

GARDEN ROUTE DM 12 MONTHS IN REVIEW

2nd Consecutive Clean Audit for Garden Route DM



GRDM Municipal Manager,
Monde Stratu, presenting the
Clean Audit Award.

The Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM) recently garnered a remarkable achievement, earning recognition from the Western Cape Government and the Auditor-General of South Africa for securing a second consecutive Clean Audit.

The GRDM is one of 21 Western Cape Municipalities out of 38 across the country that obtained a clean audit.

There are 257 municipalities in South Africa, which means 14,79% of municipalities in South Africa managed to obtain a Clean Audit.

Gwaiingweg (DR1618) Rehabilitasieprojek op skedule



'n Padskraper besig op die DR1618, 'n projek wat deur die Wes-Kaapse Regering (WKR) befonds en die Tuinroete Distriksmunisipaliteit bestuur word.

Die Gwaiingweg (DR1618) projek, met 'n begroting van R67 miljoen, vorder goed en sal na verwagting teen Junie 2024 voltooi wees.

Die projek word deur die Wes-Kaapse Regering (WKR) befonds en deur die Tuinroete Distriksmunisipaliteit bestuur (TDM) – die TDM voer die Paaie-funksie namens die WKR uit.

Die pad sal 'n 6,8m bitumeneuse oppervlakte hê wat geskik is vir kommersiële landbouvoervoer. Die projek het 'n span van **70 werkers in diens, van wie 44 deel vorm van die Uitgebreide Openbare Werke Program (UOWP/EPWP).**

Regional Fire Station to be operational by December 2023

GRDM's new fire station, valued at R11.6 million, is scheduled to be completed by December 2023. The region will benefit from the services provided by over 40 fire-fighters of the GRDM, who will operate from this modern facility.

The George Municipality has generously waived the property service fees for the GRDM, and the Western Cape Government has contributed R3 million towards the construction of the building.

The GRDM fire station is being constructed in strict adherence to the National Regulations and Standards governing such facilities.



Progress of the construction in June 2023.

Study underway for GRDM to become a Water Services Authority

Climate change and population/economic growth are causing significant challenges for water service provision in the South Africa and in parts of the Garden Route district. The gap between water demand and supply is widening. To address these challenges, the region, as a whole, needs efficient, productive, and sustainable solutions that can deliver tangible benefits.

This crisis is multidimensional, with freshwater becoming scarce due to changing climatic conditions and higher consumer demand. Improving water governance remains a challenge due to current arrangements and a lack of integration between local municipalities and the GRDM.

It is essential for the GRDM to assess water operations, identify current and emerging water issues, and determine the most effective ways to support local municipalities in addressing these challenges beyond 2040. This is why the GRDM will appoint a consultant to do a Section 78(1) Municipal System Act assessment for all municipalities in the region on the function of the Water Services Authority.

The objective is clear: "To make sure that the region is water secure and hence benefit from the spin-offs thereof."



Duiwenhoks Catchment area, located in Western Cape, South Africa, drains the Langeberg Mountains and flows south to the coast, entering the sea west of Mossel Bay in the Southern Cape. The river is approximately 83 km long with a catchment area of 1 340 km².

GRDM's Accreditation Workshop envisions inclusive housing solutions



The workshop was attended by Local, Provincial and National Government representatives.

A successful Human Settlements Accreditation Workshop was recently hosted GRDM. It was attended by Human Settlements representatives, mayors and politicians, as well as stakeholders from the National Department of Human Settlements and the Western Cape Department of Infrastructure.

Discussions revolved around the Human Settlements accreditation application process in general, what the application protocol entails, and what GRDM hoped to accomplish

through accreditation.

GRDM will develop selected programs of Social Rental Housing and Finance Linked Individual ownership housing. These will include residents whose combined monthly household income is between R1 850 and R22 000. Local municipalities will continue to provide and implement their respective Human Settlement Programs of development of BNG Housing and upgrading of Informal Settlements.

Garden Route DM Firefighters delivered outstanding performance at TFA-SA



Some of the GRDM Firefighters, with Mayor Booyesen at the back (in red), at the TFA-SA in Mossel Bay which took place on 16 and 17 September 2022.

The GRDM Firefighters performed well in the competition, with Emile Conrad winning an overall runner-up position in the competition. He competed against 129 firefighters who competed in the individual event. For the relay event, the GRDM men’s team ended almost at top in second (2nd) position.

In the events linked to various age categories, the GRDM landed the following top three positions per age category: Age 30-34 for males: Henrich Leslie – 2nd position. He came 5th overall. Age 35-39 for females: Bonita Conrad – 2nd. Age 35-39 for males: Emile Conrad – 1st. Age 45-49 for males: David van Niekerk – 1st; and Petrus Jordaan – 3rd.

Western Cape Gov. provides GRDM Construction Graders worth R9.4m



With nearly 10 million machines under the capable hands of Roads Workers, the GRDM ensures seamless maintenance and utilisation of these vital resources to service the expansive 47,000km² network of provincial roads in the picturesque Garden Route.

This year to date the GRDM received three graders from Western Cape Government. The last two additions are already being utilised by two (2) maintenance teams serving roads on the outskirts of George.

The first machine was delivered on 14 June 2022 and later in 2022 the team took the brand new graders into acceptance.

Regional Waste Management Facility construction started

A Construction Work Permit was issued on 8 June 2023 by the Department of Employment and Labour for the Regional Waste Management Facility. This means that the contractor, known as Tefla Group (Pty) Ltd, will commence their works in June/July 2023. This is a huge milestone for GRDM because through its previous Public Private Partnership approach, the partner pulled out during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The current landfill site, owned by PetroSA is running out of capacity, while it is still in use by Bitou, Knysna, George and Mossel Bay Municipalities, but won’t be available after February 2024 for waste disposal.



Representatives from the Tefla Group (Pty) Ltd who will be responsible for constructing the regional waste management facility met GRDM on 14 June 2023 to officially agree on the commencement of the construction of the facility.

Small steps with powerful impact - shoe donations



An extatic Executive Mayor, Alderman Memory Booyesen, with school-goers and teachers receiving 40-pairs of shoes for children at their school who do not have school shoes.

The Walk a Child to School Campaign has been in existence for three years. Last year, 14 schools benefited from the campaign.

This year 21 schools received 40 pairs of shoes each. These figures indicate the substantial growth of the campaign since its inception.

The collaborative initiative is annually rolled out by GRDM, Eden FM, Vodacom, the George Museum, the Road Accident Fund (RAF) and the Garden Route Mall. This group of stakeholders work towards a corporate social responsibility vision aimed at changing the lives of the most vulnerable school-goers.

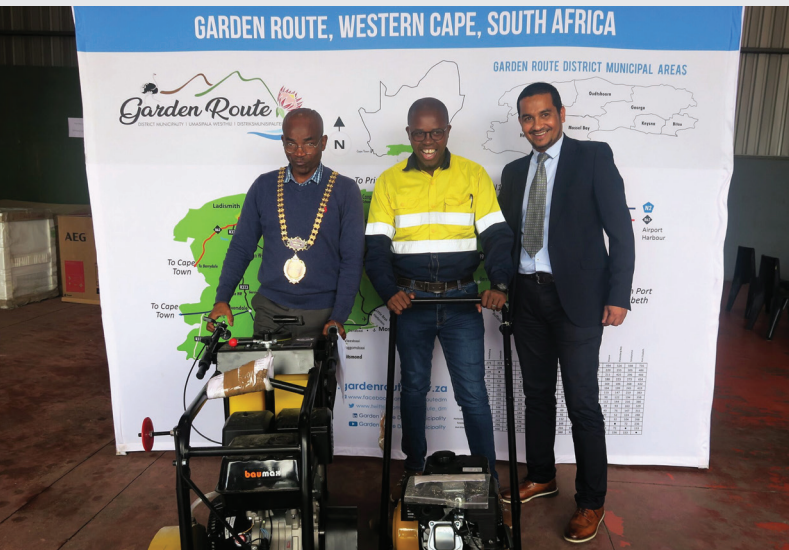
GRDM has supported 16 small businesses so far this year

Small, Medium & Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) in the Garden Route district annually receive much needed equipment/products as part of the GRDM SMME support programme. Over the past 3 years, sixty-six (66) SMMEs benefitted from the programme to the total value of more than R1.6 million.

The GRDM invested a substantial amount of R350 000 in this project for this financial year and as a Municipality, GRDM will roll out more funds in the next financial year.

The development of SMMEs in the Garden Route is invaluable. Small businesses have been challenged in various ways over the past few years and with the economy that is staggering they need support from all corners of government.

Small businesses are often major contributors to job creation. They provide employment opportunities in local communities, helping to reduce unemployment rates and stimulate economic growth. Small businesses are known for their ability to adapt quickly to market demands and can be a driving force in creating new jobs.



Lulamile Ngolo from Furicom, residing in Plettenberg Bay, receives a compactor plate and a road cutter. With him (left), is Ald. Memory Booyesen (GRDM Executive Mayor) and CEO of Casidra, Dr Keith du Plessis (right).

GARDEN ROUTE CAREER FESTIVAL

13 to 14 JULY 2023

Knysna High School Sports Fields

See more here: skillsmecca.gardenroute.gov.za

GRDM installed 1700 Smoke Alarms at informal settlements



Several households from the Kannaland and Bitou municipal areas received smoke detection devices in their homes so far - more will be installed in other areas going forward.

The GRDM Disaster Management Centre, in collaboration with the Western Cape Department of Local Government Disaster Management & Fire & Rescue Services, Bitou- and Kannaland local municipalities have installed 1700 smoke detection devices in high fire-risk informal settlements.

In the first phase of the project, which concluded at the end of March 2022, approximately 1400 smoke alarms were installed in the Qolweni/Bossiesgif area of the Bitou local municipality. Kannaland local municipal area was the site for the second phase of the project, which was completed within three months, from 20 December 2022 to 20 February 2023. Approximately 300 devices were installed within the informal areas of Calitzdorp, Van Wyksdorp, Zoar, and Ladismith.

GRDM Rep Forum paves the way for inclusive development



Robust interactions took place during the previous GRDM Rep Forum in Knysna. Concerns raised, amongst others, were water issues in the Buffelsnek area; that a Local Economic Development Summit is needed for the Garden Route and not only a Skills Summit; that there are many farmers in the area, but those farmers do not have the land resources to start with farming/agricultural activities. It was also mentioned that the ownership of the residential area at Buffelskop near the coast is threatened and that the matter must be looked at. Other issues raised were the energy shortage and that alternative energy resources that also need to be relooked at for emerging businesses, amongst others.

The GRDM Representative (Rep) Forum, which is held twice a year, is a structure which institutionalises and guarantees representative participation in Integrated Development Planning (IDP) processes. Representatives from all constituencies at each municipality are invited to the Rep Forum. Information shared.

At each forum, the GRDM IDP unit captures the comments and inputs from communities. Comments are then sent to municipalities or sector departments for action. A report is then submitted to a Steering Committee meeting. Regional issues that requires co-planning in terms of budgeting and implementation are be discussed at a the quarterly Municipal Managers' Forums and District Coordinating Forums (Mayoral), as well as IDP forums. Before the next Rep Forum, a feedback and progress report is shared with all members.

Fire Emergency Evacuation Drill conducted at the Frail Care Centre



Firefighters from GRDM with residents and staff of Lyttelton Frail Care Centre in George soon after the fire drill.

GRDM Fire Services were requested to assist the Lyttelton Frail Care Centre in George with a Fire Emergency Drill.

As part of the training, officials carried out a thorough size-up of the premises and inspected the building to ensure they acquired a proper assessment of all applicable elements.

The GRDM team was warmly welcomed by the occupants and staff on their arrival and the elderly were brave enough to enjoy the little action facilitated by the GRDM team.

De Hoek Mountain Resort now saves R40 000 electricity monthly



A ground-mounted, grid-connected solar photovoltaic (PV) system was installed, along with a grid-connected battery system at De Hoek Mountain Resort.

De Hoek Mountain Resort, 35km from Oudtshoorn and around the corner from the world renowned Cango Caves, has reduced its electricity bill of R45 000,00 per month to R5 000,00 per month.

This installation has yielded in 90% energy costs.

The next phase of the project will be rolled out to include the following:

- purchase batteries to store enough electricity to carry the entire resort on solar energy while loadshedding is occurring.
- to go entirely off the grid.

GRDM supports Themba lethu Neighbourhood Watch

During late 2022, the GRDM handed over Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to the Themba lethu Neighbourhood Watch. Items included torches, batons and two-way radios.

GRDM was approached by the Themba lethu Area Based Team (ABT), formed by various community structures in Themba lethu, who requested assistance due to the high crime rate in the area for the neighbourhood watch. A request for PPE was received later during a Neighbourhood Watch and Community Forum (CPF) Indaba held.

Advocate Gert van Niekerk, the Executive Deputy Mayor of GRDM, handed over the 90 batons, 20 two-way radios, and 20 torches to the Chairperson's of the different sectors within the Themba lethu Neighbourhood Watch.

Advocate van Niekerk thanked the members of the Themba lethu Neighbourhood Watch for their commitment and willingness to stand out and take the lead. "To sit at home and point fingers, to complain, to 'moan and groan', is always the easy route, but the most difficult part is to wake-up in the early hours and to go out on patrol and to make sure your neighbourhood is safe - that makes you heroes," Van Niekerk said.



The neighbourhood watch receives torches, batons and two-way radios to help them with their mission to make Themba lethu a safer space for all.

Garden Route DM investing in safety at schools

The GRDM hosted the second Safer School Conference in Plettenberg Bay in collaboration with 7 b-municipalities, the Western Cape Department of Community Safety, and the South African Police Services (SAPS) and several school representatives – including learners and principals.

Safer Schools encompasses a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach, with

numerous stakeholders working together to promote school safety and reduce the prevalence of violence.

A game-changer objective of this type of engagement is to link schools with local police stations in order to raise awareness among children about crime and violence and their impact on individuals, families, and education.



Substance abuse was discussed by Dr Reuter from the WC Department of Health.

Agri-Processing gets a R1-million boost

The GRDM has been able to source R1 million funding, after a project proposal was submitted for an Agri-processing project. This initiative forms part of the GRDM’s Joint District and Metro Approach (JDMA).

One of the conditions of the grant is for a steering committee to drive the implementation of the project. Key stakeholders of the project include the Department of Agriculture, CASIDRA, Oudtshoorn Municipality, Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), the Department of Local Government and the GRDM.

The project includes the construction of a multi-purpose processing unit to support the value chain for indigenous products, such as

honeybush, within the Garden Route district.

This project is prompted by a dire need for more processing facilities in the region. “Communities that are mostly wild harvesters are dependent on a few processors within the Southern and Eastern Cape for processing of the tea, with no value adding opportunities existing for these communities,” said Natalie Arries, Senior District Economic Development Officer for GRDM.

“The project aims to provide one processing facility located on the Nooitgedagt Farm (Oudtshoorn) property which is owned by the GRDM.”



The name ‘honeybush’ is derived from the sweet, honey-like scent of the plant when in full bloom with its yellow flowers.

25 Cater Care Students graduated and have now entered the job market

Twenty-five (25) students successfully completed the Cater Care/ Food Handler Programme in March this year. The GRDM last year, on 17 October 2022, kicked off its 2022/2023 training programme in collaboration with the Francois Ferreira Academy.

Last year 223 applications were received from youth across the district for the programme. Ninety-four (94) applicants were shortlisted for interviews, of which 25 were selected to be part of the 2022/2023 flagship programme.

The late Francois Ferreira, one of the GRDM’s valued stakeholders during the last engagement encouraged students with the following words: “In this industry, we change lives, and I hope that what you’ve learned here will, in a small or big way change the way you think and the way you approach life, because this isn’t just a job, but a lifestyle”.

GRDM is responsible for the funding of this programme, with the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Unit contributing towards the stipends for the students.



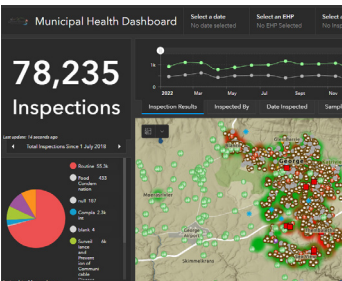
Alderman Memory Booysen with the late Chef Francois Ferreira who was a key stakeholder of the Cater Care Programme with the GRDM for more than a decade.

GRDM creates a first-of-its-kind Municipal Health Dashboard

The GRDM has launched a first-of-its-kind Municipal Health dashboard this year to provide easy access to data that Environmental Health Practitioners (EHP) gather and analyse on a daily basis. “This innovative tool utilises maps to present a heatmap of areas where persistent health issues, amongst others, are flagged, enabling GRDM to identify areas requiring additional interventions to meet health standards,” said Jessica Erasmus, a GRDM Environmental Health Practitioner.

According to Clive Africa, GRDM Executive Manager for Community Services, “the dashboard aligns with Section 1 of the National Health Act, 2003 (Act 61 of 2003), which mandates Municipal Health

Services to monitor various aspects such as water quality and safety, food control, waste management, premises health surveillance, disease prevention (excluding immunisations), vector control, pollution control, disposal of the dead, and chemical safety”.



Green is compliant and red is non-compliant and indicates the status of businesses.

GRDM Communicators win SALGA award

The GRDM Communication team is the winner of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) Award: ‘Most Updated Social Media Platforms’ out of all 44 district municipalities in South Africa! The award was announced and awarded during a ceremony that formed part of the 6th Annual South African Local Government Association (SALGA) Communicators’ Forum in Cape Town.



The GRDM Communication Team (fltr): Xola Makinana (Intern), Marillia Veldkornet (Snr. Communicator), Herman Pieters (Mgr. Communications) & Marlene Nqumse (Snr. Communicator), Jacqueline Thomson: Intern (not pictured).

GRDM receives R5.2 million to train youth in Home-Based Care



Home-based care training to 140 unemployed Garden Routers is rolled out through the Garden Route Skills Mecca initiative.

GRDM was awarded more than R 5.2 million for training of 140 unemployed persons as Personal Care Assistants across the Garden Route district, including seven (7) B-municipalities.

The programme commenced on 1 March and will end by 31 August 2023. Training takes place at various training venues across the Garden Route district where students are exposed to both theoretical training and work-based learning. As part of the programme, learners receive monthly stipends, and at the end of the programme, they will be issued with a certificate of completion.

The Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) aims to create an integrated approach to the development and provision of suitably skilled health and social development workers, to render quality services similar to world class standards. Their ultimate vision, therefore, is to create a skilled workforce for the health and social development needs of all South Africans.

Past fire season statistics

Throughout the past municipal calendar year, spanning from July 2022 to June 2023, the Garden Route district, encompassing Hessequa, Mossel Bay, George, Knysna, Bitou, Oudtshoorn, and Kannaland, has witnessed a surge in wildfires. Deon Stoffels, the GRDM Fire Chief, says a staggering 82 wildfires have ravaged the region since July

2022, leaving 23,848 hectares of land burned.

Comparatively, although the previous year saw three additional wildfires between July 2021 and June 2022, the extent of the damage was slightly lower, with approximately 14,500 hectares consumed.



The after-effects of a wildfire that ravaged through Spuihoek in the Hessequa Region during November 2022.

Oudtshoorn Air Quality rated the best in Africa

A recent study conducted by a Swiss technology company, IQ Air, backed by the United Nations Environment Programme, has revealed that Oudtshoorn, located in the Western Cape of Africa, has secured the top spot on the list of 15 least polluted regional cities in Africa.

The efforts invested over the past decade to enhance the air quality in Oudtshoorn have paid off, as it was historically one of the most polluted towns in the Garden Route district.



A street scene with businesses, people and vehicles in Oudtshoorn, the town with the cleanest air in the whole of Africa.