



SafeParks report for PRABOA AGM 2023

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Executive Summary

SafeParks is the security initiative of the Parkhurst Residents and Business Owners Association (PRABOA). The initiative is focused on ensuring the security of public and private spaces in Parkhurst. SafeParks, has appointed 24/7 SECURITY as its contracted provider for public space security and for armed response services for those contributors who choose it.

SafeParks has a duty to ensure that our security is effective, and we get maximum value for money for any solutions we choose, on our members' behalf. 24/7 Security operates as resident's associations' preferred providers for PSS and AR in neighbouring Parktown North, Rosebank and Parkview, as well as being dominant in the Parkview Policing Precinct under which Parkhurst falls.

24/7 Security has been active in Parkhurst under the SafeParks banner for 18-months now and there is a significant awareness of their presence in the neighbourhood.

There are two SafeParks branded tactical vehicles, each manned by highly trained security officers as well as a 3rd tactical support vehicle, during peak times, to service Parkhurst.

24/7 Security is monitoring all existing cameras on the Vumacam network- also paid for by SafeParks and will, over time, expand under the newly launched SafeCity initiative.

All SafeParks subscribers have free access to the 24/7 Security App which has a geo-located panic button function as well as private medical and fire emergency support.

Whilst SafeParks support is now stable after the disruptions of Cortac exiting Parkhurst in 2022, we implore residents of Parkhurst to start contributing to the public space security at least, in far larger numbers. We have had to increase our fees for the first time in 10 years and the current rate for SafeParks only is R545 per household per month. However, should

you take up 24/7 as the armed response provider as well, your total will be R885 pm, which is, if not equal to what you are paying now for armed response only, but mostly less than you are paying for armed response with other suppliers.

SafeParks acknowledges that there has to be a strong drive to get more support in order to implement enhanced measures that are planned for Parkhurst, including more vehicles and foot patrols. The alternative will sadly be a reduced number of services and/or resources for residents, impacting the suburb at large however we have a duty to ensure the scheme's sustainability in the long run.

To this end, we are offering SafeParks only subscribers a month free if they sign up to the full package with 24/7 as armed response before the end of December 2023.

Thank you

Mike

The SafeParks pro-active security scheme

The community in Parkhurst is actively addressing the challenge of preventing crime by recognizing the importance of securing not only individual homes but also public spaces and streets. The initiative involves patrolling public spaces and streets as a proactive measure, which requires the commitment and financial contribution of the entire community.

Additionally, the use of technology, such as License Plate Recognition cameras monitored by 24/7, adds an extra layer of defence. These cameras help identify vehicles that may have been involved in previous crimes or are flagged, contributing to crime prevention and leading to arrests.

This holistic approach, combining community engagement, patrols, and technology, reflects a comprehensive effort to enhance the safety and security of the Parkhurst neighbourhood. If you have any specific questions or if there's more information you're looking for, feel free to let me know! SafeParks was created by PRABOA to provide a solution that can achieve this, but this is only possible if the initiative is supported by enough residents.

Funding by residents

Parkhurst is a suburb of around 2000 households and approximately 200 businesses.

The vast majority of both groups already pay for some form of security solution, unfortunately, mostly only for a reactive home or business alarm monitoring service.

The problem is thus not money – the current total spend by the community in the suburb on security is substantial. The key problem, however, is a lack of commitment to securing the community and neighbourhood with the suburb being highly fragmented in terms of service providers that mostly only protect your home/ business on an armed response/ alarm monitoring basis, not the community and neighbourhood at large.

Many residents are reluctant to move from their personal security provider as they believe that they are happy with the service or simply that changing providers is “too much hassle.” But imagine the impact on the community and combating crime if the majority of residents contributed to SafeParks?

Other suburbs who have managed to get a substantial rate of support from their residents and business owners have been very effective in driving down crime. Some of our neighbouring suburbs have support of up to 65%, and in some instances even up to 85%. Although there are many voices in Parkhurst who are quick to complain about crime, they do not support our community. Sadly, we could do so much more to prevent crime if we could increase our support base.

How much do residents have to pay?

Monthly subscriptions are divided into two parts :

- a Public Space Security (PSS) contribution and
- a Home Alarm Monitoring fee, often called an Armed Response (AR) fee

The PSS debit order, as well as the AR debit order goes directly to SafeParks, and the agreed fee is then paid over to 24/7.

When SafeParks appointed a new PSS provider, one of the non-negotiable criteria was that debit orders be payable to SafeParks. This gives the community, through SafeParks, control of the security scheme. Should we need to terminate 24/7's services at some point in the future; we are able to move the combined PSS contributions to a new provider. The power lies thus with the community, not the security provider.

Currently the PSS monthly contribution is R545 and the AR contribution is R340, giving a total contribution of R885 per month.

Please keep in mind that you are almost certainly already paying for a home

security provider. By joining the SafeParks scheme and switching to 24/7 for your AR you will improve the scheme's total revenue. This will then directly translate into additional proactive security measures for the benefit of the community, with direct oversight of how it is spent.

Public Space Cameras

Cameras are only one part of a community security solution. Due to all the foot and vehicle traffic in Parkhurst, as well as all the open entry and exit points, cameras cannot give the security cover what they can in a fully controlled environment. In controlled areas, AI/ rule-based cameras are much more effective as they search for specific incidents/ movements. Whilst an expensive solution with Vumacam, cameras are very good for post-event evidence gathering, picking up vehicle alerts and responding to crime events.

24/7 Security Services actively monitor cameras and make use of intelligence provided. There are two additional private cameras that are monitored.

LPR Cameras

License plate recognition (LPR) cameras monitor vehicles' number plates against multiple databases, including the SAPS-listed vehicles of interest (VOI). These databases include sought-after and stolen vehicles. When the LPR cameras detect a VOI, it triggers an alert to the 24/7 Security Command Centre. The 24/7 Security Armed Response teams are then deployed to locate/block the vehicle.

Overview Cameras

Overview cameras use artificial intelligence to monitor and detect abnormal activities. The iSentry software is designed to analyse CCTV camera footage in real-time. (Vumacam uses iSentry and the 24/7 Security Command Centre receives the feed and alerts that are generated by them.)

It uses deep learning to distinguish between normal and abnormal activities. In the event of abnormal activity, an alert is triggered to the 24/7 Security Command Centre where operators assess the alert and deploy the required resources, e.g., armed reaction, law enforcement, medical and fire response.

This video explains it well: <https://youtu.be/mVtyGYc70iA>

Crime trends in Parkhurst in 2022

By far the most crime that happens in Parkhurst is theft of or theft out of vehicles, mostly parked in streets by visitors or where residents have inadequate off-street parking, especially over the weekends visiting along

4th avenue. SafeParks have continuously highlighted the risk of this to our clients, especially regarding certain targeted vehicles, using cell phones or laptops in public spaces or people leaving visible items in vehicles. Most of these thefts happen to non-clients or visitors to Parkhurst, some who may not even be aware of the risks.

Cell phone snatching numbers are high in Parkhurst, again it can be attributed to happenings in 4th Avenue as most phone stolen have been stolen at restaurants there. The residents and public have been advised to not leave phones lying on restaurant tables and not to be engaged on calls or texting when standing on sidewalks.

Suspicious persons are high on the crime matrix. 24/7 does stop and searches when alerted that a suspicious person is spotted in Parkhurst. This matrix only reflects crime reported to 24/7 and is verified by Parkview SAPS.

24/7 and SafeParks work closely with the Parkview Community Policing forum and meet on a weekly basis with Parkview SAPS.

SafeParks would like to thank Parkview SAPS under the guidance of Colonel Govender, and his management team and VISPOL commanders for their contribution to keeping the crime matrix low in Parkhurst. They are following the hands-on approach and can be seen in our neighbourhood doing patrols on a weekly basis.

The way forward

A significant portion of the community unfortunately still only contribute to reactive security providers or not at all and whilst the current state of the economy is certainly impacting a number of us, not supporting the community in which you reside can only have negative long-term consequences. The reality is that with more subscribers/ financial support, there is so much more we can do.

What you can do as a resident:

- Join your street WhatsApp security group (some streets also have vacancies for street captains)
- Support the SafeParks PSS solution
- Use 24/7 as your AR security provider
- Encourage friends and neighbours to join or switch to the scheme
- Get on the security newsletter (contact Theresa on safe@safeparks.joburg)
- Phone in all suspicious activities to the 24/7 control room – whether you are a 24/7 client or not
- Be involved in the community!
- Join and monitor our website and Facebook pages:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SafeParks/>
- Website SafeParks: <https://safeparks.org.za>
- Website PRABOA: <https://parkhurstvillage.com>

Many thanks to those of you who are our loyal supporters and we are truly heartened by your continued support and the number for positive messages we receive.