NEWSLETTER

December 2025

STANFORD CONSERVATION

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Another year is almost over.

We would like to thank all our members for their loyal support throughout the year, and we hope you will continue your membership when you see how much this organisation does for our village. We also encourage you to invite friends and neighbours to join Stanford Conservation and help contribute towards the upkeep of the village.



Around the world, the responsibility of maintaining the built and green environments is increasingly shifting to citizens. This is not necessarily negative—because it allows communities to actively shape the spaces they live in. NGOs and voluntary organisations now take on many of the tasks that should fall to government, and their success depends entirely on volunteers who give their time and expertise, as well as on the broader community who support them through membership, donations, and fundraising.

Stanford Conservation is one of these organisations. Led by a small committee and supported by many additional volunteers, it keeps Stanford “neat, clean and green”, advocates for preserving the village’s rural character and heritage, and uplifts our poorer community through the Swop Shop.

This newsletter summarises our activities for 2025.

Our achievements would not be possible without the many volunteers who quietly dedicate themselves to the causes closest to their hearts. Because of them, our village remains a place we call home and where people truly want to live. We thank every one of you.

Equally important is the collaboration between Stanford’s civic organisations. Since 2024, the chairs have met regularly to ensure that our efforts are aligned for the greater common good of the village.

John Kelley

FORGOTTEN ONES







This dedicated team of early-rising volunteers braves rain, wind, sun, snakes, and more every Tuesday morning to maintain Stanford's two historic cemeteries in Moore Street. Many of those resting there have long become "forgotten," yet they played important roles in Stanford's history. Years of municipal neglect had left many graves broken, hidden or overgrown, but the team has since uncovered them.

Through a donation of a beautiful Masai print, the Forgotten Ones team raised R12 500. These funds are used to hire additional labour for the heavier work that they can no longer do, e.g. remove Patterson's Curse in abundance, brush cut the grass areas etc.
The team also created a detailed map identifying as many graves as possible. This map is available on our website.

Earlier this year, the gates at the West Cemetery were stolen. The municipality replaced them, but the heritage scrollwork had to be handcrafted and paid for separately by Conservation. It is a pity that the resident cobra and mole snake (Ghost Buster and Holy Moly) weren't 'on duty' that night! They do an excellent job of keeping moles and other vermin at bay.

The volunteers also maintain "Aeroplane Park" at the corner of Queen Victoria and Moore Streets. You may even spot a volunteer mowing the grass with a small petrol mower.

Notable Graves Include:

- Hester Parlby (1835) – the oldest grave in the cemetery. She was the wife of Samuel Parlby, who farmed the Klein Rivier Valley Farm (now Stanford Village) from 1831–1838
- Matthew Dreyer (1911–1944) – a Commonwealth War Grave.
- Jan de Villiers (1918–1940) – the only person buried in Stanford with full military honours.



If anyone is willing to donate a sit-on mower or volunteer to mow once a month, please let us know.

SWOP SHOP

Located in Bezuidenhout Street, the Swop Shop plays a vital role in keeping our village free of recyclable litter while offering dignity and support to those with little or no income.
From November 2024 to October 2025, the project collected 20,597kg (20.5 tons) of recyclable materials —waste that would otherwise litter Stanford.

Twice a month, residents queue with clear bags of recyclables (excluding glass). Volunteers weigh the bags, load them onto the municipal truck, and issue tokens. These tokens can be exchanged for essential items such as school stationery, toiletries, linen, household items, clothing, shoes, and dog food.

At the start of each school year, there are two big Back-to-School sessions where learners can collect comprehensive stationery packs tailored to the requirements of local schools. During the year, before each term, three additional sessions are held that focus on school stationary.







Funding & Donations:

A large portion of the Swop Shop's budget comes from donations,
including (for 2025):

- Grootbos – sanitary pads
- Checkers – a R10,000 voucher (arranged by Cobus Visser)
- Residents – donations of good quality household items
- Various donors – stationery and toiletries
- **By far the biggest income generator is the Junktique market table, run with extraordinary dedication by Denise Anderson, who raises R35,000 - R40,000 each year.**



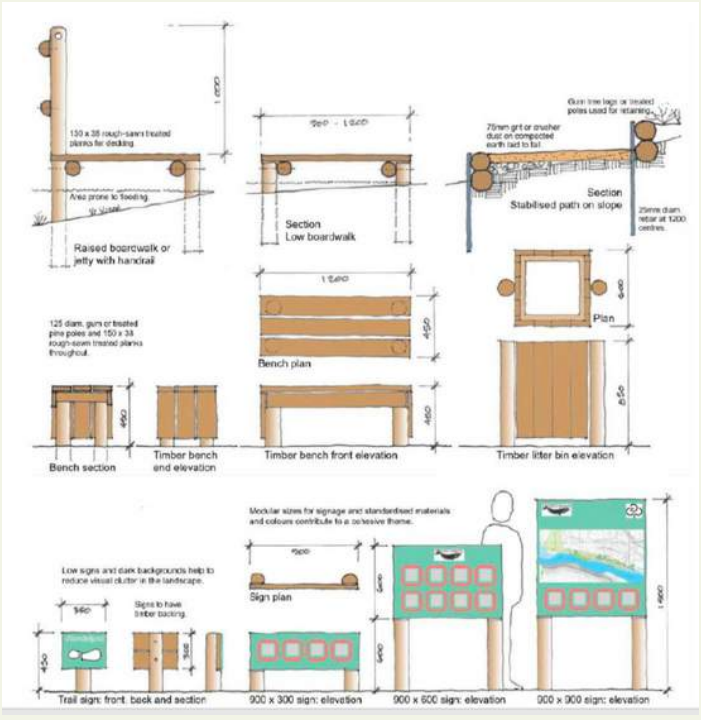
HERITAGE

The Stanford Heritage Committee (SHC) has experienced a productive year, having reviewed 51 building and town planning applications—a reflection of the sustained and increasing interest in Stanford and its surrounding areas. A detailed breakdown of submission types is presented in the accompanying graph.

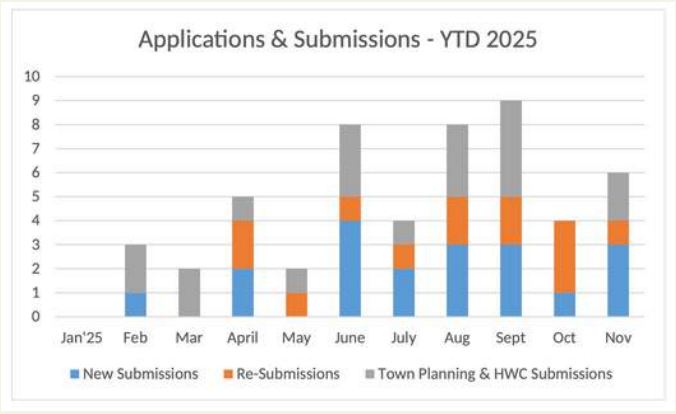
Of the 32 submissions, the majority (63%) pertain to building plans for new constructions, alterations, and additions.

Beyond its routine monthly review of various submissions, the SHC has collaborated with the Stanford Ratepayers Association and members of Stanford Conservation's Planning Group to provide support to the Overstrand Municipality in implementing the Millstream Project and restoring a section of Erf 294, including Die Oog.

In response to a rising number of development applications along the R326, the SHC has prepared a precinct plan for Stanford East, which has been well received by the municipality's town planning department. Additionally, the SHC and Planning Group are engaging with the municipality to establish a Streetscape and Urban Design Manual designed to enhance and preserve the distinctive streetscape character of the village.







PLANNING GROUP

Stanford benefits from the contributions of various volunteer professionals – including landscape architects, heritage specialists, and urban designers – who systematically review and provide feedback on development proposals.

Since Stanford is officially recognised as a heritage village, any development proposals within the urban edge that cover more than 5,000 m² are reviewed by the Stanford Heritage Committee. This essential task is carried out by the Planning Group specialists. Collaborating with municipal planners, developers, and authorities, they strive to preserve Stanford's rural character, environment, and cultural heritage as outlined in the Overstrand Spatial Development Framework (SDF).

Given the recent increase in applications for new housing developments to the east of Stanford (on both sides of the R326), the Planning Group has faced substantial demands this year, and their expertise is highly valued by the community.

Preserving Stanford's rural and village character requires that new housing proposals incorporate open spaces, ecological corridors, and promote pedestrian and cycling connectivity within the developments. Equally, facilitating links with neighbouring developments remains a priority.

To mitigate the risk of gated or high-density developments – characterised by average erf sizes of 325m² and limited provision for social interaction, which is vital to a rural lifestyle – the Planning Group has prepared a Stanford East Precinct Plan. This plan was presented to and received positively by the municipality's Town Planning department during the first week of December. A public meeting to discuss this proposal is scheduled for early in the new year. Upon approval and integration into the revised Overstrand SDF, Stanford Conservation will ensure that the documented scenic route (R43 and R326) is complemented by developments that enhance the village's value.

THE MILL STREAM VILLAGE PARK & GREENWAY
STANFORD, WESTERN CAPE

CONCEPT MASTER PLAN



Figure 3: Environmental and Heritage Features (partly sourced from Cape Farm Mapper

ST THOMAS RESTORATION PROJECT



The St Thomas Church Complex and Village Green are graded by the SA Heritage Council as possessing provincial heritage significance. As custodians of these assets, the Stanford community shares responsibility for ensuring they do not fall into disrepair—as is sadly happening elsewhere in the country.

The Anglican Church of Southern Africa owns the property, while the Stanford congregation is responsible for maintenance. Maintaining heritage buildings is costly, and Stanford Conservation assists to ensure these structures remain intact for future generations.

By late 2022 it became clear that both the church and Oulap Hall required major restoration. Work began in March 2023 and was completed at the end of August 2025 when the floor in the Oulap Hall was replaced.

Total cost: R620,000 (excluding donated materials and pro bono work). Thanks to the team for managing the project with the Church. Minor maintenance remains, but ongoing upkeep now rests with the congregation.



WANDELPAD

The Wandelpad consists of 4.7km of walking trail requiring constant maintenance, along with bridges, steps, and other infrastructure.
Open spaces surrounding the trail are regularly cleared of invasive species, notably Port Jackson, Patterson's Curse, and grey poplar. This work is carried out by the Wandelpad team and our weekly labourer, Ernest.

Additional "blitz squad" volunteers and "dubbeltjie diggers" assist with invasive removal through pop-up work sessions.

Stanford Conservation is also responsible for:

- **the open space at the top of the village**
- **the R43 circle and entrance gardens**

These areas do not belong to the municipality, which is legally prohibited from working on them – hence Conservation has taken on these mammoth additional tasks.















REED CUTTING

Debate around reed cutting has continued for years. After the September 2023 flood, and with approvals from the municipality and Cape Nature, the decision was made to begin cutting reeds to prevent further narrowing of the river channel and reduce the volume of water displaced by reeds during smaller flood occurrences.

A community fund was started, and by February 2024 a contractor was appointed.
Reeds up to 25m wide and 4–5m high were cut.
To date, three major cuts have been done in 2025.
Total area cleared: 29,000m² (almost 3 hectares)
Total cost (2024–2025): R167,000

Flood Buddies contributed the largest share of funds (R100,000+), with the municipality adding R40,000 through ward councillor Dudley Coetzee. KRAB, the Garden Club, and association members donated the rest.

Reed-cutting costs about R15,000 per cut if reeds are below 50cm. Continued community support is needed to sustain this effort.

Advantages of Reed Cutting:

- Creates an attractive, easily accessible riverfront for public enjoyment
- Decreases concealed spots that could facilitate illegal activity
- Eliminates fire hazards
- Reduces underwater surface area during minor floods
- Improves opportunities for birdwatching, particularly for wader species.



FLOOD MITIGATION

The September 2023 flood highlighted the need for a better understanding of the river catchment system and an early-warning mechanism.

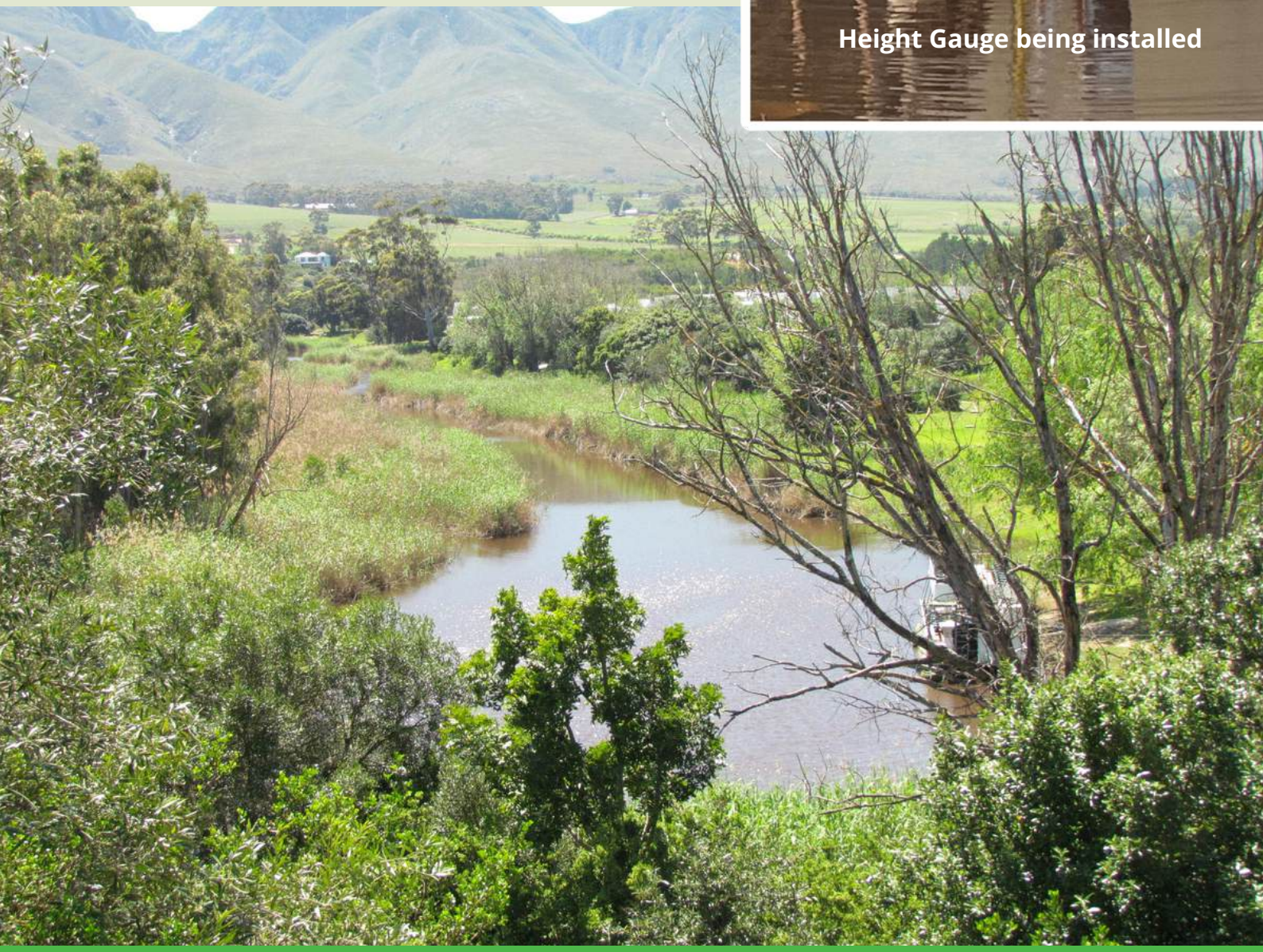
With support from the Flood Buddies and a R40,000 municipal ward grant, a total of R115,000 was raised to install:

- a real-time river level monitoring station 12 km upstream from the R43 bridge
- a rainfall station near Tesselaarsdal
- river level gauges on the R43 bridge.

These tools greatly improve prediction and community alerts for heavy rainfall. We appreciate flood specialists Stuart Dunsmore and Chris James for providing advanced modelling and data collection to the village free of charge.



Height Gauge being installed











FUNDRAISING

Maintaining Stanford's open spaces, preserving our heritage, and supporting the village's disadvantaged residents all come at significant cost.
Our sincere thanks go to:

- Our members – your R400 annual fee fills many gaps
- Think & Drink – the monthly quiz organised by Leigh King
- Art-on-a-String – organised by the artistic community
- Forgotten Ones – the annual Mandela Day event
- Casa Blanca – for hosting the Open Permaculture Garden event during Stanford in Bloom
- Grootbos, Checkers and the Junktique Market – for supporting the Swop Shop

MEMBERSHIP

Stanford Conservation would appreciate your financial support so it can continue to protect your financial investment in the village by preserving and improving Stanford's green and built environment.

Membership Fee: R400.00/household (Jan to Dec)

Bank Details: Stanford Conservation
Nedbank SAVINGS Acc no 238 300 1805
Nedbank CURRENT Acc no 125 267 3272

Please use MEMBERSHIP and YOUR NAME as reference
Proof of payment to milkwood@maxitec.co.za or 083-293-5512 would be appreciated