

Princess Vlei Forum Annual Report 2015



Website: www.princessvlei.org * Email: imagine@princessvlei.org

PO Box 31043 Grassy Park Cape Town, WC 7888

Registration no: 142-542 NPO

2014/15 Committee Members

Philip Bam – Chairperson

George Davis – Deputy Chairperson

Ebrahim Abrahams - Treasurer

Bridget Pitt – Secretary and Flight of Dreams co-ordinator

Vilma Martiz – Assistant Treasurer

Emma Oliver – Assistant Secretary

Bishop Christopher Gregorowski

Malcolm Campbell

Gary Stewart – Chair of the Technical & planning committee

William Leith

Samantha Lee

Bradley Van Sitters

Matilda Smith – Legal Support

Auditors: DCA Chartered Accountants

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Protecting Princess Vlei: Heritage, Community and Environment	3
3	Negotiating the Transformation: The technical and Planning committee	4
4	Outreach	6
5	Financial report	9
6	Spreading the word	14
7	The road ahead	14

1 Introduction

This year has been a year of transition and consolidation. Much of our focus has been on formalising our relationship with the City, to ensure that we are empowered to act as custodians of the Princess Vlei, and ensure that it is development and managed in a way that best serves both the community and environmental needs.

This process has been slow and frustrating at points, but after much negotiation with role players in Alderman Belinda Walker's office and other City departments, we have been recognised by the City as a community custodian group of the Greater Princess Vlei Conservation Area (GPVCA), and we are close to finalising a Memorandum of Agreement with the City. This is an important victory, as the City initially proposed that we set up a new "Friends" structure to serve this purpose.

In addition to formalising our relationship with the City, we have successfully applied for Not for Profit Organisation (NPO) status, and are

in the process of applying for Section 18 A status to enable us to offer tax relief to donors

An important milestone was reached when the City released the Draft Conceptual Development Framework in July. This draft plan was drawn up with reference to the community vision for Princess Vlei presented to the Deputy Mayor on March 22 2014. While details need to be ironed out, and there are still areas of concern, the plan broadly reflects the community vision for the vlei, and represents a solid victory for sustained community action.

The challenge in moving from being a protest organisation to one formally recognised by the City is to ensure that we continue to be a legitimate voice of community interests. Compromises have to be made on both sides, but it is critical that we maintain our independence and credibility. To this end we have endeavoured to be transparent in all our dealings with the City, and to keep our membership and supporters informed.

Two general meetings were held this year, one in March to discuss the process of drawing up an MOA and to table constitutional amendments. The second public meeting was held in August, to discuss in depth the City's Draft plan. The Plan was also presented to the community at a City Open Day. In addition we have sent out several newsletters and press releases keeping the public and our members informed of the process.

However, as ever we rely on active engagement from our members and member organisations to ensure that we can be a vigilant and dynamic community partner to the City.

Funding remains a source of concern, and we have not yet had a firm commitment from the City as to what budget will be available for improvements. We have lobbied Ward Cllr Kevin Southgate to spend part of the Ward allocation budget on Princess Vlei – after canvassing views at our General Meeting in August, it was agreed that this would go towards creating a children’s park. However funding remains a challenge, and an important task in the future will be for us to find supplementary funding for projects at Princess Vlei, while also lobbying to ensure that the City holds to its obligations to make funds available to manage the space in a way that sustains its ecological integrity, and upholds the comfort and dignity of its users.

In addition to this work, we have continued to engage the community, particularly its younger members through vibrant events and programmes such as the Clean up and Canoes event, the Flight of Dreams programme and Parade, and the Orienteering event.

It feels as if we are nearing the end of this difficult transition phase, and will soon move into the exciting phase of manifesting some of the wonderful ideas for Princess Vlei that have been put forward by the community through the Dressing the Princess projects that predated the

Forum, and the Forum’s Imagine Princess Vlei campaign. With the active support of our members, we hope to soon turn those ideas into a reality

2 Protecting Princess Vlei: Heritage, Community and Environment

2.1 Heritage site

At our AGM last year, Natalie McAskill undertook to pursue the issue of applying to have Princess Vlei declared a Heritage Site. LOGRA took on the management of this, and funding was raised to employ Carlynne Kruger to do interviews and undertake research to support the application. The application is in process.

2.2 Environmental

The subdivision separating the mall site has now lapsed, and the entire precinct falls under the Greater Princess Vlei Conservation Area. In terms of the City’s Draft Conceptual Development Framework, a substantial portion of this site has been set aside specifically for conservation. The City has also spoken of prioritising the improvement of the water quality, to make the Vlei safer for baptisms and recreational activities with low environmental impact. The environmental rehabilitation of the Site

remains a priority and a challenge. We would also like to explore ways to get the community more actively involved in this process.

2.3 Improvements to the Site

An important project was arranging for the toilet block to be transformed by local graffiti artist MakOne 1. The colourful graphics celebrate the cultural and natural heritage of Princess Vlei.



3 Negotiating the Transformation: The technical and Planning committee

Sub-committee chairperson: Gary Stewart

This sub-committee had its roots in the World Design Capital (WDC) Subcommittee. The committee was then reconvened towards the end of last year as the “Imagine Princess Vlei” Subcommittee.

At the beginning of this year the committee changed its name from the “Imagine Princess Vlei” Subcommittee to the “Technical and Planning” Subcommittee. This was thought to more clearly reflect what the committee was about.

3.1 Liaison with the City

The nature of the forum’s relationship with the city has changed over the last year or two, from being more adversarial and in opposition to the mall, to partnering with the City to develop the Vlei in a sustainable way. The Technical and Planning Committee has been at the forefront of managing this changing relationship.

3.1.1 Administrative Issues

Part of this process has been to formalise the relationship with the city and having the PVF becoming a “friends” organisation. This would allow the forum to be recognised as the community body which would channel public participation, allow the ring-fencing of income to develop the vlei, and to have a more integral say in what happens at the vlei.

To make this happen a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) would have to be signed with the city. Prior to an MOA being signed the city requested the PVF make a few constitutional changes which would bring it in line with principles of a “friends” organisation. Most of these constitutional changes have been made at a General Meeting of the forum on Thursday 12 March.

We are now in the process of working through a draft MOA with the city and hope to finalise this in the near future.

3.1.2 Urban Planning

Over the last few years the forum has solicited the input from the community about what they'd like to see at the vlei, through workshops and online media. This culminated in the "People's Vision" which documented all these ideas into a coherent form.

The "People's Vision" document was presented to the city which used it as input for the Princess Vlei Concept Development Framework (CDF) which was presented to members of the Management Committee at a meeting with the city, including Belinda Walker on Thursday 9 July. The Concept Development Framework outlines an overall framework for what is to happen at the vlei, demarcating certain areas for particular kinds of development and basic principles which will underline what kind of development takes place.

The city hosted an Open Day on Thursday 20 August at the Retreat Civic Centre where the plan was presented to the public for comment. The Forum also hosted a workshop at LOFOB on Thursday 29 August to get a more substantial response from our membership and the broader community. This has been forwarded to the city which will use it to redraft the Concept Development Framework.

3.2 Way Forward

The anticipated major issues which will engage the subcommittee for the next year will include:

- finalising the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and formally establishing the friends relationship
- negotiating and finalising a lease agreement to ensure the forum has income generation rights to raise funds, e.g. with a market or licensing of other activities like boating, for the enhancement of the vlei area.
- working with the community and the city to more explicitly map out a detailed urban plan for the Princess Vlei precinct

It has been a frustrating year, but progress has been made in establishing at least some kind of working relationship with the city. The upcoming year will present many exciting opportunities for further engagement to ensure that the people's vision is realised.

3.3 Thanks

The members of the committee – Bridget Pitt, Terrence Smith, Malcolm Campbell and Matilda Smith – deserve a great deal thanks for their often unglamorous but essential work which goes into determining and articulating the people's vision.

4 Outreach

We have continued to build networks and to work with other organisations to expand the web of protection around Princess Vlei. In addition to the projects we have undertaken, a number of other groups have used the Vlei for events this year. For example, the Scouts have held a major competition there, the annual Peninsula Paddle came through the Vlei, and Ben Bikes hosted a relay race. Heritage Day was a hive of activity, with several families braaing and picnicking. All of this helps to change the profile of the vlei and to create a vibrant and safe community space.

4.1 Flight of dreams programme



Sub-committee chairperson: Bridget Pitt

This dynamic programme has become a large focus of our work. It is organised in collaboration with the Frank Joubert Art Centre, the Jungle Theatre Company, eMzantsi Carnival and the Cape Bird Club, and with learners from Lotus High, John Graham Primary and Hyde Park Primary.

2015 marked the third year of this programme, which aims to:

- Raise awareness about environmental issues, in particular about the importance of conserving and rehabilitating Princess Vlei.
- Celebrate the natural systems and flora and fauna in our city, in particular the birds.
- Create awareness about our Khoi and San heritage.
- Enable children to express their appreciation of nature through creative projects.

The first event in the programme was the Meet the Birds Event at Princess Vlei, where approximately 60 learners from these and other schools participated in a role-play game to save the birds and other wildlife at Princess Vlei for the future. We were assisted in this by volunteers from the Cape Bird Club.

During August, Jungle Theatre was sponsored by the Forum to run drama workshops with Lotus High learners, and develop a running performance

of the Khoisan legend “The Great Bird Race”. We also held two workshops to construct giant bird puppets out of recycled waste.

The Flight of Dreams was promoted at a Heritage event hosted by the WCED’s Centre for Conservation Education.

On Saturday 26 September, we held our parade. About 100 children and supporters paraded the puppets through the streets, accompanied by eMzantsi’s “Bloka” band. The Great Bird Race was performed outside the library, in Perth Park and at Princess Vlei.



The colourful carnival was followed by the planting of *Erica verticillata*. This Erica once carpeted the area around Princess Vlei, and is the heath after which Heathfield was named. It is now extinct in the wild. These plants were donated to Princess Vlei by the City of Cape Town, on behalf of 28 schools in surrounding areas.

The Flight of Dreams was made possible by huge effort from Princess Vlei Forum volunteers and individuals on our sub-committee – Liesl Hartmann, Paul Hendricks, Brendon Bussy, Bridget Pitt, Vincent Meyburgh, Lorraine Tanner, and Emma Oliver, as well as teachers Shafiek Isaacs, Ebrahim Abrahams and Ingrid Solomons.

A challenge remains to expand the group beyond our three loyal schools. Despite extensive efforts to draw in other schools, this remains a challenge, as few teachers seem willing to engage in after school activities.

4.2 Walk Around the Vlei

In December 2014 we worked with the ARD athletics club to host a walk around the Vlei. At the end of the walk, hikers were addressed by Dalton Gibbs, the regional manager of the City of Cape Town’s Biodiversity Management Branch, on the ecological history of Princess Vlei and the other vleis in the area. The walk was valuable in guiding ideas for integrating the different precincts of Princess Vlei.

4.3 Clean up & Canoes

On March 14 this year, the Forum worked in collaboration with the Watershed Project to host a day marking the start of National Water Week. The event also celebrated the one year anniversary of the community victory in saving Princess Vlei from the shopping mall development. School children and other volunteers spent the day collecting litters, and were rewarded with Canoe rides offered by Gravity Adventures. The event highlighted the serious problem of littering and dumping at the Vlei, which compromises its aesthetic value, and poses a threat to hikers and wildlife. Further clean-ups are recommended, as well as working with the City to find ways to resolve this.



4.4 Source to Sea Project

This ground-breaking project seeks to connect Cape Town's waterways from Source to Sea through establishing hiking trails and eco-corridors, and rehabilitate the rivers as part of this process. We were invited to participate in a Think tank around this, and took part in a walk following the Diep River from Constantia to where it opens into the Little Princess Vlei. Forum members then went with the team on a Site visit to Princess Vlei. This project could assist in improving the water quality of Princess Vlei, and linking the vlei to other conservation areas through these trails. As a well-supported international venture, it could prove a useful avenue through which resources can be rallied to support our conservation efforts.

4.5 Western Cape Wetlands Forum

On June 3, George Davis of the Forum did a presentation on Princess Vlei to the Western Cape Wetlands Forum. George has continued to liaise with the Wetlands Forum in exploring ways to connect with other organisations doing similar work, and to expand our resource and skills base.

False Bay Ecology Park

Emma Oliver has represented the PVF at the fortnightly FBEP meetings. This helps to keep us in contact with the other vleis in the area, and also enables us to share our ideas and activities with them.

4.6 Orienteering

On Saturday 29th August, the Forum worked with Bruce Meier of the Peninsula Orienteering Club (PENOC) to host an Orienteering race at Princess Vlei. This very successful event was attended by 90 participants in the race, as well as many others on hand, and demonstrated the value of the site for these activities. We plan further collaboration with PENOC in the future.



5 Financial report

This year we did not host a major fundraising event, but have raised close to R40 000 through a Thundafund campaign, the sale of cards, dvds and books, and personal donations. While we continue to offer membership without subscription fees, we would like to urge our members to make a voluntary donation to assist with our running expenses. Committee members and volunteers give generously of their time, money and personal resources, which enable us to run events and programmes.

Our agreement with the City will enable us to ringfence some of the funding raised through activities at Princess Vlei, such as stall leasing fees for a craft market etc. These funds can then be used for the improvement of Princess Vlei.

We need to embark on serious fundraising in order to effect some of the changes we want to see at Princess Vlei. We urgently need fundraising expertise to assist our endeavours.

Our main expenses have been generated by the outreach projects outlined above

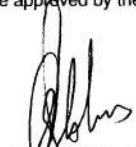
PRINCESS VLEI FORUM
NPO 142-542
ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
31 MARCH 2015

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND ADMINISTRATION	CONTENTS	PAGE
Chairperson - Phillip Bam Dep. Chairperson - George Davis Treasurer - Ebrahim Abrahams Secretary - Bridget Pitt Assis. Secretary - Emma Oliver Bishop Christopher Gregorowsky Wilma Maritz Willie Leith	REPORT OF THE ACCOUNTING OFFICERS	2
	REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	3
	STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	4
	STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS	5
	NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	6
Bankers: First National Bank Grassy Park	SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEDULE Detailed statement of receipts and payments	7

The annual financial statements set out on pages 3 to 6 are approved by the executive committee and are signed on their behalf.



Chairperson
30 September 2015



Treasurer

DCA Chartered Accountants (SA)

REGISTERED ACCOUNTANTS AND AUDITORS

Telephone: 021 761 2964
Fax: 021 761 2965
Cellular: 0828705970
e-mail: albertyn@dcaca.co.za

215 Medi-Centre
42 Broad Road Wynberg
address all correspondence to:
PO Box 46980, Glosderry, 7702

REPORT OF THE ACCOUNTING OFFICER TO THE MEMBERS OF PRINCESS VLEI FORUM

We have performed the duties of accounting officer to Princess Vlei Forum for the year ended 31 March 2015.. No audit was requested and no audit was conducted, although expenses were checked for validity.

The financial statements set out on pages 3 to 7 are the responsibility of the members. We have determined that the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records and have done so by adopting such procedures and conducting such enquiries in relation to the books of account and records as we considered necessary in the circumstances. We have also reviewed the accounting policies which have been represented to us as having been applied in the preparation of the annual financial statements and we consider that they are appropriate to the business.



DCA CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS (SA)
REGISTERED ACCOUNTANTS AND AUDITORS
WYNBERG
30 September 2015

PRINCESS VLEI FORUM

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

Your committee has pleasure in submitting the financial statements of the organisation for the year ended 31 March 2015.

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

There were no changes to the executive committee during the year. The results of the operations for the year ended 31 MARCH 2015 and the financial position at that date are adequately reflected in the financial statements.

POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

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

PRINCESS VLEI FORUM

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 31 MARCH 2015

	2015 R	2014 R
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash at bank	51 626	56 616
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>51 626</u>	<u>56 616</u>
Equity and liabilities		
Equity		
Accumulated Funds	51 627	56 616
Balance at beginning of year	56 616	-
Movement for the year	(4 990)	56 616
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	<u>51 626</u>	<u>56 616</u>

PRINCESS VLEI FORUM

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

	2015 R	2014 R
Income	39 883	166 790
Expenses	44 873	110 174
Net (deficit) surplus	<u>(4 990)</u>	<u>56 616</u>

PRINCESS VLEI FORUM

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The Annual Financial Statements have been prepared on the cash 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.

2 CASH FLOW STATEMENT

Since the financial statements have been prepared on a cash basis the Cash Flow Statement is superfluous and has not been prepared.

PRINCESS VLEI FORUM

**DETAILED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

	2015 R	2014 R
Receipts	39 883	166 790
Donations	12 366	44 790
Thunda Fund	27 517	-
Fundraising - Baxter Theatre	-	122 000
Payments	44 873	110 174
Advertising and promotions	-	7 458
Bank Charges	1 587	1 705
Casual labour	-	510
Testing equipment	-	762
First Aid	-	912
Events expenses		1 585
- Princess Vlei celebration	6 227	-
- Birding event at the vlei	950	-
- Princess Vlei mural	4 000	-
- Princess Vlei carnival	6 895	-
- Flight of dreams	21 536	-
Fundraising expense - Baxter theatre	-	67 030
Hiring of equipment	-	13 025
Legal fees	-	8 790
Printing and stationery	2 850	8 036
Transport	600	-
Webhosting	228	360
NET (DEFICIT) SURPLUS	(4 990)	56 616

6 Spreading the word

The activities of the Forum continue to get good coverage in the community papers and on local radio stations. We update our website regularly, and send out regular newsletters to our database of 759 subscribers. We also have a Facebook page, which is updated frequently. The work of the Forum will also be featured in a SABC documentary to be screened next year.

7 The road ahead

This last year has been challenging in many ways, but we are in a considerably stronger position than we were at our last AGM. The City's Draft Conceptual Development Framework endorses the community vision for Princess Vlei, and allows for the creation of a magnificent site honouring nature, heritage and community. We have negotiated the City's recognition of us as a community liaison group, empowered to work with the City in transforming and sustaining the site, and we are close to signing an agreement to this effect.

We need to continue with our task of finding a balance between being a campaign organisation and a stewardship organisation. We need to hold the City to its obligation to maintain, manage and improve the site, while maintaining a cordial and collaborative relationship. We need to ensure

that the City takes us seriously, and respects the work we have done and will continue to do in engaging with the community on creating a vision for Princess Vlei. We need to find relationships that work, and make the most of them.

Through continued engagement with our community and professional partners, we need to develop a compelling and sustainable plan for Princess Vlei that does not devolve the City of their obligations, and we need to ensure that the site receives the legal protection and status that will protect it from the threat of commercial development in the future.

Princess Vlei's staunchest champions continue to be the civil society that values it. More than ever, we need to keep working at building community structures. We need to find the balance between enabling the local community to be the heartbeat of Princess Vlei, and to find its identity affirmed and reflected in the space, but at the same time ensuring that the space is accessible to and valued by a much wider and diverse group. We need to work towards building a Princess Vlei that is loved, nurtured, and fiercely defended by generations of present and future users.