

## 'For Sale' boards banned outside St Francis Bay properties

Estate agency 'For Sale' boards are now banned from being erected in St Francis Bay outside those houses that are on the market.

The only exception is when there is a 'Show House', as only then can an agent erect a board outside a property during the hours of the show house. The 'For Sale' sign will have to be removed immediately after the show.

This is good news for all estate agencies that voted via a 'whatsapp' group yesterday, 29 September, in favour of the new 'No Boards' rule. There were initially 10 out of 11 wanting the ban on boards, but a full house of 11/11 agencies were finally all in agreement of the new rule that no 'For Sale' boards are to be erected in St Francis Bay from now on.

One of the main reasons for this new law is there were too many different boards erected outside every house on the market in St Francis Bay every Friday - giving the impression to weekend visitors that the whole of St Francis Bay was 'for sale'.

Also a rule that stipulated no more than three boards outside each property was being blatantly ignored. Up to five boards were outside properties on a weekend and the boards were not all removed early every Monday morning in line with the former law which laid out times for boards to be erected and taken down. Agency boards were often still visible outside properties as late as a Tuesday or Wednesday.

"Now if one takes a drive around St Francis Bay this afternoon or this weekend there are no boards" an estate agent excitedly said.

Another remarked how pleased she was as this

new rule will neat the town and keep it exclusive as well as being good for investors.

She also felt this new rule was a protection for sellers or their tenants occupying the 'For Sale' houses. It prevented unscrupulous people just picking up at the front door without warning on a weekend denuding entry to see a house. Plus the new rule also protected unoccupied houses from being burgled as has sometimes occurred.

When houses are being sold there will now be no 'For Sale' signs outside properties, bar on 'Show House' days. Peet Kemp, former chairman of St Francis Bay Tourism said this afternoon. Late last year St Francis Chronicle published a front page article about the 'Battle of the Boards' after Kemp met with estate agency principals and the former St Francis Bay Residents Association to attempt to control the number of boards being erected in St Francis Bay.

"Too many estate agency boards have negative implications for St Francis Bay and are bad for business," Kemp was quoted as saying before the 2015 festive season. "New rules are to be drawn up and should these not be obeyed illegal boards will be removed and there will be consequences," he said.

Peet advised that in February this year Kouga Municipality, which was previously the law enforcer of estate agency boards, handed control of the boards over to St Francis Tourism. "Tourism can now enforce the new rule on the boards," Kemp said.

If the new rule preventing boards being erected is broken tourism members or even residents

themselves can remove them, Kemp said. They cannot destroy them though, he cautioned, as this is damage to property. The boards should rather be left lying on the verges for the owners to fetch.

Kemp echoed his earlier sentiments about estate agency boards: "We have an obligation towards ourselves and our own investments to

restore St Francis and surrounds to the beautiful place we fell in love with."

"Too many estate agency boards have negative implications for St Francis Bay and are bad for business. We want to go back to the days when the focus was on the natural beauty of our area, that is why people come here, and why others live here," Kemp added.

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