**EVERGREEN RESCOM PORTFOLIO REPORT 2015/16**

**ENVIRONMENTAL**

**By Portfolio leader Hennie du Preez**

This report covers the period from March 2015 to June 2016. There were a few disappointments, but also good progress on a number of fronts.

1. **Waterworks/features:**  The year started with a disappointment when AMDEC projects advised that the proposed waterworks system that had previously been approved in principle was off the table because of concerns around the high cost of operation experienced at the Steenberg Golf Estate in Cape Town. After further discussions with projects it was agreed that we could go ahead with a Phase 1 of the project, to be run on a trial basis.

AMDEC projects agreed to spend R42 000. The project was completed in February 2016 and is now running. Unfortunately the water flow is significantly lower than originally planned and the visual effect of the water features is not what was expected, but we have learnt an important lesson for Phase 2. This project will in future be known as the **‘Water features’** project.

The jury is still out on whether AMDEC and Evergreen will proceed with this project, but we hope that it will be included in the overall landscape development plan now in preparation.

1. **Arbor Day:** Arbor Day was again successfully celebrated in September 2015. The village gardeners had prepared the holes and on the day, 18 trees and 20 shrubs were planted by 4 teams of residents, each team assisted by a gardener. A 5th team fertilised all the trees and shrubs planted on the previous 2 Arbor Days. The day ended with a street braai.

Looking back over 3 Arbor Days, residents have funded and planted:

* 2013 62 trees;
* 2014 31 trees, 75 shrubs;
* 2015 18 trees, 20 shrubs;
* Totals 111 trees, 95 shrubs!
1. **Irrigation to trees and shrubs:**  The summer proved to be extremely hot and dry, and with watering times restricted, Evergreen agreed to invest R12 000 in a drip irrigation system to all trees and shrubs planted on earlier Arbor Days. That system is now working successfully.
2. **Communal gardens:** Following ongoing complaints about the poor state of the communal gardens, Evergreen agreed to a proposal from residents to play a more active part in directing the efforts the village gardeners and to provide limited funding for the purchase of seed, seedlings, fertiliser etc. A gardening group was formed and the results of its input and efforts can already be seen in the Namaqualand daisies at the entrance that will be in bloom at the time of our meeting, the trimmed Freylinia shrubs, the larger areas of veldt grass that has been cut back and the redevelopment of the garden across the road from the present clubhouse.

The gardening group has also planned and directed the redevelopment of the pavement garden from the gatehouse up to the end of Phase 3.

1. **Landscape development plan:** AMDEC projects have instructed Uys and White, a well-respected firm of landscape architects to prepare an overall landscape development plan for the village. This plan will be available at the time of the meeting and we will hopefully have the opportunity to comment on it.

None of this would have been possible without a lot of help from many. AMDEC and Evergreen for funding the projects, Jill to start with, and latterly Roy, our managers for their unstinting help and support and all the residents who bent their backs on Arbor Day and who, from time-to-time, helped with projects around the village. In particular I would like to single out the ladies of the gardening group –Sue Edwards, Elske Fann, Isabella Labuscagne, Emmy Milne – Kiloran Townsend for her photographic work, Dick Sheppard for his invaluable advice on and attention to the trees and shrubs and last but by no means least, to Ivar Skanke who is always available to give a helping hand. To all of you a very big and sincere thank you!

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