

# Stellendale offers affordable housing for first-time buyers

Lower-income South Africans who are struggling to secure their first property because their income is either too low to apply for a mortgage or too high to qualify for RDP housing, can now access affordable housing options at Stellendale Village in the Western Cape.

The next phase of this innovative and secure complex, situated between Stellenbosch and Tyger Valley, is being launched this month. A further 600 units will soon be built at Stellendale Village, of which 127 are aimed at lower-income families wanting to get a foot onto the proverbial property ladder. Stellendale Village is a joint venture agreement between International Housing Solutions, the South African Workforce Housing Fund and Visual International.

Amidst this 1,500 unit development in the northern suburbs of Cape Town, 10% of the properties will be sold at discounts of more than R90,000 below the other units. These 'GAP houses' as they are commonly referred to, are to attract first time buyers who generally fall short on the income criteria for units at market prices or unsubsidised units, yet who's income is too high for government subsidised RDP housing. To qualify, the monthly household income of a typical GAP buyer would be between R3,500 and R14,000.

## Demand outstrips supply

"In this segment of the market, demand for affordable housing outstrips supply," says Peter Grobbelaar, project director of Visual International. "These GAP units are similar to, and interspersed between, the other homes and apartments thus promoting an integrated society and providing real social upliftment."

Included in the balance of the units to be built are the 127 GAP homes and apartments costing between R299,000 and R399,000 as well as 600 units which will be marketed to middle-income earners, in the price range of R489,500 and R629,000.

Visual International also entered into a development agreement with the Department of Local Government and Housing of the Western Cape Provincial Government, whereby the department made a portion of state land, immediately adjacent to Stellendale Village, available for incorporation into Stellendale.

## Carbon footprint is reduced

"Of the broader real estate market, housing is the only sector of the market where demand outstrips supply, particularly for homes priced under R600,000. In addition to providing quality living options to people who would otherwise struggle to find decent accommodation, this sector is also a huge job-creation vehicle, providing much needed employment opportunity in the communities where affordable housing development takes place," says Grobbelaar.

In ensuring that Stellendale Village contributes positively to the environment, caution has also been taken that the carbon footprint of the project is reduced through carefully considered energy and water consumption, insulation, landscaping and transport to the village. This includes the use of energy efficient streetlights, channeling of rainwater and thermal ceiling insulation.

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