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We all have role to play in keeping areas clean

There appears to be a general state of neglect in some of the smaller Eastern Cape towns as well as townships in the urban areas. Illegal dumping and raw sewage streaming down streets has become so commonplace that it no longer raises eyebrows. With all the cleaning co-operatives that have been launched by the government over the years as well as the money that has been pumped into the expanded public works programmes, one would have expected the streets to look cleaner, but there has been hardly any improvement.

In the Jeffreys Bay townships of London and Ocean View, residents who are so fed up with the sea of garbage and raw sewage engulfing their homes, are planning to protest to voice their frustration over the unhealthy conditions they are surrounded by.

At a meeting hosted by the UDM on Saturday, residents said their living conditions were not fit for humans, and we agree.

It is, however, important to point out that the onus is also on residents to ensure they do not dump their garbage in public open spaces. But it is equally important for the local municipality to provide dustbins and ensure that rubbish bags and bins are collected regularly.

Further inland, three Blue Crane Route municipal towns in the Karoo are battling sewage leaks that are affecting critical service centres, including clinics.

Sewerage pipes are often blocked and the effluent pushed back, eventually ending up in the streets and watercourses.

This is a big worry as it poses a health and safety risk for residents.

The problems in all these Eastern Cape towns boils down to two things: some residents do not take pride in where they work and live, so they go on to throw foreign objects into the drains that cause pipe blockages, and civil servants who do not make enough of an effort to provide professional services to the public.

The filth in the streets is an indictment on us all — communities and civil servants alike. Each of us have a role to play in keeping our areas clean around us.