

## **April 2017 Social Development News**

We are pleased to advise that the SRA has agreed to a contract renewal with our social worker, Marion Thomas, who has worked very hard for our community and achieved notable successes over the past year. Probably the most notable and hard won success is to gain a functioning working relationship with City and Provincial Social Development officials.

Marion is now also contracted to provide social worker services to the Muizenberg Improvement District, with the result that her work has a more effective reach among the population that frequent our SRA.

Marion has agreed to engage a fieldworker to assist her in her work. The Muizenberg Improvement District also employs one fieldworker and this means that our combined area is fully covered by dedicated workers whom are trained to work among the homeless and to gain their confidence and trust.

A major recent success was an urgent late night operation carried out with Department of Social Development workers which resulted in the removal of 9 children sleeping on the streets of Muizenberg and the placement of 7 of them in a place of safety in Stellenbosch. Many of these children also frequent the streets of Kalk Bay and are known for their singing and aggressive begging. This operation involved Marion dealing with drug induced children, and transporting them to the place of safety in Stellenbosch at 3am. While this operation was in progress in the early hours, Marion was able to contact and discuss the matter with no less than the head of the Western Cape department of Social Development. What tenacity and dedication!

Another recent success is the removal of 4 more children from the Battlefield site on the St James/Muizenberg boundary and their placement in alternative care through the Magistrates Court in Simonstown.

These examples illustrate how dedicated Marion is to addressing social ills in our community and how effective the working relationships she has established with responsible officials have become. It also illustrates how fortunate our community is to have her services. Thank you, Marion!