Groote Schuur CID launches its Community Gazette

Welcome to the launch edition of the Groote Schuur Community Gazette, the bimonthly mouthpiece for the Groote Schuur Community Improvement District. We aim to keep you updated on a regular basis on the activities of the Groote Schuur CID and happenings in the GSCID area of jurisdiction.

“The Groote Schuur CID has been established since 1 September 2010 and is now operational on our streets,” declared Anthony Davies, Executive Director of the GSCID, which has been operating from its newly refurbished offices at 93 Main Road, Mowbray since 1 January 2011 during a major statutory establishment process. An official media launch took place on 1 September last year, but the GSCID management team could only move in to their new offices in January this year once renovations had been completed. “Our offices are clearly visible on the Main Road in Mowbray and easily accessible to all within the district,” said Davies.

The Groote Schuur CID, in association with UCT and other commercial property owners, aims specifically to address the problem areas of crime and grime on behalf of the entire community in Newlands, Rondebosch, Rosebank, Mowbray and portions of Observatory, which form the Groote Schuur CID’s area of jurisdiction (See map on page 3). It also aims to address the complexities related to issues of homelessness.

Special Rating Areas (SRAs), previously known as City Improvement Districts (CIDs) allow for funding from statutory levies, in the case of the GSCID from commercial property owners and UCT, to provide additional security patrols and cleaning. In addition, the GSCID are also relying on UCT to support them in providing appropriate assistance to deal with the many complexities related to homelessness and the impact of the sex industry in the area.

UCT, who has very generously funded the GSCID establishment costs, has partnered with commercial and educational institutions in the area, the ‘commercial corridor’ along the Main Road, to commence the GSCID operations. UCT has also sponsored three mobile security kiosks which have been deployed in places of high visibility within the Groote Schuur CID precinct. (See story on page 3)

Dr. Max Price, Vice-Chancellor of UCT, said: “Our commitment to the GSCID stems from UCT’s desire to be a good neighbour and to contribute to providing a safer, more enjoyable and cleaner environment to our immediate neighbourhood and to upgrade the Main Road business districts.”

Davies is very excited that they are now fully operational and that all their major service offerings (security, cleansing and social outreach) are in place. (See page 4 for more on these services). “It has been a long road to reach where we are today,” said Davies, “starting with a public participation meeting in February 2010 and culminating in our operating from these offices. In the nine months since the launch, already much has been achieved within our area of jurisdiction. Our board of directors has now been appointed in terms of the By-law under which we operate, and all the remaining statutory requirements, such as the appointment of auditors and obtaining our VAT registration, have been completed.”

Davies advised that they are currently operational in phase one of the Groote Schuur CID - the commercial corridor or business district. In phase two associated operations will extend into the residential area.

Special Rating Areas (SRAs) are clearly visible on the Main Road in Mowbray and easily accessible to all within the district,” said Davies.

The Groote Schuur CID is indeed in experienced hands under the guidance and leadership of Executive Director, Anthony Davies, who was responsible for founding the Claremont Improvement District Company (C IDC) more than 10 years ago. His depth of experience with urban management matters and CID affairs, in particular within the Claremont precinct, made him an obvious choice for his present position as founder of the Groote Schuur CID (GSCID). Davies was initially appointed as a consultant by UCT to ensure that the statutory requirements in terms of the City’s Special Ratings Area By-laws were met. As Executive Director, he will serve on the GSCID Board of Directors.

Davies’ experience in tackling urban management issues will certainly stand him in good stead in dealing with the challenges facing the Groote Schuur CID, an area encompassing the commercial corridor starting from Letterst ed Road in Newlands to Anzio Road in Observatory, a very large operational area.

During his tenure as Executive Manager of the CIDC, Davies was instrumental in the ground-breaking agreement between the University of Cape Town and Amalgamated Transport Services concerning the taxi routes between the Mowbray and Claremont taxi interchanges and the Jammie Shuttle terminus on the Lower Campus of UCT. The agreement provided a model for integrated solutions to taxi related challenges. Other milestones during Davies’ CIDC tenure were the upgrade of the Public Transport Interchange and the completion of the Claremont Boulevard. In 2009 he was awarded Civic Honours for his achievements in initiating and managing the Claremont Improvement District Company over 11 years.
It is a privilege for me to be involved in the founding of the Groote Schuur CID and especially to express our grateful thanks to UCT for their very generous support in enabling us to establish ourselves since announcing our intentions at our first public meeting held on 4th February 2010.

Certainly without UCT’s much appreciated start-up finance, we would never have begun to operate. Our grateful thanks are extended to Dr. Max Price, the Vice Chancellor and his leadership team and to John Critien, the Executive Director and his colleagues in the Properties and Services Branch of UCT, for their commitment and constant support.

It was on 1st September 2010 that we began our operations on the streets of the GSCID. Operations, that I am pleased to say, are now in full swing. Crime is definitely down in our area. Many people are complimenting us that the streets are noticeably cleaner and the increasing challenges and needs of the homeless are being compassionately addressed.

There is still much to be done as we continue our mission to improve our neighbourhoods together with all our stakeholders.

In our next issue we will be discussing the needs of our homeless people in some depth and the launch of the second and exciting phase of operations which will deal with additional security patrols in our neighbouring residential precincts.

Anthony Davies

John Critien of UCT comments:

In August 2006 the idea of the University of Cape Town supporting the establishment of the Groote Schuur CID was first discussed with Anthony Davies. We are delighted that the University has been able to serve both the community at large and our staff and students in this way, and that the GSCID is now operating smoothly and effectively.

With the already excellent co-operation with UCT’s campus security staff, the problems of crime and grime in the neighbourhood of UCT are now being effectively addressed. The GSCID is also well placed to help manage challenges related to issues of homelessness. This is all to the benefit of our students and staff, as well as our neighbouring communities.

We congratulate Anthony and his team and look forward to their continued success.

Our Mission Statement

The Groote Schuur Community Improvement District seeks to create a partnership between UCT, the Groote Schuur Community and the City of Cape Town, to improve and upgrade the public neighbourhoods for the benefit of all.

John Critien, UCT Executive Director: Properties and Services

Anthony Davies

SRA hierarchy

The Special Rating Area (SRA) hierarchy (see adjacent diagramme) is a framework developed to illustrate that cities, towns, suburbs or any urban area such as that covered by the Groote Schuur CID, are areas that offer a good experience where people live, work, visit, shop or just pass through. Badly run down areas create apprehension and concern, leaving the user with a poor experience of the area.

According to Urban Management Consultant and Chairman of the GSCID, Neil Fraser, the objective of a City Improvement District or SRA is to provide an area where one has a good experience. “If you see security officers around you, you feel safe. If you see people picking up litter, the environment feels well managed,” he says.

The hierarchy shows that the primary objective of an SRA is to move the area from the lowest rung, the negative – dirty and unsafe – to the next rung – clean and safe. “Once you have achieved this,” adds Fraser, “you can then start going through the other steps that take the experience the area is offering to the desired level – whatever that may be.”

 Fraser emphasises that the upper rungs of the SRA pyramid do not necessarily relate to the GSCID’s immediate objectives and that other issues will take priority in the short term. He points out that the initial function of the Groote Schuur CID “is to move our neighbourhoods from the lowest tier to the second tier and be recognised for that! Once we have achieved this successfully, we can then consider further improvements such as better signage, increased night lighting, welcoming street banners and draw-card activities to enhance the user’s experience of the area even more. The long term goal, certainly, is to move the area from the bottom rungs to the top over time,” adds Fraser.

Goals and benefits of the GSCID

- It will reduce crime, grime and drug dealing
- It will assist in managing challenges related to issues of homelessness
- It will provide better management of public transport (including taxis)
- It will provide a safer, cleaner and friendlier public environment
- Public space will be upgraded
- Property values tend to increase within SRAs
- It will seek to coordinate and partner with the SAPs, the City of Cape Town and other civic and neighbourhood bodies to achieve these goals and benefits

From the Executive Director’s Desk
With more than 14 years experience as a SAPS detective, as well as 11 years in the security industry, Groote Schuur CID Operations Manager, Charl Brooks, has honed the skills and knowledge he needs to successfully carry out the responsibilities of his position.

Brooks joined the Claremont Improvement District in 2000 and quickly worked through the ranks, starting off as a patrolman and then moving on to Site Inspector and Contracts Manager, all of which have given him an excellent grounding to deal with the challenges of his present position at the Groote Schuur CID.

He believes that good relationships with SAPS, Traffic officers, local law enforcement and other emergency units are vital to the success of the GSCID’s security operations. Good personal skills and a passion and commitment to his work, he believes, are equally important as “one needs to deal with so many issues and so many different people.” Brooks sees one of his key roles as “making people feel welcome and safe in the GSCID area of operations.”

Man with a Mission

The Groote Schuur CID has acquired three mobile security kiosks which are being used as satellite GSCID offices in places of high visibility. The kiosks, which were generously donated by UCT, have been deployed in the Rondebosch and Mowbray business areas.

The public are encouraged to use the kiosks as information centres to report any instance of crime they might be aware of or if they need assistance trying to find something, such as a street name or a flat or business. Said Anthony Davies, Executive Director of the Groote Schuur CID, “Enormous thanks must go to UCT for sponsoring these security kiosks.”

Mobile security kiosks
Co-operation protocols key to GSCID security

Orbis Security Solutions were appointed as the security service provider for the Groote Schuur Community Improvement District and commenced with operations in September last year. Orbis also provides the security services in a number of other improvement districts including the Woodstock, Wynberg and Claremont precincts. “Our appointment,” says Mark Sangster, Managing Director of Orbis, “will certainly add value to the overall security operations in the Groote Schuur CID, given the synergy and co-operation with the other districts.”

“The Groote Schuur Community Improvement District has unique challenges, given the extent of the student population,” declares Sangster. “The Orbis team has already developed co-operation protocols with the University of Cape Town and information sharing has become a standard feature. The deployment of the additional security staff in the district has certainly added a dimension of safety and security.”

Social outreach initiative

Ingrid Frieslaar, the GSCID’s Social Outreach Manager, has the perfect personality to conduct a challenging job that requires patience, understanding and an empathetic attitude. The task is particularly challenging given the size of the area in which she operates, from Letterstedt Road in Newlands to Anzio Road in Observatory.

Ingrid has been involved with the homeless for many years, starting as far back as 2000 working with the Claremont Improvement District in the Claremont precinct, and it is this in-depth experience which she says “stands her in good stead in her current position.”

Her key function is to assist with reuniting those she refers to as ‘her clients’ with their families, assisting those without identity documents to obtain the relevant documentation and also with finding suitable employment for those willing to work. She does in close co-operation with Straatwerk, who is dedicated to the rehabilitation of the homeless in the area with job creation forming an important component of the programme. Recently, Ingrid succeeded in taking 12 formerly homeless people off the streets and facilitating regular employment for them.

She conducts regular street inspections to establish which locations are used as nighttime places of shelter so that she can easily locate her clients. A database with photographs of her regular clients in the area - numbering some 78 indigents between the ages of 22 to 64 - has been established. She relies heavily on a number of street informants who keep her abreast of any newcomers into the area. “The homeless tend to be very territorial and a group will monopolise an area to the exclusion of others,” she says.

Straatwerk uplifts the homeless

Straatwerk, a Christian ministry which runs a rehabilitation programme for the destitute and unemployable, have been appointed to handle the Groote Schuur CID’s cleaning operations. The emphasis is on job creation, but “most importantly,” says Hannes van der Merwe of Straatwerk, “we render practical and effective services to the community in the process, while giving the destitute an opportunity to uplift themselves with dignity.”

The services offered include street cleaning, graffiti removal, weeding and pruning. At present, the clean-up focus in the GSCID area is predominantly on the Main Road and the Liesbeek Canal and trail.

Straatwerk, whose cleaning depot is based in Durban Road, Mowbray where potential recruits and job-seekers can sign up for the programme, are able to draw on a pool of approximately 30 regular workers who are allocated work on a rotational shift basis.

Regulars who have proven themselves reliable get first option of the shifts available. Four teams of three are used in the GSCID area with each team consisting of a foreman and two workers who have worked though the system and proved themselves. “They currently work a daily morning shift, but there is room to extend these shifts into afternoon sessions as the size of the worker pool increases and as the community demands become greater,” advises van der Merwe.

“We also offer manual labour to businesses within the area,” he added. Straatwerk has for several years also successfully conducted cleaning operations in the Cape Town Central and Claremont Improvement Districts.

For more information contact Straatwerk on 072 607 4508 or hannes@straatwerk.co.za

GSCID-SAPS partnerships

The Groote Schuur CID works in close co-operation with the SAPS stations in the GSCID area (Clarendon / Rondebosch / Mowbray / Woodstock). Station commanders and contact details are as follows:

**Cluster Office:**
- **Cluster Commander** Colonel A.J Botha  021 657 2241/3  082 778 6633
- **Clarendon-Saps@Saps.Org.Za**
- **SAPS Claremont**
  - Station Commander  Col J.T Naidoo  021 657 2241/3  082 778 6633
  - Claremont-Saps@Saps.Org.Za
- **SAPS Rondebosch**
  - Station Commander  Lt Col K.R Wienand  021 657 2241/3  082 778 6633
  - Rondebosch-Saps@Saps.Org.Za
- **SAPS Mowbray**
  - Station Commander  Lt Col M. Dyers  021 680 9580  072 567 5547
  - Mowbray-Saps@Saps.Org.Za
- **SAPS Woodstock**
  - Station Commander  Col N. Ntseso  021 442 3100  082 374 4916
  - Woodstock-Saps@Saps.Org.Za

**Groote Schuur CID Contact details:**
- **Shell Court, 93 Main Road, Mowbray**
- **P O Box 34505, Groote Schuur, 7937**
- **Tel:** 021 685 8185  **Fax:** 021 685 8218
- **Emergencies:** 086 009 4625
- **Email:** info@gscid.co.za  **Website:** www.gscid.co.za