their help in manufacturing floating warning signs and our employee Siyanda who is now highly skilled in placing of poles and signs.

Communications

Trish Milliken has put her considerable energy and talent into the production of four newsletters. She has managed the website www.estuarycare.co.za which has become a mine of useful information. In addition she has seen to the production of the new Estuary Care Brochure.

Court Action against Ndlambe

An application has been brought jointly by KOSRA, Estuary Care and Nature's Landing Homeowners' Association against Ndlambe Municipality, the Mayor, the Municipal Manager and the Director of Community Protection services.

The three aspects of the case for which court orders are sought relate to:

1. The Municipality's contempt of the Court Order January 2009 prohibiting the regular overflowing of sewage from the conservancy tank in Rivers Bend into the Bushman's River. This was only finally achieved more than four years after the Court Order. Coupled with this is the fact that the Marselle sewage treatment works is unlicensed and there is concern that treated effluent flows from the sewage works into the Bushman's River.

2. The failure to close the illegal, overflowing and unmanaged refuse dump at Marselle; the failure to stop the incessant burning of the rubbish; the failure to prevent plastic and other waste from blowing across the veld; and the failure to implement proper recycling and waste management for Kenton and the surrounding areas. Most recently, the dump has been burning continually for two weeks with the Municipality taking no steps to extinguish it, despite repeated requests.
3. The consistent failure of the Municipality to respond to any correspondence from rate payers, as required by law.

The Municipality and its legal advisors have repeatedly refused to meet with us despite several requests to try to resolve the issues and have been obstructive in their approach to the litigation.

Dredging on the West Bank of the Bushman's River.

The Bushmen's Preservation Trust (BPT) have been engaged since 2014 in trying to clear a channel on the West Bank of the Bushman's river. They used a pressurized slotted pipe to agitate sand on the outgoing tide. They encountered obstructions to this technique in the form of rubble deposited in the river from the 2012 floods and obtained official permission to excavate to remove the rubble. This excavation was done in early March 2015 using large excavators on tracks, and created a large offensive mound of dredged material stretching for some 250 metres along the Western shores of the river. It still remains very much in the public eye. Estuary Care objected to the Department of the Environment (DEDEAT) along with numerous other concerned residents. The BPT have been authorised to proceed with the removal of the remaining sand but need to obtain official consent for the operation of vehicles below the high water mark.

Estuary Care remains of the view that rubble contained in the sand should be sorted out by hand labour and the sand should be put back into the river.

Property Development.

Estuary Care continues to register as an Interested and Affected Party when Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) are launched in the area. Through this mechanism we are able to put forward our comments regarding these developments.

The upgrading of the Bushman's River embankment on the R72.

This project is also a joint effort with KOSRA and the National Roads Engineer. It aims to make the embankment parking areas between the two bridges an attractive and pleasant place for tourists to stop. The area has been cleared of exotic trees, tables and chairs installed and trees planted on either side of the tables to provide shade. Additional ARMCO barriers have been erected and "No stopping" signs for trucks have been erected. The area has been levelled and planted with grass and is mown on a regular basis.

Environment Collaboration Group

We continue to be represented by Daphne McNeil on the Environment Collaboration Group and Daphne has participated in three educational activities initiated by organisations belonging to this Group.

Sustainable Seas Trust

The Sustainable Seas Trust (SST) is producing a book about Bushman's and Kariega estuary management care. The purpose of the book is to develop caring communities who know, understand and promote the estuaries. The vision for the book is to see involvement by people caring for the environment . SST encourages members of the public to share their knowledge and photographs about Bushman's and Kariega estuaries by sending materials to info@sst.org.za or to drop in at the SST Offices, 1st Floor Threeways Centre to share their contribution/s.

We are pleased to report that Estuary Care has contributed to funding the initial investigation for the book.

Assistance to river users

Over the holiday periods, Estuary Care pays for Siyanda Nqina to assist estuary users at the slipways with the issue of pamphlets and of general information regarding boating and fishing regulations. He also assists with boat launching and he services the Municipal toilets at the Kariega slipway.

Estuary Care Finances

Estuary Care		
Financial statement for Financial Year 1 Nov 2014 to 31 October 2015		
Income		
Interest from Savings account	R 535.27	
Interest from Money Market	R 10,246.88	
Subs	R 51,869.00	
Boat licence income	R 67,390.35	
Donation & refund for benches	R 11,607.00	
Other income	R 4,487.54	R 146,136.04
Expenditure		
Bank charges	R 780.58	
Path clearing & mowing	R 2,057.50	
Web site set up and costs	R 9,504.29	
Wages	R 14,150.00	
Stationary	R 17,484.70	
Signage	R 7,775.90	
SST for book	R 17,072.00	
Teardrop banner	R 1,600.00	
Path Maintenance cost	R 41,075.85	
River clean up contribution	R 1,800.00	
Toilet cleaning material & uniform	R 309.60	
Commission to agents for boat licences sold	R 15,143.45	
AGM expenses	R 975.08	
Lazer pointer	R 559.00	
Benches purchase	R 14,598.00	
Contribution to legal fees	R 30,000.00	
Dune project	R 5,311.00	R 180,196.95
Total		
Opening balance as at 1 november 2014		
Cash on hand	R 341.25	
Bank account	R 80,208.28	
Money Market	R 133,251.62	
Surplus/(deficit) for the period	-R 34,060.91	R 179,740.24
Closing balance as at 31st October 2015		
Cash on hand	R 8.65	
Bank account	R 36,232.94	
Money Market account	R 143,498.65	R 179,740.24

The Chairman spoke to the Financials statement which was approved on the proposal of Mr Glen Craig and seconded by Mrs Jean Baker.

Election of Committee members for 2016

The committee has 13 elected members. Four are to stand down in 2015 of whom three are available for re-election. George Poole, Kieren Bremner and Andrew Murray resigned during the course of the year. We thank them for their service to the committee. Shaun Bates was co-opted during the year to take on the Fishing and Bait portfolio.

Title	Name	Resident/position	Elected From	To stand down	Availability for 2016
Mr	Ted Gilfillan	Resident Kenton on Sea	2013	No	
Mr	Johan Grobler	Resident Kenton on Sea	2014	No	
Dr	Marianne Balarin-Pieters	Resident Bushmans	2013	Yes	No
Mr	Chester Wilmot	Resident Kenton on Sea	2012	Yes	Yes
Mrs	Daphne McNeill	Resident Kenton on Sea	2012	Yes	Yes
Dr	Bill Northrop	Resident Bushmans	2012	Yes	Yes
Mrs	Trish Milliken	Resident Kenton on Sea	2013	No	
Dr	Dirk Meiring	Resident Bushmans	2013	No	
Mrs	Rem Gilfillan	Resident Kenton on Sea	2014	No	
Mrs	Dot Cohead	Resident Kenton on Sea	2014	No	
Mr	Shaun Gates	Resident Bushmans		No	Yes

The three members of the committee who were available for re-election, plus Shaun Bates, were proposed by Mr John Matthews and seconded by Mrs Jean Baker. There were no other proposals.

Talks

The meeting concluded with addresses by two speakers from The South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON):

Mr Johan Pauw- The why and how of long-term environmental observation systems and research.

Dr Shaun Deyzel-A local reflection on Red Tides, Floods and other extreme coastal phenomena.

The interesting addresses were followed by questions and discussion.