



Publication: People's Post Constantia-Wynberg - Main
Title: KARBONKELBERG
Publish date: 18 Jun 2024
Page: 1

Reach: 20000
AVE: R 50149.35
Author: HELEEN BOSHOFF

KARBONKELBERG

Residents frustrated



HELEEN BOSHOFF
HELEEN.BOSHOFF@MEDIA24.COM

Up-up the crooked stairs to informal settlements on Karbonkelberg in Hout Bay, dark clouds promising rain bring misery to residents experiencing lingering flooded conditions, frustrated by the government's temporary relief measures.

"Three years ago, the City constructed a concrete walkway or road between our informal dwellings where a stream used to run through into the ocean. We're not sure why the road needed to be built because we didn't mind the stream. It never flooded the settlement and made us feel surrounded by nature," said Deidre Strauss. Now in her 50s, Strauss told the *People's Post* she was born and bred in Hangberg. Since this walkway's construction, their dwellings are regularly submerged due to water torrents brought by rain, which

residents point to the doing of the high concrete foundation.

According to them, the stream's level used to be low enough not to breach the margin bordering their homes. "I used to need a ladder to reach the roof. But now, the concrete foundation raised this level by 1,5 metres easily," Strauss pointed out.

"Even before the construction finished, the rains came and the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) teams started packing sandbags to block the water from our units. And ever since, that's all we get – more sandbags and plastic sails to keep the water out."

Inside, their homes remain damp, water damage is sustained to hardboard walling, tiles fall off the walls, concrete foundations crack and mould buildup is evident on material furniture.

"I've lost so much linen due to water damage in attempts to keep the water out," another neighbour down the path, Yusra Mohammed, added.

►►CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

On Hangberg's Karbonkelberg, residents like Deidre Strauss are miserable due to constant flooding conditions wreaking chaos in their homes, following a walkway construction three years ago. PHOTO: HELEEN BOSHOFF

"Due to my bad health cannot afford living in these wet, mouldy conditions

- Deidre Strauss



Publication: People s Post Constantia-Wynberg - Main
Title: RESIDENTS FRUSTRATED
Publish date: 18 Jun 2024
Page: 4

Reach: 20000
AVE: R 26743.64
Author: Staff Reporter

►►CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Mohammed said in the last two years, the City hosted awareness campaigns focussed on flood prevention. "These flood prevention measures were quite ironic, as it seemed that their construction does not take these measures into account."

Strauss said she has pursued every avenue of communication to see this issue get attention from authorities.

"I've been to the councillor's offices, I've talked with his PA, sent messages, photos and also approached the community ambassador to help escalate these issues. Early in April, I reported a storm to the councillor to which he simply replied: 'We will get DRM to put sandbags.'"

"What an undignified response!"

Residents had regular contact with the contractor, who would assure them he fully understood the problem. "He has no shame," Strauss expressed in awe.

To top it off, she suffers from numerous chronic ailments, like bone marrow cancer, asthma, high blood pressure, cholesterol and uses a nebuliser at night.

"I am in pain every day and due to my bad health, I cannot afford to live in these wet, mouldy conditions."

Mohammed argues residents to not ask for more sandbags or plastic sails: "The City should stop offering us these temporary measures – come and fix the problem. Or better yet, we need formal housing," she added.

An inquiry was sent to the City and Ward 74 councillor Rob Quintas. Feedback was not received by the time of going to print.



Ever since the City of Cape Town's construction of a walkway down the centre of the Karbonkelberg informal settlement, residents claim their homes have become drenched with floodwater during winter rainfall.



Due to the lingering damp conditions in their homes, water damage causes tiles to come off the walls, their foundations get cracked and material furniture become mouldy.

◀◀ Yusra Mohammed appeals to the City to come up with a sustainable solution to the constant flooding conditions on Karbonkelberg, instead of temporary solutions.

