



Dawncliffe Residents Association Newsletter – 4th quarter 2008

Nothing will stop crime! It's about mitigating the risk of serious criminal activity. We have alarms and sensors, we have gates and fences, we have guards who act as a deterrent by being eyes and ears and we have improved knowledge of what crimes have been committed so that we can adjust our own defences to counteract a weakness. So, have we made progress? Yes, of course, but has the cost been worth it. Is the guard hut worth the cost and effort? 244 homeowners in the area think so and about the same don't. By the way the monthly cost of the guard hut scheme to the homeowner is about R390 and if you use the Coin Armed Response it is a further R145 more per month depending on your requirements. Reduced prices are available for Pensioners and others who do not have the cash resources but who wish to show their support.

The website (www.dawncliffe.com) is up and going ably run by Nikki who gives it lots of time and energy to serve us. It is intended to disseminate information to empower the community to make their own decisions as well as provide an information hub for the community. Everyone is able to send in their incident reports or to write in the forum section their thoughts about anything that affects the community. If you wish to complain or encourage then do so in the forum. If you want to build a community idea then do so in the forum. If you want to know what others are thinking then check out the forum. The authors name will be recorded with your entry but if you have been objective then mature readers will not take exception.

Crime stats for our area over a 7 month period to end June 2008 compared to the rest of Westville are substantially down. Housebreaking is 1.7 incidents per 1000 homes per month (rest of Westville is 4.2), vehicle theft is 1.0 (rest of Westville is 1.2) and armed robbery is nil (compared to 1.5 for the rest of Westville). A recent hijacking in Stephens Avenue has been a major set back for these stats. Coin were not able to explain how the vehicle was able to pass by the guard without observation neither was there any observation of a suspicious vehicle entering the area to drop off the two criminals.

Concern has been expressed that loiterers at the guard huts observe the routines of the inhabitants of the area whilst purporting to be speaking to the guard. If you are not happy with the performance of the guard or his loitering friends you are encouraged to stop and discuss the issue with the guard. It is very helpful in conveying to the guard that he/she is under scrutiny. It is equally important to stop and commend his/her performance when it is deserved. Constant criticism is counter productive. As Christmas approaches you may wish to recognise the guard's efforts over the year with something small and special.

Thanks to those people who have improved the hut environment. Some of the huts are looking really good and are a credit to the area.

Attached to this newsletter is a strip of stickers for the windscreen of your vehicle. They are intended to provide a quick visual reference to the guard. If you don't have it on your windscreen you won't be stopped but if we all use them then the guards job of identifying suspicious vehicles is more effective. We need that critical mass of cars using the sticker before we can reap some of the benefits.

The DRA is resourced with volunteers from amongst the residents. The costs of running the guard huts is carried by those who contribute (244 in November 2008) and the cost of the website is financed from advertising. However there are other costs which have to be met from time to time and in order to finance these extraneous costs the committee has planned a fundraising evening at the Barnyard on Thursday 5 March 2009. We have booked 200 seats and if they are all sold then we should raise R8,000. When details are advertised please support this event by coming along or sponsoring tickets for friends.

Have an enjoyable and safe break!