

# ***New Killarney-Riviera Association***

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Hi everyone

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave of the Covid-19 pandemic continues to kill our friends and neighbours. Vaccinations are seemingly the only defence, but it does not give you total immunity, so please continue to exercise extreme caution even after you have had the vaccination. You can register to be vaccinated online, at <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/evds/tscs/>. Some medical aid funds are arranging vaccination centres, and some Clicks and DisChem stores are also providing the service, but apparently you still need to register first. In the meanwhile, please all continue to observe social distancing, please continue to wear your masks and sanitise your hands, and please continue to be very careful.

The recent days of unrest and looting, and the apparent lack of any urgent police response, once again reminded us that we need to be proactive about our security. It is unlikely that mobs of looters will descend on Killarney, but the television coverage of lawlessness with apparent impunity will probably embolden the local criminals to steal even more cell-phones and handbags. We must therefore be even more alert and aware when out on the streets, or even inside shops.

It is frequently suggested that we should fence-and-boom the entire suburb, thereby shutting out potential "threats". Apart from serious moral issues, the three high-traffic roads running through Killarney and the impracticality of walling-off an entire suburb which was not originally designed to be enclosed, make this option very difficult. In addition the municipal by-laws prevent us from denying access to any pedestrians ever, and we would not really be able to prevent vehicles from driving through at will either.

Once again, people are quick to point out that "other suburbs" have closed off roads. This is obviously true – we have all seen them. However shutting off an entire suburb is different to closing the odd cul-de-sac. Dead-end roads like 8<sup>th</sup> Ave can probably be boomed off, but the Rules will still need to be followed, and that will still be expensive.



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I attach the City Policy on booms and road closures, as well as the relevant report from the Human Rights Council. They lay out the process that will need to be followed in making application for a road closure. If anybody is interested in closing off a road, please take a close look at the details - in particular Section 7 of the Policy. It seems that the taxi associations and their taxi passengers will also have to support the application if we try to close off any road that is used by taxis.

As has been discussed many times before, we can have any level of security protection we want, provided we are willing to pay for it. A foot patrol costs about R25,000 per month for 24/7 coverage. A vehicle patrol costs much more. Our last quote from CAP was about R120,000 per month. For context, the total annual membership revenue for the NKRA for this year so far has been R59,450 from 31 buildings.

We currently have some active street security projects, which only a handful of buildings are helping to fund. Consequently, the best we are currently able to afford is a patrol by a tuk-tuk for part of the day on 4 days per week. If we had more contributing participants, we could have security coverage for more hours. We do get some critical comments about how "other suburbs" have grand security initiatives, but these critics seldom contribute actual money.

Since a CAP patrol project is unaffordable, it has been suggested that we should approach other security companies for a similar – but more affordable – service. For example the Vision Tactical security company has many client buildings in Killarney-Riviera, and they already conduct "preventative patrols" with marked vehicles, along with foot-guards on some pavements, to create visible deterrence. The most affordable and practical approach would be for several dozen buildings to all subscribe to a common armed response panic button service, regardless of which security company you use to guard your premises. If enough buildings share a service provider then they will probably place a dedicated car in our area, which will effectively create a CAP-type protected environment, but with a much simpler funding and admin model. We might even manage to get bulk discounts at some level. Please would you all let me know which armed response service your building is using, and the monthly cost thereof, so that we can prepare a table of options?

In addition, every building still needs to protect its perimeter and gates, in whatever manner best suits your building and your circumstances, and every individual resident needs to be careful when you are out on the pavements. A lot of street crime involves phones being snatched out of



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hands – if only people could manage to walk around without staring at their phones, they would be much safer. Uber-users are particularly vulnerable when they are waiting at the roadside to be picked up, phone in hand and with the PIN-number already activated. Please warn your visitors and neighbours accordingly. It might be an idea for buildings to put up warning signs inside their foyers, to remind people leaving the building to be on the alert.

The recent unrest has been a major source of concern, but Killarney is unlikely to be targeted. The political-criminal syndicates which apparently orchestrated this unrest are dependent on crowds of desperate and hungry people to do the actual work, and Killarney-Riviera is far away from any sizeable community of desperate people. The few homeless people who live on the motorway embankment are too few to constitute a mob as such. However if you do notice anything that looks like a riot developing, please call your security company, as well as the SAPS on 10111 (or 112 from your cell phone). You can also call the Killarney SAPS sector manager (Sergeant Mdlolo) on 082 355 5646. Please post any concerns or information on the community WhatsApp groups and alert other residents if there are any problems. Please do **NOT** post any unverified rumours or fake news, as this can cause a diversion of scarce resources, and may cause unnecessary panic.

Killarney is policed by the Hillbrow police station, and we fall under the Hillbrow Community Policing Forum. The CPF meets monthly at the Hillbrow police station, and the NKRA serves as the Killarney sector-forum thereof. We keep the CPF well informed of our security challenges, as does our ward councillor. However the CPF can only request police action, it cannot order the police to act. I have requested repeatedly for the dedicated SAPS sector patrol car to resume patrols in Killarney, but no joy so far.

If you have any **practical** ideas to improve our security, please do share them, so that they can be taken forward. A "practical idea" is an idea which can actually work in our particular circumstances, and which does not depend on us somehow acquiring a huge amount of extra money, or on the government suddenly developing large amounts of extra capacity. It is NOT a "practical idea" if it starts with "if every resident in Killarney contributes ...", because long experience has shown that very few Killarney residents are willing to contribute to joint security projects.

On a happier topic, the NKRA recently undertook a project to repair pavements which had become dangerously uneven and unsafe. We requested input from the residents, and last week our project repaired major safety issues on the following pavements:



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1. Riviera Road outside Beverley Heights
2. 1<sup>st</sup> Street outside Killarney Gardens
3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street outside Gleneagles
4. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street outside Brenthurst Court
5. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street outside Chartwell
6. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street outside Sevenoaks
7. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street outside Park Avenue
8. Killarney Avenue outside Brenthurst Court
9. 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue outside Park Avenue
10. 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue outside Killarney Park
11. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue outside Chelston Hall
12. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue outside Hatherley Hall
13. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue outside the park gate
14. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue outside Castlerosse
15. 9<sup>th</sup> Street opposite Knightsbridge

The hot asphalt starts to cool as soon as it is loaded onto the truck, and cold asphalt is useless. The weather that week was very cold, and we therefore had to work quickly, so we focused on ensuring the safety of people over the cosmetic appearance of the repairs. In particular we did not cut neat squares down into the existing surface around each hole, as that requires special tools and takes a long time, but rather to save on time and money we just trimmed away the crumbling old tar around each hole, filled it with hot asphalt, and rolled it flat with a compactor. The end result doesn't look as neat as it might have done, but we had to compromise on aesthetics in order to stretch our limited resources to cover as many roads and pavements as possible.

The new asphalt of the patch always extends very slightly above the level of the old surrounding surface, and in a short space of time it will be worn down to match the level of the surrounding surface. The newly patched areas initially contrasted dramatically with the grey colours of the old surface around them. As the pitch in the new asphalt dries out the colour will quickly fade, until it merges into the surrounding grey mass. This fading process can be hastened by sprinkling sand or dust onto the fresh black surface – particularly grey dust such as cement dust, or perhaps some light-coloured building sand.



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The project was originally conceived and approved as a pavement repair project, as we had hoped that the municipality would fix all the street issues themselves. However although the JRA has recently fixed a lot of damage in the "main" roads, they did not address the "low traffic" roads. Most of our streets are actually still in a fairly safe condition, particularly the "main" roads which are regularly upgraded by the municipality. However since the "low traffic" streets seldom get any attention, some of them have deteriorated quite badly over time, and in places they were quite capable of damaging our cars and injuring cyclists and scooter deliverymen – particularly at night. The dilapidated appearance of these streets was also damaging the image of our suburb, and seriously downgrading the resale values of our properties. People who can afford to pay high prices for apartments, tend to also drive expensive cars.

The City is in serious financial difficulty, and the damage to public infrastructure caused by the recent riots is clearly going to delay all "non-critical" maintenance even further. Due to the seeming reluctance or inability of the municipality to address our "low traffic" roads, in our May communique it was proposed to expand the pavement repair project to simultaneously address the most severe damage in the streets as well. There were no objections to this proposal, so while we were out patching pavements, we also patched some serious street damage in 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

It was impossible to obtain reliable and comparable quotes for the whole job in advance, so we worked on the basis of buying one full truckload of asphalt per day, and then doing as much repair-work as that amount of asphalt could cover. Each day we bought a fresh truckload of hot asphalt, and stretched it as far as we could. In addition to the many potholes and areas of subsidence, on four pavements long trenches had been dug by the municipality which were never properly reinstated, and another pavement had been left in poor condition by the fibre-optic people. Fixing these problems required more than just a superficial patch, and it also required more time and more asphalt than we had originally anticipated. Over four consecutive days, we manually trimmed and prepared more than fifty problem spots of various sizes on streets and pavements from Riviera Road up to 9<sup>th</sup> Street, and in total we laid down and compacted 38 tons of asphalt.

In the streets, I subjectively tried to fix every issue where the hole seemed large enough and deep enough to pose a danger to cars and cyclists. In some places the damage was quite extensive, and we ended up spending a lot of extra time and extra asphalt on this as well. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue are in particularly serious condition, and actually need to be properly resurfaced,



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but that would literally cost millions. Because we ran out of money, there are still places in these three roads that are quite dangerous to traffic, and we should aim to patch them next year as soon as we have more funds.

The original pavement-only project was estimated to cost R40,000, but in total the final cost of the combined pavement and street project reached R68,000. We did the best we could with the money we had, sacrificing aesthetics in order to spread the available time and asphalt over the maximum number of serious safety issues. Hopefully the pavements will not be dug up again in the short term. In addition to the serious state of the three roads already mentioned, there are a million other less-dangerous but still unsightly areas on roads and pavements that we wish we could address as well. If any buildings would like to undertake a "localised" project to fix the roads or pavements around their buildings, we can arrange 10 tons of hot asphalt and a skilled crew with compactor machinery for around R18,000 per day. Please let me know if any buildings would like to take this pro-active option?

For this project we only focused on repairing pavement problems that can be fixed with asphalt, and we will need to address the more complicated paving issues in a future project. The paving along Riviera Road outside Daventry Court is particularly dangerous, after having been disturbed many times by various fibre-optic companies. These companies have not put the paving stones back properly, and their man-hole structures stand well above the ground level.

We also noted that some of the trees are damaging the tar pavements quite badly with shallow lateral roots. In some cases where the pavement is very narrow, these bulging tree roots are making the pavement almost impassable to pedestrians. We cannot cut away these roots without harming the tree, or maybe even causing it to fall over, and paving over those root bulges is not always practical. One suggestion would be for buildings with such trees to carefully chop out large neat squares into the tar around those trees, with a pick, so as to make these areas look a bit neater and more formal, instead of the unsightly cracked and displaced tar of the present. You could then maybe create a flower-bed in those squares around the tree roots, and make a damaged area into a feature. A few buildings have already done this, and it looks so much better. However we always need to preserve a safe pathway past these trees for pedestrians, including people pushing baby-strollers or trolleys etc.



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We have been informed of an intention to build the Thabo Mbeki Presidential Library in North Road, Riviera. The plan is to demolish the abandoned electrical sub-station on the corner of Main Road, as well as the current residence of Mr Mbeki in North Road, along with some properties in between these two stands. Getting rid of that deteriorating sub-station will be a big win for the area, and hopefully a presidential facility of this status will bring in some extra law enforcement. I circulated the documentation which we received, and the responses to me were all in favour. Everybody who wished to object was given the contact details, but I am not yet aware of any objections having been submitted. The detailed plans can be accessed via the drop-box link at [https://www.dropbox.com/s/j1uowns3t7203vs/TMPL\\_Section%2038%20Application\\_DRAFT%20HIA.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/j1uowns3t7203vs/TMPL_Section%2038%20Application_DRAFT%20HIA.pdf?dl=0)

An investigation by the Electoral Commission is suggesting that the next round of municipal elections should be postponed to February 2022 because of the Covid risk, however for now the elections are still officially going to be held on 27 October 2021. If you have changed your address since the previous elections, you should check that you are properly registered. You can do this online, at the website <https://www.elections.org.za/pw/Voter/My-ID-Information-Details>.

In a previous communique we proposed to repair the steel palisade fence at the traffic circle in 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which was damaged by a car some time ago. The contractor who recently fixed the adjacent concrete palisade fence quoted us R4,427.50 to replace the damaged pillar and the one section of palisades which are buckled, and to straighten the other affected sections as needed. No member has objected to us fixing this very noticeable problem at this busy intersection, so I have authorised the contractor to proceed with this repair. We very much need to counter the perception that Killarney is suffering from urban decay.

As a result of the expanded street and pavement repairs project, the two fence repairs and the extended street-sweeping project at the illegal taxi rank, our funds are now exhausted for the year. I have had to notify the street-sweeping service provider that we cannot afford to continue with this project for the time being. In truth we cannot really afford to purchase any recurring monthly service without having reliable monthly cash inflows, and ideally we need to find a sponsor for that street-sweeping project. Urban decay is a serious problem this close to the Joburg CBD, and it must be halted and reversed. The available money was better spent on fixing streets and pavements rather than sweeping them, as the repairs will add sustainable value to the



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community for many years, whereas the value produced by the same amount of money spent on sweeping would be erased by further littering in a very short space of time.

However litter also damages the image of the area, and it must be dealt with too. For several years RCS Security has been providing us with a street-cleaning service free of charge. A man named Carlos roams around the area with a wheelie-bin, clearing up litter from over-flowing pavement bins, as well as any other litter he may encounter along the way. He also keeps an eye open for potential security threats, and reports back to RCS. RCS has offered to ensure that Carlos clears the major litter from the taxi area at least once per day, in addition to his regular route. This will obviously not be as thorough as having a dedicated cleaner in that street, but it is certainly better than nothing. We thank RCS for this support. We also ask all buildings to please direct a small portion of your internal janitor capacity to helping keep the streets and pavements clean around your buildings. A lot of buildings have been doing this for many years already, and it is an easy way to make a huge positive contribution to the area.

31 buildings out of the 55 sectional title buildings in Killarney-Riviera have now renewed their NKRA membership for 2021 – about 56% of the total. Many thanks indeed to all these buildings for your on-going support. The current list of the members for 2021 is as follows:

1. Beverly Heights
2. Brenthurst Court
3. Bretton Woods
4. Canterbury Close
5. Chartwell
6. Chelston Hall
7. Christina Court
8. Cranwell Hall
9. Daventry Court
10. Devon Place
11. Dumbarton Oaks
12. Gleneagles
13. Glenhof Gardens
14. Hampshire Mews
15. Hatherley Hall
16. Hyde Court



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17. Interlaken
18. Killarney Court & Gardens
19. Killarney Hills
20. Killarney Park
21. Killarney Village
22. Kingsborough
23. La Camargue
24. Mentone Court
25. Monviso
26. Portofino
27. Rapallo
28. Riviera Mansions
29. Santa Margherita
30. Sevenoaks
31. The Rivas

If your building does make a membership contribution, please ask your managing agent to include the reference number, so as to facilitate the allocation of the payment on our side.

Please would the NKRA members give us feedback on the issues described above? We also welcome all suggestions from all other residents, on all issues.

Keep well, and keep safe. 😊

Wayne Ford



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