
Publication: The Sunday Times - Neighbourhood JHB

Title: The perfect lifestyle for 60-plussers

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PROPERTY & LIFESTYLE



Contemporary *classic*

This historic 1912 residence with top modern finishes was designed by renowned architect Sir Herbert Baker and offers unparalleled views across greater Johannesburg, page 11

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The perfect lifestyle for 60-plussers

When comfort, aesthetics, technology, design and health precautions all come together smartly in a retirement estate, you're all set

WORDS: KIM MAXWELL • IMAGES: SUPPLIED



Evergreen, Bergvliet

Ease into the retirement process gradually, by finding a home that provides for your current and future lifestyle needs. The rest will then fall into place.

This is the advice future retirees are given. Yet deciding on a place to settle for your retirement years can be stressful, with concerns about hidden costs or feeling isolated from friends and family. Affordability, quality of life and safety concerns are often top of mind. Some downsize to a smaller home or townhouse, then find they have to move again as their mobility or health needs change.

Residential estates are a one-size-fits-all option for retirees looking for community living in a secure environment. Some cater for multiple family and retirement phases. According to Devmark Property Group's national sales manager Bruwer de Jager, the success of their Retirement Collection villages lies in offering everything.

"Location is of paramount importance. Our developments including The Plettenberg Manor, Helderberg Manor and Langebaan Manor are situated

close to beaches, shops and restaurants. Furthermore, amenities usually include a clubhouse, hair and beauty salon, coffee shop, gym, assisted living suites and 24-hour care — all in beautifully landscaped gardens," he says.

De Jager adds that garden and house-cleaning services make leading a lock-up-and-go lifestyle achievable.

Retirement villages limiting visitor access and insisting on only gate deliveries for groceries during the pandemic, highlighted the importance of top-notch health security too. It's why Evergreen has undergone a redesign of safe spaces for its seniors. The developer looked at how higher-risk groups of retirees interact in communal spaces and facilities, and explored aspects such as physical security, financial peace of mind, hospitality and continuous care.

ACCESS CONTROL
Evergreen Lifestyle Villages MD Garry Reed says they learned from being forced to shift to virtual interactions. "During the toughest lock-down period, Evergreen had to relook onsite logistical procedures such as

residents' health monitoring and moving nurses to live inside its villages. We had to rethink how we operate daily, with clear definitions of shifts, roles and responsibilities on site. The way we approach design and layout now takes safety into account even more."

Touchless access control was also implemented in villages.

"Evergreen is continuously looking to improve the lifestyle and welfare of its residents through a combination of design development, innovation, technology and operations," says Evergreen Lifestyle's head of developments Julie Morelle. For instance, they made the design of units more compact, yet still offering comfort and quality. All homes have a private outdoor balcony or garden too — on top of communal recreational areas.

"At Evergreen we embrace flexibility — designing more, yet smaller — amenities for socialising and coming together. Post-Covid we are fast-tracking the integration of technology: access control and communication with the outside world," says Morelle.



River Dale, Port Elizabeth

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"We have since incorporated 'hotelification' as a diversified standard, as well as on-demand services, adapted to our residents' needs and requirements."

GAUTENG VOLUMES

A Lightstone survey investigated trends within the retirement property industry. Its findings were that, for the total volume of retirement properties transacted across South Africa over the past decade (2009 to 2020), the majority of transfers were conducted in 2013 in Gauteng (2,863), with the Western Cape showing a slight peak by 2017.

This might help explain why Evergreen's Broadacres Lifestyle Village in Johannesburg is described as "a firm favourite" by sales director Phil Wilson. The village consists of 144 - sold out - houses. Another 48 one and two-bedroom apartments were recently launched.

Lightstone Property's head of real estate Esteani Marx says the trend of Gauteng enjoying the most collective transfers in volume terms is not surprising. But she notes that when Lightstone "investigates the value bands in the retirement category, the view is rather different over the last decade". Marx says Gauteng started enjoying higher value transfers from 2010, and remained the front runner for those years.

But from 2015, transactions in higher value bands started to climb in the Western Cape, and continued to do so until late 2019. Lightstone reports that, during 2018, the variance in value between the Western Cape and its closest competitor, Gauteng, was more than R1m.

HIGHER CAPE VALUES

Rabie Property Group has seen high demand for its upmarket



Oasis Life Burgundy Estate will be ready mid-2021

Cape Town retirement estate homes, situated near family homes within Clara Anna Fontein Lifestyle Estate in Durbanville. Launched in 2018, Phase 1 of the Oasis Life development is nearing completion, with 18 residents having moved in since June. The first phase includes 58 houses, plus a R25m clubhouse scheduled to open in December.

Designed as the "heart and soul of the Oasis Life village", a restaurant, healthcare suites, library and event space "will complete the well-rounded offering of Clara Anna Fontein"

and set into motion "its hospitality-based lifestyle" according to Rabie director Miguel Rodrigues.

For Devmark's De Jager, geographic appeal is a no-brainer. "The Western Cape offers some of the most beautiful scenery in the world and property in the province has become incredibly popular," he says.

HOTEL-STYLE LUXURY

Bev Bloch, manager of Pam Golding Properties Specialised Southern Suburbs Retirement sales team, says she has seen

"considerable interest" in Quadrant Gardens, a flagship lifestyle retirement development in Cape Town's Claremont. She describes it as "hotel-style luxury with all the comforts of home".

A few of the 74 apartments are still available, priced from R3m to R6,4m for one to three-bedroom units, including penthouses. Managed by Cape Peninsula Organisation for the Aged (CPOA), Quadrant Gardens is a joint venture with private developer Corevest. "In keeping with the latest retirement trends, all apartments are sold on a life

right basis, through CPOA, who is responsible for rates, security, maintenance and building insurance," says Bloch.

This year, Lightstone singled out Burgundy Estate near the Durbanville Winelands as one of SA's top-10 most popular retirement estate choices for 60-plussers. Oasis Life Burgundy Estate is in its first phase of construction, with 24 houses and 33 apartments set for completion in mid-2021.

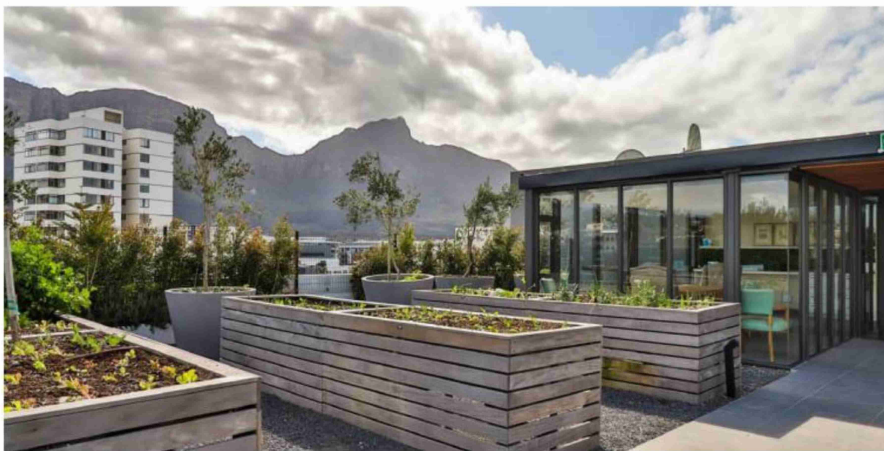
EAST COAST'S GROWING SHARE

In Port Elizabeth, health, a community lifestyle and financial benefits are all part of the deal at the Amdec Group's multigenerational Westbrook Lifestyle Estate. The development provides secure living in affordable designer homes with footpaths, running and cycling tracks. Their first development, The Ridge, is sold out and they have just launched their new village, River Dale.

"Our vision of a walkable environment with homes and communal areas has come to fruition," says managing director of Westbrook residential developments Clifford Oosthuizen. "The Ridge is already home to a happy and thriving community. We anticipate the same success for River Dale".

An Evergreen Lifestyle retirement village is also planned and as there is a Curro school on the premises, offering grandparents a carefree retirement lifestyle while living in close proximity to their children and grandchildren. Westbrook residents' safety is ensured through electrified perimeter fencing, guarded gatehouses, access control, CCTV and 24-hour foot, bike and vehicular patrols. All homes are also fitted with alarms and security systems.

Evergreen is continuously looking to improve the lifestyle and welfare of its residents through a combination of design development, innovation, technology and operations
JULIE MORELLE, HEAD OF DEVELOPMENTS, EVERGREEN LIFESTYLE



Quadrant Gardens' herb garden, Claremont