

The Community Dialogue (formally known as the Community Safety Forum) was held on 22 June 2022. This was the eighth meeting of the dialogue since August 2021.

21 people from Hoekwil and Touwsranten were present at the meeting. The meeting was facilitated by Morne Heunis from the SAPS Eden cluster, Chandre Gould and Roslynn Damons.

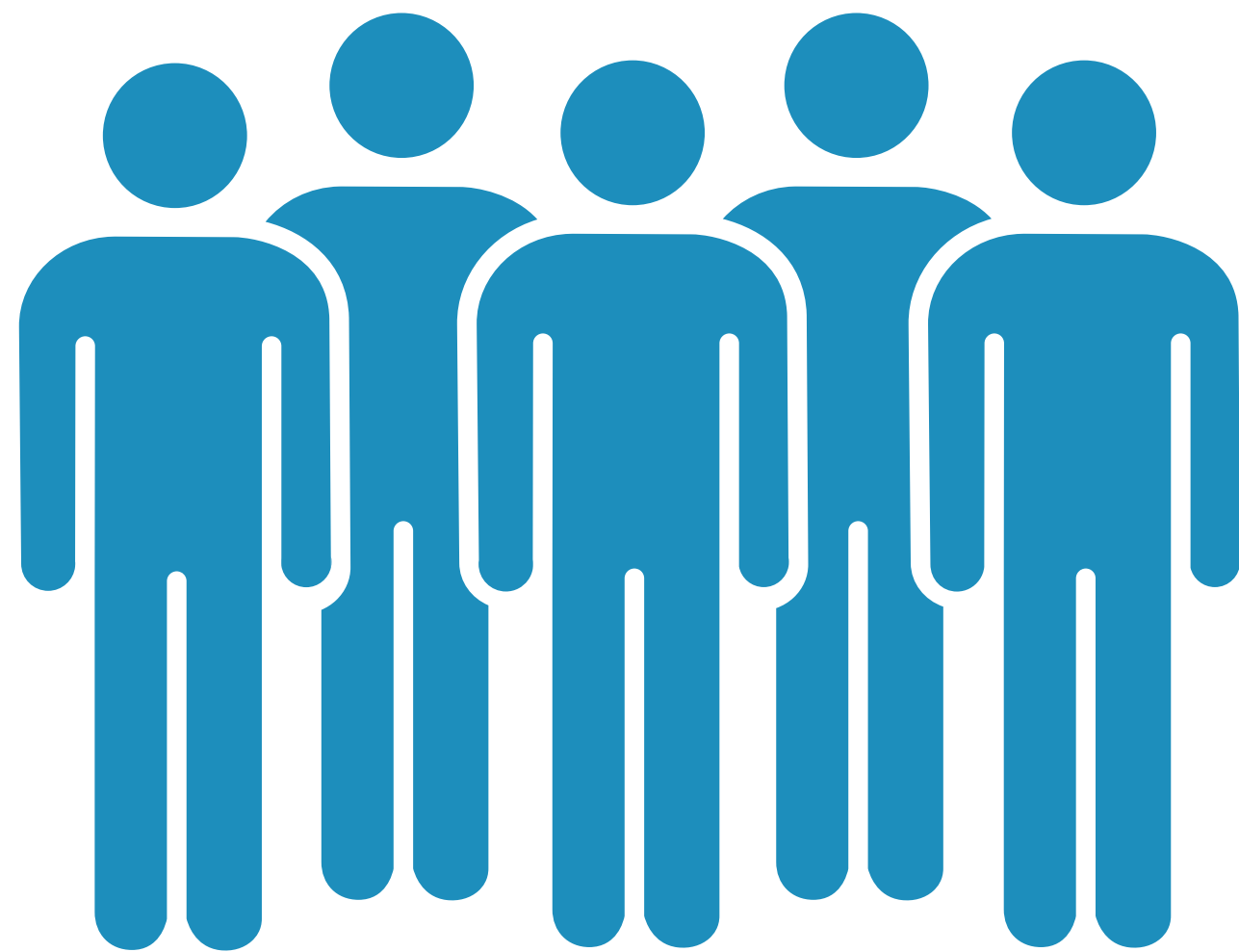
The meeting addressed three questions: what is working about the dialogue, what is not working and what can we do differently



Why participants came to the meeting

The meeting started with all the community members saying why they made time to attend the meeting.

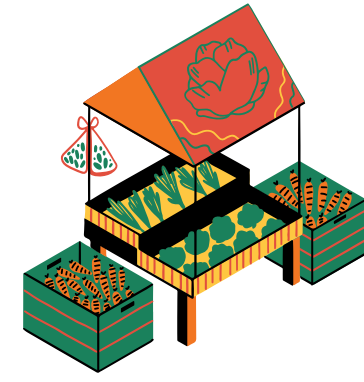
Everyone present came because they want to be part of positive change, would like something better for the community and believe that we can achieve this by working together.



What is working



Flea Market



It was agreed that the flea market has been a huge success. It is a social gathering where people from Hoekwil and Touwsranteen meet and build trust between each other. It is also creating an income for stall holders. It was agreed that the market should continue and is making a positive change.

There was a concern raised that some members of the community see the flea market as being for white people.

This perception will need to be addressed.

Relationships



One of the reasons for the dialogue is to build relationships between and among the people of Touwsranteen and Hoekwil.

This is because good, trusting relationships are needed if we are going to work together towards a happier, safer, more prosperous community.

The people in the meeting said that they have seen, and do feel, that we are building community and getting to know each other better. People are now able to have conversations that they could not in the past because the barriers that separated people are being slowly broken down through these dialogues.

What is working



Commitment

The commitment shown by the people who constantly attend the dialogues and contribute was noted as one of the things working. There are enough people from Hoekwil and Touwsrante who are committed to working together to better the community. People want to be part of the process and are willing to work together in order to ensure that the goal of creating a safer and more prosperous community succeeds. The commitment of the SAPS to take part in the dialogue and be accountable to the people of these communities was appreciated

other things that are working

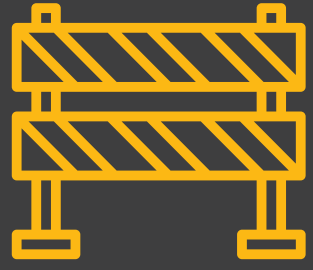
We get to understand the problems in our community better

We can speak directly with the police and hear what they are doing and ask questions. There is a closer relationship with the police

People from the immigrant community have learned that they can report domestic violence to the police and get help

There are groups who have started to address alcohol and drug use, and a group that is trying to work out how to match peoples' skills with jobs

We can form new groups to work on other issues

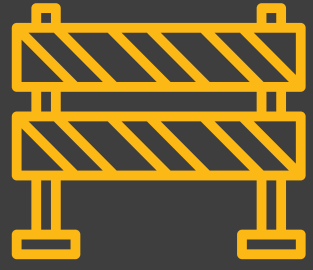


What is not working

Community Disengagement

It was said that there are misconceptions in Touwsrante about the dialogue because it is not clear what it is about or who it is for. It was made clear that this dialogue does not want to do the work of the community policing forum or the neighbourhood watch – they are important forums that must continue. It was agreed that the name of this gathering should change from the "Community Safety Forum" to the "Community Dialogue" because this is a dialogue between community members to explore ways to improve the community of Hoekwil and Touwsrante. This dialogue needs to be open to everyone who wants to make a difference and who is concerned about safety, it should work with the existing forums and not function alone.

There is a clear need for the community dialogue to be introduced to the community. People in the community need to be made aware and get to understand what this is about. It needs to be clarified that this is a community initiative for the community by the community. It was suggested that the forum should be rebranded and that at the next meeting we should develop a mission statement so that everyone in Hoekwil and Touwsrante can understand what it is about.



What is not working

Meeting Venue

The community dialogue was started because there was concern about safety, and there was a need for a place where people from Hoekwil and Touwsrante could come together to hear each other's worries and find solutions together. Where we meet is important because it will determine what people think and feel about the dialogue. It was noted that there are some misconceptions in the community because the meetings have been held at one church. This might lead to a perception that the dialogue 'is a church thing' which may alienate members of other churches as well as community members not comfortable going to the church. It was also said that the meeting venue should be in the centre of the community. It was agreed that the next meeting will be held at the community hall.

Icebreakers

It was said that some people feel uncomfortable when they are called on to speak in the circle. It was suggested that there should be more discussion in small groups and one-on-one. One of the reasons people may not be willing to attend the meetings is because they might feel uncomfortable.

Without a dialogue the groups that are working will not have a 'home', a place to come back to, a place to start from. The dialogue is important so that groups that want to do good work can get input and ideas and share their successes and challenges.



Conclusion and Way Forward

At the end of the meeting participants said they appreciated the honesty and openness in the meeting and the chance to speak about what was bothering them and to celebrate the success of the market. Boelie Damons invited Denzel, Roslynn and Sharon to join him on Monday to meet with church leaders from Touwsrante to speak about the dialogue and invite them to come to future meetings. It was agreed that everyone would bring someone new to the next meeting.



The next meeting is on 26 July at 5h30pm
at Touwsrante Community Hall

Attendees List

Morne Heunis

Chandre Gould

Andisiwe Makwecana

Roslynn Damons

Sharon Appels

Helen Buvtan

Denzel De Swardt

Simon Mtshotana

Walter Damons

Mila Gould

Anelisiwe Fana

Nina Muller

Sharon Fisher-Buys

Helet Theron

Rachel Van Tonder

