

AfriForum Report on Homelessness in Durbanville for Submission to the City of Cape Town

Homelessness in Durbanville has become an increasingly complex issue that is having a noticeable impact on the community. AfriForum's recent survey and research reflect the growing concern among residents and offer valuable insight into public perceptions of homelessness and its consequences. This report outlines key findings from the survey and proposes constructive recommendations for the City of Cape Town to consider, with the aim of finding a balanced and collaborative approach to addressing homelessness in the area.

Survey Overview

AfriForum's survey on homelessness was conducted between June and July 2025, receiving 294 responses from Durbanville residents. The survey was open to all residents and reflected a wide demographic, including a broad geographic representation from across the suburb. The aim was to gain insights into residents' views on homelessness, its effects, and how the municipality's response to this issue is perceived. The findings, while not fully representative, highlight significant trends that can inform meaningful and effective responses to the challenge of homelessness in Durbanville.

Key Findings

1. Increase in Homelessness

The survey found that 83% of respondents observed an increase in the number of homeless individuals over the past 12 months. This aligns with reports from local media and community observations, indicating that homelessness has become more visible and, in many cases, more concentrated in specific areas of Durbanville.

2. Public Concern

A significant portion of respondents (53%) expressed being 'extremely concerned' about the growing issue of homelessness, with an additional 26% expressing 'very concern'. This highlights the high level of public awareness and anxiety regarding the social and economic effects of homelessness in the community.

3. Perceived Inadequacy of Municipal Response

A notable 73% of survey respondents felt that the City of Cape Town has not done enough to address homelessness in Durbanville, though only 5% felt that sufficient action was being taken. This sentiment reflects a perceived gap between public expectations and current municipal interventions.

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4. Crime and Safety

Many respondents (82%) believe that homelessness contributes to crime in the area, with 86% reporting an increase in crime over the past year. These findings suggest that the visible rise in homelessness is linked to broader concerns about safety and security within the community.

5. Community Preferences for Action

The survey indicated a preference for a cooperative approach to addressing homelessness, with 54% of respondents favouring a partnership between government, NGOs, and the broader community to find sustainable solutions. This demonstrates a recognition of the need for collaborative efforts rather than placing sole responsibility on any one group.

Recommendations for the City of Cape Town

AfriForum respectfully offers the following recommendations, which we believe can contribute to a constructive and effective approach to addressing homelessness in Durbanville:

1. Enhanced Municipal Support and Collaboration

While the municipality has made some strides, there is an opportunity to increase the provision of safe spaces and shelters for homeless individuals, ensuring that these facilities are equipped with essential services such as food, sanitation, and medical care. Collaborative initiatives with organisations like MES (Mould Empower Serve) and The Haven could help provide long-term solutions to homelessness, including rehabilitation and reintegration programs.

2. Improved Law Enforcement and Community Engagement

It would be beneficial to foster stronger partnerships with local security companies, neighbourhood watches, and law enforcement to better monitor areas where homeless individuals gather. These efforts should focus on maintaining public safety while respecting the rights of those who are homeless. Additionally, we encourage the establishment and support of designated areas for homelessness, where proper services and support can be provided. AfriForum is also dedicated to raising public awareness on the proper reporting of any violations to the relevant authorities, whether related to bylaw breaches or criminal activities. In this regard, AfriForum offers its assistance to ensure that accurate and timely information reaches the appropriate departments, thereby supporting law enforcement in addressing these matters more effectively.

3. Public Education and Awareness

Raising awareness about the causes of homelessness and its wider societal impacts could help shift perceptions and encourage greater public understanding. Providing information about available services and resources may also foster a sense of shared responsibility and community involvement in addressing the issue.

4. Long-Term Solutions for Rehabilitation and Reintegration

AfriForum encourages the municipality to consider expanding efforts to address the root causes of homelessness, including access to mental health services, substance abuse

treatment, and job training. By focusing on both short-term relief and long-term rehabilitation, the City can help individuals regain stability and reintegrate into the community.

Conclusion

AfriForum acknowledges the significant challenges posed by homelessness in Durbanville and appreciates the efforts made by the City of Cape Town to address this issue. However, we believe that there is still much more that can be done to improve the situation. Through enhanced collaboration, improved community safety, and the development of long-term solutions, the City can make a positive impact on the lives of homeless individuals while safeguarding the interests of the wider community. AfriForum is fully committed to assisting the City of Cape Town in any initiatives aimed at addressing homelessness. We make ourselves available to support municipal efforts by providing resources, expertise, and a network of community partners that can help address the complex issues surrounding homelessness. By working together, we can find balanced and sustainable solutions that benefit both homeless individuals and the wider Durbanville community.