



SSNW Watch

December 2024 | Newsletter | Christmas Edition

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

It was Queen Elizabeth II who used the Latin expression "annus horribilis" (horrible year).

We started out the year with a series of fires fanned by gale-force winds. We were hit twice by fires.

We also had our fair share of electrical outages caused by falling pylons, blown cables and transformers, and then we had some water outage issues and then same flooding that impacted some of our communities negatively but filled the dams. In addition to the above, we went through a stressful period during and after the elections.

Summerstrand has also not escaped the various forms of crime that have gripped some of the other suburbs in Port Elizabeth. We had a particularly bad period where we saw an increase in house break-ins, theft of cars, car break-ins and muggings with knives and guns, not only along the beachfront but also in the neighbourhood streets. Students were also the victims of criminals, losing laptops, iPads, and cellphones whilst on their way to university or returning home.

If this was not enough, we started to get organised crime visiting our area (the card scammers and car jammers).

Our tourism industry also felt the dark hand of crime, thus resulting in numerous cancellations. The now famous video clip that went viral was unfortunate, but the "wake up call" was needed, as unpleasant as it may have been to listen to. This culminated in a well arranged protest on the lawns in front of the Beach Hotel - Well done to the organisers and those who attended.

Residents of Summerstrand, you need to know that many people have been pushing hard against those intent on making our lives miserable.

SAPS and Metro Police have been trying their very best to operate with their limited resources in terms of "feet" on the ground and vehicles. The problem is with the best will in the world of you do not get support at government level, it will not happen. In early July, we approached the CEO of the Business Chamber and assisted in the construction of a letter that was sent to the new Minister of Police on the 12th July 2024. The purpose of the letter was to highlight all of the problems that we are having at the beachfront and the impact on tourism, etc. In essence, we were motivating a request for a Nelson Mandela Bay Beachfront Tourism Protection Unit (the same as Cape Town and Durban). Sean Tappan raised this issue again with the Minister at a meeting in Wells Estate on 21st July 2024.

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"With one kind gesture you can change a life. One person at a time you can change the world. One day at a time we can change everything."

Our current situation is that SAPS received 23 policeman but still only have one dedicated vehicle for beachfront duties. Metro on the other hand are still waiting for approval to get 24 Peace Officers via the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

During the last two months, we have noticed a decrease in various criminal activities, this may be attributed to the following:

1. Visible policing – SAPS and Metro are trying hard with limited resources.
2. New SAPS recruits are operating in plain clothing. They apprehended a mugger in Happy Valley during the evening.
3. Four robbers driving a white polo and robbing students in Summerstrand, were arrested.
4. SAPS were after a car jammer who was breaking into cards at Barneys.
5. SSNW have been very active on night shifts.
6. SSNW and SAPS apprehended a robbery suspect at S-Bend who was in possession of a stolen 9mm star pistol.

We go into the new year with some “green shoots” and cautious optimism. Hopefully our economy will continue on an upward trajectory and more jobs will be created. On a good day our beachfront looks really good! The objective is that our beaches must look good every day.

On behalf of the Summerstrand Neighbourhood Watch, we would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Stay safe and enjoy your time with your families. To our SSNW patrollers and their families, thank you for your continuous support. To our security partners, SAPS, Metro Police, ATLAS, F-ADT, and CityWide, thank you for your support and stay safe. To our waste management and cleaning department, a very big thank you for all of your hard work trying to keep our beachfront clean.

Best Wishes,
Ian Millar
Chairman SSNW

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER

A year ago we were approached by the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber to work with them and form the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber Beachfront Safety and Security Cluster.

The formation of the cluster enabled SSNW to achieve the vision of the greater use of camera technology in the fight against crime. SSNW had started the camera roll out project but funding proved to be difficult. In addition, the chamber, through the offices of the Chief Executive Officer, would provide us with another important lobbying partner who could reach out at local, provincial and national level.

We take the opportunity to thank all of the cluster members for their support and were it not for their financial support, we would not have been in a position to implement our various projects, e.g. camera roll outs, waste bins, and the solar lights.

If your hotel or big business wishes to become a member of the cluster and contribute to the various projects, then please get in touch with Chanelle Gilfillan (clusters@nmbbusinesschamber.co.za).

Goodbye Sean, Hello Enrico!



During the year, our Operations Director, **Sean Tappan**, resigned his position in order to take up his new appointment as Ward 2 Councillor of for the DA. Sean has spent many years with the Summerstrand Neighbourhood Watch, in the roles of Chairman and Operations Director.

Sean is a man with an abundance of energy and a passion for serving his community and is therefore well-suited to his new role.

Sean remains a member of SSNW and also gives his time to patrolling with the rest of the SSNW team. We wish Sean all the best going forward in his new role. So far, Sean has had a baptism of fire (ha-ha).



Enrico Vermaak has been a member and committed patroller for the last two years. Enrico has his own very successful IT support company, called Virtucom. He is in the right place at the right time, given our extensive involvement in camera technology.

Enrico works very closely with our technology partners, Andrew Raath of ITTS who installs and manages all of our equipment.

We wish Enrico all of the very best in this parttime role of Operations Director for the SSNW.

Through The Lens

As most of you are aware, we have been building an array of cameras ranging from the Beacon to the garage near the Paxton Hotel.

These cameras are a combination of licence plate recognition cameras, pan tilt and zoom cameras, as well as normal static cameras. All access and exit roads to Summerstrand have LPR cameras. All of our cameras are monitored by the CityWide Control Room.

We are also pleased to announce that another array of big cameras have just been commissioned. These being in terms of the Metro E2 Camera Monitoring Programmes. These cameras will supplement ours and are positioned at Kings Beach, Humewood Beach, Happy Valley, Something Good and the PIPE. CityWide will also monitor these cameras and all cameras will be fed into a joint operational control centre for the city.

The SSNW Camera Project really started in its infancy from a few years ago in Gomery and Richardson Avenues. We have certainly come a long way, especially in the last twelve months.

We thank our ex Operations Director, Sean Tappan and ITTS, Andrew Raath for taking us on this exciting technology journey. Our new Ops Director, Enrico Vermaak is equally up for the task!

In this game, the monitoring of cameras is critically important and in this regard we appreciate the fine work done by CityWide, Stephen Moore and his team.

We would like to once again thank the Nelson Mandela Bay Chamber Beachfront Safety and Security Cluster for providing the finance to enable us to fulfil our dream objective of this large camera rollout project. Thank you!



Where have you “bin”?

We have now manufactured and installed twenty large manufactured and plastic tilt bins on galvanised stands which have sea mammal motifs fixed on the sides.

- 5 bins at Kings Beach (whale)
- 7 bins at Humewood/Happy Valley (penguins)
- 8 bins at Hobie lawns (dolphin)

We would like to thank Darryn Rudman and his team from GBD Engineering for making a fine product and for doing a great installation job.

In addition, we thank Dr Peter Swartz, whose idea it was. It took a while but just look at the final product with a galvanised frame!

To Babs and Dr Kithi, you made the right decision to implement these drums and the people who work hard to keep the beaches clean really love them.

We now need to have an anti-litter awareness campaign. Sadly, the area after a good day at the beach is left in a terrible state and we thank our cleanup team for the excellent work that they do.



Let There Be Light



Many of you will recall our launching of solar lights in the Barneys carpark front row between the old Yacht Club and KFC, as well as the parade area, and end of the pier, and spotlights parallel to Beach Road. This project was managed by SSNW and sponsored by the Boardwalk Hotel. Well, they have lasted 13 months and have passed the test. The only problem initially, were the brackets having to deal with gale force winds. ITTS resolved this problem and new galvanised brackets were made.

Our supplier, Mesmerise Lights and Transform Electrical, have been very supportive of our solar lighting project. After our infamous assault and mugging at the Happy Valley bridge, we installed a number of solar lights alongside the bridge on the valley side. These have also passed the test, as those who want to steal the cable in the poles cannot find any cables (ha-ha).

As a result of Barneys Charity Golf Day, Mr Craig Mittens, sponsored the solar lighting project by giving the Beachfront Safety and Security Cluster R49 750. This amount went towards installing lights on the walkway from the shell hat, across the bridge to Barneys, plus four more lights on the Beach Hotel side of the parking area. The Chamber Cluster contributed a further R52 066 to make this all happen.

Again, a big thank you to Craig Mittens, Barneys, and the golfing guys and girls, as well as the Cluster and SSNW. ITTS did a great installation job.

SSNW PATROLLERS

Our patrollers have been doing an excellent job as "eyes and ears". We thank them for giving of their time and fuel. Many of our patrollers do more than the required twice a month two hourly patrols. We appeal for more people to join us, as a lot of work is being done by few. The picture below highlights the illegal car guard bibs and knives confiscated during a few night "raids."



Our patrollers also report on infrastructure damage and calling our crime partners to assist when we apprehend perpetrators. In addition to this, the patrollers have been involved in operations involving card scammers and car jammers. SSNW patrollers still drive around our streets late at night and report any unusual incidents that take place during their patrols.



Breakdown of Illegal Housing

During the course of the year, SSNW, together with SAPS, illegal housing department and waste management, have been involved in removing illegal housing structures in the Summerstrand area.

These structures and their immediate surroundings are extremely unhygienic, there is litter everywhere and they are also a fire hazard, thus posing a potential danger to residents and hotels.

Bush camps removed this year have included those camps behind the Boardwalk Hotel, adjacent to the tip, Kings Beach, behind the Town Lodge, and two near the Humewood Golf Course. In most cases, we have found knives and evidence of drug use, as well as credit cards, keys, handbags, etc.



THE SUMMERSTRAND FIRES

In the early part of the year, Summerstrand and Forest Hill experienced a spate of serious fires fanned by gale force winds. Some of our western residences were under serious threat, as well as Sasol Garage and Summerdunes Retirement Village.

Once again, SSNW was at the forefront with our men and women in full communication with each other and the fire department. We had patrollers on bikes, going through the bush, scanning the terrain in the path of the fires and we had Chris Opperman and Glenn Pappin out with their mini fire tenders.

Our community also contributed immensely by providing lip ice, eye drops, water and chocolate to all of our firefighters and especially those from the Humewood Fire Station.

We once again thank the Fire Chief and the firemen and women of the Humewood Fire Station.



SSNW also contributed towards Fireman Roland Jerling's trip to the Firemen World Games held in Denmark. This is a demonstration of absolute fitness. Not only is Roland a fireman, he is also a qualified first aider and lifesaver.

Firefighter Roland

SSNW donated to the fund supporting Roland Jerling to participate in the Toughest Firefighting competition which was held in September in Aalborg, Denmark.

50 countries participated in this competition, whilst Roland and the team did not get into the finals, the experience gained will be helpful in competing next year.

The annual event is to test the competency, strength, and mindset of firefighters. Roland is based at our Humewood Fire Station, and he previously won a number of competitions in South Africa. Roland is also a fully qualified lifesaver and first aider.



M SECURITY SERVICES



Given the limited policing resources in both the Metro Police (human and vehicles) and SAPS (mainly vehicles), SSNW, together with the Mandela Bay Business Chamber Cluster, decided to deploy security personnel along the beachfront from December to the second week of January 2025.

M Security Services, who are already operating in the city, are deploying security guards who will patrol from McDonalds to Radisson Hotel. These patrols will be split into three segments and will operate from 4:00pm-4:00am. They will be seen moving along the sidewalk on the hotel side of the road. These patrollers will have two way radios and will be in constant touch with the control room who will also be in touch with the CityWide control room in the event SAPS, Metro or emergency services are required.

A very big thank you and shout out to the Mandela Bay Beachfront Safety and Security Cluster and its members who have made this initiative possible. These members are businesses and hotels on the beachfront who contribute on a monthly or annual basis.



CITYWIDE SECURITY TEAM

Merry Christmas to one and all from the CityWide security team.

Over this festive season CityWide will be assisting with security along the beach front. CityWide's state-of-the-art control room will be monitoring the many CCTV cameras that have been installed along the beach front. The more than 100 cameras have been paid for by the MBDA, the SSNW and the beach front business cluster. Not only will we be looking pro-actively for incidents along the beach front we will also be able to assist SAPS, Metro police and traffic with investigations, should an incident arise.

We have recently enjoyed a huge success with use of the cameras in tracking a car involved in scamming tourists and residents along the beach front. Despite having more than 5 different numberplates that they were using on this car, the number plate recognition technology and work from the control room enabled this car to be tracked, recovered and the card scammers to leave the area. We know that they will be back, but we will be ready for them. This success highlights the difference between a control room and monitoring centre. Control rooms interact with the police and other security services and institutions and can track vehicles in real time.

CityWide has proven to be the fastest growing start up security company in the country making huge strides over the past 5 ½ years in various areas of operation. CityWide is a SAIDSA approved company with a state-of-the-art control room. We have increased our fleet of response cars from 6 to 16 over this short period of time and our client base has grown accordingly. Our recent introduction of German alarm monitoring technology into our control room allows us to despatch the fastest vehicle to an alarm based upon Google maps traffic patterns. This improves even our industry enviable response times. Another 1st is our Geo location, GPS-based cell phone panic button which will allow us to find you wherever you are in our response area. This gives our clients an anywhere based panic. We are market leaders in the use of technology and have recently been appointed by the MBDA and the Nelson Mandela Bay business chamber to monitor their street-based cameras in our GQ based control room.

Please remember not to drink and drive and to ensure that your alarm is armed at all times.



Season Safety Tips From Fidelity ADT

Fidelity ADT urges Summerstrand residents to remain vigilant about personal security, following a spate of muggings, attacks and robberies along the beachfront and shopping mall areas. As the days get warmer, Gqeberha beaches will no doubt begin to fill up as we head toward Summer.

Warmer weather and busier beaches unfortunately also come with a surge in criminal activities including muggings, theft, and even attacks in beachfront areas.

Bernadette Nel-Naude, East Coast General Manager at Fidelity ADT shares the following safety tips to protect yourself and your belongings at the beachfront and at shopping malls during the festive season:

S E R V E | S E N S E | S A F E | S H A R P E N | S H I F T

- 
- **Always be vigilant:** Keep an eye out for suspicious individuals, as well as for any activity that looks or feels out of place and alert the nearest authorities or lifeguards if you do witness a crime.
 - **Lock it or leave it:** It's best to avoid bringing any expensive valuables, electronic devices, or to display fancy and expensive jewellery while on or around the beachfront areas. Be practical in what you pack, utilise beach bags that are able to securely lock, or leave your valuable possessions at home.
 - **Lock your car.** When you park close to the beach or shopping mall, make sure your car is properly locked, and all windows are closed. Do a quick check to see that no valuable items are visible to any passing pedestrians.
 - **Keep an eye on the kids.** If you are in a group with youngsters, make sure you always know where they are.
 - **Safety in numbers.** There is a definite benefit to being among friends or acquaintances that can look out for one another. It means one person can look after the bags while the others go for a swim.
 - **Arm your alarms.** When you leave your home or go to bed make sure you arm those alarms as security companies are reliant on receiving signals to assist.
 - **Test your alarms.** Make sure you regularly test your alarm to ensure it is in optimal working order.
 - **Update keyholders.** Make sure that you update your keyholders to ensure that your security company can get hold of the person who will allow access into the premises when needed.
 - **House sitters.** Notify your security company of any persons that will be on the premises while you are away.

Fidelity ADT, together with the South African Police Services (SAPS), local Community Policing Forum (CPF) and neighbourhood watches are working in partnership to conduct regular hotspot patrols in order to deter crime in these areas.

"There's absolutely no reason to let would-be criminals put a damper on your beach time or shopping fun. Vigilance and situational awareness are your strongest weapon, along with a few key tips to safeguarding yourself, your family, and your belongings," concludes Nel-Naude.



A WORD FROM ATLAS SECURITY



Atlas Security Summerstrand Incident Alert WhatsApp Group Ensuring a Safer Community for Our Clients

At Atlas Security, we are committed to enhancing the safety and security of the communities we serve. One of the ways we do this is through our *Atlas Security Incident Alert WhatsApp Groups*, including the newly launched group dedicated to Summerstrand. These groups are designed exclusively for our clients and monitored 24/7 by our control room to provide immediate and efficient responses to incidents reported by our members.

Our decision to create these dedicated WhatsApp groups stems from the need to prioritize and allocate resources effectively to those who rely on us as their security provider. Messages sent to these groups are treated with the same urgency and importance as a signal received from a client's alarm. This level of attention ensures that we can act swiftly and decisively to keep our clients safe. However, this requires clarity on the purpose and scope of these groups to avoid spreading our resources too thin.

Why We Made This Change

Over the years, we have proudly played an active role in assisting community safety initiatives, including participating in external community groups. These efforts have fostered collaboration and a collective approach to safety, and we acknowledge the critical role these groups play in bringing communities together.

Unfortunately, we have faced challenges in continuing this model. Our participation in community groups often resulted in us responding to incidents for non-clients or individuals without any security provider. While we are passionate about contributing to safer neighbourhoods, this growing demand has begun to compromise the quality of service we can deliver to our loyal paying clients.

In some instances, potential clients declined our services, citing that they already benefit from our assistance through these community platforms—essentially receiving our services for free. This has created an unsustainable situation that obstructs our ability to provide the exceptional, client-focused service that Atlas Security is known for.

What Sets Our Groups Apart

The *Atlas Security WhatsApp Groups* are exclusively available to our clients, ensuring that the resources of our highly skilled control room and response teams are dedicated to those who trust us with their security needs. To maintain the integrity of these groups:

- Membership is vetted to include Atlas Security clients only.
- Keyholders of protected premises (such as family members) are eligible to join.
- Non-clients are encouraged to sign up for Atlas Security to gain access to these critical services.



This approach allows us to focus on delivering the highest level of protection, giving our clients peace of mind that their security remains our top priority.

The Success of the Summerstrand Group

The Summerstrand group has already seen remarkable success in enhancing community safety. Our teams have arrested 43 suspects in the area for various crimes, demonstrating the effectiveness of this initiative.

One standout example was a recent major arrest following a string of armed robberies in Summerstrand. Thanks to the expertise and dedication of one of our Armed Response Officers, these criminals were brought to justice.

Here is his story:

"I've been a part of the Atlas family since April 1, 2009—15 years now. Even though I have had some breaks in service, most of my adult life has been with Atlas. My family keeps me motivated, and there is also an adrenaline rush when catching or searching for a suspect. It is a reminder that you are alive, focused, and driven to make our community a safer place. I take pride in knowing that I have a purpose in this world: to make it a better place for everyone."

On the night of the arrest, he made the critical decision to search in the Central area—a choice that proved spot-on. "I have worked in Central for years. It is an area with a lot of crime, and many criminals use Parliament Street's nightlife as a cover. We have had many successful arrests there, recovering stolen vehicles and apprehending suspects after incidents like hijackings. When I spoke to the victims that night, they described the robbers as foreigners, and I knew that many stolen items end up being sold in Central. With that in mind, I focused on Rose Street and Parliament Street, where we have previously made numerous arrests."

His years of experience and deep knowledge of the area were pivotal in tracking down the suspects. "Experience is everything, especially in Central. Over the years, you develop a sixth sense for criminal activities—you start to understand their habits, actions, and movements. To catch a suspect, you have to think like one, anticipate their next move, and figure out where they will hide. That is what helped me that night."

A Message to the Community

We understand that this decision may impact some residents, and we do not take this step lightly. We continue to respect and support the incredible work being done by Neighbourhood Watch groups and other community initiatives. Private security companies, like Atlas Security, play a pivotal role in crime prevention, but the demand on our industry has reached unprecedented levels. For this reason, we are refocusing our efforts to serve those who have chosen us as their trusted security provider.

To those who are not yet part of the Atlas Security family, we encourage you to join us. Let us work together to create a safer environment for all. For more information or to sign up, please contact us.

Thank you for your understanding and support as we continue to adapt and improve our services to meet the needs of our clients.

We would like to wish those who celebrate Christmas, a peaceful and Merry Christmas. We would also like to thank the SSNW for their unwavering dedication throughout 2024 as they continue their fight against crime in the area.

- Wayne Hart; Marketing Director of Atlas Security

A Helping Hand

Blake is a young man who sits near the sewage pump house at Something Good. Blake tries to earn a living by operating as an unqualified car guard. Recently, Pam Harth of Summerstrand, decided to help young Blake get qualified as a car guard Level E. To do this he had to get his ID and study the modules required to pass, which he did at 100%. His next stop is PSIRA (Private Security Industry Regulations Act) for his final approval to be an officially qualified car guard.

His story is soup for the soul and how, if you put your mind to it, you can try to rise out of poverty as opposed to becoming a criminal.

Can you see the gem in people? The untapped potential?

Below is Pam's story!

"My interest started when a new car guard appeared on the side of Something Good. He is neat, polite and speaks well. As the weeks have passed and my husband and I have chatted more to him, I realised that he could not be there legally without an E security, car guard certification. This must be done through Ulunthu Training and would cost R780, apart from the fact that he would have to get to their premises near the bottom of Mount Road for 3 days of training.

I requested help on the Chat group. Two other ladies agreed to donate money only to be paid to me once I had receipts for his course. I took him to register, and he proceeded to do the course which also included 2 exams for which he achieved 95% and 100%. WHAT A HUGE SMILE HE HAD WHEN HE CAME OUT WITH HIS LAMINATED CERTIFICATE.

He still needs to register with PSIRA and get a badge from the municipality which will cost a further amount, about R200. However, I shall go into the PSIRA offices with him on Monday and pay by card as they won't take cash. I have since taken him to Mount Road Police Station to have his fingerprints done formally and a copy of his certificate certified.

Ian Millar, Chairman of the SSNW, has now offered to reimburse me for the PSIRA registration and SSNW will also provide Blake with a suitable car guard bib.

Blake cannot wait to finish this process and is keen to show other car guards his certificate and to tell them what he has done." – Pam Harth



STRAY CATTLE

Despite discussions with cattle herders, we continue to have regular visits to our residential area. These cattle come down through the bush behind the airport in the vicinity of the sewage works. There are no kraals or fencing up that way which is not helpful.

Whilst some residents enjoy seeing some of these healthy looking herds and their calves, they are a nuisance, as not only do they eat the flowers and shrubs in your garden, but they also pose a danger at night on Strandfontein Road with no lights and vehicles travelling at high speed.

Our Ward 2 Councillor has tabled this matter at council. In the past there were rules in place for the management of cattle near the Walmer township. This is being looked at again, especially as this could lead to issues like foot and mouth disease.

Contact number for cows or stray animals: 041 506 2565/93 or 079 490 0540 (after hours)

FURRY FRIENDS

During the course of this year we have had numerous dogs and cats go missing and in most cases they have been found. In too many cases, however, it is a battle to find the owners. Please folks, if you want to have pets then they must be well looked after. Please make sure your pets have a collar and or a chip. Amongst our pet community we have a number of escape artists, so please ensure your premises and boundaries are well secured.



One of our escape artists, Ore, in the picture above, was found in the bush near the University. Whilst many of us went in search of Ore, Chris Opperman of Sasol, using a drone, was the hero who found dear Ore. To those caring members of our community, thank you for your support on our Members Summerstrand Info WhatsApp groups. Social media technology enables fairly quick recoveries.

Should you wish to make any donations to the Summerstrand Neighbourhood Watch, you can do so by contacting Lerryn Mew (082 325 9815).

Our Slippery Friendssss

By now you are all very much aware that it is snake season. Our venomous residents are Puff adders, Boomslangs, Rinkhals and Cape Cobras.

In this edition we have asked our patroller, reserve policeman and snake handler, Shaun Roberts, to give us some advice.



SNAKE SEASON IS UPON US!!

With the warmer weather comes snake season and, in our suburb, alone we have already had to relocate around 10 snakes to more remote areas where they can thrive.

Here are a few key points to take into consideration when out and about.



1. Awareness in the Outdoors

- Stay alert when hiking, camping, or working in areas where snakes are common.
- Stick to clear paths and avoid walking through tall grass or brush without checking the area first.

2. Home Precautions

- Keep your yard tidy, remove debris, and seal any gaps where snakes might seek shelter.
- Store firewood off the ground and away from your home.
- Regularly check sheds, garages, and crawl spaces for snakes.
- When walking around at night, always do so with a torch and closed shoes.

3. Snake Encounters

- If you see a snake, stay calm and keep your distance. Do not attempt to handle or provoke it.
- Teach children to respect wildlife and avoid touching or approaching snakes.
- Be mindful of where you place your hands and feet, especially when climbing rocks or reaching into underbrush.
- Contact one of the registered snake catchers, Port Elizabeth has a few and if possible, try and get a photo of the snake.
- Please make sure all pets are locked away inside the house.
- If the snake is inside, try and keep there as this is easier for us to catch and work with.
- Everyone's safety is crucial.

When it comes to venomous snakes our area has the following:

Puff Adder (*Bitis arietans*) (COMMON IN SUMMERSTAND)

- Venomous with cytotoxic venom that causes tissue damage.
- Thick-bodied and slow-moving with a distinct chevron pattern.
- Found in various habitats, including grasslands and rocky areas.

Boomslang (*Dispholidus typus*) (COMMON IN SUMMERSTAND)

- Venomous with hemotoxic venom affecting blood clotting.
- Arboreal snakes (different colour patterns - combination of green, black, yellow, brown and olive)
- Found in forests, bushveld, and gardens.

Rinkhals (*Hemachatus haemachatus*) (NOT AS COMMON BUT AROUND)

- Spitting snake with neurotoxic and some cytotoxic venom.
- Characterized by black and white banding on the throat.
- Common in grasslands and wetlands.

Cape Cobra (*Naja nivea*) (NOT AS COMMON BUT AROUND)

- Highly venomous with neurotoxic venom.
- Colour ranges from yellow to brown or black.
- Found in open savannas, shrublands, and arid areas.

Night Adder (*Causus rhombeatus*) (NOT AS COMMON BUT AROUND)

- Mildly Venomous
- Smaller snake with a distinctive V-shaped marking on the head.
- Common in grassy and wooded areas.
- Not to be underestimated especially when it comes to pets, children and those with health issues.

In most cases, if I get a callout for something venomous then it is either a puff adder or a boomslang. We are seeing more cobra activity in our area and Rinkhals have been positively identified in certain areas of Summerstrand.

Remember that not all snakes are venomous, we also get a lot of callouts for Western Natal Green's, Olive Snakes and Brown House Snakes and the famous Mole Snake.

We need to remember that snake encounters are rare, they would rather not interact with us, also, we are living next to a nature reserve which thanks to all the rain is looking very healthy.

Finally, snake rescuers do this type of work/offer this type of service at their own cost. Most will request a donation of some sorts, the purpose of this is not to make a profit but to help cover the costs incurred.

There are two key parts to the process, the rescue and the release, the release usually happens in areas that are as isolated as possible.

Snake handler emergency number: 082 7111341

Go Big Community Development

During this year, the Summerstrand Neighbourhood Watch sponsored the annual school marching drill programme. The purpose being to instil discipline and respect for uniform among our youth. The aim is too also provide these learners with a positive outlet, whilst keeping them away from the influences of grime, gangsterism and substance abuse.

A school marching drill workshop was held on the 21st and 22nd June 2024 and was facilitated by a trained officer from SAPS, SANDF and NMB Metro Police.

40 schools participated in the programme in preparation for the big competition day which was held at the Gelvandale Stadium on the 17th and 18th August 2024.

Each school platoon marched to the beat of their very own school band and their performance was "top draw" stuff! The winners went to Cape Town for the championships.





TOP THREE JUNIOR SCHOOLS

Zanoxolo Primary (GOLD)

Alpha Primary (SILVER)

Sapphire Road Primary (BRONZE)

TOP THREE SENIOR SCHOOLS

Chapman High (GOLD)

Soqhayisa High (SILVER)

Gelvandale High (BRONZE)

SSNW IN SUMMARY

If it were not for the members support and that of the body corporates, and business in the area, the Summerstrand Neighbourhood Watch would not be able to function.

SSNW has been in operation for approximately three years and hosts 580 members on our Telegram Crime Report group and a dedicated members group of 157 on Telegram and 216 on the WhatsApp group. This does not include business and apartments.

SSNW is a non-profit organization. The executive committee and patrollers give of their own time and travel expenses are for their own account.

Patrollers are required to dedicate themselves to patrol duty a minimum of twice per month and two hours per session and to be on call in the event of emergencies.

We do provide some 45 patrollers with bibs, magnetic decals, caps, beanies and first-aid kits, as well as specific training programmes from time to time. In addition, they have the cellphone Zello App as a means of radio communication.

SSNW has an executive committee consisting of the following:

<u>CHAIRMAN:</u>	Ian Millar
<u>VICE CHAIRMAN:</u>	Glenn Pappin
<u>OPERATIONS DIRECTOR:</u>	Enrico Vermaak
<u>SHIFT ROSTER ADMINISTRATOR:</u>	Thomas van Deemter
<u>MEMBER ADMINISTRATOR:</u>	Lerryn Mew
<u>SECRETARY/SOCIAL MEDIA ADMIN:</u>	Candice Millar

As chairman, I report to the chairman of the Community Policing Forum (CPF), Kevin Slattery, and Warrant Officer Van der Berg at Humewood Police station. The forum meets once a month and consists of top officers from SAPS, Metro, Traffic, Crime Detectives, Ward Councilor. This forum provides the ideal platform to raise issues affecting our sector.

SSNW works very closely with our alliance partners, ATLAS, Fidelity ADT, CityWide and SAPS, Metro, Traffic, Dark Water Anti-Poaching, and, in many cases, we are first responders.

In addition, SSNW was approached by the Nelson Mandela Business Chamber to assist with setting up the Mandela Business Chamber Beachfront Safety and Security cluster. This partnership has enabled SSNW to achieve its vision of providing cameras from the beacon to Walmer Boulevard. In addition, we are also able to use the CEO office of the Chamber when leverage is required. An example is the recent letter we wrote to the Minister of Police regarding the lack of crime fighting resources for our Humewood SAPS and Metro Police. We need more visibility in Summerstrand.



CAMERAS

We have various types of cameras along the beachfront, i.e. Pan, TILT, Zoom, Number Plate Recognition, etc. We have installed over R600 000 worth (about 60 cameras). A large number of beachfront hotels and businesses have contributed to this project.

Our cameras are monitored by Citywide Security Company and will soon be joined by approximately another 20 cameras installed by Mandela Bay Development Agency. This is great news for our beachfront. Some of these cameras have already led to arrests.

ISSUES IN OUR SUMMERSTRAND SECTOR

NMU

Having a university in our suburb presents numerous challenges, e.g., student behaviour, parties, alcohol, reckless driving, litter and demonstrations.

As eyes and ears, we are involved one way or another in all the above. With students living in and around our suburb, we also must deal with those predators who prey on them.

STREET PEOPLE

This is a big problem right now with no immediate end in sight. Numbers are increasing and they are not just from Port Elizabeth and are mostly from the Northern Areas.

With unemployment so high and drug and alcohol addiction, many of these people will never be gainfully employed. In addition, increasing numbers are mentally unstable.

These homeless folk lie around all over, leave a mess and there is also a hygiene problem.

We are directly involved in finding the bush camps and breaking them down together with the SAPS and illegal land occupation officials and the cleansing department.

This year along we have removed camps near the cemetery, behind Gomery Avenue, near the Boet Erasmus Stadium, behind the City/Town Lodge, two near Humewood Golf Course and two in the bush behind the Boardwalk, adjacent to the Second Avenue Sports Field.

Social welfare need to get more involved, and we raise this at CPF meetings. In the meantime, we keep pressurizing them. We try to make it difficult for them so that they may leave our area and return home.

BAG SCRATCHERS

We try to minimize the mess they create by giving them a hard time and encourage them to keep the place clean by forcing them to tidy up. Cleansing department provides us with a lot of black bags which are used where messes occur. Residents must stop putting bags out on a Sunday night. Often, we search bag scratchers to ensure they are not carrying out water meters, copper pipes, post boxes, etc.

THE TIP

This is the gold mine for the street people who, during the night, would remove plastic, wood, etc which they used to build their shacks. We have repaired the gate and cut down the Port Jackson around the tip. In addition, we inspect the place and encourage them to tidy up.

Residents must stop dumping their building rubble and garden refuse outside the tip before opening hours.

CATTLE

We continue to have dairy cows and livestock in our suburb. Not only do they eat residents' plants, but they are also a hazard for drivers, especially during the night. SSNW has established contact with herders in Walmer whom we call when their cattle are spotted here. These cattle come through the deep bush right out at the sewerage works, behind Walmer Township. The issue of stray cattle is currently being dealt with by our Ward Councillor.



COPPER/METAL THIEVES

SSNW will involve our security partners when we uncover incidents or observe suspicious activity. You will have seen articles in the Herald regarding copper cable thieves in Summerstrand and railway steel thieves below the South End cemetery.

CAR HIJACKING AND CAR BREAK-INS

SSNW patrollers, when alerted, will also report any sightings of stolen vehicles or suspicious cars in our area when occupants may be involved in these activities. We encourage victims to go to the police station and open a case. In many cases, our cameras have assisted the SAPS, etc.

BEACHFRONT CLEANLINESS

SSNW will report to policing authorities of civil disobedience issues and by-law contravention, i.e., drinking in public, indecent exposure/urinating in public and noise pollution, braais and camping on the front lawn. In addition, when funds are available, we have cleaned up the walkway in front of Millers and at the S Bend. Together with the Cluster, we have purchased twenty new tilt bins.

LOST PETS

Our footprint and social media platforms enable us to get photographs and calls for help and these are quickly dealt with and there is a very good success rate. Apart from pets we have had some success in finding lost individuals.

SNAKES

Our member, Shaun Roberts, is an IT specialist, police reservist and snake catcher so he gets numerous calls to catch puff adders, boomslangs, cobras, etc.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

In cases where there are car accidents and police have not arrived; our members will assist with traffic management.

EFF DEMONSTRATION – 20TH MARCH 2023

Much has been said about this day, but Summerstrand residents should know that an immense amount of planning went into securing what ended up being a reasonably safe day.

SSNW planned where to strategically position their patrollers to provide intelligence to the joint operations center thus advising the police of the numbers of demonstrators, their position and if they were armed.

In addition, Forest Hill Neighbourhood Watch, South End and SSNW removed all tyres that had been hidden around the suburbs.

FIRES

SSNW was very involved with dealing with the fires that impacted our area, Forest Hill, near our big sub-station as well as behind Sasol garage.

SSNW also collected water, eye drops, throat lozenges, etc., for our Mandela Bay firemen during the tough weekend of fires. We received a mobile fire pump and hose and water tank from Xtreme Projects as a thank you for the work we did.

POLICING PRECINCT AT THE PIER

Along with other sponsors we, at SSNW, invested R16 000 on our visible policing project thus ensuring the provision of cameras, screens, batteries, solar panels, computer, etc. This project proved to be very successful during the December/January holiday period. Our objective is to get 100% in 365 days of the year. Sadly, our SAPS and Metro Police were not able to sustain the good work that was done, this due to shortage of resources.

SOME COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

We also contribute to those in need, and we involve our community in many of our projects.

- Metro police project using sport to bring children together in Helenvale ("Katanga").
- Clothing, blankets for the policewoman whose home was burnt down and who has several children.
- Flood victims' relief by providing food and clothing to the disaster management team at South End.
- Refurbishing areas within Animal Welfare Society kennels.

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- Assisting our top firemen to go to Denmark for the World Fireman Championships.
 - Schools Marching Project
 - School presentation at the Pier on Gender Based Violence.

SOLAR LIGHTING:

As we reported in the Weekend Post, we are also trying to promote solar lighting and, in this regard, SSNW, together with the Boardwalk Hotel, installed a number of solar lights in Barney's carpark area as well as on the bridge at Happy Valley. Barneys and the Mandela Bay Business Chamber Beachfront Safety and Security Cluster financially contributed to the purchase and installation of about thirty solar lights from the shell hat, along the walkway to Barneys. SSNW and ITTS project managed.



CONTACT US

Scan the code to become a member:



Mail: ssnwatch@gmail.com

For membership enquiries: **082 325 9815**

Please support our social media accounts:

Twitter: **@SSNWatch**

Instagram: **@SSNWatch**

Facebook: Summerstrand Neighbourhood Watch

Website: www.ssnwatch.co.za