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in Southern Africa

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HOUSING

in Southern Africa

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January 2016

HOUSING
in Southern Africa

ED'S NOTES

Housing is set to shine in 2016

Welcome to 2016! With exciting catalytic projects in the pipeline, the banks are now on a roll to provide the funding for much needed mortgages and opportunities abound to further develop the housing market.

There have been some staggering achievements with some of the top industry players continuing to carve out and increase market share under tough economic conditions.

Human Settlements Minister Lindiwe Sisulu's briefings last year inspired a number of new sector start-ups in the construction industry to deliver subsidised, quality, affordable houses.

Sisulu has long charmed the housing sector with her professionalism and determination to roll out quality housing. She works closely with key private sector players who deliver.

The Municipal elections in 2016 will continue to galvanise the ruling party into action to meet the State President's promises to the electorate in 2015. And the Integrated Development Plan provides the key to service delivery and housing across the sector.

In our monthly upcoming issues we will continue to showcase pockets of excellence throughout government, metros and municipalities and carry on highlighting these organisations and state-owned entities.

Private sector developers continue to grow the rental and affordable housing stock and the iconic Loftus Versfeld in Pretoria is set to become another of the city's growth nodes, with residential and mixed use properties.

Kudos to banking giant, FNB who have been ranked as the cheapest bank in South Africa according to the Solidarity Banking Charges 2015 Report. This is good news for labour in the construction sector. On that note, the New Development Bank opened its headquarters and the Chinese based bank aims to provide funding for infrastructure and residential projects.

According to Multi NET bond originator there has been an increase in bond application approvals, with a 65% average approval rate. This is partially due to the increased appetite by the banks and more

competitive lending. In the United States, American Modular Systems were used to create a platinum certification zero net energy designed building. We feature the River Vine state-of-the-art prefabricated residential concept project that takes sustainable construction to the next level.

Although the local construction sector faced a challenging year in 2015 it is well placed to cope with new growth and large scale projects this year.

In our beautiful rainbow nation perhaps our housing should reflect some sunshine and light in colourful exteriors and take a leaf out of our cover picture of Mexican housing exteriors.

Enjoy the read!



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Loftus area set for property boom

Retha Schutte of Pam Golding Properties says that the rapid growth of the Tshwane municipal area has been nothing short of astonishing. “Areas such as Menlyn are becoming the new mini Sandtons of Pretoria and we now are seeing areas around the Loftus Versfeld stadium earmarked for massive redevelopment.”

According to Schutte, the development of the Loftus area is being led by the construction of a new residential apartment block, 441@Kirkness by developer Coza Investments. This is located directly opposite the stadium. “Usually we see retail and commercial property spearheading the development of growth nodes, but in this case a residential project is leading the way.”

The new residential block consists of 56 apartments under a million rand.

“With the area set to be boomed, the developers have seen the need for affordable quality accommodation in the area, which is conveniently situated nearby the very heart of Pretoria and a range of commercial, educational, medical and retail facilities,” adds Schutte.

The 51m² one-bedroom apartments are situated within easy reach of the Union Buildings, numerous embassies, major transport routes, the Hatfield Gautrain station as well as Tshwane’s Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

The area around the iconic Loftus Versfeld stadium in Pretoria is set to become another of the city’s growth nodes, with the development of residential and mixed-use properties.

service routes. In addition, there are a number of prestigious hospitals in close proximity and is also within walking distance of the University of Pretoria, Afrikaanse Hoër Seunskool, Pretoria Boys High School, Pretoria Girls High and Afrikaanse Hoër Meisieskool.

“If you consider that Loftus Park with its range of additional facilities is also being developed, 441@Kirkness is set to become prime real estate within the Pretoria region. Occupation has been scheduled for December and January 2016.”

Renier Swarts, Marketing Executive at property developer Abland, says that the Loftus Park mixed-use development represents an investment of R1,4 billion and will consist of premium grade commercial office space, a retail component, a public exhibition centre, Radisson Red Hotel, Virgin Active Gym and several restaurants in an open-air piazza.

“Loftus Park is a tremendously exciting development and is an indication of how much faith developers have in the region. It is our aim for this mixed use space, the first phase of which will be completed by August 2017, to stimulate an entirely new

growth node within the area,” says Swarts.

The apartments, designed by Swart architects, also represents the first stepping stone into the residential property market as they are affordable and well-located. Young professionals and first time buyers, will be secure in the knowledge that they have made an investment that is likely to appreciate in value over time. The project offers excellent rental returns for investors.

Schutte says that there are a number of buy-to-let investors showing a keen interest in the 441@Kirkness, which should secure rental returns of between R8 500 and R10 000 a month for a furnished unit.

The apartments offer a modern, open plan design comprising of a living area and a balcony. Each unit has loft bedrooms on the upper floor and a shower bathroom equipped with quality finishes and Geberit fittings. The kitchen has granite tops, Bosch appliances, an under-counter oven, washing machine and dishwasher.

The building offers wifi internet, 24-hour state-of-the-art security equipped with CCTV cameras and manned security gates. ■

Decrease in wasteful expenditure

Auditor-General Kimi Makwetu said there has been a decrease in the value of fruitless and wasteful government expenditure since the 2013/14 financial year.

The Auditor-General said this when releasing the overall report on audits done on national and provincial governments, as well as state entities. However, he said that wasteful expenditure could have been avoided if reasonable care had been taken.

Makwetu added that wasteful expenditure had dropped from R2,4 billion in 2012/13 to R1,2 billion in 2013/14 and now stands at R936 million in 2014/15. Of the millions wasted, in the year under review, R32 million (3%) was incurred to prevent further fruitless and irregular expenditure or losses. This was due to the cost of cancelling irregular contracts or contracts of non-performers.

The Auditor-General said, "We have picked up testimonies from a number of our teams, who said that in the past there were weaknesses in financial management discipline. This improved as the leadership of various institutions took a very keen

interest in the financial matters that are associated with the delivery of services."

Makwetu said it was worth noting that 80% of this expenditure was identified by the auditees. This shows that there has been an improvement in compliance, detection and reporting.

According to the Auditor-General's report, unauthorised expenditure dropped from R2,6 billion in 2013/14 to R1,6 billion in 2014/15. This was due to the decrease in unauthorised spending - KwaZulu-Natal decreased by 79% and 69% in Limpopo. Makwetu said 99% of the unauthorised expenditure was identified by the

departments themselves, with auditors identifying the remaining 1%.

"Of the R1.6 billion in unauthorised expenditure incurred in 2014/15, almost (99%) was as a result of overspending of the approved budget."

He noted there had been improvements in supply chain management although the number of auditees with findings remain high. "This is the reason that we report these instances, as required by the Public Finance Management Act, so that those charged with governance can authorise the required investigations to determine whether they concur with management actions associated with these transactions." ■



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FNB named cheapest bank in SA

According to Jo-Ann du Plessis, Head of Pricing and Product at FNB Value Banking Solutions “We are pleased to have been recognised as the bank with the cheapest account in South Africa.”

Du Plessis explains, “We are focused on bringing real value banking where customers can experience full-service banking, with no hidden costs.”

The FNB Easy Account has a low monthly fee of R4,95 and offers a number of free transactions. For example, purchases in stores using the card linked to the account, withdrawing cash at retailer till points such as Checkers, Shoprite and Pick n Pay and using electronic channels are free. Furthermore inContact SMS notifications keeping customers informed of transactions going through their account are free of charge.

The FNB Easy Account also offers a free Linked Savings Account with up to 4,75% interest depending on the balance in the account as well as FNB’s innovative Bank Your Change, which rounds-up card purchases and transfers the difference between the purchase amount and the rounded-up amount into a Linked Savings Account

“We have found that the Linked Savings account actually helps our customers to save, as moving money from one account to a savings account makes it easier to separate allocated

money towards saving and reduces the chance of using it for everyday expenses,” says du Plessis.

Customers can access their funds in their Linked Savings account at any time and transfers into and out of these accounts are free of bank charges.

“We are also the only bank to offer free rewards to these types of accounts catering for cost sensitive consumers and reducing cost burdens in these tough economic times.”

Easy Account customers can receive R10 back in prepaid airtime for every R100 of qualifying spend with

as Chief Operations Officer will be responsible for operations including project lending, operational compliance and project procurement as well as the regional offices of the NDB.

Vice President Leslie Maasdorp is the new Chief Financial Officer responsible for the Treasury and Portfolio Management. His portfolio also includes Finance Budgeting and Accounting functions.

Vice President Paulo Nogueira



FNB’s new mobile service offering, FNB Connect.

“We realise that each customer is different and they have different requirements from their bank, so it’s up to FNB to offer a range of solutions whether this is getting a loan, sending money home through mobile banking or banking affordability,” says du Plessis. The Easy Account

was originally only available through FNB Easy Plan branches. In

June 2014, the decision was taken to expand the availability of the product in all FNB branches to make affordable, no frills banking more accessible to everyone.

“Digital and electronic banking are critical to the long-term sustainability of low-cost banking. To enable FNB’s strategy to migrate its customers to digital platforms, electronic transactions on our Easy Account are free. The convenience, cost effectiveness and safety of these channels enable us to pass on cost savings to the customer,” concludes du Plessis. ■

New Development Bank

NDB President Kundapur Vaman Kamath says, “We are pleased with our progress to date in finalising our broad policy framework and organisational structure which will now enable us to progress to the next phase of our establishment.”

He said, “After completion of the initial start-up phase, we are now in a position to allocate formal responsibilities with immediate effect to the four Vice Presidents. We will also be in a position over the next few months to commence our recruitment of permanent staff.”

Kamath announced the appointments: Vice President Xian Zhu,

The New Development Bank (NDB) opened its headquarters in Shanghai, China last year and has now announced the appointment of four Vice Presidents.

as Chief Operations Officer will be responsible for operations including project lending, operational compliance and project procurement as well as the regional offices of the NDB.

Vice President Leslie Maasdorp is the new Chief Financial Officer responsible for the Treasury and Portfolio Management. His portfolio also includes Finance Budgeting and Accounting functions.

Vice President Paulo Nogueira

Batista Junior, Chief Risk Officer Economic Research, Risk Management, Strategy and Partnerships. Vice President Vladimir Kazbekov, has been appointed as the Chief Administration Officer responsible for Human Resources, Information Technology, Administration and Corporate Communications.

For further information contact Mao Shi on +86 21-66810633 or email: mao.shi@newdevelopmentbank.int ■

Sustainable residential estates



What is important, however, says Shiraaz Hassan, Commercial Director of Asrin Property Developers, is that these developments are built with integrity as well as whether they will be able to sustain what the developer has envisaged.

Looking at various statistics released and previous experience, there has been a 7% year on year increase in the demand for sectional title units and first time homebuyers are driving this market.

Hassan said that the goal is to achieve a mutually popular, price sensitive product which caters for young families, first time home buyers and people retiring. With more construction of higher density developments it is important to add as much green space as possible as well as landscaping and communal areas.

“Adding open space encourages residents of the complexes to engage with each other,” he said.

He says, “Each estate type will have a certain type of person buying into it. For example, the first time home buyer will have a certain budget and may not have a need for a large family style home whereas the 40-something buyer will often want a larger home, with a garden and space

The number of people preferring to live in sectional title schemes or estates run by Home Owners Associations has increased over the years, and this trend looks as if it is set to continue in the years to come.

for his/her children to grow up in. In all instances, buyers are looking for security and lifestyle options such as swimming pools, tennis courts, and other amenities where costs would be shared among the owners,” comments Hassan. He points out that a freestanding home can be costly and that is one reason why buyers opt to live in estates.

Research is crucial according to Hassan, “At Nuutgevonden, for instance, the units have been extremely popular with young adults and families alike because of the competitive cost per m², as well as the open green spaces and security offered.” The development is within close proximity to Stellenbosch’s town centre and the university.

“Creating successful developments is not purely about constructing units, said Hassan, but rather about the sustainability of the schemes. Many developers have in the past built sound buildings but have not succeeded in implementing the correct management procedures to be used after handover to the owners. The impact

that a larger scheme has on the environment as well as maintaining all the common areas will need a plan from specialists in order for them to work in the future.” He cites the example of the Somerset Country Estate, where homes and gardens are larger and the buyers are generally executives of an average age of 40 with families.

In addition, he said, recommendations from consultants should not merely be submitted with the aim of getting schemes approved but should rather be to enhance and improve the area to which it is being brought.

Construction management plans should be implemented as well as post-construction management guidelines, as these will ensure up-keep of estates.

“The handover process from developer to managing agent to the trustees and owners should always be a transparent one and all parties should be engaged in order to understand the plan – this translates to good management, maintenance and upkeep, which in turn contributes to healthy property values,” said Hassan. ■

Stats SA to report on GDP

The country's seasonally adjusted real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at market prices has increased by an annualised rate of 0.7% in the third quarter of 2015.



The increase comes after the GDP contracted by 1,3% during the second quarter of 2015, according to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). Michael Manamela, Stats SA's Executive Manager for National Accounts, said the main contributors to the increase in economic activity in the third quarter of 2015 was the manufacturing industry (0.8%); finance, real estate and business services (0.6%) and the wholesale, retail and auto

trade, catering and accommodation (0.3%).

Manamela says that negative contributions were recorded by the mining and quarrying industry (-0.8%) and the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry (0.3%).

The estimate of GDP for the first nine months of 2015 increased by 1,5% compared with the corresponding period in 2014.

Joe De Beer, Stats SA's Deputy Director-General for Economic Statistics, said the economy was experiencing a slow gradual recovery. "Most of the contraction in the economy came from the agricultural sector which has been adversely affected by drought conditions."

Meanwhile, Stats SA has announced that as of June 2016, the responsibility for publishing expenditure on GDP will be shifted from the South African Reserve Bank to Stats SA. "However, to finalise processes and to ensure a smooth transition from the Reserve Bank to Stats SA, Stats SA's first statistical release containing expenditure on GDP has been delayed by one quarter." ■

HIFSA and South Point merger

The Competition Commission South Africa has recommended that the proposed merger between the Housing Impact Fund South Africa (HIFSA) and Stay Southpoint Properties Proprietary Limited (SASP), which is owned by South Point

Management Services Proprietary Limited, be approved without conditions.

The Commission has recommended to the Competition Tribunal that the merger proceeds, whereby HIFSA acquires shares in SASP. Post-merger,

HIFSA and SPMS will have joint control of SASP. HIFSA is a financier of development projects for the construction of homes in urban and underdeveloped areas in South Africa. SASP is a property ownership firm focused primarily on student accommodation. ■

Sectional demand – West Rand

Today the landscape on either side of Hendrik Potgieter Road, the main artery linking Roodepoort to the Cradle of Humankind, is dotted with rows of sectional title developments.

Johan van Schalkwyk, Principal of Leapfrog Property says that there are two main reasons for the demand for sectional title properties secure, affordable housing. "With the high crime rate, South Africans have a

greater sense of security when living in a complex. Most of the people in Roodepoort and the surrounding areas prefer sectional title properties with shared building insurance and services as opposed to shouldering the cost alone by buying a freehold property." Van Schalkwyk notes that the property value in areas like Wilgeheuwel have increased by 8% since 2014 and that units typically sell within seven days of being listed. "In the

greater Roodepoort area a one bedroom apartment sells for R300,000 and a two bedroom simplex with a private garden for R700 000."

Buyers under R500 000 struggle to obtain home loans, either because of bad credit records or by being financially over-exposed. However, the market between R700,000 and R1,2 million is experiencing exceptionally high demand but there is a serious shortage of stock. ■

Improved bond success rate



The good news regarding mortgage bond awards is that the banks have shown an increased appetite for this type of lending and have become more competitive in their hunt for mortgage bond applications.

According to John Smyth, Director of Multi NET, South Africa's third largest bond originator with bank direct origination contracts, "Far more applications could be successful if there was an ongoing educational programme clarifying the criteria, which has to be met in order to obtain a mortgage bond. Our experience shows quite clearly that ignorance of how the system works is the main reason that prevents many people from qualifying for bonds. This lack of knowledge is apparent across all income groups."

Recapping on the criteria which banks take into account when considering mortgage loans, Smyth said that the first is straight forward affordability: does the applicant earn enough to be able to meet his monthly bond repayments – the banks will insist on the applicant's income being sufficient to allow him comfortably to pay 30% of his monthly salary on the bond.

The second criterion is the level of debt the applicant has already incurred. Quite often, said Smyth, the applicant's income may be sufficient to comply with the 30% ruling but he will then be rejected because his 'net disposable income' is found to be inadequate. He may well have committed himself to a range of other monthly expenses (on anything from

educational fees to cars, clothing, holidays, etc.) and these combined may stretch his net disposable income to the upper limits.

Thirdly, said Smyth, he may be rejected because he has defaulted on previous payment commitments, e.g. on hire purchase accounts. In South Africa the credit bureaux are kept informed of these lapses in payment and, unless reparation has been made, they are likely to be seen as indicating that the applicant is a poor credit risk.

The obstacles in the way of a successful loan described could be reduced if the financial institutions were to take on the task of educating potential borrowers on the whole subject of mortgage bonds and on how to budget.

"It is often said that during the 2002 to 2007 boom years, South Africans, especially those new to middle class status, were encouraged by too easy credit to be spendthrift. However since the introduction of the National Credit Act, that trend has been very definitely restrained. Today, we believe it is the continually rising cost of living – on food, education, electricity, services and petrol -which is preventing people from becoming home owners." Quite often by the time Multi NET meet the applicant he is already in no position to qualify for a loan – and

re-educating him on budgeting can take considerable time.

Nevertheless, said Smyth, it is a proven fact that those who consult an independent bond originator have a 20% to 30% better chance of getting a bond compared to applicants who deal with only one bank. Bond originators generally achieve a higher hit rate but also better terms and conditions for their clients.

Multi NET has an average success rate of 65% on bond applications and they foresee this figure improving in the year ahead. ■



SOLID RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

The Residential Property Economy data still shows a solid well balanced residential market, despite signs of a severe economic weakness.

According to John Loos, Household and Property Sector Strategist FNB Home Loans, in recent months house price inflation has risen from 5% in April to 7.2% by November. “We estimate property transactions volumes have also experienced a growth, with registrations at the Deeds Office accelerating from negative year-on-year growth rates of -10% early in 2015 to positive levels slightly above +10% by around mid-year.”

FNB’s Valuers have also signalled the possibility of transaction growth and house price inflation. Loos says the recent growth is due to the lagged response to economic developments late in 2014 and early this year. FNB Valuers Market Strength Index measures the difference between Demand and Supply Rating Indices, which still showed mild strengthening. But it is the pace of that strengthening that has been slowing, and on a month-on-month basis they have begun to perceive a recent decline in demand.

Real year-on-year GDP growth slowed to a poor 1% in the 3rd quarter, and both the South African Reserve Bank and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Leading Indicators for South Africa have picked up downward speed in their year-on-year rates of decline, suggesting more economic weakening to come in the near term.

“The real shocker was November’s Manufacturing Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI), which dropped to its lowest level in about six years, pointing to significant contraction in output. With the global economy remaining mediocre, and various commodity prices low, it is difficult to see anything other than contraction for the export-driven sectors such as mining and manufacturing, and this will ultimately be felt by the rest of the economy.”

Considerable leads and lags are a feature in this economy. So for the time being, the Household Sector appears only to have got as far as

experiencing mounting “financial limits”, imposed by slowing income growth in a slowing growth economy. This is perhaps reflected in broadly slowing retail sales growth, most notably in the vehicle retail sector, but in September’s data also in a mildly slower mainstream retail growth rate.

But the Household Sector doesn’t yet appear to have got to the next stage of ‘financial stress’. Insolvencies data for September continued to show significant year-on-year decline.

With a lack of financial stress perhaps it isn’t surprising that the residential market continues to look in fairly good shape.

With interest rates rising, a third affordability ratio, namely the Instalment Value on the Average Priced House/Average Rental Ratio also continues to rise. But this ratio remains relatively low, because despite interest rates having risen mildly since early-2014, they still remain near multi-decade lows.

Loos concludes, “We will have to wait for the renewed slowdown in the various forms of growth in the residential market. Recession risk is high. With global commodity price weakness and thus low inflationary pressures continuing, we may be fortunate in that the SARB could continue to hike interest rates at a snails’ pace, softening the landing. But it is probably unrealistic to expect the residential market to defy the strengthening forces of economic gravity.” ■



Azure on the Bay

Azure on the Bay at Big Bay on the west coast of Cape Town is due for completion by May 2016. The well positioned residential development will offer 83 apartments, with most sold already, according to Shiraaz Hassan, Asrin Commercial Director.

Pam Golding Properties are positive that they will achieve full sell out of the units by the end of February 2016. Hassan says, "In terms of timing and placement of this development, we feel that these units have been well received because there is a scarcity of beachfront units."

He adds, "Buyers in the scheme have been attracted by the richly landscaped, sheltered communal courtyard area with pool," he said. In addition, being close to the ocean and a stone's throw from the Eden on the Bay retail centre, allows the



discerning investor to enjoy the best that the West Coast has to offer without having to drive anywhere. This has enhanced the investment appeal of Azure.

Hassan says, "The Big Bay Waterfront is definitely set apart from many others when it comes to offerings within walking distance. Those who live here have many world-class restaurants on their doorstep as well as convenience stores and a good selection of boutique stores."

The beach is a popular spot for many and becomes a hive of activity, particularly in the holiday season. "It

offers pretty much all the lifestyle attractions that the Atlantic Seaboard does, at a fraction of the price, and without the frustration of a shortage of parking or congested open spaces," says Hassan.

The design of the building has been well-conceived, with its single basement parking area allowing direct access to units via a lift, and view corridors strategically placed so that each unit enjoys a view of either Table Bay, the courtyard or the sea.

"Many of the units have already gained 11% in value since the launch," concludes Hassan. ■



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Local entrepreneurs and developers could benefit from some of the technologies that the American company use. The Zero Net Energy building will integrate renewable energy systems, environmentally-friendly materials and leading-edge products in a home that is functional and energy-independent. This includes using both solar and geothermal technologies to produce as much energy as it consumes over the course of a year.

“We conceived River Vine as a demonstrable solution that incorporates modern design, advanced technology and modular building science within a sustainable footprint that meets multifunctional needs,” said Tony Sarich, Owner of River Vine and co-founder of AMS and Gen7 Schools. “Our goal is to maximise the building’s performance, while streamlining the process to make a complex home simple and user-friendly for those who live in it.”

River Vine will be fully automated, using the latest smart home technology to provide greater convenience, as well as greater efficiency through goal-directed management of the home’s renewable energy systems. All systems, appliances and electrical components will be networked for centralised control from a single touchpoint.

To build River Vine, AMS created a partnership with forward-thinking companies, whose innovative green

Designed to achieve LEED Platinum certification, River Vine will be one of most advanced, prefabricated residences ever constructed. A state-of-the-art smart home that will take sustainable prefabricated design and construction to the next level.



products will be creatively combined to make River Vine an inspirational building that paves the way for more sustainable building and living.

River Vine Project Partners include AEP Span, ASC Steel Deck, Solatube, USG, Heliodyne, Tech Lighting, ELEMENT, Aquatherm, Crossville, Inc. and Ductmate Industries, with more companies expected to join the partnership as building progresses.

Designed as a concept home, River Vine gives AMS a way to bring market-ready ideas and progressive building practices together in an optimised environment that can be

life-tested through everyday use, then replicated in future buildings. “What we learn from River Vine can be applied to new Gen7 classrooms, redefining the way we design, use and control our living, learning and working space,” said Sarich. “We’re building more than a home; we’re building the future.”

Established in 1983, American Modular Systems is one of the leading modular manufacturers, designing and building quality commercial and educational facilities. For more information, visit River Vine’s website at www.amsbuildingthefuture.com or RiverVine@americanmodular.com ■



EVERGREEN BROADACRES

The leading national retirement lifestyle residential brand, Evergreen, a division of the Amdec Group, a privately-owned property development and investment business, has been recognised as South Africa's leading developer of New Urban lifestyles.

Responding to demand, this new phase of development within the well-established country estate was launched recently and will see a further 47 spacious and pet-friendly homes added to the suitably priced and perfectly positioned 83 residences already situated throughout the two hectare green belt.

Amdec's Development Director for Evergreen Broadacres, Cobus Bedeker says: "New residents will be able to enjoy quality retirement living, complete with all the facilities associated with the leading Evergreen lifestyle."

Located 3km north of Fourways, Evergreen Broadacres is in close proximity to William Nicol Drive, Witkoppen and Cedar Roads. A sought after location situated near the Life Fourways Hospital, Lanseria International airport and many leading shopping centres. Evergreen Broadacres is one of the country's most desirable retirement living estates.

The village boasts a lifestyle centre with facilities that include a bistro, TV

Evergreen Lifestyles will introduce new ready-to-move-in homes in the much sought-after Gauteng-based village, Evergreen Broadacres, by January 2016.

and open plan lounge, bar and entertainment area, as well as a heated pool, modern gym and fully equipped healthcare centre. Security and convenience have been taken into account in every step of the planning, with the personal safety of residents in mind.

The entire village also benefits from generator back-up power, which not only provides power to the lifestyle centre, but all security infrastructure and even the street lights.

Bedeker adds: "We have created a space where individuals can be involved in community activities while at the same time retaining their privacy and sense of individuality. Our residents enjoy all the comforts of living privately and independently in a home of their own, with the added benefit of being able to 'lock-up and go' whenever they choose".

While current residents take full advantage of the superb facilities, interactive clubs and social events on offer, Evergreen Broadacres strives to provide a supportive environment that both nurtures community spirit and maintains the privacy of those who call Evergreen Broadacres home.

Providing retirement living at its best, Evergreen's integrated approach to healthcare caters for the changing needs of their community. Amdec's impressive property portfolio includes the iconic Melrose Arch in Johannesburg, as well as numerous commercial, residential and mixed-use developments throughout the country.

With six retirement villages located across the country and more planned, Evergreen Lifestyles boasts a reputation for building and managing these exceptional estates. This, alongside their practice of employing caring and experienced staff, has resulted in international accolades for Best Retirement Development in South Africa and Africa.

Bedeker says: "Evergreen Lifestyles has built its reputation through the hard work of our experienced design, development, building and management teams. The high demand for property in Evergreen Broadacres, and its subsequent growth and development since the first phase, only serves to prove our success in delivering a world class lifestyle estate." ■





AFFORDABILITY AS RENTALS ESCALATE

This is still not sufficient to meet the surging demand. Rental vacancy rates are now at their lowest point since 1985 and inflation-adjusted rents are rising 3,5% annually.

With US household incomes stagnant, last year was another record-setting year in the number of renters paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs. According to the 2015 report on rental housing, “While lower-income households are most likely to experience these cost burdens, the report finds that rental cost burdens increasingly afflict even moderate-income householders.

The report, *America’s Rental Housing: Expanding Options for Diverse and Growing Demand*, finds that 43 million families and individuals live in rental housing, an increase of nearly 9 million householders since 2005. This is the largest gain of any 10-year period on record. And the share of all US household rentals rose from between 31% to 37%, the highest level since the mid-1960s. While the supply of rental housing has increased, primarily through conversion of formerly owner-occupied units and, to a lesser extent, new construction, rental demand has increased even faster. Rising demand has put upward pressure on rents and reduced vacancies; meanwhile, new additions to the rental market have primarily added units with above-median rents.

These trends in rental markets, along with a 9% decline in household income since 2001, have pushed the

Harvard’s Joint Centre for Housing Studies has released the *Biennial Rental Housing Report* showing multi-family housing construction has accelerated to its fastest pace in nearly 30 years.

number of cost-burdened tenants (paying more than 30 percent of income for housing) up from 1,8 million in 2001 to 21,3 million in 2014.

Even worse, the number of these households that are severely burdened (paying more than half their income for housing) increased from 7,5 million to 11,4 million. Overall, 49% of tenants are struggling with 26% severely challenged.

“Record-setting demand for rental housing due to demographic trends, the residual consequences of the foreclosure crisis, and an increased appreciation of the benefits of being a renter has led to strong growth in the supply of rental housing over the past decade, both through new construction and the conversion of formerly owner-occupied homes to rentals,” said Chris Herbert, Managing Director of the Joint Centre For Housing Studies at Harvard. “Yet the crisis in the number of renters paying excessive amounts of their income for housing continues. The market has been unable to meet the need for housing that is within the financial reach of many families with lower incomes. These affordability challenges are also affecting moderate-income households.”

The United States Housing Policy is not addressing affordability

challenges. Herbert said: “The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit programme remains critical to addressing both production and preservation of affordable rentals but it cannot address all the problems.”

“Rental housing in America is a tale of two markets, where upper-income renters are finding a healthier supply of housing choices and landlords and private sector investors are benefiting from higher rentals, but too many families earning less are having to make trade-offs between putting a roof over their heads and food on the table. These negative trends are poised to go from bad to worse, as the most cost-burdened populations – minorities and the elderly – grow, and incomes continue to grow more slowly than rental costs.”

“More families are renting and too many of them are struggling as supply fails to meet demand and stagnant incomes fail to keep up with rising rents,” said Julia Stasch, President of the John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation. The organisation has invested more than US\$300 million to preserve and expand affordable housing and support more balanced housing policies. “The affordability of rental housing is a critical national issue that deserves more attention and more action from policymakers.” ■



SEA VIEWS

The City of Cape Town Executive Mayor, Patricia de Lille, says that the Integrated Development Plan for Hangberg has finally come together.

Speaking at the handover of apartments to beneficiaries at the Sea Views Development, she told media, “We have all walked a very long way to reach this historic milestone. Right from the beginning, we had to contend with many differences and difficulties. We have had to stand firm in the face of numerous detractors.”

After years of strained relations and a complete breakdown of trust between the community and government, the city and Hangberg residents came together to sign the Hangberg Peace Accord, which was an order of the court. “And, to establish the Peace and Mediation Forum,” says de Lille.

The Sea Views project is now a Hangberg success story.

She goes on to explain, “It is testament to what is possible when we see challenges as an opportunity to work together and unify around our common goals. A working relationship of mutual respect and consideration



had to be the real foundation of any development here. We can all share in a sense of accomplishment, and take pride in making good on the commitments of the Peace Accord.” To the beneficiaries, she added, “Welcome to your new homes. The families have a safe living space to call their own.” This includes a landscaped environment and play areas for the children.

“In line with our approach to prioritise transit-oriented development, this complex is situated in close proximity to employment, key transport routes, social amenities and schools. We are not only committed to rebuilding this community, but also to giving you the opportunities to rebuild your lives.”

The remaining units at Sea Views

are due for completion by April 2016.

“I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the Project Steering Committee for their work in recommending the source areas for the housing projects. The beautiful mosaic mural on the surrounding wall at Sea Views creates a memorable visual impression. I believe that this artwork symbolises what we have achieved here. We have taken many separate pieces and put them together to create one cohesive and integrated entity. Many fragmented opinions and ideas have come together in pursuit of a shared goal, which we have now achieved together,” says de Lille.

She concluded, “This is the beginning of a new chapter here in Hangberg.” ■

CONSTRUCTION CHALLENGES



Andries Rossouw

South Africa's construction industry faced a challenging year in 2015, marred by industrial action, substantial delays on projects, as well as questions raised around safety concerns on structural projects.

Last year proved to be a tough one for most construction companies with lower revenue and profit margins, according to Andries Rossouw, PwC Assurance Partner.

The quality assurance, advisory and tax services network specialist PwC highlights some of the trends in the construction sector in its third edition of SA Construction. The findings are based on the financial results of the leading construction companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) for financial year ending June 2015.

The construction industry is cyclical in nature and the cycle is not in its favour at present. The 2015 financial year saw a decline in market capitalisation and financial performance. Eight of the nine companies reflected a decrease in market capitalisation. In aggregate for the nine companies analysed, market capitalisation decreased by 38% to R25.9bn as at 30 June 2015 (R41,6bn as at 30 June 2014).

From 30 June to 31 October 2015, the nine companies analysed showed a further 9% decline.

The South African Government's ongoing National Development Plan and its continued commitment to public infrastructure investment of R810 billion over the next few years are still positive signs for future growth, although this value has decreased in previous years. Government construction expenditure

in 2014 was R18,6 billion below the 2013 forecast. This decrease in anticipated expenditure underlines the challenges experienced by the industry. With the announcement that the Commonwealth Games of 2022, which will be held in Durban, the public sector is bound to invest in infrastructure. "To date we are not aware of how much will be spent," adds Rossouw.

This is the first time in five years that the secured order book decreased (4%) on the prior year. The secured order book covers 1.3 times current-year-revenue, in line with the prior year as the lower order book was mirrored by lower revenue.

Total revenue decreased by 7% to R129,3 billion on the prior year mainly as a result of a decrease of R8,6 billion from Aveng, a R5,4 billion decrease from Murray & Roberts and R1,6 billion from Group Five, partially offset by an increase of R300 from WBHO and a R1,4 billion increase by Stefannutti Stocks. The decreases were largely as a result of the weaker economy, in particular for commodity markets with a notable decrease in revenue from oil and gas projects.

Total operating costs decreased by 5% in response to lower revenue. Staff costs continue to represent a significant component of operating costs constituting 29% of total operating costs (2014:28%).

Cash generated from operations increased by 2% on last year from

R4,3bn to R4,4bn. Solvency and liquidity ratios continue to remain reasonably strong and remain in line with the previous year at 1.6 and 1.3 respectively. With the downturn in the global economy and harsher local operating conditions, risk management continues to be a vital component of effective management in the South African construction industry. In order to remain sustainable during this difficult period, companies need to be proactive towards potential risks in order to compete.

The common risks identified by construction companies include monitoring and compliance with the B-BBEE codes; industrial unrest; talent management and the retention of staff; growth and expansion within the industry; project execution; liquidity risk; health, safety and environmental sustainability; legislative and regulatory compliance; tender risk; and credit risk management.

The construction industry adds significant value to South Africa and its people. According to Stats SA, more than 1,4 million people are employed by the construction industry, either on a contract basis or permanently.

Rossouw concludes: "The South African construction industry is well placed to cope with new growth requirements as well as take on large scale projects.

But it will need to manage short-term liquidity requirements." ■

City shows art at MyCiTi stations

Transport for Cape Town (TCT), the City of Cape Town's transport authority, is in the process of commissioning and installing artworks at all of the 42 MyCiTi stations across the city.

City Mayoral Committee Member: Transport for Cape Town, Brett Herron says, 'We have used this as an opportunity to showcase the talent of our local artists. The images on the walls at the MyCiTi station in Adderley Street were reproduced onto ceramic tiles by the renowned Cape Town potter, Mervyn Gers.

The images capture the vibrancy of Adderley Street, at a time when public transport was still in its infancy. It is a befitting ode to this site, located at the heart of Cape Town's central business district," says Herron.

Adderley Street has been the axis of movement in the city for nearly 360 years.

The theme of movement and public transport is reflected on the images selected by the MyCiTi Artwork Selection Committee. The committee includes officials from TCT, ARG Design architects and Educentric, an art curating company.

The work was commissioned in 2015. Initially, the best quality images had to be procured and were graphically translated before the potter was able to reproduce the images onto ceramic tiles at his studio in Paarden Eiland. The tiles were then installed at the MyCiTi station in Adderley Street.

Four black-and-white photos were selected depicting people from all



walks of life in transit around the Cape Town central business district from as early as 1895 to the 1940s.

Images illustrate life in Adderley Street in 1895, some decades before the arrival of motor vehicles. Trams are zigzagging, people are strolling on sidewalks and horse-carriages are used for transporting goods.

A picture of a tram car and driver steering the Cape Town Tramway in 1896 was chosen. An image portraying 'traffic' in Adderley Street in the 1930s with trams, people and a single motorcar is set around the harbour, with Table Mountain in the background.

Rush hour in Hanover Street in the 1940s show men and women fighting for space on a moving tram.

"The images illustrate the one certainty that every city around the globe faces: constant change. As our cities expand with more people and bigger economies, we have to adapt to the growing demand for public transport and use new technologies. Now, nearly 360 years since horse-carriages moved people and goods between the harbour and town, commuters from the 21st century step into the MyCiTi station, surrounded by art, which reminds us of our history," says Herron.

The murals at the MyCiTi station in Atlantis were created by world-famous artist, Faith47 – a self-taught graffiti artist from Cape Town, who paints her ideas on old cars, factory buildings, under bridges and on walls.

Artist Julia Anastasopoulos designed the illustrations at the Civic

Centre station; Zwelethu Machepha created the artwork at the Usasaza MyCiTi station; Thami Mbenekazi created works at the Killarney station; and the Cape Town-based multimedia designer Ofentse Letebele (aka King Debs) produced the multi-coloured faces along the walls of the MyCiTi station in Dunoon, amongst others.

At the MyCiTi station in Mitchells Plain there is a collaborative effort between five artists, Conform, Ice7, Rayzer, Drone and Mak1One. Four of them live in Mitchells Plain and the fifth is from Heideveld.

The MyCiTi art project derives from similar art projects along metropolitan subway systems around the world such as in New York, London and Moscow and the public transport system in Sao Paulo.

Educentric, a specialist art curating company, has been commissioned by the City to facilitate a public process for the procurement of original artworks for the MyCiTi stations.

Design proposals are solicited through a public tender process from designers and artists from Cape Town.

The designs are then tailored in accordance with the station layout, history, culture, etc. in consultation with the City and selected in terms of local identity and creativity.

"The purpose of the art is to connect the commuters to the physical location, to rouse their interest in the surroundings, and to enhance their experience of the MyCiTi service," says Herron. ■



BATHROOM TRENDS FOR 2016

There are still the usual suspects – a bath, toilet, basin, shower – but they have been adapted to the current changes in technology and the demands of modern living. Interesting textures and decorative elements are also being introduced to add a sense of warmth and create a space to linger longer in. Jasmin Kraneveldt, from leading sanitaryware and tiling retailer Bathroom Bizarre, delves into bathroom trends that will be taking centre stage in 2016.

Modern rustic

One of the major bathroom trends for 2016 is the incorporation of rustic

elements to warm up slick modern designs.

“It’s all about interesting patterns, humble natural materials, and rich contrasting textures. When combined, these elements work together to add welcoming personality to the calming earthy tones that are synonymous with the modern rustic look,” explains Kraneveldt.

She suggests ways to incorporate this trend in the bathroom:

- Update the sink area by installing a timber pedestal such as the Siena bathroom vanity in Oak for example, juxtaposed against the modern clean lines of a simple white basin and chrome mixer.



Bathrooms are not what they used to be. Gone are the days when a bathroom was merely a space to wash away dirt and grime. Today, the bathroom has had a massive re-think, making the shift to a watery relaxation zone that holds equal importance compared to other rooms in the home.

- Textured tiles are a great way of subtly introducing natural elements into the bathroom. EXA tiles for example, boast an organically-inspired hexagonal relief that are reminiscent of sea urchins.
- Accessorise with authentic objects collected on travels. A hand-carved African stool for example, can be the perfect place to house a scented candle and therapeutic salts next to an ultra-slick freestanding bath.

A room in its own right

Bathrooms are hard-working multi-tasking spaces that need to serve both functional and pleasurable

requirements. Today, bathrooms incorporate the latest high-tech fixtures and fittings, blended seamlessly with decorative accessories that complement the overall look. Necessary items such as a bin, bathmat or laundry basket are being given more careful thought, says Jasmin. "We are seeing increasingly more people replacing their cheaper plastic bathroom accessories with ones that have a more luxurious finish, complementing the space rather than detracting from it. Think chrome toilet brush holders, hand-woven baskets for laundry and embellished mirrors."

Kraneveldt points out that other big-ticket items, such as chandeliers

and artwork for example, that were normally reserved for well-appointed living areas, are now also being incorporated into the bathroom. "Every good interior designer knows that a well-designed room starts with a neutral palette as the foundation. It is then layered with well-considered furniture and accessories, and finished off with a showpiece that takes centre stage." She believes that nowadays the bathroom is being designed with a similar formula in mind to create a room that is equally as aesthetically pleasing as the rest of the home. Make a statement in your bathroom by incorporating items that create a sense of luxury, such as the Pen281 polished chrome pendant light with silver shade, or the Doreen Mirror.

In with the old and the new

There is no doubt that bathrooms are going to continue to evolve in the coming years as technology advances. Slim sanitary ware for example, is becoming a staple feature in most bathrooms. Super thin baths and basins that were once unheard of, are now a reality thanks to developments in the way items are designed and moulded. Homeowners can now enjoy sanitary ware that boasts elegantly refined contours without compromising on strength. The new imported ultra thin range includes generous freestanding baths, such as the Fleur bath and the ultra-thin Kai counter-mount basin.

But sometimes, moving forward also means looking to the past for inspiration. "We are noticing that vintage-inspired silhouettes are making a huge comeback in bathroom design, such as the scrolled detail on the Montreal free-standing bath and feet. But the truth is that this elegant look never really went out of style." Look out for traditional pedestal basins, Messina basin and matching pedestal, and roll top ball and claw baths for example, which epitomise this classic revival. For further information go to www.bathroom.co.za ■

Listed property fund goes solar



Ascension Properties has commissioned Voltas Technologies and Tritec SA to install a 140 kWp solar plant on its Island Centre complex in Paarden Eiland, Cape Town.

Ascension Properties, a JSE listed property income fund, has gone green with its first solar PV installation in Cape Town, underpinning a move in the property sector to show eco-awareness and reap the financial rewards of green energy over the long term.

The choice was made to use the embedded generation scheme available in Cape Town which will enable the solar installation to feed any surplus electricity, produced by the PV system, back into the municipal electrical grid.

The move reinforces Ascension's commitment towards sustainability and environmental awareness amid increasing electricity grid instability

and rising electricity costs. Newly appointed CEO of Ascension, Kameel Keshav said: "With Ascension's strong focus on government tenants, we felt it necessary to not only show our commitment to sustainable energy solutions which ease the strain on the national energy grid, but also towards solutions which will bring in healthy returns on investment – for us as well as for our tenants.

"As the price of electricity increases, having alternative and green-focused solutions in place will help reduce overheads. This is a trend which is increasingly becoming recognised throughout the property sector in South Africa."

The project will result in a

minimum yearly avoidance of 230 tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

The solar plant comprises of 450 modules totalling 140 kWp, with the rooftop mounted system providing around 235 MWh in the first year, representing around 28% of the electrical consumption of the building.

Solar photovoltaic is simultaneously a very reliable, cost-effective and clean technology, said Cristian Cernat, Director of Tritec South Africa and Voltas Technologies.

"We designed this project from an owner's perspective; optimising the yield and the financial returns of the project over its 25 years lifetime," said Cernat.

Rooftop PV solar plants have become a sound investment for many commercial and industrial buildings with the levelized cost of solar energy being lower than the typical purchasing cost of electricity. Over the next 20 years he said that such projects decreased the energy operation costs of buildings and added overall value to the properties.

"Furthermore, in the context of high increases of electricity tariffs, the price of solar electricity is basically fixed after installation. This means low operational costs, thus allowing for more predictable and stable energy operation costs in the coming years, added Cernat.

Installation commenced in November and is due for completion early January 2016. ■

Corruption in Eskom contracts mounts

There is further evidence of large-scale corruption in the tender process with the ANC and its investment wing, Chancellor House, according to Democratic Alliance Shadow Minister of Public Enterprises, Natasha Mazzone. The AfDB did not provide details of the allegations, but found that Hitachi 'engaged in sanctionable practices in order to be awarded the boiler works contract'.

This follows a similar agreement in September by Hitachi to pay US\$19 million to settle charges brought against them by the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), who alleged that Hitachi had paid 'success fees' to the African National Congress' Chancellor House for

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has announced that a settlement has been reached with Hitachi over allegations of corruption in the awarding of the Medupi contracts by Eskom.

'exerting influence' during the Eskom tender process.

"The DA has requested a full investigation into the awarding of contracts to Hitachi by Eskom. The mounting evidence of political interference by the ANC in the tender process can no longer be ignored," says Mazzone. The ANC's Chancellor House allied with Hitachi in 2005 in a deal that saw the company purchase a 25% stake in Hitachi for only R1 million. Under the agreement, Chancellor House – and by extension the ANC – would share in the profits

from contracts awarded to Hitachi.

Subsequent to concluding this deal, Hitachi was awarded a R38.5 billion contract by Eskom in 2007 to construct boilers at Medupi.

The Public Protector previously investigated the matter at the behest of former DA leader, Helen Zille, and found there to be a clear conflict of interest given that Valli Moosa, the then Eskom chairperson, was also a member of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC. Given the SEC and AfDB developments the matter is worthy of renewed scrutiny.

Building right the first time

All measures should be taken by government to ensure specifiers and engineers insist on quality assured building products.

All products should be sourced from reputable suppliers belonging to regulated, accredited industry organisations in order to avoid costly rebuilds of sub-standard housing and infrastructure projects, according to Johan van Wyk, General Manager of the Southern African Readymix Association (Sarma).

He says that government's repair bill for poorly built low cost houses and infrastructure peaked at several billion recently. As a result the time has come for government and private contractors to put a premium on quality and to procure materials only from organisations that can display credentials that are in keeping with the overall requirements to produce quality structures. In this way all government departments, from municipalities to provincial and national government, can be assured that requirements are being met in terms of quality and sustainability.

"Sarma members, for example, are compelled to adhere to a number of key criteria governing the manufacturing of concrete to ensure that customers get what they pay for. It also proactively seeks to ensure that the highest quality products are delivered by its members on a consistent basis. A good example is the association's world class quality management system (QMS) that was



developed specifically for the readymix industry."

The QMS is world-class and sets certain minimum standards for the manufacture of readymix concrete, from supplier management to policies and procedures to final delivery of the mixed product. Verification is required along the way and accountability is assigned at each step of the process. Annual audits are also undertaken to ensure that Sarma members adhere to the association's set codes of conduct.

"It is understandable that officials and procurement officers within organisations may not always be aware of the intricacies involved in manufacturing certain goods. Readymix concrete, like many other products, needs to be made according to a careful recipe and by cutting costs or substituting certain ingredients with inferior products, the end result can

turn out to be a complete failure," says van Wyk. He says that while wet concrete may look the same and be delivered in the right consistency, it may have completely different end characteristics that are unsuitable for the purpose it was meant for. If corners are cut to save costs and win a tender, it is the end-user that pays the price for poor quality. Fly-by-night operators most commonly substitute quality cement with inferior product, add excessive extenders, use low quality, illegally obtained sand and aggregates or add too much water to the mix to make it easily pourable.

"When one considers that concrete is the single most important ingredient for foundations, columns, walls, roads etc it is clear that if the recipe is wrong - it is a recipe for disaster," concludes van Wyk. For further information contact Sarma on +27 11 791 3327, or go to www.sarma.co.za ■

Marley takes over gypsum business

Marley Building Systems, which forms part of Etex the Belgian based industrial group specialising in cladding and building boards in fibre cement, has announced the finalisation of the acquisition of the South African Gypsum business of Lafarge.

With the growing population in Southern Africa, the group's recent acquisition will create a unique and competitive offering that capitalises on construction trends in South Africa.

Etex aims to achieve higher operational excellence and service quality combined with a more streamlined structure in the region.

This acquisition is in line with Etex's vision of strengthening its position by investing in Southern Africa. Marley Building Systems will combine the expertise of various support functions such as marketing, sales and customer service.

Etex aims to strengthen its position in Africa, with the Southern African region and Nigeria as the company's main drivers of growth. Demand for housing in the region has been on the rise for years. To put this into perspective: South Africa already accounts for 15% of Africa's GDP.

In addition, the Southern African market is becoming increasingly regulated. Various quality standards are

being adopted, with recent examples like SANS 204 for Energy Efficiency in Buildings and SANS 517 for Light Steel Frame Building. Consequently, alternative building methods, such as dry construction, are gradually replacing traditional construction.

The Belgian industrial group specialises in manufacturing and marketing building materials, roofing, passive fire protection and high performance insulation as well as ceramic floor and wall tiles.

For more information please visit www.etexgroup.com or contact Sean Singh, Marketing & Business Development Manager on 011 316 2121 or email sean.singh@marley.co.za ■



Concrete strip roads – ideal for rural areas

Perrie says concrete strip roads, laid as wheel tracks, are economic and durable and particularly suitable as farm roads or roads in rural areas. “They can be of invaluable use to the agricultural sector as well as communities living in outlying rural areas,”

He says although concrete strip roads have proved themselves in many countries, the South African government as well as private landowners have not yet fully realised the advantages, or fully utilised, concrete strip roads. These roads are a useful means of making steep rural farm roads passable in all weather conditions.

“Strip roads are widely used in SANParks resorts such as the Mountain Zebra National Park near Cradock, KZN Wildlife Ezemvelo resorts

South Africa has yet to fully discover and utilise the benefits of concrete strip roads says Bryan Perrie, Managing Director of The Concrete Institute.

in the Drakensberg and the iSimangaliso Wetland Park at St Lucia.” Perrie consulted on the construction of the Pezula strip roads in Knysna on the Garden Route.

“Strip roads can be built without expensive or sophisticated equipment and by comparatively unskilled labour that has received just basic instruction. No reinforcement of the concrete is necessary. Furthermore, laying the strip roads can be done in short lengths, so the construction can be slotted in when labour and time are available.

“The strip roads can be made relatively skid-resistant simply by

wood floating the concrete as a final operation. For a strong skid-resistant finish, the concrete can be broomed transversely to the direction of traffic to produce a multitude of fine grooves across it. Light cars and LDVs can, under normal circumstances, use new concrete strip roads after three days of curing, and trucks of 1,5 ton capacity after 7 days of curing.”

The Concrete Institute offers a booklet on Concrete Strip Roads free of charge. For further information contact 011-315 0300 or email info@theconcreteinstitute.org.za for a free copy, or download it from the website on www.theconcreteinstitute.org.za

New law to curb infrastructure related crimes

President Jacob Zuma has signed into law the Criminal Matters Amendment Act, which will help to curb infrastructure-related crimes. The Act amends the Criminal Procedure

Act of 1977. It will see the introduction of harsher sentences for the destruction of essential infrastructure and more stringent bail conditions and applications for perpetrators.

The amendments provide for changes to the law pertaining to infrastructure-related offences by making stricter provisions for the

granting of bail, the sentencing of offenders and creating a new offence to criminalise damage to, tampering with or destruction of essential infrastructure, which may interfere with the provision of basic services to the public.

The Act also aims to create a new offence relating to essential infrastructure, as well as amend the Prevention of Organised Crime Act, 1998.

President Zuma also signed into law the Disaster Management Amendment Act, 2015, which aims to clarify the policy focus on

“rehabilitation and functioning of disaster management centres. This will align the functions of the National Disaster Management Advisory Forum to accommodate the South African National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. It will also provide for the South African National Defence Force, South African Police Service and any other State entity to assist the disaster management structures, strengthen the disaster risk reporting system in order to improve the country’s ability to manage potential disasters. ■

THE RETURN OF VINYL

Vinyl flooring, a synthetic counterpart of linoleum, is water- and stain-resistant, versatile, durable and has become a major flooring trendsetter, especially in wet areas in the home.

Vinyl flooring was first invented in the 1930s, and it remains a popular option today due to a variety of desirable characteristics – the main ones being the fact that it is water-resistant, durable, easily maintained, warm underfoot and cost effective. According to Kyle Turner from leading sanitary ware and flooring supplier Bathroom Bizarre, vinyl flooring offers many benefits.

Moisture resistance: Vinyl flooring is entirely waterproof, so it can be used virtually anywhere inside the home. It is especially suited to wet areas, where water often ends up on the floor, such as bathrooms, kitchens and laundries.

Aesthetic versatility: Vinyl flooring is available in an incredibly wide range of colours and patterns to suit virtually any décor style. “The most popular types of vinyl designs are those that simulate natural materials, such as timber and natural stone for example. Faux timber vinyl flooring is especially popular - it is available in planks, similar to genuine wooden floorboards, and looks like genuine timber floors when laid. This allows homeowners to enjoy the look of natural timber in wet areas, without running the risk of warping and flaking,” says Turner.

Quick and easy installation: Vinyl flooring is available in sheets, tiles and planks and is easy to install. Sheet flooring needs to be glued down, and the tiles come with a “peel-and-stick” backing, so it is a matter of laying evenly and neatly. Vinyl planks on the other hand, are laid much the same way as laminate flooring – a tongue-and-groove profile that simply clicks together. “The key to successfully installing vinyl flooring lies beneath the floor itself – vinyl flooring requires an extremely smooth surface, as any flaws or imperfections will show through as bumps and indentations eventually. Vinyl flooring is best laid on top of a layer of well-sanded plywood or smooth concrete screed.”

Durability: Vinyl flooring is generally considered to be a durable flooring option. All the vinyl flooring offered by Bathroom Bizarre is of the

highest quality and boasts a 0,5mm wear layer, making it suitable for high traffic areas in both commercial and residential applications.”

Hygienic and stain-resistant: To keep vinyl flooring looking as good as new, ensure that all grit and dirt are regularly swept or vacuumed away. Clean with a damp mop and vinyl-approved cleaner where required. The top layer coating on vinyl acts as a surface barrier, protecting the floor from stains and spills.

Underfoot comfort: Vinyl flooring does not get cold, even during the winter months, making it a great option for traditionally cold areas in the home. It is a resilient flooring, which means that its soft texture provides a little bit of ‘give’ when walking on it, especially if it has been laid with a foam-type combilay underlay underneath. “The underlay is designed to even out uneven subfloors, better

insulate the flooring, and provides resistance to mildew and moisture. It has the added bonus of adding a bit of spring to the flooring and enabling better soundproofing as well,” concludes Turner. ■





THE RIGHT FRAME OF MIND

Gone are the days when windows were selected for their aesthetic appeal. With the ever increasing cost of electricity, developers and builders are looking for ways to minimise the cost of heating and cooling homes.

Cobus Lourens from leading window and door manufacturer, Swartland says: “Windows provide homes with light, warmth and ventilation, but they can also negatively impact on a home’s energy efficiency. Choosing energy efficient windows can go a long way to reducing your monthly utility bills. Swartland has a few solutions in their range that will certainly make the difference.”

The Frame

There is a variety of materials currently on the market, including vinyl, steel, aluminium and wood – all have positive and negative aspects. Two of the most popular materials for energy efficient window frames include wood and aluminium. Timber windows, such as Swartland’s timber window frames for example, offer the best insulation value and the highest cradle-to-grave environmentally friendly credentials, and

are low maintenance. Aluminium windows, such as Swartland’s Kenzo range for example, may not be the top performing material in terms of heat transfer and loss, however, aluminium is a strong material that does not require much maintenance. Also, remember that choice of glazing will affect the overall energy performance of the window.

The Glazing

Generally, the more layers a window has, the better temperature and noise insulation it provides. An independent test by the South African Fenestration and Insulating Energy Rating Association (SAFIERA) showed that Swartland’s double-glazed Cape Culture range of timber windows for example, are probably the most energy efficient windows in South Africa. Glazing coatings can also substantially improve the insulation qualities of glazing. For example, Low-E glazing or low emissivity glass, is

coated with a thin metallic substance that increases the window’s ability to reflect, rather than absorb heat. Apart from insulation, glazing can also come with coatings that offer other desirable qualities, such as protection, safety, security, solar and sound control, UV-protection, and decoration.

The Installation

Even the most expensive and energy-efficient window will not perform effectively if it is not installed correctly. Subframe systems are typically used in masonry openings so that windows can be anchored into the opening. The PVC-U windows have been designed to ensure the fitting is simple and accurate to ensure better insulation, the sub-frame is insulated with polystyrene. This prevents energy flow through the wall, ensuring better thermal performance of the fenestration installation. It also helps with acoustic insulation and also acts as a barrier against condensation and mould growth.

The Law

In South Africa, the SANS 10400 National Building Regulations have been amended in the form of the XA appendices and enforce and regulate energy efficient practices in the built environment. The new regulations will reduce the overall energy consumption and CO₂ emissions and that windows are SANS 10400-XA-compliant.

Swartland continuously tests its products to ensure that they are compliant with the National Building Regulations. In order to ensure that its windows are compliant with the SANS 613 and 204 (Fenestration Products) Mechanical Performance Criteria, all the windows for example, are tested for deflection, structural strength, water-resistance, air-tightness, operating forces, and the best possible energy efficiency. As a result, they have unique mechanical property values, from A1 to A4, assigned to them.

With regards to glazing, make sure that windows conform to the safety regulations contained in the SANS 10137 Code of Practice, and that the Toughened Safety Glass and Safety Glass conform to the guidelines contained in SANS 1263. Swartland’s new pre-sealed and pre-glazed Ready-2-Fit range of windows and doors for example, meet all the minimum safety criterion and come in a variety of configurations to suit virtually any architectural style. ■

Mini cranes operate efficiently on site



Eazi Group, Africa's leader in mobile work-at-height solutions, offers technologically advanced, cost-effective and safe solutions with Maeda mini cranes.

At first sight, they resemble robotic spiders sitting on long crawls: compact and stable, with a long arm coming out of its core, ready to move into position to get the job done. Maeda mini cranes are technologically advanced and versatile lifting equipment, developed and designed to tackle ambitious tasks in constricted areas. As one of the largest construction and equipment manufacturing companies in Japan, Maeda have been producing mini cranes since 1980. Over the years, Maeda has become a global leader with a market share of approximately 70% - 75%.

The Maeda mini cranes are available in South Africa through Eazi Access Rental - a 100% South African owned company that offers the largest fleet of telehandlers and work-at-height equipment in Southern Africa.

Based in Midrand, the company has 13 branches across various provinces. "The focus is to provide South Africa's industries with safe work-at-height solutions that is cost effective and enhances productivity," says Chad Pope, Business Director for Eazi Access Rental.

The African economic boom is unfolding in the rapidly growing urban centres on the continent. As a result, space has become more constricted, accelerating a trend towards work-at-height solutions.

Waterfall development in Midrand is considered one of the top urban developments in Africa, the Eazi Group have deployed multiple powered work-at-height machines on site.

Eazi Group's market has grown and it currently supplies machinery in Mozambique and Namibia. Other growth markets include Nigeria and Angola, especially in the construction sectors.

The Maeda mini cranes are ideal for construction use. The range offers a lifting capacity from one to six tons with a lift height from 5,5 m to 16,7 m. For specialised applications, such as glass handling or cladding, customers can choose from a variety of below-the-hook accessories. The smaller series can all be operated by remote control, allowing precise lifting. They also work on environmentally-friendly electric power with zero emission.

Maeda offers a wide range of models, starting with the MC104 Mini Crawler Crane. Its body is only 600 mm wide, well below the size

of a standard doorway. The MC104 comes with a lifting bracket for easy lifting into place by a second crane or helicopter. Transmission is hydrostatic. Customers have the option of choosing white rubber tracks to avoid damage to sensitive flooring. Pressure on the ground is very low. Workloads are lifted by a pentagon-shaped automatic 4-stage telescopic boom. The MC104 only weighs just over a ton and can lift up to 1 ton. The next model, the MC174, comes with a lifting capacity of 1.7 tons, and the most popular model, the MC285-2, boasts a massive 2.82 tons lifting capacity. All three models are compact machines with the same specs as big cranes, yet easy to load and transport.

Eazi Group offers competitive sales and rental services; with possible leases up to three to five years. "Since the economy is under pressure, clients prefer to work more cost-effectively", says Larry Smith, Managing Director of Eazi Sales & Services division. ■

Eazi Group CEO Ian Fleming



Designed for construction rental

The new Bobcat T35130S 13 m telehandler was launched earlier this year, alongside the new T35140S 14 m model.

The products have been designed specifically to meet the needs of the construction and rental industries, with both telehandlers offering a 3.5 tonne maximum lift capacity.

The introduction of the new 13 and 14 m models follows on from the launch of the new generation Bobcat 10, 12, 14 and 18 m lift height telescopic handlers over the last two years. Whilst they have a simpler design intended to meet the needs of rental businesses, the new T35130S

and T35140S telehandlers still offer many of the advantages of the new generation models.

Particular attention has been paid to aspects such as the protection of sensitive parts, and intuitive and safe operating to meet the needs of rental users.

The easy-to-use compact stabilisers ensure that the full capabilities of the new telescopic handlers can be utilised in the most confined working areas and close to walls (minimal loss of reach).

As in other new generation machines, the T35130S and T35140S telehandlers offer advanced features

such as the new Panoramic Cab which has a large parabolic windscreen providing panoramic visibility especially when handling loads at height.

In the cab, there is a new dashboard with digital display and intuitive controls including a joystick with integrated forward/reverse (FNR) control for improved productivity and safety.

The working envelope for the T35130S telehandler has a maximum lift height of 12.55 m and a maximum forward reach of 8.6 m. The Bobcat T35140S telehandler has a maximum lift height of 13.6 m and a maximum forward reach of 9.8 m. ■

Maliba Lodge

Tile Africa Commercial supplied a natural look and feel of 400 m² of Urbis Genova Porcelain Floor Tile to Lesotho based Maliba Lodge. The original lodge was almost destroyed in a fire in 2013.

"It was very important for us to retain as many of the elements of the original building and keep the same footprint. We wanted a hard wearing, large and natural looking stone tile that matched the natural organic feel of the lodge," says Dwain Elliott, Director Maliba Lodge.

"Tile Africa Commercial specifiers matched the product with the specifications, while keeping the technical aspects in mind to ensure that the tiles supplied were suited in terms of traffic and durability," explains Vaughn Dyssel from Tile Africa Commercial.

The Urbis Genova Porcelain tiles

that were supplied, provided a cost effective and sustainable design but also blended in with the remaining infrastructure on site. Natural building materials of stone and thatch were also used to incorporate the original look.

"The new building design allowed for more light. The new floor surface not only looks good, but is safe, durable and easy to maintain," adds Elliott.

Tile Africa Commercial offers an extensive range of technical and aesthetic products that cover every requirement and application.

Due to its strategic distribution centres, centralised co-ordination for national projects as well as specialised advice from its experienced consultants and specifiers, Tile Africa Commercial provides customers with a professional service and peace of mind from concept to completion. ■



Tile Tips

Johnson Tiles have put together five key tips to consider when it comes to flooring.

Selecting Tiles

The size of the space will determine the sizes or even formats of the tiles, which can be produced in a variety of sizes and shapes. This allows the format, patterns and way in which the tiles are laid to be more creative. It is also important to consider the area to be tiled – whether it's indoor or outdoor, the pattern, design, textured surface or non slip tiles. Richard Nuss, Marketing Manager at Johnson Tiles suggests that clients match their space and complement their colour scheme

Inkjet tiles

Inkjet technology has revolutionised tile design. Inkjet printing technology allows for high definition printing on ceramic and porcelain tiles. This has led to the development of tiles that look exactly like wood and natural stone but at a fraction of the price and without the maintenance. "Wood-look tiles are water resistant, easier to heat and will last for many years without harming the environment – no sealing and no harsh cleaners," says Nuss. It is advisable to consider ceramic tiles as they are easy to clean and also hygienic.

Colour and design

Colour complements design, so it's important that these elements are considered together when making tile choices. The latest looks include cement or screed designs. Wood-look tiles, with natural looking wood grains are very popular too. Greys are trendy and very popular at the moment, particularly warmer greys. Greys, with a touch of yellow and green are great for bringing life and character to interior designs. Furthermore, greys work well with stone, concrete and wood design. "Consider



using a lighter tile for dark room and a lighter and bolder tile for bright rooms," advises Nuss.

Installation of tiles

Proper installation is critical for the perfect finish and longevity of your tiles. For best wear and durability, install the best quality tiles to get the best result. Don't limit yourself by sticking to a simple square pattern; there are other installation options such as diagonal designs that one can choose from. "Consider cutting the tiles, as this will let you create new layouts suitable to your style," says Nuss. Moreover, mosaics can be added for glamour to create a specialised look and unique style to the room.

Tile installation

Use grout that matches the tile as this creates a better flow of the room. The tiles can be used on the walls as well to keep the same design while enhancing the room's style. ■





IN THE MIX

Chryso Southern Africa has contributed to the successful completion of six grain and wheat silos in Kimberley in the Northern Cape.



From left to right: Brenton Brouard, Greyling and Jansen from Chryso and Wayne Kamoo from Renniks Construction.

Renniks Construction used slip forming construction methodology for the large silos, 33 m high with a 200 mm wall thickness. The project used a total of 6 300 m³ of concrete for GWK's agri-business.

Renniks Construction have a long spanning relationship with Chryso Southern Africa and worked together on many projects; most notably, the Fulton Award winning Impala Shaft #16 project.

"Slip forming is a sliding construction methodology that requires the assembly of a sliding system at ground level. This system is lifted incrementally as concrete is poured; creating a structure with no joints. Reinforcing is fixed into position as the slide progresses so as not to slow down the placement of concrete. Once the required height of the concrete structure is reached the sliding system is dismantled," explains Renniks Construction Site Manager, Wayne Kamoo.

Brenton Brouard, Chryso Southern Africa's Technical Manager says that Chryso Southern Africa played a key role in the concrete mix design for the project.

"The particles of the river sand in the area are not as rounded as that of conventional river sand. We therefore decided to use a greater amount of crushed sand than usual. However, this could have caused a potential problem as there were fewer fines

in the overall grading of the blend," Brouard says. "Typically, concrete used in a slide should be cohesive with sufficient fines. The concrete has to have good finishability properties in order to create the 'slip effect'. If there is material segregation with aggregates protruding, then the slide will not be smooth and there will be difficulty in incrementally lifting the sliding system."

As a solution, Brouard elected to use Chryso Quad 20 admixture. This admixture was an ideal choice for the Kimberley project. The product increases the cohesiveness of the concrete and prevents bleeding and segregation. It also improves the finish of the concrete and assists construction by giving the concrete its sliding effect.

"We also used Chryso Omega 101, the air entraining properties assisted by replacing the lack of fines in the mix and helped with greater workability," says Brouard.

He says, "By facilitating greater workability of the concrete, there was sufficient time created to allow concrete to be placed into the form around the entire circumference of the silo and vibrated and for the sliding process to proceed without interruptions."

Planning is of the upmost importance with concrete slides. Since slip forming is a continuous process teams have to work 12 hour shifts.

"One has to have a reliable and consistent supply of cement, admixtures, sand and stone to site to facilitate this continuous operation. With Chryso we received good service and the mix design is always done professionally," concludes Kamoo. ■

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