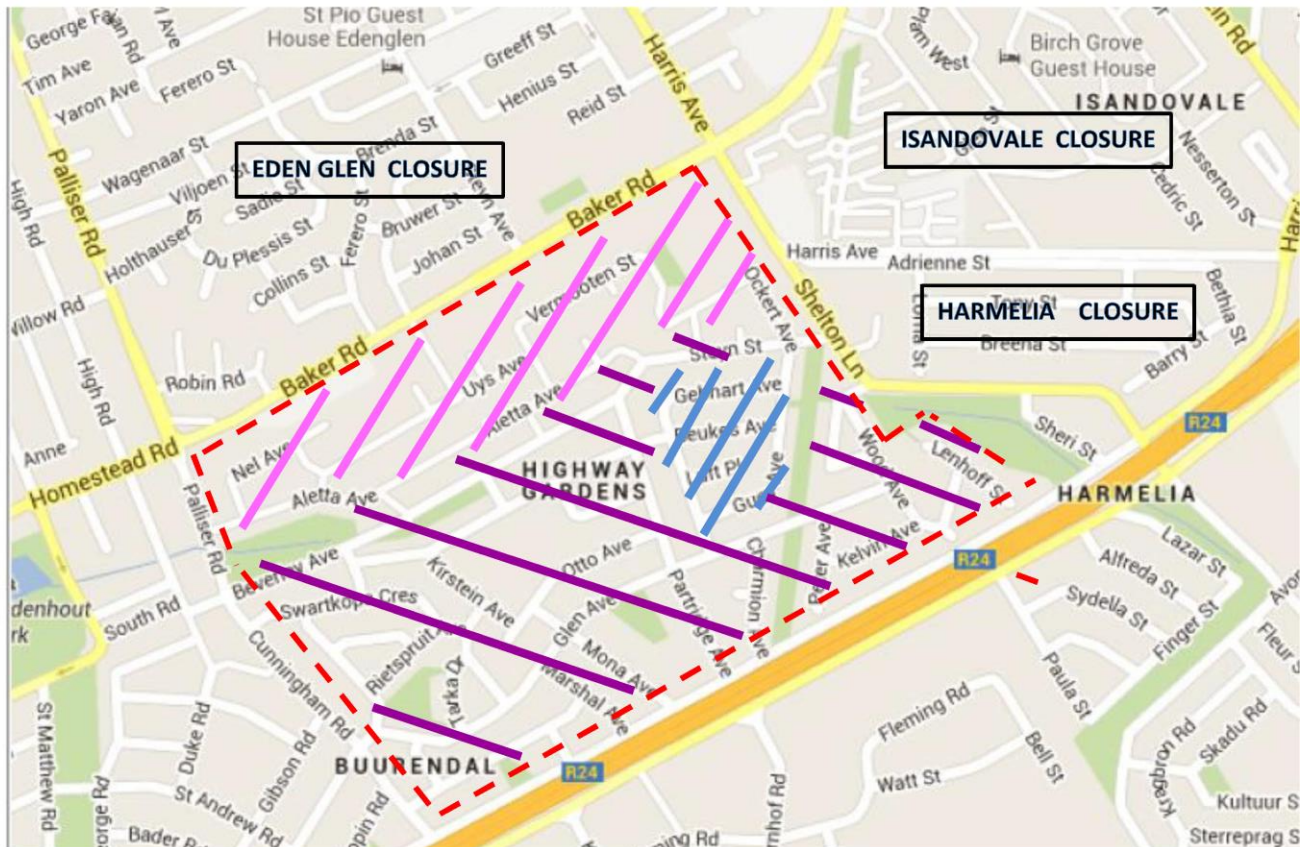


HISTORY OF THE COMBINED BROADER CLOSURE (CBC)



MAP OF THE CBC

In the late 1990's the Highway Gardens/Buurendal Ext 1 area, in common with other areas, experienced extremely high crime. Hijackings were a weekly occurrence and armed robberies were frequent, with several shootings and even a murder in Highway Gardens. In an effort to secure the area, an application was brought before the council in 2001 to close off the area covering Palliser Rd in the west to Shelton Ave in the east and Baker Rd in the north to Minuach Ave in the south (outlined in **red** on the map). That was in the very early days of road closures and the application was rejected by council.

The committee members who submitted that application were mostly from the Edenglen area between Baker Rd and Beverley Ave and they subsequently applied to have just their area closed off and this was approved (shaded **pink** on the map). Known as Eden Gardens Closure Committee (EGCC)

Then an application was submitted by the residents east of Partridge Ave between Gebhardt and Glen Ave, and that was approved (shaded **blue** on the map). Known as Highway Gardens Residents Association (HGRA).

Crime continued unabated in the rest of the area and four groups of residents started making enquiries about getting their little areas boomed. The problem was that the council would not allow Partridge and Steyn/Beverley to be closed off because they were considered main thoroughfares. They also did not want so many small closures in the area. Eventually these four groups joined to form the Combined Broader Closure (CBC) (shaded **purple** on the map).

Residents in the unclosed area were mandated and overwhelmingly supported the initiative. 63% of houses paid R260 to cover the cost of an application to council. The legally required Traffic Impact Study was commissioned and the necessary Site Development Plans were drawn. A consultant was appointed to prepare the application. Discussions took place with the two already closed areas and there was agreement in principle that once our infrastructure was in place we would combine to form one big area, which would result in cost savings. The application was structured accordingly.

- **August 2003:** Application submitted to EMM.
- **February 2004:** Principle approval received. The legally required advertisements calling for objections were published in the Provincial Gazette and local press for a month. There were objections, the main one being that the EGCC committee did not have the authority to commit its area to the CBC.
- EMM turned down our application. Legal advice was sought and application made for a tribunal to appeal the decision.
- **August 2005:** A Tribunal was held. It turned down the application on the grounds that the already closed areas had not been specifically mandated to join the bigger area despite the fact that there had been agreement from all the committees.
- The CBC committee set about re-mandating the entire area, including the two already closed areas. The new mandate forms were submitted to the EMM.
- **March 2007:** Another tribunal was held and finally permission was granted to restrict access to our area for a period of two years. Five long years of hard work by a dedicated team had eventually paid off.
- The two already boomed areas elected to remain as they were and did not join the bigger area as previously agreed.
- **May 2007:** Residents were asked to contribute R3000 per erf towards the infrastructure and townhouses were asked to contribute R1100 per unit. The response was as follows: Houses: 54% full payment; 9% part payment; 27% no payment. Townhouses: 65% full payment; 35% no payment.
- The committee called for quotations for the erection of the infrastructure:
 - ❖ Beverley, Steyn & Partridge would have 24 hour booms while Glen and Hendrik would have 12 hour booms.
 - ❖ Nine streets would be closed off with gates;
 - ❖ The perimeter of the area would be fenced with palisade.
- **September – December 2007:** A contractor was appointed and the palisade fencing was erected.
- **January 2008:** Guards employed through Top Security.
- **March 2008:** Construction of the booms commenced. Islands were built, roads were marked, guard huts were erected, signage was put up and portable toilets were purchased. A garden service was appointed to mow the grass at the booms and a company was appointed to service the toilets. The necessary insurance was put in place.
- **July 2008:** The manual booms were operational.
- **August 2008:** A company was appointed to do the administration of debit orders.
- **September 2008:** Electrical connections were made to the 24 hour booms.
- **November 2008:** The Beverley & Steyn booms were automated.
- **March 2009:** It was time to think about the reapplication which had to be submitted by August 2009. This all cost money and 40% of residents contributed a levy of R200 for the reapplication.
 - ❖ Residents were re-mandated. This involved contacting every resident (526 of them) and getting the necessary forms signed.
 - ❖ The legally required Traffic Impact Study was commissioned. This is a costly exercise and is undertaken by a specialist company.
 - ❖ The reapplication was prepared by a consultant and submitted to the EMM.

Upgrading and maintenance of infrastructure has been ongoing. All booms except for Hendrik are automated. Booms were modified to enable guards to close the manual booms late at night. Cameras have been installed and are proving to be a great help in keeping crime down. Fencing has needed painting and the guard huts needed to be maintained. Cameras have been updated and no touch boom activation buttons were installed. Road markings have been repainted regularly. All this is costly, and we are finding that maintenance of infrastructure is becoming a heavy burden.

There have been several severe storms through the years which have caused considerable damage. In October 2012 guard huts and cameras were badly damaged as a result of a severe hail storm. Fortunately insurance covered the cost of repairs. In November 2016 the Swartkops gate and fence at Donald Ave were severely damaged due to flood damage. Temporary guards were employed to maintain the integrity of the closure.

The guarding company was changed from Top Security to Mamba in May 2015. They have been extremely supportive and helped to keep the closure going.

WhatsApp groups were established in February 2015 to assist with communicating with residents.

There is no doubt that the closure eradicated the violent crime that had been experienced. However, resident apathy continues to be a problem, with only about 43 per cent contributing. We have all the usual excuses – people who are thinking of selling won't pay because they are moving – and then reap the benefits of an increased house sale price. Newcomers choose to move in because of the safety the closure provides and then neglect to come on board. Our support base needs to be increased. There are still some parts of the infrastructure which were never installed because the hoped-for level of contributions did not materialise. Residents are advised to ensure that their personal security at home is adequate. We really do need all our residents to come on board to keep this initiative viable. We have tried to keep increases to a minimum, preferring to try to increase our support base.

History of monthly contributions:

- January 2008: Residents' contributions were set at R300 per month when the first guards were employed.
- November 2010: Increased to R345 per month.
- January 2013: Increased to R380 per month.
- December 2013: Increased to R420 per month.
- December 2014: Increased to R450 per month.
- May 2022: Increased to R500 per month.

This rather lengthy story is probably boring for most people. The purpose of all the detail is to make new residents aware of how much has gone into getting where we are today. We believe that this initiative is really worthwhile. **If it should lapse, it is probably safe to say that it will never be resuscitated.** That would make us a vulnerable target, surrounded by boomed areas.

We appeal to all residents to come on board.

The CBC Committee