



# PRINCESS VLEI FORUM

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022



**HANS HOHEISEN**  
charitable trust

MANAGED BY NEDDANE PRIVATE WEALTH

# Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Protecting Princess Vlei: Heritage, Community and Environment	4
4	Negotiating the Transformation: The Technical and Planning committee	18
5	Media	19
6	Finances	20
7	The road ahead	25
8	Acknowledgements	26

## 2021 to 2022 Management Committee

Gary Stewart	Chairperson
	Technical and Planning Subcommittee Chair
Bridget Pitt	Deputy Chairperson
	Guardian Schools Subcommittee Chair
Emma Oliver	Secretary
	Environmental Subcommittee Chair
Philip Bam	Treasurer
Vilma Maritz	Deputy Treasurer
Mary Jansen	

Auditors: DCA Chartered Accountants

# 1. Introduction

This past year has brought many challenges. While we are all relieved to be free of the strict lockdown measures, the impact of COVID on our economy is severe, worsening inequality, unemployment and food security. At the same time, the climate crisis is escalating at an alarming rate, bringing devastating floods and droughts to our country as to elsewhere in the world. Add to this load shedding, ongoing corruption, political instability.

It is easy to feel overwhelmed by these shadows, to feel as if the work of a small conservation project is irrelevant. But in many ways our work at Princess Vlei is more important than ever. As the communities around us buckle under the stress of economic hardship and an uncertain future, the Princess Vlei provides an invaluable refuge of tranquility, where people can find some solace, some natural beauty, and escape their problems for a while. Many of our young learners have remarked on the feelings of freedom and happiness they experienced at the vlei.

Our work with these learners also gives them hope for the future, a sense that they can contribute to tomorrow by planting today. In times of division, the vlei brings people together in the simple act of investing some care in the earth.

At the same time, our restoration work is critical in helping to stop the catastrophic loss of biodiversity that has been called the sixth mass extinction event. Every plant species we bring back and nurture, every bird, butterfly, or chameleon that benefits from that plant, creates new opportunities for life. As the rate of urbanisation rapidly increases, the best hope for the planet is to create living vibrant sustainable cities that nurture both the human and non-human inhabitants. Conserving and restoring the vlei is an important contribution to creating this city.

Our work at Princess Vlei is made possible by four major contributors: our donors; our community; the City and nature. Primary amongst our donors is the Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust (managed by Nedbank Private Wealth) which has enabled us to employ a full-time project

manager, to oversee our education outreach, and implement our restoration project through the deployment of Alex Lansdowne and a specialised restoration work team. Other generous donations have been provided by the City Grant in Aid Fund, the Kirstenbosch branch of the Botanical Society and WESSA.

Our second significant partner is the local community, which has been instrumental in supporting our work, with well over 100 volunteers at different times coming out in all weathers to plant, and clear litter and aliens. We have made a significant step to network with other community conservation groups to bring collective minds to shared problems. Community efforts, particularly by dedicated teachers, has led to 500 learners gaining the opportunity to enjoy Princess Vlei and become young nature guardians and scientists.

The GPVCA has benefited from the investments made by the City, with over R8 million invested over the past four years. Councillor Southgate has been instrumental in leveraging City resources and supporting all aspects of our project, and many City officials have gone beyond the call of duty to support us. We have been encouraged by a shift in the CoCT towards more active engagement with civil society. An important development here is the Section 80 Advisory Committee for Water Quality in Wetlands and Waterways, on which Denisha Anand is serving. This has already proved fruitful in bringing a multidisciplinary approach and strong community voice to the critical issue of how to protect and restore Cape Town's natural water ways and wetlands.

And our last partner, nature, continues to surprise and delight us, as with the discovery of a resident otter, and new plant species. Every effort we make to invest in the earth is returned ten fold, as life comes back to our neglected Princess.

Our mission is more important than ever. We look forward to working together with our Princess Vlei community, our donors, the City and nature to nurture and protect this invaluable community and natural heritage space.

## 2. Protecting Princess Vlei: Heritage, Community and Environment

### 2.1. Project manager's report

In 2020, we were informed that the City would create the post of a Principal Technical Assistant (PTA) to carry out the conservation management of the Greater Princess Vlei Conservation Area from April 2021. Accordingly, when Denisha Anand's contract as the Princess Vlei site manager came to an end in November 2020, she was engaged on another three year contract as a project manager for Princess Vlei Forum. This post encompasses:

- providing support to the CoCT staff to ensure that the GPVCA is optimally managed in accordance with biodiversity principles
- Overseeing the fynbos restoration project
- Community outreach and environmental education
- Networking and facilitating relationships to benefit GPVCA.

#### 2.1.1. Co-management and liaison with CoCT

While the City of Cape Town employed a Principal Technical Assistant (PTA) 2021, this post is not the dedicated site manager that we had lobbied for. Because the GPVCA is managed by City Parks, and not by the CoCT Environmental Department, there is no scope for the deployment of a biodiversity manager.

The Project manager has therefore played an important role in supporting the PTA, and through collaborative engagement, assisting with important restoration and conservation priorities.

To facilitate this relationship, In the past year the project manager has focused on creating a sustainable communication chain for operations and activity on site by both the CoCT and the PVF. This has



*Sihle Jonas and Teboho Maliehe, Cllr Kevin Southgate and Denisha Anand, PVF Project manager*

been established through monthly operational meetings initiated by the project manager. These meetings were also used to handover information from our project manager to the newly appointed PTA. All issues raised by both the CoCT and the PVF are addressed at these meetings or via email.

The site remains severely understaffed as there is no funding for a dedicated team of EPWP or other workers doing important work such as full site clean ups and herbaceous alien clearing. These activities still largely rely on voluntary efforts by the Forum and community participation. We have made a huge dent with our hacking initiatives, funded by BOTSOC. These have helped us to remove large areas of highly invasive port Jackson.

However, the work exceeds the best efforts of our volunteers, and litter has piled up in some areas of the vlei, especially on the western and southern shores. There has also been a lack of weeding and general bank maintenance, although our labour team has carried

out weeding and bank management where the COCT did not have the capacity to do so.

The clearing of both terrestrial and aquatic alien invaders remains an issue. The water hyacinth maintenance management plan must be activated and the removal of port Jackson must be prioritised throughout the site.

As part of her collaborative management duties, the Project manager monitors and reports dumping, littering, vandalism and damage to restoration sites. She also does weekly site visits to ensure that operations on site are supervised. The need for this was acutely highlighted by the incident in May 2021, when unsupervised contractors destroyed several meters of shoreline vegetation and a the PVF's flagship fynbos restoration site.

### **Monitoring of faunal and floral species**

Most noteworthy animal sighting this year was the resident Cape Clawless Otter, who we suspect has created a den near the northern shore of the Greater Princess Vlei water body. The Project manager also monitors the endangered Western Leopard Toad and ensures that the Parks department operations are compliant with breeding season considerations. A WhatsApp group with PVF members and City officials has been created for monitoring and updates.

Species observation by conservation minded individuals is extremely important for the documenting both plant and animal sightings at Princess Vlei. The project manager has used the iNaturalist platform to collect data for the site. We would like to urge the City to create a system that encourages citizen data collection.

### **The Environmental Management Plan**

The EMP for the GPVCA is outdated and only in draft form. An updated and formally adopted EMP is an urgent priority, which the PVF has consistently brought to the attention of the CoCT. This need has also been emphasized as a matter of urgency at every operational meeting.



*Cape Clawless Otter spotted at Princess Vlei. Photographer: Adam Dhalla*

We are pleased to say that this process is now underway, and, thanks to the communication between the PVF project manager and the PTA, the CoCT has agreed to a collaborative drafting phase of the EMP. The CoCT has provided the PVF with an updated draft EMP for discussion and contribution. Our restoration management plan will be incorporated as an accessory document to this plan and will guide the restoration of indigenous vegetation on site. We will also provide comments on all other relevant aspects of the EMP.

While our relationship with the COCT is sometimes conflictual, there has been hard work on both sides to build mutual trust, and there is a growing recognition in the City of the value of an active, passionate community partner in the management of this complex site. Efforts to forge a collaborative relationship were strengthened after a successful community and City rehabilitation planting, where the City provided plants in partial compensation for the destruction of our restoration site by contractors on the eastern shore in 2021. We remain committed to providing community oversight, and to working with the CoCT to ensure that the GPVCA gets the human resources and infrastructural investment it needs.

### 2.1.2.Overseeing the restoration project

The project manager has worked in collaboration with restoration consultant Alex Lansdowne on the restoration of Dune Strandveld and Cape Flats Sand Fynbos at Princess Vlei. Much of this restoration work is done by community volunteers and by school learners. It thus provides an opportunity for community members to contribute meaningfully to the revitalisation and beautification at Princess Vlei.

One of the restoration concerns has been to **repair the restoration site on the eastern shore** which was damaged by the City contractor. Unfortunately our efforts to stabilise the bank have not held against the rising waters in winter. This has resulted in plants being away. This is an ongoing concern, but the City has pledged to offer more support to repair this, in accordance with an undertaking made by the Mayor after the incident. It has unfortunate that we have invested considerably more resources in this site, but it is still far from the condition it was in when the damage occurred.

More details about our restoration project are provided below, and in the Environmental and Schools sub committee reports.



*Protea scolymocephala* - one of many protea species reintroduced to Princess Vlei by the restoration project - is thriving on site.

### 2.1.3.Community outreach and education

The project manager is actively engaged in the community outreach and education work supported by the environmental subcommittee and the Princess Vlei Guardians committee. In addition to the activities reported under these two subcommittee reports, the project manager undertook the following outreach projects:

#### TEDx Cape Town:

The Project Manager presented a TED talk on the success of the Princess Vlei community conservation project to a live audience on the 28 November 2021. This video aims to spread awareness about community conservation and custodianship as an indigenous cosmology. (Watch at [https://www.ted.com/talks/denisha\\_anand\\_custodianship\\_and\\_care\\_lessons\\_from\\_an\\_indigenous\\_princess?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/denisha_anand_custodianship_and_care_lessons_from_an_indigenous_princess?language=en))



## RISE

Rise is a program that finds talented people who need opportunities and supports them for life as they work to serve others. The program starts at ages 15–17 and offers a lifetime of benefits including scholarships, mentorship, access to career development opportunities, funding, and more as Global Winners work toward solving humanity's most pressing problems. Our Project manager took on the role of service mentor and spent the day weeding, plant IDing, sharing the Princess Vlei story and the relevance of our work in the context of Climate Change.



*Protea scolymocephala - one of many protea species reintroduced to Princess Vlei by the restoration project - is thriving on site.*

## PLAAS:

The project manager hosted a group of 25 participants and coordinators and took them through the Princess Vlei biodiversity and cultural journey. We discussed everything from a mall development to the importance of a biodiversity site that weaves together local, cultural, spatial, and social issues.

The key themes and concepts covered in the course:

- Histories and paradigms of conservation, in South(ern) Africa and globally, and the current biodiversity crisis and how this is unequal across space and time;
- Political ecology in relation to conservation: how to understand conservation in a broader context focused on tackling both the extinction crisis and urgent issues of social justice?



*25 participants at the Jolly Carp doing interviews with local community members, city officials, youth and PVF*

### EDU Africa:

The project manager has given a number of online lectures to international universities on the work and success of Princess Vlei via the EDU Africa program. We presented at the New York Social Justice Festival, George Brown College, University of West Georgia: Public History Seminar to name a few. These have helped to build international solidarity in the community conservation sector.

We also hosted a group of students from the US who were completing a course in community and environmental health. They were taught about alien and invasive species and the threats to the health of our waterways. They assisted with alien clearing.

### Simons Town Museum

The Project Manager facilitated a workshop at the Simons Town museum aimed at creating awareness around the interconnectedness of water, people and plants using a wetland as a reference system. The learners took part in an interactive sharing circle around wetland habitats and the multiple ways that people interact with these systems, and what the impact of our interactions have on them. We also spoke about all the species, including plants which make up these eco-systems and how they're important not only because of their biodiversity value but also for their cultural value.

The learners explored plant specimens brought by the Project Manager to give them an opportunity to engage with the plants directly. They learnt about home-making with restios and medicine-making with bruin salie.

### Botanical Society:

The project manager joined Rupert Koopman, Dr Kate Parsley and Prof William Bond in presenting a webinar to explore plant and biome awareness disparity. This webinar series aimed to help the public develop plant awareness skills.



Project manager addressing learners at the Simons Town Museum



## 2.1.4. Networking and expanding governance

### Section 80 committee

The Project Manager was appointed by CoCT to serve on the Advisory Committee for Water Quality in Wetlands and Waterways as a community conservation specialist. This opportunity was welcomed as it would allow her to amplify socio-environmental issues experienced in around water bodies throughout Cape town, including Princess Vlei. The advisory committee promises to:

- communicate with the relevant protected areas advisory committees,
- host workshops with interested person and groups,
- encourage and facilitate strategic partnerships with organisations and stakeholders,
- encourage the development of Catchment Management Plans for priority catchments,
- explore solutions and make recommendations related to catchment drainage and sewage outfalls where it affects coastal water quality,
- carry out research and inspections related to its activities.

To date the advisory committee has presented various reports allowing us to become familiar with the CoCT's vision for the future of water in the province. The liveable urban waterways program was one of the most promising presentations, delivered by Andrea Macdonald. This program aims to facilitate system thinking when managing our waterways and to standardise community efforts in restoration. This will allow us to work towards a common goal for our waterways as the CoCT and as public interest groups.

We are hopeful that the presence of our Project Manager on this committee will make significant change by holding officials

accountable and by tabling the concerns of communities directly affected by the health of our wetlands and waterways.



*Section 80 water advisory committee*

## 2.2. The Restoration Project



2022 saw the expansion and consolidation of the restoration footprint at Princess Vlei. The Princess Vlei Forum has now conducted rehabilitation and restoration around the entire waterbody.

A conservation garden was planted in the Eastern Shore Precinct to demonstrate some of the interesting species found in the conservation area. This area is highly accessible and will be viewed by many visitors who cannot or do not venture into the conservation area.

Work in the past year has focused on secondary planting in existing restoration areas in the east and north. The restoration areas created before 2022 can now all be left for monitoring and ad hoc management. This will free resources to expand the footprint of restoration in 2023.

A new restoration area was planted in the south-west in the drainage seep that would have historically connected the two vleis. This area was cleared of invasive plants last year and the unexpected recovery has resulted in the discovery of two new species for the conservation area: *Psoralea repens* (NT) and *Pelargonium myrrhifolium* ssp. *coriandrifolium*.

The dune field to the south of the vlei, in Retreat, has the most intact, undisturbed vegetation on site representing Cape Flats Dune Strandveld. This is a critically endangered vegetation type that is endemic to Cape Town. Together with volunteers from our partner organisation, the Botanical Society Kirstenbosch Branch, we cleared 2,11 Hectares of Port Jackson and Rooikrans. Whilst these plants were in a medium-high density, most were of a very large size due to the lack of historical environmental management.



High intensity Restoration areas (green) and areas under active rehabilitation management (orange).

Category	2021	2022
Active Restoration	0,66Ha	0,8Ha (+21%)
Rehabilitation	1,55Ha	3,8Ha (+125%)



*Pelargonium myrrhifolium ssp. Coriandrifolium* at Princess Vlei.

### Plant Rescue

We have continued our plant rescue in Muizenberg, Capricorn Park, at the New Generations School. These plants will be important in 2023.

### Key Species

Two new species were actively conserved for the first time at Princess Vlei.

*Psoralea aphylla* occurred in small numbers on the Eastern Shore. However, most plants were lost due to the destruction of the restoration area in 2021. 5 new plants have been grown from a small amount of seed and will be planted on the Eastern Shore. Their establishment will ensure this species does not go locally extinct at Princess Vlei.

Mr Neil Major of Zeekoevlei, Botanist and Restoration Horticulturalist, kindly donated cuttings of the Critically Endangered *Psoralea glaucina* which was last seen at Princess Vlei a century ago. These cuttings were collected from Retreat many years ago in a wetland that is now developed. The reintroduction of this species to Princess Vlei will ensure this lost population has a future, as Princess Vlei is the only feasible receptor site.



*Psoralea aphylla* seedlings at the nursery.

2023 will be the fifth year of restoration management at Princess Vlei and we can anticipate new threatened species and the expansion of the restoration footprint at Princess Vlei.

The late rain has delayed planting and the Spring Survey. More detailed reporting will be available in the 2022 Restoration Report which is due in October.

**Summary of plants planted in the past year**

PLANTS	No.	Where planted	
<i>Seed bombs</i>	100	Eastern Shore	October 2021
<i>Seed Mix</i>	5 l	Northern shore	16 may
<i>Pelargonium betullinum</i>	70	Northern shore	16 may
<i>Pennisetum macrourum</i>	110	Northern shore	16 may
Seed Mix (Eastern Shore)	6 l	Eastern shore	2 June
<i>Dimorphotheca pluvialis</i>	100	Eastern shore	2 June
<i>Ficinia nodosa</i>	40	Eastern shore	2 June
<i>Ehrharta calycina</i>	120	Eastern shore	2 June
<i>Elegia tectorum*</i>	300	Eastern shore	16 June
<i>Cyperus textilis</i>	50	Eastern shore	16 June
<i>Sencio halimifolia</i>	50	Eastern shore	16 June
<i>Salvia africana-lutea</i>	50	Eastern shore	16 June
<i>Chrysanthemoides monilifera</i>	20	Eastern shore	16 June
<i>Metalasia muricata</i>	50	Eastern shore	16 June
<i>Carex clavata</i>	100	Eastern shore	16 June
<i>Ficinia nodosa</i>	50	Eastern shore	16 June

*Plants shaded in green were supplied by the City to replace some of the plants damaged by the contractor in 2021*

PLANTS	No.	Where planted	
<i>Dimorphotheca pluvialis</i>	175	Heritage garden	18 July
<i>Jordaaniellia dubia</i>	15	Heritage garden	18 July
<i>Pelargonium capitatum</i>	128	Heritage garden	18 July
<i>Leucadendron laeololum</i>	4	Heritage garden	18 July
<i>Psoralea pinnata</i>	12	Heritage garden	18 July
<i>Kei Appel</i>	1	Heritage garden	18 July
<i>Polygala myrtifolia</i>	20	Heritage garden	18 July
<i>Pennisetum mucronatum*</i> <i>Plecostachys serpyllifolia</i>	20	Heritage garden	18 July
<i>Elegia nuda</i>	25	Heritage garden	
<i>Isolepis rubicundus</i>	75	Northern shore	22 July
<i>Anthospermum aethiopicum</i>	384	Northern shore	22 July
<i>Pelargonium capitatum</i>	384	Northern shore	22 July
<i>Pennisetum mucronatum*</i> & <i>Plecostachys serpyllifolia</i>	80	Northern shore	22 July
<i>Elegia nuda</i>	240	Northern shore	22 July
<i>Psoralea pinnata</i>	24	Northern shore	22 July

## 2.3.Environmental Subcommittee

In the past year we have continued organising and hosting different activities around Princess Vlei to support the restoration work, and build community engagement and involvement.

- In October, 20 die-hards braved the cold to accompany ethnobotanist, environmental educator and enthusiast Alex Lansdowne on a **spring walk** around the Vlei. Alex teaches as he walks and they learned about the 'Vlei Octopus' – the wax berry, planted 4 years ago by learners which now stretches with 'arms and legs' more than 8 meters in diameter. Seeds, seedlings and bulbs planted in the previous years, such as the sugar bush protea, pelargonium triste and botulinum were all emerging with spring.
- In November 2021, we held a workshop at the Rondevlei Tea room on **growing and propagating local fynbos and dune strandveld plants**. Led by Alex Lansdowne, the 12 participants first took a walk to see the plants growing in their natural environment. They were then shown how to propagate plants from cuttings and from seeds. Participants left the workshop with trays they had created of rose geranium, bruin salie, red hot pokers and the Fountain bush, which were later planted in school gardens or at Princess Vlei.
- On April 9<sup>th</sup> almost 50 people joined us for a **Hackathon** which took place on the dunes adjacent to Sasmeer Estate. The event was a collaboration with hackers from the Kirstenbosch Branch of the Botanical Society, the Nature Connect River Ambassadors programme and the local community. This was a new site was targeted for two reasons: The dunes contain the most pristine and intact stretch of Cape Flats Dune Strandveld within the Greater Princess Vlei Conservation area. They are also the worst area for dumping and alien Port Jackson. We collected a large pile of Port Jackson and another of rubbish bags. It was a sobering reminder that clearing litter is a daily necessity.



- On May 7<sup>th</sup> we had a **planting and seed scattering** event to top up the restoration site on the northern shore of the Vlei.
- On **Youth Day** more than 40 people gathered on the Eastern shore restoration site to plant over 600 plants of 10 different species which had been provided by the City of Cape Town. The City contributed these plants in partial compensation for the disaster of May 2021 when a City contractor dumped water hyacinth over two-thirds of the site, destroying thousands of plants and two years restoration work. City officials from the Parks and Recreation department came with their children on this public holiday and joined the community in planting. The weather was kind and despite the bittersweet nature of working on this site it was a magical mornings' work.
- On **Mandela Day**, 25 people gathered to plant and create a 'heritage' garden at the small area behind the heritage plaque at the entrance of the park. This spring, the work has been rewarded with flowering rain daisies. The site supports three

milkwoods memorialising Khoe heritage, which were planted in 2019.

- On **Women's Day**, over 20 people gathered on the 'seep' on the south western shore - a semi-wetland area between the big and little Princess Vlei. The community cleared the area of invasive alien species in 2021. There are encouraging signs that nature is restoring itself, with the presence of psoralea repens an endangered species on the 'red list'. We put in over a thousand seedlings of 6 different species of fynbos to help re-establish the eco-system in this previously degraded land.



*Another Princess Vlei Veteran, Emil XY, who came with members of Heal the Hood to plant on Mandela day*

- August 27<sup>th</sup> we hosted the **Growing Community Conservation** workshop at the Lookout at Zandvlei. The 26 participants came from 12 Friends groups, restoration and conservation groups. Dr Kevin Winter, urban waterway specialist and lecturer in Urban and Environmental Sciences at UCT addressed the workshop on building partnerships and working with the City. Nick Fordyce, the chairperson of the Friends of the Liesbeck was the MC. Denisha Anand spoke on her experiences of working at Princess Vlei and the challenges she faced in the early days. Alex Lansdowne gave a presentation on the 5 essential ingredients for a good restoration plan. Participants attended focus groups looking at fundraising, restoration work, community engagement and working with the City.
- The response from all those attending was overwhelmingly positive and people wanted further opportunities for networking and for sharing of common issues, such as the challenge of homeless

people 'living' rough in spaces where conservation and restoration work is taking place

An ongoing challenge is getting communities actively involved in community conservation. Last year, we extended our reach in to the Elfindale side of Princess Vlei, this year we made efforts to reach out to residents of Sassmeer Estate through a pamphlet drop and event in their area. We have also made use of neighbourhood WhatsApp groups. We have had a number of new faces at our events, but consistent involvement is an challenge for all of us.



*Sometimes to grow things you have to cut others down - members of the hackathon team near Retreat Civic*

### Thanks to...

Plants were funded by the Kirstenbosch Branch of the Botanical Society, with some donated by the City. The Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust managed by Nedbank Private Wealth funded our community conservation workshop. Thanks Alex Lansdowne and his specialised team of restoration workers led by Neil Petersen. And to all the community members – volunteers, old and young – who have come with their enthusiasm to join the ongoing revitalisation of Princess Vlei.

**Emma Oliver - Environmental Subcommittee Chairperson**

## 2.4. Guardian schools

### *Growing New Conservators*

'My name is Imange and I wrote on my stick, 'I hope you grow little Imareed'. My plant I planted is a reed. I named it half of my name so it could grow, and maybe it will know me when I am old. I hope to come back to Princess Vlei and to still find my stick and my plant in the same place as I planted it.'



Imange(11) is one of many young Princess Vlei guardians who has learnt the power of putting a plant in the ground, and anticipating its growth. This is our work, to awaken excitement, creativity and passion around nature, and in this way foster young Guardians to take responsibility for protecting nature at Princess Vlei and beyond.

This year, we have focused on getting our schools programme going again post lockdown, although we were knocked by Omicron

infections early part in this year. Despite this, a total number of 12 schools and youth groups, and 450 learners, have been involved in events in the past year.

- 120 learners and 30 teachers and community volunteers gathered for the **Dream Weavers procession** and celebration in October 2021.
- 30 Learners from Fairmount high took part in a **canoe club** organised jointly with Gravity adventures, with weekly sessions at Princess Vlei
- 57 students took part in the '**Boats and Toads**' programme in November, which included observing toads in their habitat, learning about the breeding cycle of toads, a canoe ride, creating clay toads and painting habitats on card
- 10 Learners came to Princess vlei to learn about plant reproduction and **pollination** and key pollinators. They identified which plants may be attractive to different pollinators and recorded pollinators observed near or on the plants
- 50 learners participated in the **wetland wonder programme** in March this year. Learners observed the vlei from the perspectives of different species: they searched for what each species might need in terms of food, shelter, opportunities for breeding; and noted predators and other hazards; Learners then created mandalas illustrating key species and the species they connect with in a wetland ecosystem.
- 8 Learners attended a three day **eco camp** at the Princess Vlei eco-centre in April, where they learnt about the fynbos eco-systems (more below).
- 13 learners came to planted 3 species to top up the restoration plot on the eastern shore in May.
- 15 learners came to continue with this planting, with another 5 dune strand veld species, and 400 seedlings of the rain daisy. This has provided a lovely display this spring.
- On 22 July, 43 learners from Levana and Floreat planted 1187 Cape Flats Sand Fynbos plants on the northern shore.
- 120 school learners were given an interactive lesson on PH in soils.



Giant artworks created by learners are carried through the streets in the Dream Weavers Procession

### Dream Weavers Procession

A highlight of our year was the Dream Weaver's parade in October last year. The weather let us down, and much of the day's events took place in the Retreat Civic. This included a 'mass workshop' to make nature themed headdresses, and a performance by The Jungle Theatre Company on water pollution. In the weeks leading up to the event, learners had been busy creating a collective artwork - two giant webs symbolising the connectedness of life. These will be installed at Princess Vlei on the raptor poles on the eastern shore. When there was a brief gap in the rain, we had a boisterous parade, and carried the webs through the streets of Sassmeer Estate. Learners were also given 'seed bombs' of indigenous plants to scatter as they walked through the vlei.

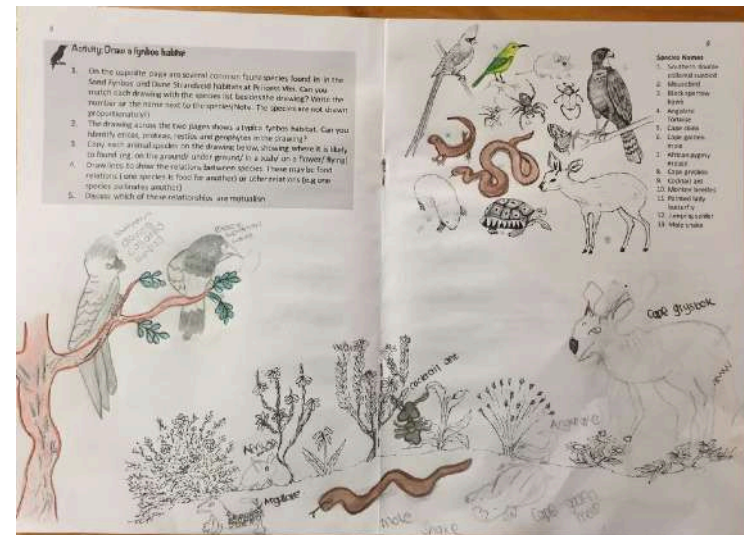
### Guardians eco-camp

After several cancellations due to COVID, we were grateful to be able to host a three day camp for learners from Lotus high school at the Princess Vlei Eco centre in April. The learners are part of our

Princess Guardians Program which aims to cultivate custodianship and care for our environment amongst the youth.

After the stress of lockdowns, it was important for us to create a space where our eco guardians had the opportunity to express themselves and unwind in nature. Our co-facilitator Robin Moodley assisted with art jam sessions, enabling the learners to create art work based on observations made during their nature walks at the vlei.

The Project Manager facilitated lessons from our Sunbird and Fynbos workbook which enabled the eco guardians to explore the habitat, food and threats of sunbirds firsthand. They were lucky enough to spot a malachite sunbird during free time in the sun. The learners used bird



and fynbos field guides to identify and name the species in their books, and explored the strandveld vegetation to complete the questions .

A highlight of the camp was exploring the restoration site along Briana Crescent. Some of the learners had planted here in 2021, and were amazed at the difference their planting had made in one year. The habitat was thriving with birds and pollinators and some plants already in flower. This showed them the impact of their commitment



to the vlei and to nature, and showed what planting tiny seedlings and dispersing even tinier seeds could do. Their custodianship became visible and they could see the impact that an act of care can have on the environment, while still having fun!

### **Curriculum work**

In addition to teaching at the vlei, our project manager designed worksheets based on Princess Vlei that will complement the senior and primary natural science curriculum. The first lesson was used to teach pH using strandveld (alkaline) and sand fynbos (acid) soils as a practical example. Grade 8, 9 and 10 learners tested two types of soils in class with a pH meter, using a pantry test. A lesson on taxonomy and plant use will be taught in Term 4.

In the weeks ahead, we will be hosting another parade and performance in October, this time using the medium of dance to celebrate and honour the species at Princess Vlei. We also hope to revive our canoe club in the summer months, and to continue growing our family of young nature guardians.

Reflecting on their experience at Princess Vlei, many of our learners remark on how it makes it them feel calm and free, and helps them to forget their stress. Our learners face so many difficulties at home. These moments are truly valuable and healing.

Each plant that the learners put in the ground also plants a seed in their hearts to help them love and care for this planet. The need to grow this care has never been more urgent. Our schools work nurtures our young learners just as it nurtures the biodiverse species at Princess Vlei.

### **Thanks to**

The schools outreach has been made possible by huge effort from Princess Vlei Forum volunteers and individuals such as Emma Oliver and Fabian Hartzenburg. A special thanks is due to teachers Shafiek Isaacs, Curtley Fortuin, Hayley Robertson, Shamiega Charity, Roslin Liemens, Ebrahim Abrahams, Priscilla de Wet, Natalie Knipe, Kristi Jooste and all other teachers who have made our school programme

possible. Thanks to Denisha for always being willing to give up weekends to inspire a passion for nature amongst the kids. We would also like to thank our sponsors, the Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust, managed by Nedbank Private Wealth; and the City of Cape Town's Grant in Aid project.

**Bridget Pitt - Chairperson of the Guardian Schools Subcommittee**



*Mandalas created by learners to show food webs at Princess Vlei.*

## 4. Negotiating the Transformation- Technical and Planning Subcommittee

### Liaison with the City

Quarterly liaison meetings with the City have continued this year, and we have resumed face to face meetings, which is greatly facilitating dialogue. These are chaired by Councillor Southgate from Ward 72, and are attended by relevant city officials from City Planning, Parks and Recreation, Storm Water and Biodiversity departments. The Forum has motivated for a standardisation of participants and agenda, to ensure follow through of issues. The liaison meetings are productive in discussing and resolving issues related to developing Princess Vlei, although progress has sometimes been slow and frustrating.

### Security

An ongoing area of concern has been the level of security that the City has provided at the vlei. For a number of years the city has contracted Quemic park rangers to patrol and provide security at the vlei. They have been reasonably effective at patrolling the vlei and providing regular reports about issues of concern. For financial reasons the city has decided to terminate Quemic's contract at Princess Vlei. This has raised serious concerns about the City's commitment to securing the significant investment which has gone into the vlei from both the Forum and the City. Discussions are ongoing with the City about finding a suitable security solution which maintains the integrity of this valuable public open space.

### Market

The forum has piloted a market at the vlei from January this year. It has evolved into a weekly Saturday morning market. It is being run in partnership with the Community Think Tank, and is focussed on food, fresh produce and craft themed around heritage. This has long been on the community wish list and we thank our partners in leading this initiative.



*The Market has been a popular innovation at Princess Vlei.*

### Heritage status

Provincial Heritage status was awarded to the GPVCA early in 2021, but due to COVID restrictions this was only formally launched with the installation of a plaque and ceremony in October 2022.

### Project Manager

Denisha Anand, has acted as the primary day to day operational interface with the city, as part of her overall job description dedicated to environmental education and restoration. This work has included monthly operational meetings with on site city officials. Earlier this year, Denisha was appointed to the City of Cape Town's Wetlands and Waterways Advisory Committee as a Community Conservation Specialist. This is an acknowledgement of the work she has done at Princess Vlei.

### The road ahead

A few projects are planned for the upcoming year:

- The city has sourced further funding to move to the next phase of the walkway, which will involve using low impact ground cover as well as clear signage to outline the walkway around the vlei.
- The subcommittee is working on the preparatory design work a multi-purpose sheltered venue which can be used for environmental education and also heritage/cultural events.

Despite the challenges of the past year we have made noticeable progress towards making Princess Vlei a family friendly space which the community can be proud of. This can be seen in the numbers of visitors on weekends, and in particular on Heritage Day.

**Thanks to**

A special thanks to Cllr Kevin Southgate, without whose financial and political support, many of the achievements this year would not have been possible. Thank you to the Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust (managed by Nedbank Private wealth) for enabling us to employ the Project Manager.

**Gary Stewart - Technical and Planning Subcommittee Chairperson**



At the unveiling of the heritage plaque. b L to R: Willie Leith; Denisha Anand; Bridget Pitt; Emma Oliver; Cllr Kevin Southgate; Philip Bam; Gary Stewart

**5. Media**

The Forum continues to make itself known through various media platforms. Our data base is now 1117 subscribers, with 15 notices and newsletters sent out in the past year. The Website is updated regularly and has a blog recording events, as well as providing general information. We. Have a regular blog documenting all our events on our website. Our Facebook page has grown to 1082 followers, and features photo albums of all our events. We have launched our instagram account with regular postings. We have been featured several times in the pages of the Southern Mail, the People's Post, Weekend Argus and Daily Maverick.

This year we have participated in the creation of a film produced by ReWild Africa, This is part of a documentary series called "Protectors", which shares the stories of underrepresented conservationists who are dedicating their lives to protecting or restoring ecosystems throughout Africa, and should be released next year.



## 6. Finances and fund-raising

It's a pleasure to report that the finances of the PVF still hold good in spite of the strained economic situation in the country. We are blessed to have been supported once again by regular grant makers such as Botanical Society of SA and the Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust managed by Nedbank Private wealth.

Our operating Income has not increased substantially reflecting a meagre 2% from R 511378.00 to R 521793.00. We were fortunate to continue to provide an increased expenditure to achieve our objective of restoring the vegetation around the vlei. Expenditure increased from R 414945.00 to R 505016.00 representing a 21% increase over last year's expenditure. The financials reflect that the investment of charitable institutions were put to good use and enabled the Forum to continue its work of community education and creating awareness about our fragile environment. The work with children, planting and clearing around the vlei is the proverbial casting your bread on the water and in later years it shall return.

We are pleased to report a clean audit. The audited Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 31 March 2022 have been circulated and accordingly submitted for approval.

Community funding remains a difficulty but we are extremely grateful to the few individuals who continue to support our efforts. We will endeavour to encourage donations from our communities, as even a R10.00 donation will be a great encouragement. The facility belongs to our community and the community should take responsibility for funding the protection and preservation of the area. This year we are introducing a motion for a small membership fee to make our membership base also a solid financial base.

It would be remiss of the Treasurer not to acknowledge the tremendous work done by Bridget Pitt, Emma Oliver, Alex Lansdowne in sourcing funds. Vilma Maritz is a great help in the treasury function and deserves much appreciation.

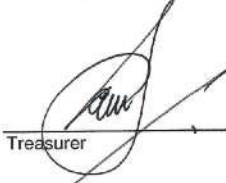
**PHILIP BAM - HON TREASURER**

**PRINCESS VLEI FORUM**  
142-542 NPO  
**ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**31 MARCH 2022**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND ADMINISTRATION	CONTENTS	PAGE
Chairperson - Gary Stewart Treasurer - Philip Bam Secretary - Bridget Pitt	REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS	2 - 3
Deputy Secretary - Emma Oliver Deputy Treasurer - Vilma Maritz Mary Jansen Robin Oakes	REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	4
	STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	5
	STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	6
	STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS	7
	NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	8
<b>Bankers:</b>  First National Bank Grassy Park	SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEDULE Detailed income statement	9

The annual financial statements set out on pages 4 to 8 are approved by the executive committee and are signed on their behalf by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson  
01 September 2022

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Treasurer

# DCA Chartered Accountants (SA)

REGISTERED ACCOUNTANTS AND AUDITORS

Telephone: 021 761 2964

Cellular: 0828705970

e-mail: albertyn@dcaca.co.za

44 Ottery Road Wynberg

address all correspondence to:

PO Box 46980, Glosderry, 7702

## QUALIFIED REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PRINCESS VLEI FORUM

### Qualified Opinion

We have audited the annual financial statements of the Princess Vlei Forum (the Forum) set out on pages 4 to 8, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 March 2022, and the statement of financial performance, changes in equity and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In common with many entities of a similar nature, it is not feasible for the Forum to institute accounting controls over cash collections prior to the initial entry of the collections in the accounting records. Accordingly it was impractical to extend our examination beyond the receipts actually recorded.

In our opinion, except for the effects of the matter stated in the preceding paragraph, the Forum's financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Forum as at 31 March 2022, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice.

### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Forum in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. This responsibility includes: designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

### Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to note 1 to the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice to satisfy the financial information needs of its members. As a result, the financial statements may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

### Other Information

The executive committee is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Supplementary Schedule set out on page 9, but is not included in the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. We therefore do not express an opinion on those schedules.

### Responsibilities of Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

In preparing the financial statements, the executive committee is responsible for assessing the Forum's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the Forum or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Forum's financial reporting process.

### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.



DCA CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS (SA)

Registered Auditor

01 September 2022

**PRINCESS VLEI FORUM**  
142-542 NPO

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

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Your committee has pleasure in submitting the financial statements of the organisation for the year ended 31 March 2022.

**RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT**

The Executive Committee is responsible for the selecting and adopting of sound accounting practices for maintaining an adequate and effective system of accounting records, for safekeeping of assets, and for developing and maintaining a system of internal control that, among other things, will ensure the preparation of financial statements that achieve fair presentation.

After conducting appropriate procedures the executive committee is satisfied that the centre will be a going concern for the foreseeable future and has continued to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

**GENERAL REVIEW**

The results of the operations for the year ended 31 March 2022 and the financial position at that date are adequately reflected in the financial statements.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

There were no changes to the executive committee at the end of the financial year and the date of the report is as set out on page 1.

**POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS**

No material facts or circumstances have occurred between the accounting date and the date of this report.

**PRINCESS VLEI FORUM**  
142-542 NPO

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 31 MARCH 2022**

---

	<b>2022</b>	2021
	<b>R</b>	R
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	<b>3</b> <b>4 756</b>	8 335
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash at bank	<b>4</b> <b>474 250</b>	453 893
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u><b>479 006</b></u>	<u><b>462 228</b></u>
<b>Equity and liabilities</b>		
<b>Equity</b>		
Accumulated Funds		
Balance at beginning of year	<b>451 729</b>	355 295
Movement for the year	<u><b>16 777</b></u>	<u>96 434</u>
Balance at end of year	<b>468 506</b>	451 729
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable	<b>5</b> <b>10 500</b>	10 500
<b>TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</b>	<u><b>479 006</b></u>	<u><b>462 229</b></u>

**PRINCESS VLEI FORUM**  
142-542 NPO

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

	2022 R	2021 R
Income	510 915	500 279
Expenses	505 016	414 945
Net operating surplus	<u>5 899</u>	<u>85 335</u>
Other income		
Interest received	10 878	11 099
	<u><u>16 777</u></u>	<u><u>96 434</u></u>

**PRINCESS VLEI FORUM**  
142-542 NPO

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

	2022 R	2021 R
<b>CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>20 356</b>	<b>109 337</b>
Cash receipts from donors	510 915	500 279
Cash paid to suppliers and employees	505 016	414 945
Cash generated from operations	5 899	85 335
Depreciation	3 579	2 403
Interest received	10 878	11 099
Increase in accounts payable	-	10 500
<b>CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>( 10 738)</b>
Acquisition of Property, plant and equipment	-	( 10 738)
Net cash flow for the year	<u>20 356</u>	<u>98 599</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year	453 894	355 295
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	<u><u>474 250</u></u>	<u><u>453 894</u></u>

**PRINCESS VLEI FORUM**

142-542 NPO

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The Annual Financial Statements have been prepared on the accrual basis and incorporate the following principal accounting policies, which unless stated otherwise, comply in all material aspects with generally accepted accounting practice and are consistent with those applied in previous years.

**1.1 Revenue**

Gross revenue represents funds raised, members' subscriptions and donations received and are recognised on receipt.

**1.2 Property, plant and equipment**

Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost and depreciated on the straight line basis at rates calculated to write each asset down to estimated residual value over its commercial life.

**1.3 Comparative figures**

Some comparative amounts were reclassified on the unaudited schedule to align with Funder line items.

**2 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

All related party transactions are concluded, in the ordinary course of business, at arm's length. Transactions between the forum and these entities have occurred under terms and conditions that are no more favourable than those entered into with third parties in arm's length transactions.

	2022 R	2021 R
<b>3 PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT</b>		
Computer equipment		
Cost	10 738	-
Accumulated depreciation	(2 403)	-
Book value at beginning of the year	8 335	-
Addition	-	10 738
Depreciation for the year	(3 579)	(2 403)
	<u>4 756</u>	<u>8 335</u>
<b>4 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>		
FNB - Current account	4 815	6 003
FNB - Money Market account	469 435	447 891
	<u>474 250</u>	<u>453 893</u>
<b>5 ACCOUNTS PAYABLE</b>		
Accrual	<u>10 500</u>	<u>10 500</u>

**PRINCESS VLEI FORUM**

142-542 NPO

**DETAILED INCOME STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

	2022 R	2021 R
<b>Income</b>	<b>521 793</b>	<b>511 378</b>
Donations	3 150	39 650
American Orchid Society	-	36 529
Botanical Society of SA	20 000	20 000
City of Cape Town	60 000	-
Grant - Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust	427 765	400 500
Heritage Committee	-	3 600
Interest received	10 878	11 099
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>505 016</b>	<b>414 945</b>
Bank charges	2 325	2 039
City Grant in Aid	60 491	-
Computer expenses	-	3 219
Depreciation	3 579	2 403
Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust - expenses		
- HHCT Admin	9 375	26 795
- HHCT1 Manager	237 640	176 908
- HHCT1A Restoration labour	95 050	45 400
- HHCT2 Restoration	-	35 967
- HHCT3 Environmental education / guardian schools	26 871	-
- HHCT3 PG Venue hire and deposit	1 899	-
- HHCT4 Community outreach	4 050	17 400
Orchid restoration project	34 341	1 932
Restoration plant material	19 997	20 000
Rowland and Letta Hill		
- Consulting fees	-	4 000
- Plant material	2 150	23 305
SER Offset		
- consulting fees	-	54 869
- plant material	6 500	-
Webhosting	748	708
<b>NET SURPLUS</b>	<b>16 777</b>	<b>96 434</b>

*NB: this schedule is unaudited and is attached for management purposes only*



## 7. The Road ahead

This is our tenth year as an organisation, and we will take the opportunity to reflect at our Annual General meeting on how far we have come, but, more importantly, on where our membership wants us to go.

We continue to rely on individual members and member organisations to keep us in touch with our community. A priority remains to involve local communities in a vibrant partnership with the City, thus ensuring that the Princess Vlei serves the needs of nature and of the community. While the City is the managing authority of Princess Vlei, it is the community that holds the soul of the vlei, and recognises how the vlei is a powerful repository of our identity and heritage. We would therefore like to see the community play a more proactive role in acting as custodians of this site.

The project to improve the infrastructure at Princess Vlei is ongoing, and we hope to see real progress with the walkway that the City is installing in response to community demand. We are also keen to find ways to realise our vision of our heritage 'boma' to enable gatherings and educational work on the eastern shore.

The restoration work is ongoing, and already nature is doing half the work, as plants get established and propagate themselves. This exciting area of work is its own reward. The City's Environmental Management Plan will be an important tool in ensuring these gains are protected.

Many thinkers are encouraging humans to look beyond sustainability, and embrace a different way to live with the earth and each other. Our evolving relationship with Princess Vlei is a living expression of the love and passion our community have for this piece of earth. We look forward to another exciting year, and, with the help of our members, guardians and sponsors we hope to grow from strength to strength.



## 8. Acknowledgements

A huge thanks to:

### Donors

Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust managed by Nedbank Private Wealth  
The Society for Ecological Restoration  
The American Orchid Society  
The Roland and Letta Hill Trust  
The Botanical Society, Kirstenbosch Branch  
City of Cape Town Grant in Aid  
WESSA  
ARD Athletics Club

And the many members who have given donations.

### Partner Organisations

Botanical Society, Kirstenbosch Branch  
Nature Connect  
Peter Clarke Art Centre  
Jungle Theatre Company  
Masiphumelele Creative Hub  
Gravity Adventures  
The Lions Club

**Cllr Kevin Southgate** for unflagging support and championing our cause in the City.

**LOFOB** for their generous sharing of meeting spaces and other resources.

**The Neighbourhood Watch** and **Grassy Park Community**

**Policing Forum** for assisting in marshalling and providing security at events.

Our Project Manager **Denisha Anand**, and restoration consultant **Alex Lansdowne**, for their dedication, vision and inspiration.

**Neil Petersen** and the restoration team for their hard work in clearing restoration sites

**The City officials** who work behind the scenes to make Princess Vlei fabulous, and are always willing to listen to our concerns – Zeenat Arieff, Luyanda Mjuleni, Teboho Maliehe, Fay Howa, Sihle Jonas, Ashton Mouton, David Dunn, Asanda Mdladlamba, Nabeel Bassadien, Songezo Ndevu, Richard White and many others.

And a special thanks to our committee members, volunteers, teachers and members who make this all possible.

