

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
26 May 2014

REMOVAL OF ENGLISH OAK TREES IN KNYSNA

Municipal appointed contractors recently began removing some of Knysna's beloved English Oak trees in and around the CBD. These English Oaks have been synonymous with Knysna for many years.

The work to remove the trees is expected to take about three weeks and residents should expect traffic delays and detours where felling occurs. We acknowledge that our decision to remove these trees will be questioned by some residents, but we wish to assure you that Council debated the issue and came to the conclusion that there was no other alternative but to remove them, said municipal manager Lauren Waring. The Council's Manager: Parks consulted with some horticulture experts on the subject before any felling commenced.

The last twenty years has seen a deterioration of the trees due to age and or growing conditions. Most of the oak trees have recently been infected by an ambrosia beetle or a stem borer and a pathogen which causes the trees to die within a short time frame.

Normally not all diseased trees have to be removed completely. There are times when an ailing tree can be saved with the right treatment. Unfortunately there is no known cure against this infection when the trees are mature. With winter approaching any tree that is diseased and dying will shed more branches and can more easily come down in a storm, being a potential danger to persons and property.

Looking ahead, the Council will initiate a planting plan for replacement trees. These replacement trees will be of species which are more suitable as street trees for Knysna and also for future generations to enjoy. This approach enabled Council to exercise its duty to take reasonable care of the environment and to ensure that Knysna is a place where people and nature prosper.

ENDS

Christopher F. Bezuidenhout Manager: Communications & Customer Relations
P O Box 21. Knysna. 6570. Western Cape. South Africa
Tel +27 (0)44 302 6300 (switchboard) or 302 6381 (direct)
Fax +27 (0)86 536 0981 e-mail cbezuidenhoudt@knysna.gov.za