

Low impact, high creativity - greener approaches to housing

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A greener approach to housing has seen two innovative answers to the housing problem lay foundations in the Western Cape.



These have been developed alongside innovative financial models to facilitate home ownership. The Empower Shack 2.0 and the Umnyama Ikhaya container pod home are prototypes aimed at slightly different income groups and both are on their way to gaining official approval as alternative housing types.

A Memorandum of Understanding is under review between the City of Cape Town, Ikhayalami and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology regarding the further development of Empower Shack 2.0s, and the Umnyama Ikhaya container pod home is on its way to gaining Agrément certification.

Umnyama Ikhaya, the company behind the container pod home built from up-cycled shipping containers, has signed an agreement with GreenFin to assist future home-owners pay for the units, and facilitate green technology. "We offer 99-month unsecured loans with no deposit," says Umnyama Ikhaya CEO John Venter. "We will also offer 20-year mortgages very soon. It will include pods and land, with the location of the land to be decided in the third quarter of 2016. Families will then qualify on single or joint income under R12,000 a month. Two- and four-sleeper pods fully kitted will sell, land inclusive, for between R450,000 and R600,000." They can be fitted for off-grid living, scaled up and custom designs created.

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