

'These were tears of joy'

Dear Fever,

Some good news to share.

Today I witnessed four destitute families receive keys to their new homes. An old lady, 76 who spent most of her life helping people less fortunate than herself actually lived in a disused water tank for many years. Her bed comprised of 3 coke crates with a thin sponge mattresses over it. Despite this poverty and meagre possessions, she shared with those that didn't have. She prayed for the sick, and even helped those unwell to tend to their personal hygiene needs. A fit and strong lady she is. When told that a new home was ready to be handed to her, she looked up with closed hands, thanked God and cried. These were tears of joy. I cannot describe the feeling, but it was indeed an emotional experience for me. I spent many months liaising

with provincial and local government officials around the plight of these families. Three houses were handed over in Marburg, and one in Boboyi. A further 300 or so houses (part of 900 houses) are now currently being handed out near Gamalakhe as I write.

I also happened to be at the briefing with the MEC for Human Settlements, Mr Ravi Pillay, the Hibiscus Coast Municipality Mayor and other officials this morning. Listening to the HCM Municipal manager I am amazed at the number of housing service delivery projects currently on the go. There are thousands of houses that have been built so far and thousands more still to be delivered within the next few months in the region.

I must applaud the Honourable MEC for human settlements for his simplicity. The MEC arrived in a sim-

ple VW Jetta, no sirens, no big bodyguards, or flashing blue lights. His senior staff and officials arrived in simple vehicles. It made me proud that this man, from our town – Port Shepstone, with such values has risen to the higher echelons of government. What touched me most, was when he addressed us, he stressed that we need to cater for the needs of ALL members of our community, in clear reference to the growing numbers of poor white and Indian families that also need government intervention during these difficult times. We need to build a truly non racial democratic society that can live in peace and harmony.

Well done to the Hibiscus Coast Municipality, and the Provincial Department of Human Settlements.

Selvan Chetty
Port Shepstone