



LET'S REBUILD KNYSNA FOR ALL

MANIFESTO 2026

PIPES & PUMPS • POTHoles & PAVEMENTS • PUBLIC SAFETY • POLLUTION • PERFORMANCE
DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE • KNYSNA CONSTITUENCY



TEAM KNYSNA DA

A NEW CHAPTER FOR KNYSNA

Knysna stands at a crossroads. Our town has extraordinary potential — a place of natural beauty, resilient people, and vibrant communities — yet for too long residents have been let down by failing service delivery and declining municipal performance. The Democratic Alliance believes Knysna can work again, and we have the experience, the plan, and the united team to make it happen.

Across South Africa, the best-run governments are led by the DA. Where the DA governs, services improve, finances are stabilised, infrastructure is maintained, and communities are safer and cleaner. Team Knysna DA will bring that same proven track record and expertise to our town by focusing on the five priorities that matter most to residents:

01 PIPES AND PUMPS
restoring reliable water and sanitation infrastructure.

02 POTHoles AND PAVEMENTS
fixing roads, sidewalks, and public infrastructure.

03 PUBLIC SAFETY
building safer communities for residents, businesses, and visitors.

04 POLLUTION
protecting Knysna's natural environment and keeping our town clean.

05 PERFORMANCE
ensuring a professional, accountable, and efficient municipality.

This manifesto is our commitment to rebuilding trust, restoring delivery, and creating a hopeful future for every community in Knysna. Together, we can get Knysna working again.

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OUR PLAN IS BUILT AROUND

THE 5 PS



01

PIPES AND PUMPS

restoring reliable water and sanitation infrastructure.



02

POTHoles AND PAVEMENTS

fixing roads, sidewalks, and public infrastructure.



03

PUBLIC SAFETY

building safer communities for residents, businesses, and visitors.



04

POLLUTION

protecting Knysna's natural environment and keeping our town clean.



05

PERFORMANCE

ensuring a professional, accountable, and efficient municipality.



FOREWORD

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

Dear Residents of Knysna,

This election is one of the most important moments in our town's history. The choices we make now will determine whether Knysna continues to decline, or whether we begin a new chapter of hope, delivery, and renewal.

Team Knysna DA is united in our commitment to serve every resident with integrity, hard work, and accountability. We know that people are tired of empty promises. That is why we are focused on practical delivery and the basics that every functioning municipality must get right.

Our plan is built around the 5Ps:

- **Pipes and Pumps** — ensuring reliable water and sanitation services.
- **Potholes and Pavements** — repairing roads and restoring infrastructure.
- **Public Safety** — making our communities safer for families, businesses, and visitors.
- **Pollution** — protecting our environment and cleaning up our town.
- **Performance** — building a municipality that works efficiently and professionally.

Your vote is your voice, and this election is an opportunity to turn Knysna around.

We are not starting from scratch. Across South Africa, the DA governs the best-performing municipalities and provinces. Team Knysna DA will draw on this experience and expertise to bring proven solutions, capable governance, and accountable leadership to our town.

But real change depends on every voter. Your vote is your voice, and this election is an opportunity to turn Knysna around. We pledge to work tirelessly for our communities, to listen to residents, and to put service delivery first every single day.

Together, we can restore pride in Knysna and build a future that works for all.

Yours faithfully,

TEAM KNYSNA DA



THE COALITION'S RECORD

FOUR YEARS OF FAILURE

The documented reality of ANC coalition governance, drawn
entirely from official sources.

THE COALITION'S RECORD



IN FACTS AND FIGURES

FOUR YEARS OF FAILURE

24

Of 67 sewage pump stations inspected

were entirely non-functional (Sept 2025, WCG Engineering Assessment)

50

Of 136 pumps required in the sewage system

Several pumps had been physically removed and kept by a service provider due to a financial and legal dispute. The matter was resolved and pumps were returned in September 2025. According to 3 March 2026 Committee report 14 pumps could not be located and 10 pumps were still unrepaired and uninstalled.

50%

Of the water entering the distribution network

cannot be accounted for — lost to leaks, broken meters, and illegal connections

R11m+

Revenue lost annually to broken/bypassed water meters

not recovered due to 8,000+ illegal connections and non-functional UIUs

~7

Pipe bursts per day under the ANC coalition

the infrastructure was built for 60,000 people; over 100,000 now live here

10

Acting Municipal Managers since 2021

resulting in no continuity, no accountability, no follow-through on commitments. The current Municipal Manager has been suspended since February 2026.

15%

Akkerkloof Dam capacity at the height of the 2026 crisis

town declared a local disaster area; Gift of the Givers deployed water tankers

R9.7m

WCG support grants spent on Knysna in 2024 alone

despite this, the municipality continued to deteriorate and was notified of that it would be placed under administration



WHAT THE WESTERN CAPE GOVERNMENT SAID



“Knysna is an example of a municipality that doesn't have financial problems, but a municipality that ignores rules.”

MEC ANTON BREDELL, JUNE 2025

“This has not been an easy decision to take. It is an act of last resort. But ultimately, we must act in the interest of the residents of Knysna. The situation has become untenable.”

PREMIER ALAN WINDE, ANNOUNCING THE DISSOLUTION OF KNYSNA COUNCIL, SEPTEMBER 2025



Against this backdrop, the ANC's new mayor, Thando Matika, publicly admitted that the municipality had engaged in “poor planning and poor management” of infrastructure. His coalition partners in the EFF and Patriotic Alliance were silent on their involvement in the collapse of service delivery. The Patriotic Alliance, whose switch from the DA in 2022 triggered this entire crisis, has never once acknowledged the consequences of its decision for ordinary Knysna residents.

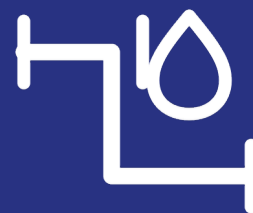
Meanwhile, DA councillors, who are in opposition, have spent four years filing motions, raising alarms, engaging the NCOP, and documenting failures that the coalition-controlled council refused to act upon. Every warning the DA gave has since been vindicated, especially through court action that blocked cadre deployments and the removal of illegal senior management appointees.

Every warning the DA gave has since been vindicated.

PILLAR 1

PIPES & PUMPS

Fixing Knysna's Water Distribution Network, Restoring Sewage
and Water Pump Infrastructure



PILLAR 1 — PIPES & PUMPS



PIPES — WHAT THE COALITION HAS DONE

Knysna's water distribution network was built more than 30 years ago to serve a population of roughly 60,000 people. The town now has over 100,000 residents and the infrastructure has never been meaningfully upgraded.

The mayor himself (previously the MMC for Infrastructure Services between 2019 and 2021), admitted on national television in January 2026 that the municipality still has "lots of asbestos pipes which we should have replaced a long time ago." Between 2022 and 2025, he was the MMC for Finance and Governance before his election as executive mayor. He was acutely aware of the failures and infrastructure challenges but folded his arms and perpetuated the collapse. These corroding pipes produce approximately seven bursts per day. More than 50% of all water pumped into the network is lost before it reaches a tap which is a staggering and inexcusable waste at a time when Knysna is a declared water disaster area.

When new pumps were installed at the Charlesford pump station in 2025, they were not installed according to the designed specification, reducing the town's pumping capacity at its most critical source. At least 8,000 households have bypassed water meters, and the municipality has made no systematic effort to address this, losing over R11 million in revenue annually that could have funded pipe replacements.

The inability in filling critical vacancies for prolonged periods has contributed to the failures in our pump infrastructure. Vacancies include 27 technician posts in the water and wastewater division. This results in leaks being left ignored for weeks, pressure fluctuations, and burst pipes contributing to high water losses.

It is time to fix our water pipes.

WHAT THE DA WILL DO

- Commission an independent pipe condition assessment of all 42km of water pipeline within the first 90 days, identifying the 20% of the network responsible for the majority of bursts and prioritising those for urgent replacement.
- Develop and publish a rolling five-year Pipe Replacement and Rehabilitation Plan, costed and integrated into the capital budget, with ward-level progress tracked on the municipal website.

- Expedite the filling of the key vacant technician posts through open, merit-based recruitment within six months, with a competitive salary package that retains qualified staff rather than losing them to better-paying municipalities as has happened repeatedly under the coalition.
- Establish a dedicated rapid response team, resourced with permanent plumbing teams, with a two-hour maximum response time for major bursts, replacing the current system where councillors personally chase repairs for weeks.
- Launch a systematic water meter connection audit in partnership with ward councillors and Ward Committees, cutting the 8,000+ bypassed connections that are bleeding the network of revenue and pressure. Transition metered households to smart pre-paid meters where appropriate.
- Replace all remaining asbestos cement pipes in the reticulation network on a prioritised schedule, accessing grant funding from the Water Resilience Grant and the Municipal Infrastructure Grant.
- Work with the Western Cape Government to accelerate the Charlesford pump capacity upgrade and the feasibility study for a new off-channel storage dam, a project the coalition has talked about but not delivered.

DA PROOF POINT

Cape Town, under continuous DA governance, reduced water losses to under 15% of distributed volume which is amongst the lowest for any major South African city. This was achieved through a sustained pipe replacement programme, smart metering, and a dedicated leak detection unit. Knysna's 50%+ loss rate is not a fact of geography, but inept governance.

PUMPS — WHAT THE COALITION HAS DONE

The Western Cape Government's engineering team conducted a comprehensive inspection of Knysna's sewage pump infrastructure in September 2025. What they found was beyond what most residents imagined was possible under any functioning government.



Of 67 sewage pump stations inspected: 11 were fully operational, 32 were functional but lacked backup pumps, and 24 were entirely non-functional. Of the 136 pumps required to operate the sewage system effectively: 56 were working, 28 were broken, and 50 had been physically removed from their stations — with no record of where they went or who authorised their removal.

The consequence is raw sewage flowing continuously into Knysna's streets, homes, waterways, and the Knysna Estuary, exposing residents to potential health risks. The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment served the municipality with letters of intent to issue both a Coastal Protection Notice and a Compliance Notice for these ongoing violations. Environmental management inspectors from SANParks and the Breede-Olifants Catchment Management Agency have conducted site visits confirming ongoing contamination.

On the water supply side, when new pumps were installed at the Charlesford pump station in 2025, they were installed smaller than the originals. This reduced pumping capacity at the town's primary river abstraction point during a period when the Akkerkloof Dam was already declining toward crisis levels. The municipality had no contingency plan, and when the National Council of Provinces' Select Committee asked the municipal manager about emergency plans should the water supply be exhausted, he admitted that “plans are being developed.”

WHAT THE DA WILL DO

- Commission an immediate audit of all water and sewage pump stations within 30 days and publishing outcomes thereof.
- Develop and implement a Pump Station Rehabilitation Programme with dedicated capital budget allocation, targeting all non-functional sewage stations for repair or replacement within 18 months.
- Mandate that every sewage pump station with more than one pump has a functional backup. The stations currently operating without backup pumps represent ticking time bombs for sewage spills where failure causes an overflow into streets or waterways.

- Establish a 24/7 Pump Monitoring and Rapid Response capability using SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) technology, enabling the municipality to detect pump failures remotely before they cause overflows. Cape Town's network is managed this way; Knysna's must be too.
- Ensure the Charlesford pumps are replaced with correctly sized units as an immediate priority, and work with the provincial government to fast-track the feasibility study for additional water storage infrastructure.
- Ring-fence a dedicated Pump Maintenance Fund within the annual budget, with quarterly reporting to council on expenditure and pump status, to prevent the drift into disrepair that characterised the coalition years.

DA PROOF POINT

The George Municipality — DA-governed for over a decade — has maintained a SCADA-linked pump monitoring system and achieved a consistently clean audit outcome. When pump failures occur, they are detected within minutes, and repair teams are deployed within hours. George has not experienced the chronic sewage spills that now characterise Knysna. The difference is not geology or funding — it is governance.



FIXING KNYSNA'S WATER DISTRIBUTION NETWORK, RESTORING SEWAGE AND WATER PUMP INFRASTRUCTURE





WCG ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT

THE SEPTEMBER 2025 PUMP AUDIT

67 SEWAGE PUMP STATIONS INSPECTED



136 PUMPS REQUIRED TO OPERATE THE SYSTEM



Of the 136 pumps required to operate the sewage system effectively: 56 were working, 28 were broken, and 50 had been physically removed from their stations — with no record of where they went or who authorised their removal.



PILLAR 2

POTHOLES & PAVEMENTS

Repairing Roads and Stormwater Systems



PILLAR 2 — POTHOLES & PAVEMENTS



WHAT THE COALITION HAS DONE

Knysna's roads have deteriorated visibly and rapidly under the ANC coalition. Residents across multiple wards live with potholes that have been reported, logged, and ignored for years. Some residents have resorted to filling potholes themselves using their own materials and tools. This is a civic act of desperation that reflects the complete breakdown of accountability between the municipality and the people it is supposed to serve.

The coalition allocated R52.8 million for repairs and maintenance in the 2024/25 budget, of which R46.4 million was earmarked for infrastructure services. By the municipality's own admission, a significant portion of this was swallowed by the water and sewage crisis, leaving road maintenance chronically underfunded. At the same time, procurement processes for road contracts have been characterised by political interference, delays, and in some cases, funds that were simply not spent despite urgent need.

The stormwater system which is critical for preventing road deterioration and flooding in Knysna's climate has received almost no investment. Blocked stormwater drains accelerate pavement degradation, turning minor potholes into collapsed road sections after each wet season.

Some residents have resorted to filling potholes themselves.

WHAT THE DA WILL DO

- Conduct a comprehensive road condition survey of all municipal roads within 90 days, producing a publicly accessible condition registry rated by urgency so that every resident can see the status of their street and hold us to our commitments.
- Implement a dedicated Roads Maintenance Budget that is ring-fenced and cannot be raided to cover other service failures. Under the DA, roads money will be spent on roads.
- We will review the service charter, cutting pothole repair turnaround time from the current 90 days to 10 days and establish a Pothole Response Guarantee that any pothole reported through the municipal hotline or app that is not repaired within this timeframe will trigger an automatic escalation to the ward councillor and the Infrastructure Committee, with a public resolution report.

- Clear all reported pothole backlogs within the first four months of taking office, using a combination of municipal crews and competitively tendered contractors.
- Launch a stormwater rehabilitation programme targeting the most critical blocked drains and culverts, with priority given to roads where stormwater failures are directly causing or accelerating pavement collapse.
- Introduce long-term road asset management planning, so that the municipality moves from reactive pothole-filling to proactive surface treatment and pavement life-extension, reducing long-term costs.
- Partner with the Western Cape Department of Infrastructure on roads that cross jurisdictional boundaries and leverage provincial technical expertise for major rehabilitation projects.
- Ensuring the resurfacing George Rex, Main road and Waterfront Drive.

DA PROOF POINT

The DA-led Stellenbosch Municipality introduced an online road condition reporting and tracking system that allows residents to log potholes via smartphone, track repair progress, and receive automated closure notifications. Resident satisfaction with road maintenance increased from below 40% to over 70% within two years. The same system, adapted for Knysna's context, will be introduced in our first term.



REPAIRING ROADS AND STORMWATER SYSTEMS



PILLAR 3

PUBLIC SAFETY

Restoring law and order



PILLAR 3 — PUBLIC SAFETY



DA

WHAT THE COALITION HAS DONE

Law and order have deteriorated in Knysna because of a lack of investment into public safety. The law enforcement and traffic departments are both chronically understaffed. There are service delays due to certain old and outdated equipment. The municipality is ineffective in enforcing its existing bylaws and certain bylaws are outdated and need urgent review. Additionally, there is a lack of standard operating procedures to effectively deal with traffic management, land invasions, noise pollution, animal control, and general lawlessness throughout Knysna.

WHAT THE DA WILL DO MUNICIPAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

- The municipal law enforcement function is squarely within council competence. The DA will exercise it fully.
- Conduct a comprehensive audit of all Knysna municipal bylaws within 90 days, identifying which are being enforced, which are being ignored, and which require updating to reflect current conditions.
- Fill all vacant positions in the Municipal Law Enforcement Unit through open, merit-based recruitment within six months, with priority given to bylaw enforcement officers for the highest-impact categories: illegal dumping, land invasion response, building control violations, and unauthorised land use.
- Introduce 24/7 law enforcement deployment.
- Invest in the equipment needed to bolster law enforcement, including its fleet and other technologies (body cams, etc.).
- Establish a 24-hour bylaw complaint reporting line, with a guaranteed 48-hour response for non-emergency complaints and same-day response for urgent matters such as illegal dumping in waterways or illegal building on sensitive land.
- Pursue active bylaw enforcement for persistent offenders, particularly illegal dumping, which directly causes the pollution of stormwater drains and contributes to estuary contamination.
- Establish a 'Watching Brief' to monitor and drive accountability for critical cases in the justice system.

- Address homelessness and land invasion through a programme based on valid offers of support. Where necessary, and once other avenues of support have been exhausted, initiate eviction proceedings.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT & ROAD SAFETY

- Traffic management is a municipal competency, and the DA will treat it as one, not as an afterthought.
- Appoint a permanent, long-term service provider for traffic fine administration through a transparent, competitive tender process within 90 days, ending the month-to-month deviation contract that has paralysed revenue collection and road safety enforcement.
- Set a traffic fine collection target of 25% of fines issued (currently 10–12%), through improved service provider performance, reinstatement of speed cameras, and a coordinated debt collection programme for outstanding fines.
- Reinstate and maintain all vandalised speed cameras at identified hazard points as a priority within the first six months. Camera maintenance will be included as a contractual obligation in the new service provider agreement.
- Fill all critical vacant traffic officer posts within six months. Visible traffic law enforcement is a proven road safety intervention and Knysna's roads, given their condition, need it more than most.
- Implement targeted traffic enforcement operations at known accident black spots, school zones, and pedestrian crossing points, in partnership with ward committees who know where the problems are.
- Establish a quarterly Road Safety Report presented to council, tracking accident statistics, fine collection rates, camera uptime, and officer deployment hours so that traffic management will become a service with measurable outcomes.

ANIMAL CONTROL & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- These functions address genuine safety and quality-of-life issues for Knysna's residents and fall squarely within municipal competence.
- Resource and professionalise the municipal animal control function, addressing the problem of stray and dangerous animals in public spaces, particularly in areas where animal-related incidents have been reported.

- Enforce environmental health bylaws consistently, including regulations governing food premises, informal food traders, and the condition of rental accommodation, which directly affect public health outcomes in Knysna's most vulnerable communities.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

- Disaster management is a shared function, but the municipal disaster management centre plays a critical preparedness and coordination role that is squarely within the municipality's competence.
- Ensure the Knysna Municipal Disaster Management Centre is fully staffed, resourced, and operationally current with updated risk assessments, tested evacuation plans, and functional early warning systems for the flood, fire, and water supply risks that Knysna faces.
- Ensure the municipality's fire and rescue services are adequately resourced and deployed including the newly funded fire station at Rheenendal, and that wildfire risk management plans for the Knysna Forest buffer zones are current and tested.

COORDINATION WITH PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL SAFETY FUNCTIONS

- Use the municipality's statutory role in the Integrated Development Plan to formally document community safety priorities, ensuring they are placed before the relevant national and provincial authorities through the IDP engagement process.
- Provide input into the Western Cape Government Policing Needs and Priorities Report, to which SAPS is Constitutionally required to respond.
- Establish a formal Community Safety Forum in each ward, bringing together ward councillors, neighbourhood watch structures, business associations, and SAPS at a local station level. While the DA cannot direct SAPS operations, these forums are the correct municipal mechanism for channeling community safety concerns to the appropriate authorities and ensuring accountability.
- Partner with the Western Cape Government to bolster Knysna's Neighbourhood Watches.

DA PROOF POINT

The DA-led Mossel Bay Municipality introduced an Integrated Community Safety Model, launching the flagship Joint Operation Centre in 2022 which functions as a real-time command-and-control hub for public safety. It combines municipal law enforcement, SAPS, neighbourhood watches, disaster management, traffic services, CCTV surveillance, drones, emergency services, and community organisations into a single coordinated operational system.



RESTORING LAW AND ORDER



PILLAR 4

POLLUTION

Protecting the Estuary ,Waterways and Public Spaces



PILLAR 4 — POLLUTION 19



WHAT THE COALITION HAS DONE

Pollution is the most visible legacy of the ANC coalition's governance failure. It manifests in two interconnected crises; the ongoing contamination of Knysna's waterways and estuary with raw sewage, and the accumulation of uncollected solid waste in public spaces across the town.

WATER POLLUTION

The failed sewage pump infrastructure described in Pillar 2 has a direct and catastrophic consequence for water quality. Raw sewage containing bacteria flows continuously from non-functional pump stations and manholes into streets, stormwater drains, and ultimately into the Knysna Estuary which is ranked third in South Africa for botanical importance and eighth for overall ecological significance.

Environmental Management Inspectors from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, SANParks, and the Breede-Olifants Catchment Management Agency have all conducted site visits documenting ongoing violations. The municipality received letters of intent for a Coastal Protection and Compliance Notice as well as regulatory actions that would be unthinkable in any well-governed municipality.

The tourism and hospitality economy of Knysna, which underpins thousands of jobs, depends entirely on the health of the estuary and the perception of Knysna as a clean, natural destination. Sewage in the lagoon is not just an environmental catastrophe but also an economic one.

Sewage in the lagoon is not just an environmental catastrophe but also an economic one.



SOLID WASTE POLLUTION

Refuse collection has been erratic and in some wards non-existent for extended periods. By mid-2024, the budget for chemical toilets was already exhausted with seven months of the financial year still remaining, requiring an emergency R2.8 million supplementary allocation. At least 1,000 wheelie bins purchased for refuse collection were found to have been sitting unused at an industrial "bin graveyard" for several years while streets filled with litter. When the 2026 water crisis forced creative improvisation these bins were only mobilised for rainwater harvesting rather than their original purpose. Waste collection is also deeply inequitable with wards represented by opposition councillors documented as having received inferior services compared to ANC-held wards. This is patronage politics at its most basic and most damaging.



WHAT THE DA WILL DO

- Declare a zero-discharge policy for the Knysna Estuary where no untreated or partially treated sewage effluent may legally discharge into the lagoon or its tributaries. Compliance will be monitored through monthly water quality testing at designated estuary points, with results published publicly.
- Execute the Pump Station Rehabilitation Programme (Pillar 2) as the primary intervention against sewage pollution, recognising that fixing the pumps is the only sustainable solution to estuary contamination.
- Partner with SANParks, the Breede-Olifants Catchment Management Agency, and the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs on an Estuary Recovery Programme, targeting measurable water quality improvements within two years.
- Ensure consequence management for all environmental violations and speedy referrals to the relevant statutory bodies.
- Restore reliable, equitable refuse collection to every ward on a published schedule. Refuse collection will be ward-blind with every street in Knysna receiving the same standard of service, regardless of which party the ward councillor represents.
- Deploy all usable wheelie bins immediately for their intended purpose of refuse collection, ensuring every household and business has access to appropriate solid waste containment.

- Ensure that informal areas have suitable solid waste containment solutions.
- Introduce a community beautification and public space maintenance programme, creating employment through an expanded public works initiative focused on parks, verges, public ablutions, and shared spaces.
- Investigate the viability of a large-scale alien vegetation removal project as an environmental solution to water security, poverty alleviation and job creation.
- Develop a Knysna Estuary Management Framework in partnership with local tourism, fishing, and conservation stakeholders which will be a binding long-term plan to restore and protect the ecological and economic value of this irreplaceable asset.
- Move transfer station out of the CBD.

DA PROOF POINT

The City of Cape Town operates a dedicated Catchment, Stormwater and River Management branch that monitors water quality at over 200 points across the metro, publishes monthly water quality scores, and coordinates rapid response to pollution incidents. The result has been measurable improvements in the water quality of Cape Town's rivers and coastline over the past decade. Knysna will establish its own monitoring and response capability on the same model.



PROTECTING THE ESTUARY, WATERWAYS AND PUBLIC SPACES



PILLAR 5

PERFORMANCE

Budgeting, Anti-Corruption, Staffing Reform, Systems and Partnerships



PILLAR 5 — PERFORMANCE



Every failure described in Pillars 1 through 4 has a common root of a municipality whose governance systems of financial management, procurement, human resources, and accountability, have collapsed. The pipes cannot be fixed, the pumps cannot be restored, the roads cannot be repaired, and the estuary cannot be protected unless the institution responsible for doing so is itself functional. This is the most fundamental pillar of all.

WHAT THE COALITION HAS DONE

BUDGETING

The ANC coalition has demonstrated a persistent inability to allocate budgets that match operational realities, and then an equal inability to spend what has been allocated. Chemical toilet budgets ran out seven months before year-end; road maintenance funds were diverted and grant money from the Western Cape Government was not effectively deployed. The municipality's own Section 72 Mid-Year Assessment for 2025/26 reveals persistent under-spending on capital projects. This means that infrastructure meant to be fixed remained broken not for lack of money, but for lack of management capacity and political will.

ANTI-CORRUPTION

Procurement under the ANC coalition has been characterised by political interference, cadre deployment, and dubious contractor selection. Senior posts have been filled through processes that prioritised party loyalty over professional competence. The missing sewage pumps represent either the most extraordinary case of equipment mismanagement in the Garden Route's history, or something worse. Either way, no one has been held accountable.

The municipality's audit outcome regressed in the 2022/23 financial year, immediately after the ANC took power. This regression reflects material misstatements, a weakened internal control environment, and inadequate oversight by a council more focused on political survival than fiscal stewardship.

STAFFING

The single most damning statistic about the coalition's staffing management is where Knysna has had 10 acting municipal managers since 2021. A municipal manager is the accounting officer of the municipality and is responsible for implementing council decisions, managing staff, and ensuring service delivery. Rotating through ten acting managers in four years means that no strategy is ever completed, no accountability is ever established, and every problem is met with the excuse that the previous manager is responsible. The municipality has several prolonged critical vacancies that are yet to be filled. This has left a void within departments and the inability to provide even the basic service levels. Money that should be spent on filling critical permanent posts is spent on bloating the organisational structure with numerous casual workers. Over the past two financial years, posts have been budgeted for, but the ANC-coalition has not been able to spend the budget accordingly. The municipality's own explanation is that Knysna, as a Grade 3 council, cannot pay competitively, so trained technicians leave for better-paying municipalities as soon as they gain experience. This is a known problem with a known solution that the DA will address it.

There are significant human resource inefficiencies within the department causing delays in quality appointments and irregularities in certain processes.

SYSTEMS

The coalition is operating on outdated systems that are out of touch with the modern work environment. They have failed to complete the organisational review or conduct regular and accurate skills audits.

PARTNERSHIPS

The coalition does not have a transparent approach in engaging all stakeholders. They have not actively pursued partnering with stakeholders to create opportunities and improve service delivery.

WHAT THE DA WILL DO ON BUDGETING

- Implement zero-based budgeting for all discretionary spending, requiring every budget line to be justified annually rather than rolled over by default. This eliminates the waste and duplication that has allowed fruitless expenditure to accumulate.



- Introduce a public Budget Performance Dashboard updated monthly, showing actual spending against budget in every directorate, so that under-spending on critical infrastructure cannot hide behind administrative opacity.

- Ring-fence all infrastructure maintenance budgets with council resolution. No budget allocated to water, sewage, or roads maintenance may be vired to another purpose without a full council vote and public justification.

- Target a clean audit outcome from the Auditor-General within three financial years. This is the standard the DA maintains across its governed municipalities and is achievable in Knysna with competent management and political will.

ON ANTI-CORRUPTION

- Implement a zero-tolerance corruption policy where any official found guilty of corrupt conduct will be dismissed and referred for criminal prosecution. No political considerations will be allowed to interfere with disciplinary proceedings.

- Require the public disclosure for all contracts above R200 000.00 including the identity of the winning bidder, the value, the tender scores, and the justification for the award. This information will be published on the municipal website within five working days of contract signature.

- Empower the Municipal Public Accounts Committee (MPAC) with full independence and adequate resourcing to investigate all procurement decisions from the coalition period where irregularities have been alleged.

- Establish an independent fraud and corruption reporting hotline, managed by an external service provider, with whistleblower protections guaranteed and quarterly reports to council on the nature and resolution of complaints received.

ON STAFFING

- Appoint a permanent Municipal Manager through an open, competitive process within the legislated timeframe. The position will carry a five-year performance contract with quarterly reviews against service delivery targets. The era of ten acting managers in four years ends on day one.

- We will conduct a comprehensive organisational review and fill the required critical posts within the legislative timeframes, implementing a proper talent retention strategy.

- Ensure the regular updating of an accurate skills audit.

- End cadre deployment where all senior management appointments will be made on the basis of qualifications, experience, and demonstrated competence. Party membership will play no role in any appointment process under a DA administration.

- Introduce a Municipal Staff Performance Management System with quarterly reviews against measurable KPIs linked to the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP). Poor performance will be managed, not tolerated.

- Ensure the continuity by filling all critical and senior-level vacancies within 12 months.

- Assign or appoint a dedicated capacity to explore and source external funding. Eg. BFI fund

ON SYSTEMS

- Publish organisational and management performance data.

- Automate processes to make work and service delivery more economical, efficient and effective.

ON PARTNERSHIPS

- Partner with government, business, organisations and retired professionals to create opportunities, enhance services, save costs, and build capacity.

- Applying the Municipal Systems Act by establishing structured technical advisory engagements.

DA PROOF POINT

Of the top ten best-audited municipalities in South Africa, eight are DA-governed. Since 2009 the DA-led Western Cape provincial government, has received a clean audit from the Auditor-General every single year. Clean audits are not luck, but the result of competent financial management, strong internal controls, and political leadership that is more interested in accountability than patronage. We will bring this culture to Knysna municipality.



**BUDGETING, ANTI-CORRUPTION,
STAFFING REFORM, SYSTEMS
AND PARTNERSHIPS**





WHY EVERY VOTE FOR THE DA COUNTS

A MAJORITY THAT DELIVERS

The Democratic Alliance currently holds 8 of Knysna's 21 council seats. We are just short of a majority. This election is the most important Knysna has faced in a generation, because it offers the clearest possible choice: continue with the coalition that produced the failures documented in this manifesto or give the DA the majority it needs to govern decisively and accountably.

Coalition politics has been Knysna's curse since 2022. When the Patriotic Alliance defected from the DA for its own self-interest, it handed power to the ANC and set in motion four years of dysfunction.



A DA majority government means:

STABILITY

no more coalition reshuffles, no more competing factional interests paralysing decision-making, no more acting managers covering for the political fallout of the previous week's council meeting.

SPEED

a majority council can adopt budgets, approve infrastructure contracts, and implement remediation plans without months of coalition horse-trading. The pump rehabilitation programme, the pipe replacement schedule, and the road repair backlog all require fast, decisive council action.

ACCOUNTABILITY

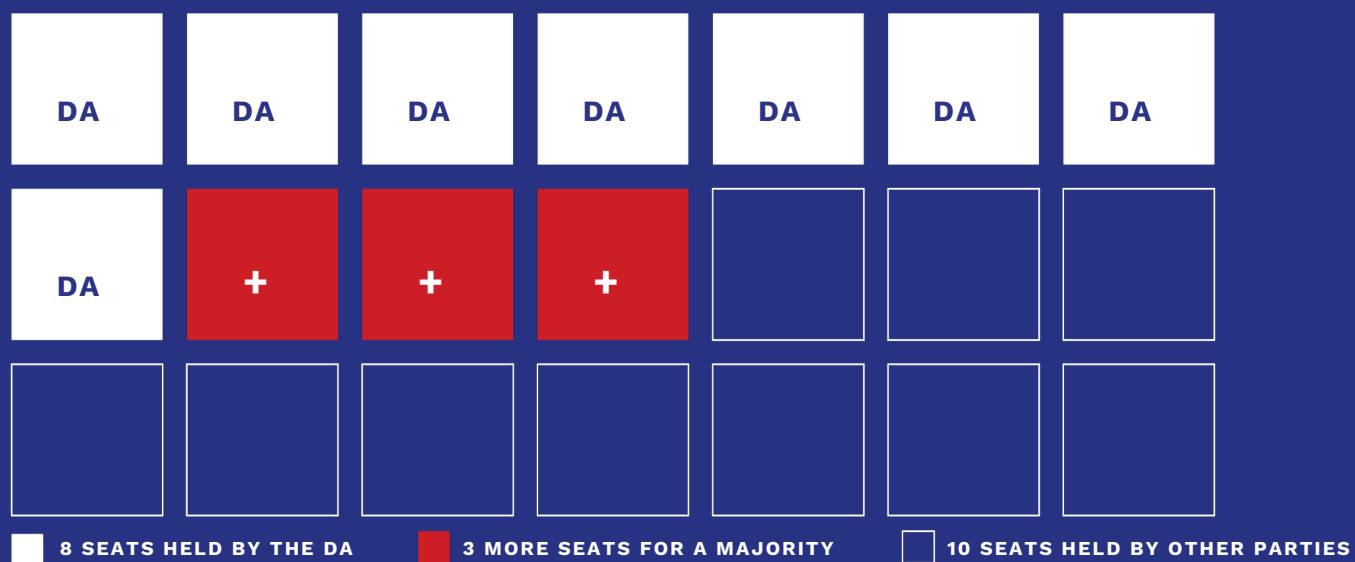
a majority government owns its record entirely. There is no coalition partner to blame when things go wrong, and no excuse for delay. The DA will govern as if it will be judged on every burst pipe, every pothole, every litre of sewage in the lagoon.

LONG-TERM PLANNING

stable governance enables multi-year infrastructure planning. The new dam, the upgraded treatment works, the pipe replacement programme are decade-long projects that require a stable political hand to see them through.

EVERY SEAT MATTERS

THE ARITHMETIC IS SIMPLE



The DA holds 8 seats. A majority requires 11 of 21. Every DA vote in this election brings Knysna closer to the clean, competent government it deserves. A vote for any other party like the ANC, PA, or any other independent is a vote to extend the misrule that has brought this town to the brink.

**VOTE DA. EVERY SEAT MATTERS. EVERY VOTE COUNTS.
LET'S REBUILD KNYSNA FOR ALL.**

A MAJORITY THAT DELIVERS





MEASURABLE COMMITMENTS WITH DEADLINES

OUR CONTRACT WITH KNYSNA

The following are not aspirations but commitments with a deadline and a responsible directorate. We invite every resident of Knysna to hold us accountable to every one of them.

WITHIN 30 DAYS OF TAKING OFFICE

- Commission a full Pump Station Status Register showing the condition of every water and sewage pump station in the municipal area.
- Launch a fraud and corruption hotline with independent oversight, operational 24/7.

WITHIN 60 DAYS

- Launch the “Leak-Free Knysna” campaign which will include the launch the pre-paid water meter audit programme in the highest-loss wards to address the high-water losses, assess illegal connections.
- Publish a publicly accessible Service Delivery Dashboard tracking water, sewage, refuse and roads performance weekly.

WITHIN 90 DAYS

- Initiate an independent pipe condition assessment of all 1,109 km of the water distribution network.
- Initiate the Knysna Infrastructure Recovery Plan with a fully costed, publicly consulted five-year capital plan for water, sewage, and roads.
- Publish a pothole and road repair schedule.

WITHIN 6 MONTHS

- Commence recruitment for the required critical vacancies.
- Clear all reported pothole backlogs.
- Restore regular, equitable refuse collection to every ward on a published schedule.



**WITHIN
12 MONTHS**

- Submit accurate financial records to the Auditor-General as required.
- Establish SCADA-linked remote monitoring for all critical pump stations.
- Publish first quarterly estuary water quality report under the new monitoring regime.

**WITHIN
24 MONTHS**

- Eliminate all raw sewage discharge into the Knysna Estuary.
- Reduce water losses in the distribution network from 50%+ to below 30%.
- Present a fully funded long-term water supply augmentation plan to council.

“Knysna cannot afford another five years of chaos. With the DA’s proven track record, we will overturn the slump, restore stability, and deliver the services residents need”

LAVAEAL DAVIS - DA KNYSNA MAYORAL CANDIDATE





LET'S REBUILD KNYSNA FOR ALL

PIPES & PUMPS • POTHoles & PAVEMENTS • PUBLIC SAFETY • POLLUTION • PERFORMANCE

VOTE DA. ONE KNYSNA. ONE FUTURE.

WWW.DA.ORG.ZA • DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE, KNYSNA CONSTITUENCY

Authorised and published by the Democratic Alliance, Knysna Constituency. All statistics cited in this manifesto are drawn from official government sources, NCOP committee proceedings, Western Cape Government directives and reports, and published journalism. This document reflects the policies and commitments of the DA for the Knysna municipal election. The DA's national policy framework and full manifesto are available at www.da.org.za.