

Apartment living on the high rise in SA

Homeowners are increasingly keen on apartment living in South Africa. For every 100 plans stamped for houses in 2013, says Statistics SA, 26 were approved for flats. This ratio rose to 59 last year.



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Stats SA assessed building statistics to establish where the most spacious homes were being built, and what the average construction costs were.

"Flats have grown increasingly popular in South Africa's cities over the last couple of years, even outstripping the construction of townhouses," said Stats SA.

The demand for townhouses has also increased, but not as much. In 2013, the ratio of townhouse plans approved for every 100 dwelling-house plans was 25, climbing to 33 last year.

The increasing demand for flats occurred in nearly all of the eight metros, but particularly in Tshwane, where new developments are evident in Hatfield, Pretoria CBD and the planned "green mega city" at Menlyn Maine - as well as Cape Town and eThekweni. Building plans with the most generous floor area were approved by Durban for houses, townhouses and flats.

Space is at a premium in Cape Town. The city approved building plans for large numbers of small residential units -

between 30m² to 80m² - across the city.

Construction costs in eThekweni are the most expensive, but only for houses and flats. Tshwane takes the top spot for townhouses. It will cost you an average of R8575/m² to build a townhouse in the capital city, according to data for 2016.

Buffalo City, which includes the coastal city of East London, recorded the lowest costs for townhouses and flats in the same year.

Despite the rise in flats and townhouses, Stats SA confirmed that houses still dominated the residential landscape: 64% of households in metro areas live in formal houses, 2.6% in townhouses and 5.4% in flats. The migration trend towards the metros - already home to 40% of South Africans - by people seeking economic opportunities is a notable factor for future building trends.

Source: The Times

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