

transform.

LOVE CITIES SA NETWORK

PUBLICATION

QUARTER ONE 2025



Love Potch Unites Leaders to Reimagine the Future

Over 35 community leaders gathered at Makojalo Venue to craft a bold new vision for Potchefstroom, transforming challenges into strengths through collaborative dialogue.

PG NO. 10

Love Howick's Flood Relief Brings Hope to Lidgetton

Over 100 flood-affected households received urgent aid, showcasing the power of swift community action in crises.

PG NO. 6

Love Mkhondo's Transformative Impact

From housing 54 children at Uzwelo Home to educating 650+ vulnerable learners, Sheldon Harris's team exemplifies sustainable change.

PG NO. 8

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intro.

This edition celebrates courage, collaboration, and community-led transformation. From the Love Cities Annual Conference in Howick to grassroots heroes in Potchefstroom, Mpophomeni, and beyond, we're reminded that lasting change begins with ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

Through education, clean-ups, disaster response, and youth programs, each initiative builds a stronger South Africa. Flip through these pages and join a movement uniting dignity, opportunity, and hope.

This is more than a network—it's a movement. **Let's keep going—together.**





time to act.

“Postponement is the father of failure”

South Africa has always been a land of opportunity, big dreams and untapped potential. I used to think that all we needed was a more innovative thinking, more growth-orientated strategies, and a stronger sense of **‘togetherness or ubuntu as we call it in Africa’**, to realise these dreams/plans/ideas. But the more I am involved in igniting change at grassroots level across our country through the **‘Love Cities’** movement, I really am beginning to believe that there are more important ingredients needed to start realising this **‘(South) African Dream’**.

I have sat in endless meetings, read countless articles and sat through many arduous dialogues around ‘rebuilding our country’, and there are **SO MANY** ideas, strategies, theories and desires to make a change together. **We don’t lack plans—we lack action** (in my opinion). It feels like people are stuck in endless cycles of procrastination – and have fallen victim to the complacent waiting game. We know that ‘he who hesitates is lost’ and my sense is that this era of our country’s history does not need hesitation but courageous action, lest we get lost in more differed hope. The call to step up, be bold, do something and ‘pitch up’ to bring about change is stronger than ever.

Even if we get it wrong, or don’t quite hit the mark first time round, at least we can say to the generations to come that we *‘dared greatly, took risks and made a move for change’*. I am extremely privileged to be a part of a courageous group of ordinary South Africans from diverse backgrounds, who have decided to ACT and start the onerous task of bringing change in our cities, towns and villages across this great Nation. One-action-at-a-time is our mantra!

This Quarterly Publication serves as a tribute to what’s possible when we leave the spectators seat and take our place in the arena of risk. Take time to read these stories of change, hard work, unwavering commitment, and bold steps taken by everyday South Africans (in amongst their normal day-jobs). These actions are creating the future we all dream of in South Africa, that one day will ring out as key defining moments in our Nation’s history.

It’s time to **ACT** and let this Love Cities Publication spur you on to step up to the plate in your neighbourhood, village, town or city, and start making a difference (no matter how small it is!). Let’s never become bystanders in our own destiny but rather actively participate in creating thriving communities and prosperous people. The future is **NOW** in your community, and the answer to unlock this future is **YOU!**



Matt Hogarty

FOUNDER & CEO

Let’s ACT...

LOVE CITIES PARTNERS



LOVE
NELSON
MANDELA BAY

LOVE
HOWICK

LOVE
MPOPHOMENI

LOVE
NOTTIES

LOVE
PAARL

LOVE
POTCH

LOVE
MKHONDO

LOVE
BERGVILLE

LOVE
MULDERSDRIFT

LOVE
'TOTI

nelson mandela bay.



Love Cities has partnered with Love Nelson Mandela Bay (formerly Mandela Bay Community Movement), integrating its three-year track record in community transformation into the Love Cities network. The collaboration will leverage shared strategies and methodologies to enhance local impact, while continuing Love Nelson Mandela Bay's flagship project, "One House a Month," aimed at building stronger communities. The partnership aims to amplify measurable social development in the region. Love Cities warmly welcomes the new partner, anticipating expanded collective achievements.



Success in School Shoe Drive

Love Muldersdrift, in collaboration with CDR Equipping, Community Ministries, and Bethany House, has successfully surpassed their goal in the recent school shoe drive, collecting enough funds to provide 600 pairs of new school shoes for local children.

This initiative highlights the community's dedication to ensuring that children in Muldersdrift begin the new year with confidence and comfort. This remarkable achievement reflects the generosity and collaborative spirit of the local community.

Thanks to everyone involved for making a meaningful difference in the lives of these children.





40 Bicycles donated to Mpopomeni students, reducing long commutes and boosting educational access. In partnership with Rotary Club Hilton and Howick



Over 100 households supported in Lidgetton through community-driven aid. A big thank you to DJ's Spar, The Spice Box, and everyone who dropped off blankets, clothing, and non-perishable food items.

amanzimtoti.



Love Toti's official launch event, "Toti Re-Imagined," brought together passionate Amanzimtoti community members to collaboratively shape the town's future. The gathering featured vibrant discussions, innovative strategies, and a shared commitment to positive change, showcasing the power of community collaboration. Attendees contributed ideas that Love Toti now aims to transform into actionable initiatives. The organisation thanked participants and encouraged ongoing engagement as they work toward a brighter, reimagined future for Amanzimtoti.



Official Launch:

Hope in Action

Love Mkhondo, led by senior pastor and team leader Sheldon Harris of Wellspring Ministries, drives transformative community initiatives in the Mkhondo region. Key programs include:

- Uzwelo Children's Home: Shelter and care for 54 vulnerable children.
- URock Program: Supports 650+ orphaned/vulnerable children across 12 villages and feeds 1,000+ during school holidays.
- Maranatha Christian School: A full-time primary school offering values-based IEB curriculum education.
- High School Learning Centre: Provides rural learners with digital resources and teacher support to complete IEB courses online.

Aligned with the Love Cities movement's goals of empowerment and sustainable change, Love Mkhondo aims to further uplift the community through education, care, and holistic support. The initiative anticipates expanded impact as it collaborates with Love Cities.



Narrative Development Session



Leaders reimagined Potchefstroom's future at Makojalo Venue.

Joy for Abraham Kriel Orphanage



230 children gifted hampers via Premier Foods partnership.

Situated on a picturesque church campus in Paarl's New Orleans area, The Gathering Café unites community and commerce through sustainable practices. The café serves three core purposes: generating income to fund Love Paarl's initiatives, acting as a networking hub for local entrepreneurs, and providing an event space for gatherings. It has created jobs, including a dedicated manager role, with rental costs waived via in-kind support until profitability. Rapidly gaining popularity, the café fosters collaboration, celebration, and stronger community bonds in Paarl.



The Gathering Café



Beautification

Ongoing clean-ups and tree-trimming enhance Nottingham Road's appeal.



Bread Roll Initiative

Partnered with Guardian Hygiene & Safety to redistribute surplus food to Shea O'Connor School.

Volunteers restored Chris Hani Road, tackling illegal dumping and fostering environmental pride.



Love Bergville is building thriving communities rooted in safety, opportunity, and collective hope.

By mobilising ordinary people to step off the sidelines and unite behind a shared vision, the initiative drives lasting social transformation through belief in humanity's potential.

Through a dynamic learning community, Love Bergville identifies best practices, forges partnerships with NGOs, businesses, and government stakeholders, and scales investments that empower residents.

This is realised by equipping the community with skills development programs, launching environmental initiatives like urban gardens and waste management, fostering economic growth through entrepreneurship, and strengthening social bonds via cultural and safety programs.

Together, these efforts create a ripple effect—regenerating ecosystems, uplifting vulnerable groups, and inspiring future generations to lead with purpose, ensuring dignity and hope become universal legacies.



become a partner.

Join our growing network of dedicated organisations committed to community transformation. If your organisation is passionate about making a meaningful impact and wishes to collaborate with like-minded partners, we'd love to hear from you!

To explore partnership opportunities, please visit our website at www.lovecities.org.za or contact us directly via email at info@lovecities.org.za.



LEAD.inc online leadership program.



Love Cities, in collaboration with Nationbuilder, has officially launched the LEAD.inc Academy—a transformative year-long leadership training program tailored specifically for leaders within the non-profit sector. The initiative aims to empower NPO leaders by providing them with practical skills, effective strategies, and access to a supportive network.

The inaugural cohort for 2025 includes 21 dedicated leaders representing six regions across South Africa: Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, North West, and Western Cape. These participants are passionate about enhancing their leadership capabilities and driving sustainable change within their respective communities.

The LEAD.inc Academy curriculum offers:

- Tailored learning specifically designed for the NPO sector
- Engaging and locally relevant content
- Practical, weekly activities
- Ongoing support from experienced coaches

This groundbreaking program underscores Love Cities' commitment to fostering impactful leadership and sustainable community development throughout South Africa.

"Equipping leaders, strengthening communities, and driving lasting impact—that's what LEAD.inc is all about," shared the program organizers. We warmly welcome all the leaders to this exciting new journey and look forward to witnessing the transformative impact of their collective efforts.



activation event.

Love Cities Hosts Inspiring Community Empowerment Activation Event



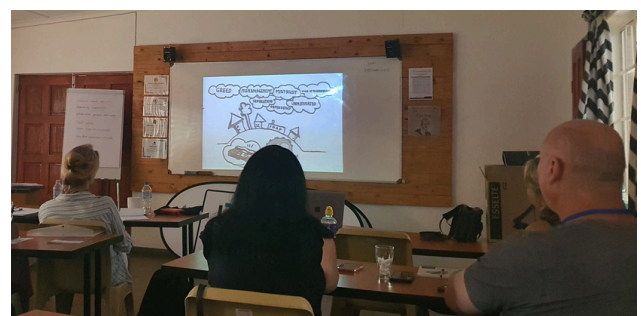
From February 25-27, Love Cities hosted a dynamic training event led by Matt Hogarty, focusing on empowering communities through collective action and sustainable change. The event highlighted innovative communication strategies, including arts and music, to shift narratives towards positive, asset-based stories filled with hope and possibility.



Participants explored effective community-building tools such as the Greenlight Poverty Tool and the Asset-Based Community Development approach. These methodologies are designed to build resilient, confident communities capable of driving meaningful and sustainable progress.

Additionally, the training introduced the Platform for Partnership, a structured framework to facilitate effective community development and ensure ongoing, impactful monitoring.

The event was more than just a training session; it represented a significant step toward fostering communities where every voice contributes to creating united and thriving environments.



2025 annual conference.

Conference Highlights Included:

<p>Theory of Change Workshop (Feb 19-20). Speaker: Anniza De Wet.</p>	<p>Main Conference Insights (Feb 21-22): Speaker: Johan Oliver.</p>	<p>Recharge & Connection Day: Networking in KwaZulu-Natal Midlands.</p>
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Under the powerful theme "Buffalo-Brave," the Love Cities Annual Conference 2025 successfully united changemakers from across the region at the &KIN Conference Centre in Howick. Over four inspiring days, attendees embraced challenges, celebrated courage, and explored innovative strategies for driving meaningful social change.

This annual gathering underscored the resilience, dedication, and bravery of community leaders committed to promoting equity, health, and economic empowerment. Special appreciation goes to our sponsors, REMA TIP TOP and DUNLOP, whose support was integral to the event's success.

Attendees departed with renewed energy, practical tools, and an expanded network of fellow changemakers, ready to boldly and strategically tackle the challenges ahead.



upcoming.

LOVE CITIES SA EVENTS

THU 24 APRIL	08:30 - 09:30	Co-Lab: Greenlight	Host: Greenlight Team
THU 24 APRIL	13:00 - 14:00	Online Information Session - New Partners	Speaker: Matt Hogarty

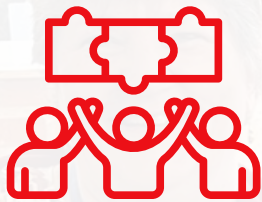
MON 5 MAY	08:30 - 9:00	Marketing Online Discussion	TBA
TUE 6 MAY	08:30 - 9:30	Leadership Circle: Event Planning	Facilitator: Bridgitte Brown - Events Manager (Michaelhouse)
SAT 17 MAY	TBC	Mzansi Mile: Fundraiser	Various Sporting Codes
TUE 20 - 22 MAY	ALL DAY	Activation Training: New Partners	Venue: Love Howick
TUE 27 MAY	08:30 - 09:30	Co-Lab	Host: Judith Mtsewu
TUE 27 MAY	13:00 - 14:00	Online Information Session - New Partners	Speaker: Matt Hogarty

TUE 10 JUNE	08:30 - 09:30	Leadership Circle: Building a Strong Team	Facilitator: HR Consultants & Matt Hogarty
TUE 24 JUNE	08:30 - 09:30	Co-Lab	Host: Doni Hogarty

FRI 18 JULY	ALL DAY	Mandela Day : City Serve Day	All Partners
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support.

Section 18 (a) Tax Exemption Certificate available



Participate in our upcoming events and volunteer opportunities.



Consider starting a love cities project in your area!



Engage with us on social media to spread the word about our impact and share your stories.



Consider sponsoring a town through our network, providing vital support to kick-start transformation projects.

Zapper™



BANKING DETAILS:

Love Cities NPC

Account no: 630 998 48302

Branch no: 220 725

First National Bank Howick



STAY CONNECTED

Follow our journey on social media for live updates, behind-the-scenes content, and announcements of upcoming events. Your active participation enriches our community and enhances our collective impact



CONTACT US

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EVERYONE. EVERYWHERE. EMPOWERED.

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Your brand deserves the spotlight.



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