

SANTORINI NEWSLETTER

July 2020



General

If one must endure a lock-down there could not have been a more pleasant place to have been confined than within our Estate. Following the general exodus of owners and tenants at the end of March, about 10% of the units were occupied. One could get all the exercise one needed without coming into contact with anyone else. With 50 acres of trails, 6 swimming pools, the gym and the tennis court at the disposal of very few residents one could comply with the lock-down regulations and sustain one's fitness levels at the same time.

Our Estate manager Paul and admin. secretary Tammy continued to fulfil their roles working from their units. Accumin also provided their usual administration services, although they could not visit Santorini. Dick Becker did a sterling job ensuring all gate control measures were strictly adhered to and keeping the security staff on their toes. As he lives less than a kilometre from the estate, he was able to obtain permission to move to and from home and work as required. Alpha Security continued to provide their normal security services during the whole period. We were able to retain sufficient of our maintenance staff to attend to essential maintenance. They were accommodated in the staff quarters on the premises.

Ashley Osborn - MD of Via Nathi Garden Services rented a unit in Kamari and a couple of Santorini staffrooms to enable sufficient of his garden staff to attend to about 80% of their usual duties. Over and above this they managed to keep the swimming pools clean and in usable condition as the pool cleaners were restricted from coming in.

All in all, the estate was well cared for during the level 5 period and having moved to level 3, most of the maintenance items budgeted for this year are back on track.

The 2020 AGM

At a board meeting on the 4th of July 2020 the decision was taken to postpone the AGM until we are able to conduct the meeting in the usual format. Most Bodies Corporates in Ballito and elsewhere are following this procedure. The usual end of year figures and reports will be sent out to all owners in August. The rest of the business to be conducted at an AGM will take place when regulations allow us to conduct it in its usual format.

Security

Since the country moved into level 3, security has become a major concern. There are numerous vagrants sleeping in the bush areas around Ballito all looking for opportunities to make money any way they can. However, the real danger is in the form of well-organized thieves that have been operational in the area since level 5 was lifted. An example of this is the recent five break-ins in houses along Kudu road which is adjacent to Santorini's Southern fence.

Two units in Perissa were broken into during the early morning of Sunday 31st of May. The thief or thieves gained access to the estate by crow-barring apart two palisades in the fence along the Thira cliff-face. They proceeded undetected to Perissa block B and proceeded to climb up the patios to reach the top unit. The unit was occupied but none the less, the thief managed to force the door open and steal a number of cell phones and laptops without waking the occupant.

The thieves then broke into an unoccupied unit below and stole a television set.

The most worrying factor of this is that they obviously knew their way around Santorini and had targeted a particular unit, which is one of the most inaccessible units, requiring a high degree of mountaineering skills.

The fence has subsequently been repaired and strengthened but there are still sections of fencing that need repair or replacement right around the estate. (See paragraph on Fencing below.)

More security cameras have been fitted in front of the cliff-hangers and along the fence on the north side of Perissa Block B.



Finances

Accumin will send out the audited figures for the previous year and the current financial situation in August. Included will be the 2020/21 budget and current expenditure against this budget.

A summary of the current situation in round figures is:

1) We have spent some R400000 less than we budgeted for until the end of May.

This is obviously mainly due to the lock-down restrictions allowing us to do very little other than essential maintenance.

The number of levies in arrears has increased enormously. It hit a peak of R380,000 at the end of April - but Accumin are applying themselves to reduce the figure. Arrears at the end of May was around R350 000. Obviously, we have all been badly affected by the financial crises brought on by Covid 19.

However almost half of this figure is made up from the arrears of just two owners.

Owners who are unable make monthly levy payments are asked to contact Kim Rom of Accumin and

to provide a schedule as to how they intend to catch up on their arrears and to sign an acknowledgement of debt.

3) Our reserves are sitting at R3.66 M as at the end of May which is in line with the legal requirement.

4) The 2020/21 budget is aimed at providing the finances to cover essential maintenance and the increased expenses incurred by increased municipal rates, increased contractors' rates and similar unavoidable expenses. There are no "nice to haves" in the budget. It is estimated that we will complete most of the budgeted items by the end of the financial year without having to dig into reserves.

Extensions to the Gate-House

Our architect Pedro de Mello Machado has completed the final drawings of this proposed structure which will be presented at the AGM. Whether or not we go ahead with the project this year will be decided at the AGM. He also has ascertained estimates of total costs involved. Unfortunately, whether we like it or not, we are now being considered by many as a holiday resort, with the result that tenant and entry controls at our gate are becoming more essential. These controls can only be effectively administered at the gate so that increased office space at the gate is becoming essential.

The Perimeter Fence

There are several sections of the perimeter fencing that need repair or replacement. It was decided by the board some years ago that palisade fencing, although not ideal, was fit for purpose and provided the most cost-effective solution. This fencing topped with rolled barbed has proved most effective

apart, crowbar to however, is to the direct of fence so replacement Palisade exposed years.

It has been to a more type of are Concrete PVC 'Value palisade perimeter, surrounding

R3 Million, which under present circumstances would be prohibitively expensive. The other two options are less expensive but nevertheless considerably more expensive than our galvanised palisade. Although only a section would be replaced each year, we will be looking at a considerable added expense over a span of several years should we decide to take one of the more expensive options.



except when it is forced requiring tools and/or a achieve. Its biggest defect that it rusts when exposed sea breeze. The sections exposed need about every 5 years. fencing on the less areas lasts 10 to 15

suggested that we move durable and effective fencing. The alternatives palisades, Clear-vu, and Fencing.' A concrete fence around our entire such as the one Simbithi would cost about

The decision as to which type of fence to erect will be taken when we have sufficient information on comparative durability and effectiveness of the various types of fencing. Once the decision is made the section of badly corroded fence from the Perissa turnstile to 12 Perissa will be replaced. This is already budgeted for and will take place before the end of July. Although minor repairs on various

sections of the fence will inevitably be necessary, no major replacements will take place without the sanction of a vote at the AGM.

Garden Services

The start of the lock-down period occurred at the end of a summer where we had enjoyed the best rainfall in years. The soft, well dispersed rain resulted in an accelerated growth rate of Santorini's



vegetation which continued well into May. Via Nathi were thus caught with having to contend with a much-reduced labour force at their very busiest time in the year. Despite this they managed to cope with the situation very well.

For the first few weeks of lock-down they confined themselves to essential services such as keeping the place clean and removing refuse. It also soon became apparent that unless the swimming pools were kept topped up and clean, they would soon

become a major problem. With our usual pool contractor unable to help us, Via Nathi took over this duty and kept the pools in good condition until the pool contractors were allowed back on the premises in May.

The interpretation of exactly what "essential services" entailed was soon broadened out to include keeping garden

areas in reasonable condition. This was done with caution at first in case it turned out to be a breach of the regulations. However, as time went on the garden services caught up and by the time level 3 arrived the gardens and bush areas were in as good a shape as ever.

The Tennis Court

The net and its supporting posts are to be replaced within the next few months. A defective court flood light is also to be replaced. Other than that various maintenance requirements are continuously monitored and attended to. It needs to be remembered that it was agreed at an AGM some years ago that the court is used for recreational purposes and it will be kept at a reasonable condition but not at an Olympic standard.

Although children are welcome to use the court please ensure that the surface is not damaged, and the court is solely used to play tennis. (i.e. No skateboards, football practice, etc.)

Compliance with Covid 19 regulations and Procedures employed.

Dick Becker has taken the lead in this respect and the regulations have been well adhered to. During level 5 very few persons were allowed into the complex. One or two new tenants with special permission were allowed entry and the odd plumber and electrician effected emergency repairs. Since the beginning of May when level 4 came into force, Dick has officially been appointed as "Compliance Officer." Charles Froneman and I have sanctioned and enforced the various rules and regulations required on behalf of the Board.

A small number of tenants and owners have attempted to circumvent the regulations but most residents, visitors and contractors have willingly complied. The number of residents living in the estate has hardly increased in the last month.

Refuse collection

One big plus factor that has emerged from the lock-down period is that everyone is required to put their garbage into the monkey-proof refuse bins provided. No black bags may be left around to be ripped apart by monkeys or mongoose. We will continue to enforce this particularly towards the cleaning services that operate in Santorini.

It has been noted there have been appliances, building rubble etc disposed in the refuse area, these items should not become Santorini's responsibility to remove.

Repair and Renovations on Thompson's Bay



Balwin Properties completed this work in January this year. The transformation and improvements are quite remarkable. Possibly the best part is that we got all these improvements to the beach on our doorstep without having to contribute a cent.

The change-rooms are now vastly improved, there are new outdoor showers provided, the walkways have been reconstructed and the sea-walls have been rebuilt. Possibly the best thing that has been done from Santorini's perspective is the rebuild of the culvert entrance that takes the river water out onto the beach. This had collapsed and could have caused flooding of our river areas had we experienced very heavy rainfall.

Painting

The painting contractor, Peter Brotherton, resumed the wall painting of Kallisti in early May. He is now about 6 weeks behind schedule. Despite this he is confident that he will complete his 2020 contracts before the end of March 2021.

Very little painting of windows, balustrades etc, occurred during level 5 but things are now back to normal and the painters are catching up on lost time.

Stairways

Many of the complex's stairways are looking very disreputable. This is particularly the case in Perissa where many of the steps are chipped and worn and the paint is peeling. The wear is particularly bad where stairs are open to the weather.

Three flights of steps leading from the carpark up to No34 Thira have recently been repaired and correctly painted with a non-slip paint. It is estimated that they should not need further attention for

at least 4 years. The contractor has quoted R8500 to repair and paint similar flights of stairs in Santorini (i.e. 3 flights and 2 landings). Another contractor has quoted about half this amount to paint the steps with a non-slip epoxy. Both techniques are currently being tested and a decision as to which way we should go will need to be taken at the AGM. The other option would be to tile the steps, but this would be even more expensive. Furthermore, the original specification as required by Thurston Raats (the original architect) require that the stairs should be painted such that they match the stairways on the Greek islands. (In other words, white with blue/grey centre sections.)

To repair and paint all the common property flights of stairs in Santorini in this manner would cost in the region of R500000-R1million. Alternatively, we could consider painting the stairways in one village per year or confine this technique to stairways that are exposed to the elements. Internal stairways are usually kept in reasonable condition by our present painting methods. In any event, a decision on how we manage this problem will need to be taken at our AGM.



Perissa Passageways

By the end of the month work on the renovation of these passageways as far as 30 Perissa will be complete. One more passage remaining which will be completed by year end. The original, damp, dark, passages have been transformed into far lighter and more aesthetically acceptable walkways. The work has taken some time and necessitated the removal of much earth and rocks. Paul's team are to be congratulated on a job well done.

Ashley is presently organising the establishment of some greenery in these passages.

Transformers

The one Santorini transformer that still requires attention (Kallisti) will be checked and serviced in August. This transformer and the one in Thira opposite the office, are both situated such that they are almost completely sheltered from the weather and are still in very good condition when last checked. It is unlikely that they will need much attention.

Once these transformers are verified to be in satisfactory condition the whole of the complexes main electrical reticulation system and HT switchgear will have been checked and repaired or refurbished. This has taken place over the last 3 years.

Waterproofing

Water leaks from units adjacent to or above each other continue to be contentious issues. Paul has resorted to calling in the acknowledged waterproofing experts -Wilcote - and getting their opinion on who is to blame and what measures are needed to rectify the situation. In most cases the body corporate is not to blame and the necessary waterproofing requirements are to be agreed on by the owners involved.

The problem with leaking patios is usually the water caught up in the space below the tiles that is filled with very porous vermiculite. Even though the tiles above may have been replaced and correctly waterproofed – it may take years for the trapped water to slowly leak out of the vermiculite layer. The correct method of re-tiling patios should be obtained from Accumin or the

consultant architect on the board (Pedro) before attempting any repairs to a patio, waterproofing or re-tiling.

At the end of March Wilcote was called in to inspect Perissa Block B and give their professional opinion as to who was responsible to fix which of the numerous leaks in that block. A copy of their report has been sent to the affected owners. Santorini have accepted that 3 drainage pipes require repair or replacement – but the remainder of the leaks are for the various owners to deal with. Work on the drainpipes ground to a halt during level 5 lock-down but is now scheduled to be completed within the next month.

Garage leaks

Leaking back walls of garages in Kallisti was discussed in the last board meeting. Two garages are to be waterproofed experimentally at the Body corporates expense -applying the waterproofing on the inside of the back wall. If successful, this method can be applied to other garages with similar problems.

Re-placement of Entry Discs

This could not be effected during the period of level 5 lock down but Tammy is now updating the discs of owners' resident on the property. Please contact her if you intend to stay in the estate for any time and arrange reprogramming of existing discs or collection of new discs at R90 per disc. Tammy - info@santoriniestate.co.za or 082 461 7655

