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A generational gap creating major investor upside

RENOVATE FOR PROFIT
Smart Upgrades that deliver strong returns

SA PROPERTY MARKET 2026
Slow growth, strong returns, rare opportunities

eXp REALTY RISE IN SA

Mike Walters on building a new era of Agents

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Mike Walters:
The Action-Orientated Pioneer Driving eXp South Africa's Growth

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EDITOR'S VIEWPOINT

Stepping into 2026 with clarity, confidence and purpose

As we close out 2025, I want to thank every one of you for the way you've shown up this year. Your loyalty, your engagement and your hunger for knowledge continue to shape REI into one of the most trusted property platforms in the country. It has been a year of real progress, driven not by hype, but by a community that takes action.

This year reminded us that the people who win in property and in life are the ones who stay curious, stay informed and stay committed to growth. Whether through our magazine, our daily online news, our video interviews, our investor insights, or our weekly webinars and live events, you've shown up consistently. And because of that, the REI community is stronger than ever.

The December/January edition reflects that momentum, inside, you'll find:

- Our cover feature with eXp's Mike Walters ahead of the first South African eXpcon in February 2026
- Part 3 of Prof Adrian Saville's powerful Auction Series with High Street
- A deep dive into the generational opportunity in Student Accommodation
- 2026 investment strategies to avoid the biggest traps and beat the averages
- Smart renovation insights, flipping success stories and practical wealth-building lessons
- Plus: "5 Truths Every Entrepreneur Must Know to Win With AI Innovation"Looking ahead, 2026 promises to be a defining year for property investors.

  Rates are easing, investor confidence is building, and new opportunities are emerging across residential, student housing, storage, distress, redevelopment and alternative asset classes. At REI, we're gearing up to deliver more value, more tools, more data and more ways for you to build wealth so watch this space.

For now, take the time to rest, recharge and reconnect with the people who matter. Return with clarity, purpose & courage to take the next step.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

Here's to a prosperous, bold and opportunity rich 2026.

Neale Petersen
Founder & Editor-In-Chief



MASTER QUOTE
The future belongs to those who stay awake, stay informed and stay willing to act when others hesitate.

ASK THE EXPERTS

Funding Property Developments: What Business Partners Ltd looks for



MEET OUR GUEST EXPERT

FRIEDRICH MEISENHOLL

Regional Investment Manager, *Business Partners Ltd (Cape Town)*

Question

What funding solutions does Business Partners Ltd provide for property developers, and what types of projects, requirements, risk appetite and recent deal examples define your ideal development client?

Answer by Friedrich

Business Partners Ltd provides tailored funding solutions for small to medium-sized property developers who are building real value in their markets. We finance a wide range of development activities, including land acquisition, rezoning and bulk services, subdivision, infrastructure rollout, and vertical construction for residential, mixed-use, commercial or light-industrial projects. Our approach is flexible: we can fund individual phases or the full development cycle, depending on the project's structure, viability and risk profile.

We typically support projects with strong fundamentals, clear demand drivers, realistic costings, experienced professional teams, and well-defined exit or tenanting strategies. Developers must demonstrate equity contribution, technical competence, and the ability to manage timelines, compliance and cash flow. We're willing to take a measured level of development risk, provided it's supported by credible feasibility studies, pre-sales or leasing interest, and professional oversight.

Recent transactions we've funded include mid-income residential clusters, sectional-title refurbishments, small industrial parks, and township-based mixed-use precincts. While these examples remain confidential, they reflect our appetite for practical, market-responsive developments that uplift nodes and stimulate entrepreneurship.

Our ideal client is a hands-on developer, experienced enough to navigate complexities but agile enough to adapt to changing conditions. We look for integrity, transparency, disciplined financial management and a long-term commitment to responsible development. Ultimately, we partner with developers who understand their market, build sustainably, and create assets that contribute to economic growth and community impact.

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COVER STORY

Mike Walters: The Action-Orientated Pioneer Driving eXp South Africa's Growth



By Khanya Gundwana
Marketing Coordinator,
eXp Realty South Africa



"I've always been action-oriented, focusing on execution rather than waiting for opportunities or instructions," says Michael Walters, with a smile that immediately puts you at ease. Mike, the **Operations Manager for eXp Realty South Africa**, carries the confident demeanour of a seasoned professional who has successfully navigated incredibly diverse industries.

His professional life isn't just a career; it's a 40-year adventure that weaves through high-end hospitality, tourism, competitive motor, beverage advertising, and a distinguished 25-year tenure in commercial and investment property.

Mike embodies a unique blend of experiences. He's the quintessential **analytical leader**, always looking for a solution, and dedicated to getting the job done right. Beneath his approachable exterior is a strategic mind, an early adaptor and fervent tech advocate, involved with a multitude of agency businesses, including touch screens and web development in the early 2000s

This fusion of practical experience and strategic foresight has established him as a pioneer of new ideas within the real estate sector. "You have to be strategic, yes, but you also have to be hands-on," Mike explains. "I think that's why I connect well with people—I've done the work at every level."

The Foundation: From the Bush to the Brand Strategy

Mike's career journey started in the most fundamental way—in operations. After completing his studies at Hilton College and the Joburg Hotel School, he immediately dove into the hospitality industry, completing a rigorous Management Trainee program with the Southern Sun Hotel Group. Working his way through every hotel department taught him the nuts and bolts of efficiency, staff management, and exceptional service.

He completed the three-year schedule six months early, spent some time within Marketing and Sales, the General Managers conference and the frequent guest programme called 'Stars for Stars', leading to his recognition as the Most Outstanding Trainee.

His passion for South Africa and the outdoors was ignited during his time at prestigious resorts, including the first timeshare game reserve experience, Mabula Game Reserve, and the internationally renowned Sabi Sabi Private Game Reserve. He handled sales, marketing, and reservations, even managing Bush Lodge's food and beverage department temporarily.

He completed the Sabi Sabi game ranger course, expanding his knowledge of birds, trees, and grasses, which instilled in him a deep appreciation for the natural environment, our country and all its people.



The Power of Branding and Execution

This operational foundation then collided with the world of marketing and advertising, where he spent about 10 years after obtaining his IMM Marketing Management Diploma. Working at top agencies like Ogilvy Mather Direct, Sonnenberg Murphy Leo Burnett, and DDB - Old Shanghai, this phase was transformative.

It built his strategic thinking, communication expertise, and, critically, his ability to develop a good creative brief and drive idea generation, from concept through to logistics and execution.
Mike executed multimillion-rand campaigns for global brands. At DDB - Old Shanghai, he had the incredible experience of setting up and managing a full-service advertising agency and handling the exclusive strategy and launch of Mitsubishi Motors in South Africa. This included all the 'through the line' activities—brand strategy, creative materials, media plans, dealer roll-outs, and events. "You can't just rely on creative flair; you need a system," Mike asserts. He developed and executed brand strategies and plans for clients, including a unique five-step process for a holistic approach to communications designed to increase brand value. He was also an early technology adaptor, developing business strategy for smaller agencies and clients on the marketing front, and implemented a sales software tool.

This period equipped him with the ability to manage teams, budgets, and drive revenue across diverse portfolios. He's successfully presented to everyone from shareholders and staff members, to CEOs and CFOs.

The Property Pioneer: From Investor's Mind to Commercial Mastery

The move into property was a natural progression, fuelled by his own experiences as a property lover and investor. He developed an eye for analysing income-generating properties and businesses being sold as 'going concerns'. He started by building a portfolio that included townhouses and houses, which he strategically converted into communes, letting rooms to students and managing upwards of forty leases at a time.

His first specialized and full time property role focused on the sale of hospitality 'going concern' businesses. "I quickly realised that the typical property assessment wasn't sufficient for these assets," Mike reflects. "The pricing needed to align with the mindset of the specific target buyer."

This insight led to the development of his 'three-tier assessment model'. This concept was developed to assist in the sale of assets based on the target market and their mindset, improving the accuracy of pricing and targeting for hospitality properties. This work required a deep understanding of metrics like RevPar, Occupancy, and detailed financials (P&L, COS, EBITDA) to determine the true business asset and ROI (Cap Rate - yields)

The Action-Oriented Leader and Innovator

Mike's nature as an action-oriented leader and proactive executor is best showcased in his entrepreneurial roles. Throughout his property career, he was consistently looking for smarter ways to achieve results. This drive culminated in the founding of Sentinel Property Group in 2017. Mike developed an innovative business model focusing on tailor-made disposal solutions for large commercial property owners. This was not a traditional brokerage; the solution used a custom-built algorithm to track top-performing brokers and auction companies.

This process perfectly embodied his belief in collaboration, as he built deep relationships and set up reciprocal agreements with various real estate companies, ensuring the best individual specialist within the network was selected to execute each specific mandate.

Since its inception, Sentinel has been responsible for the disposal of hundreds of millions of rand of fixed assets. Mike's work in the commercial sector has been extensive, including sales for major Funds and REIT's. This involved disposing of significant assets, such as retail properties, Industrial Parks, Investment, and Commercial properties, and handling corporate property disposals for major banks, financial institutions, and insurance companies. Additionally, his experience includes leading and building teams, where the implementation of smarter systems helped him triple sales and drive team growth.



The Future of Real Estate: eXp and African Growth

Today, Mike's role as Operations Manager at eXp Realty South Africa is the culmination of his diverse experiences. His focus is on operational efficiency, driving growth, empowering agents, and building relationships. He leads a phenomenal team dedicated to creating systems that help agents thrive through teamwork, customer service, and improving their skills.

A key part of his mandate is overseeing compliance within the legal framework (including PPRA, FICA, and POPIA), working together to ensure operations run as smoothly and ethically as possible.

Mike's authority is underpinned by achieving the highest professional qualification in the sector: Master Practitioner in Real Estate (MPRE), the equivalent of a PDE 5 status. This qualification is critical as eXp pursues its ambitious African growth strategy.

The future of real estate is global, and eXp Realty is leading the way. A key focus for 2026 is the strategic opening of two separate and new specialized divisions in South Africa. Mike's extensive commercial background is driving the preparation for this launch. We are working to implement the right technology, tools, and services so commercial agents can enjoy the same revolutionary benefits as eXp Realty, but tailored with a commercial angle.

This requires a deep, analytical understanding of the market and strong relationships in large-scale property disposal. This more complex side of the business will potentially include business broking and the sale of going concerns—areas where Mike's specific expertise is uniquely positioned to help agents succeed and scale.





The Essence of Mike: Family, Patriotism, and the Outdoors

Despite the intensity of his professional life, Mike is deeply rooted in his family values—a husband and a devoted father of two boys.
“My commitment to a balanced life is inseparable from my love for South Africa,” says Mike. He is a true patriot and an outdoor enthusiast, cherishing the South African sunshine and countryside. This is reflected in his dedication to sport: he is a keen golfer, a fly fisherman, and a dedicated cyclist, having completed numerous challenging events, including multi-stage mountain bike rides like two Joberg2C’s, triathlons (in his youth) and open water swim events.

From the bushveld to the boardroom, Mike Walters’ story is one of continuous growth, strategic innovation, and a genuine, ethical approach to business. He embodies the spirit of the pioneer and action-oriented leader, always adapting and always driving forward, guided by a belief in collaboration, integrity, and getting the job done right.



Voices on Mike Walters

Andrew Thompson, CEO & Country Leader,

eXp Realty South Africa:"Mike is an invaluable asset to our leadership team. His four decades of diverse, hands-on experience, coupled with his analytical approach, ensures that our operational structure is not just efficient, but strategically positioned for aggressive growth across the African continent. His vision for the launch of eXp Commercial is exactly what we need to disrupt that market segment."

Khanya Gundwana, Marketing Coordinator,

eXp Realty South Africa: "Working with Mike is incredibly motivating. He sets a high bar for execution, but he also empowers the team. He's a true systems-thinker; he doesn't just manage compliance, he creates processes that make our agents' lives easier and allow the whole company to operate with seamless professionalism. He genuinely cares about the success of every person on the team."

Brad Neille, eXp Realty South Africa Agent and SAAAC Member:

"Mike's expertise is a game-changer, especially for agents looking at the complex commercial side. When you have a question about Cap Rates, going concerns, or how to correctly price a property that might go to auction, Mike's guidance is gold.

He can break down complicated investment strategies into actionable steps. He doesn't just sell, he teaches you how to think like an investor."



Driving Growth with Future-Forward Technology

As a forward-thinking real estate agency, eXp Realty leverages cutting-edge technology and AI to empower agents, boost productivity and spark creativity in the metaverse. This is just one of the reasons why eXp Realty South Africa has grown from zero to more than 1,300 agents in less than four and a half years. At eXp, we're not just building careers - we're creating a community where the best in the business can thrive.

Truly, it's #WhereTheProsGoToGrow!

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AUCTIONS

The Power of Auctions - Part 3: History under the Hammer





By Professor Adrian Saville and Ian McLeod

A 3,000-year-old invention that is just getting started

Peruse a list of the greatest inventions of all time, and you'll find an array of fantastic physical items. From the internal combustion engine and the sail to dynamite and the smartphone. Few would deny these are incredible and impactful things. However, it would be unwise to ignore inventions that are not things.

The limited liability company is an excellent example. Whilst we can point to physical manifestations of this invention, the thing itself is a legal and social construct without tangible presence.

There is evidence of a share certificate issued in 1288, but most date the invention of the limited liability firm - or "Ltd" - to 1602, when the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), better known as the Dutch East India Company was founded. The VOC's charter stipulated that "all the residents of these lands may buy shares in this Company".

Raising a large sum of capital from many individual investors unleashed a new era of trade at unprecedented scale and scope. For the VOC, the company structure translated into ownership of more than 20,000 ships and a company value that translates to a whopping US$7,9 trillion in today's prices - the equivalent of Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, ExxonMobil, Berkshire Hathaway, Tencent, and Wells Fargo put together. Modern commerce confirms that we haven't looked back.

The auction is another commercial invention that lacks an identifiable "thing" we can touch. That may obscure its importance, but it doesn't change it.

The auction also goes back far further in history than the joint stock company - likely to Babylonian times. And like the stock exchanges and limited liability structures of today, the auction is going strong.



Original auctions

Documented by Greek historian Herodotus, one of the earliest recorded auctions took place in Babylon, where marriage auctions allowed bidders to compete for a bride's hand[1].

Setting aside the morality of such a use for the auction, the commercial design was born.

The Roman Empire later perfected the formula: victorious generals sold captured treasures and property sub hasta - literally "under the spear" - signalling that everything on offer was legitimate war booty.

"The crier (praeco) called out the prices and the article was adjudged to the highest bidder by the magistrate who was present, a money broker (argentarius) meanwhile noting down the price and receiving the money or security for the article sold."[2]

Even then, the fundamentals were familiar: set the stage, invite the crowd, let bidders compete.

The auction also goes back far further in history than the joint stock company - likely to Babylonian times. And like the stock exchanges and limited liability structures of today, the auction is going strong.

Through the ages

By the 17th century, Dutch merchants used open outcry auctions to sell fish and flowers quickly before the fresh produce spoiled. Lively auction markets coupled with groundbreaking capital raising mechanisms gave rise to the saying that the Dutch were "the envy of some, the fear of others, and the wonder of all their neighbours"[3].

The famous "Dutch auction" emerged from this urgency. Here prices start high and fall until the first bidder commits. Across the Channel, London's coffee houses and literary societies used auctions for books, manuscripts and estates, gradually moving from the noisy market floor into the refined showrooms of Christie's and Sotheby's.

"In the 18th century, artwork, libraries and natural history collections began to be auctioned in taverns and coffee houses. Sotheby's auction house began in such fashion. It was established in London in 1744 when Samuel Baker (1713-1778) supervised the clearance of several hundred rare and valuable books from the library of an acquaintance. The auction house Christie's, founded by James Christie (1730-1803), began life in a very similar fashion."[4]

Our intangible inventions - the limited company, the stock market, and auctions combine in a critical way. In fact, they have long been one in the same. Stock markets began as chaotic open-cry systems, where traders shouted their bids from trading pits and brokers furiously recorded transactions for ownership - or part ownership - of traded assets.

Today's electronic exchanges may not appear to be auctions, but they are. In fact, quoted prices of shares, bonds and other assets are invitations backed by market makers. Speedy, digital, global auctions, but intrinsically the same as noisy, in-person setups of old.

The rules, locations and goods under the gavel have evolved, but the commercial utility has remained. Auctions consistently unlock hidden demand, flushed out fair value and create urgency - three forces every business still battles with (or embraces) today.

Modern auctions

Fast-forward to the 21st century and auctions have exploded far beyond art halls and shipping yards. The internet allows for all manner of auctions. The iconic innovator in this realm is eBay, which made the auction the default mechanism for the internet's early peer-to-peer commerce.

Google and Facebook built trillion-dollar advertising empires on the back of real-time auctions for attention. Telcos across the world bid for radio spectrum via government-run auctions designed to maximise public value and efficient allocation.

Even the most sophisticated markets rely on this ancient idea: electricity grids balance power supply through continuous auction clearing; carbon markets price emissions allowances through competitive bids; investment banks use auctions to place shares in initial public offerings (IPOs).

None of this should suggest in-person auctions are losing their relevance. As we pointed out in the second paper in this series, auctions have profound psychological impacts on participants. Some condition-sensitive goods also need to be experienced first-hand - few would buy fine art, a classic car, or high-end jewellery without a close inspection.

No matter how modern or ancient the auction, the very same problems are being solved. Wherever time, location, information asymmetry and other variables make conventional market mechanisms inefficient, auctions allow for a form of negotiation, information sharing, and price discovery in real time.

Walrasian Walmart

That said, it is useful to make an important link between auctions and the markets we engage in every day at supermarkets or while online shopping. Nineteenth-century French economist Léon Walras showed just how similar auctions are to other transactions with his famous "Walrasian auctioneer" thought experiment.

The notional Walrasian auctioneer announces tentative prices for every good in the market - bread, milk, rugby balls, housing, labour... everything. Then all consumers share how much they would be willing to buy at those prices. And firms say how much they would be willing to supply at those prices.

No trade happens yet. The Walrasian auctioneer simply evaluates all three data sets - proposed prices, quantities demanded and quantities suppliers would supply. Based on his best calculations, the Walrasian auctioneer then calls out a new set of prices again, for every item in the market. And consumers and suppliers reevaluate how much they would buy and sell at these prices, calling out their new figures.

This process is repeated until the Walrasian auctioneer lands on a set of prices that clears the market - that is where an equilibrium is reached in which consumers receive the best selection of goods and services based on their preferences and budget, and sellers get a competitive income.

This "Walrasian equilibrium" might sound very much like the way prices at supermarkets and online stores come about. Anticipated prices are constantly tested as buyers choose where to spend their money and suppliers allocate their resources to producing goods. It is an ongoing, invisible dance (an auction) we're constantly engaged in without thinking much about it.

The arrival of Walmart in South Africa provides a living example. Although no explicit auction is involved, the Walrasian scenario is at play. Walmart has announced prices for all of its goods.

We vote with our wallets by making purchases at Walmart or elsewhere. And Walmart and competitors will then apply their own calculations to maximise profits (or perhaps sales, depending on their strategy), revising prices over time.

Item	Walmart	SPAR	Pick n Pay	Checkers	Woolworths
White Bread	R18.82	R19.99	R19.99	R19.99	R21.99
Sunflower oil	R65.95	R77.99	R74.99	R84.99	R86.99
Maize meal	R37.96	R39.99	R39.99	R41.99	R34.99
White Sugar	R60.44	R63.99	R65.99	R65.99	R68.99
Milk	R29.95	R29.99	R34.99	R32.99	R38.99
Rice	R36.95	R44.99	R42.99	R42.99	R46.99
Flour	R36.95	R39.99	R41.99	R41.99	R41.99
Soap	R12.90	R18.99	R19.99	R19.99	R19.99
Toilet paper	R63.00	R75.95	R74.99	R69.99	R79.99
Total	**R362.92**	**R412.87**	**R416.91**	**R421.91**	**R440.91**

Source: Businesstech (2025)

That is all to say that the auction is not so distinct from the “set” prices we pay at grocery stores and the like.

Timeless tool of trade

One thing a perusal of the past tells us is that auctions are timeless. They come to us naturally. Wherever there are goods to be traded, there will be circumstances where auctions are the answer.

Given the explosion of technology such as cryptography, the lowering of barriers to international trade and innovation of auction types, one might say that auctions are just getting started.

[1] Hart, I. (2012). The Politics of Possession: Edwin Long’s Babylonian Marriage Market. Art History, 35(1), 86-105.
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[3] Prak, M. (2023). The Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century. Cambridge University Press.
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Adrian Saville is Professor of Economics, Finance & Strategy at GIBS Business School (Gordon Institute of Business Science) and founder of Boundless World. Adrian’s work focuses on business model design, innovation, capital allocation, and growth strategy to helps businesses turn complex market shifts into clear strategy and measurable results.

Ian Macleod is a senior research associate at GIBS Business School (Gordon Institute of Business Science) and partner at Boundless World. Ian translates rigorous economic insight into practical playbooks for real-asset and financial markets, turning messy markets into transparent, value-unlocking mechanisms.

This thought leadership article is produced as part of a series for The High Street Auction Co., South Africa’s premier auction house. Learn more about The High Street Auction Company here: www.highstreetauctions.com.

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Tenanted Industrial Facility
66 Booysens Drive, Reuven, Booysens


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COMMERCIAL

How South Africa's student housing deficit creates a generational investment opportunity

By REI Editorial



Preparing for the next wave

South Africa is on the brink of one of the most significant real estate opportunities in a generation, student accommodation.
will be voting not for their favourite, but for who they think others will vote for.

With over 1.2 million students enrolled at public universities and TVET colleges, fewer than 25% have access to formal, accredited housing.

The gap is widening every year. For investors and institutions, this isn't just a housing shortage, it's a structural market opportunity.

"We are witnessing the early stages of an asset class transformation," says Retha van Rooyen, Founder and CEO of My Student House (MSH).

"Student housing is no longer a side category in residential property, it's emerging as one of the most resilient and socially impactful investments in South Africa."

A demand curve that keeps rising

Department of Higher Education and NSFAS data show enrolment rising steadily, fuelled by demographic growth, government funding, and the expansion of tertiary access. Even conservative estimates suggest a shortfall of more than 400,000 beds by 2030.

In property terms, that represents tens of billions of rands in unmet demand, stretching beyond metros into secondary education hubs such as Bloemfontein, Gqeberha, and Potchefstroom.



“The smart investors aren’t just chasing high-end developments near the big universities,” Van Rooyen explains. “They’re partnering with operators who can manage scale across diverse regions, maintain compliance, and deliver consistent student experience.”

From Properties to Platforms

The new wave of student accommodation investment goes beyond construction. The focus is shifting to management quality, compliance, and ecosystem value.

At My Student House, this model integrates:

- Technology-driven operations, including real-time reporting, communication logs, and transparent parent engagement.
- Accreditation compliance, aligned with NSFAS and university standards.
- Structured student life programmes that enhance wellbeing, retention, and academic outcomes.

These elements convert what were once “student rentals” into a stable, institutional-grade asset class, offering predictable yield and measurable impact.

Investing for profit and purpose

Student accommodation delivers more than financial returns, it generates a clear social return on investment. Each compliant bed contributes to access, safety, and success for young South Africans. This positions the sector squarely within ESG investment frameworks and impact mandates, offering investors both yield and purpose.



“The highest-performing assets of the next decade will be those that solve real problems,” says Van Rooyen. “In student housing, every rand deployed can generate both sustainable income and visible social value.”

A moment for collaboration

With universities under pressure to expand capacity and government support schemes evolving, the window for public-private partnerships is opening fast. Operators like MSH, with managed beds across six cities, demonstrate that scalability, governance, and social outcomes can coexist profitably.

Van Rooyen believes collaboration, not competition, is key to meeting national demand.

“We don’t see ourselves as competing with universities or other PBSA entities,” she says. “We’re complementing them, helping to meet national accommodation targets while giving investors a chance to participate in something truly nation-building.”

The generational opportunity ahead

Student accommodation has proven resilient through economic uncertainty, offering stable occupancy, recurring revenue, and long-term demand. As South Africa’s youth population surges and education expands, the sector will remain underpinned by necessity rather than luxury.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

For investors seeking both performance and purpose, it's a generational opportunity, one that merges the fundamentals of real estate with the future of education.

About My Student House

My Student House (MSH) is one of South Africa's fastest-growing specialist private student accommodation rental asset managers, managing over 2,200 beds across Cape Town, Bloemfontein, Gqeberha, Pretoria, Johannesburg, and Potchefstroom. MSH creates safe, compliant, and community-driven spaces that enhance academic success while delivering stable returns for investors.

Contact us: www.mystudenthouse.co.za
Jenna Gamble | My Student House
getinfo@mystudenthouse.co.za



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  Filling Rooms, Building Trust
- Incident Management
  Protecting Students, Landlords & Reputations
- Facilities & Operations
  From Repairs to Disciplinaries
- Transport Management
  Moving Students Safely & Seamlessly
- Student Management & Wellbeing
  More Than a Roof, a Support System
- Neighbourhood Engagement
  Changing How Communities See Students

Smart investors choose partners who deliver results. Our proven model combines compliance, care, and community to maximise occupancy and protect your ROI.

FIND US

- Cape Town
- Bloemfontein
- Gqeberha
- Gauteng
- Potchefstroom

Community Schemes | Rental Portfolios | RedRabbit

COMMUNITY SCHEMES

WeconnectU Wins

Top Tech Award

for the Third Year Running.



WeconnectU™



We're thrilled to share that WeconnectU has once again been named Best Property Management Software Company (South Africa) by Corporate Vision Magazine at the 2025 Technology Innovator Awards.

This marks our third consecutive win in the category – an achievement we're immensely proud of, not just for the spotlight it brings, but for what it represents:

Shared progress. Real-world impact. And the trust of thousands of property professionals across South Africa who use – and help shape – our ecosystem every day.

You're the reason we exist, and the reason we remain **the home of intelligent property management software.**

About the Award

Presented by Corporate Vision Magazine, the Technology Innovator Awards celebrate companies and creators using technology to transform the way industries work – from health and finance to manufacturing, logistics, and real estate. Winners are selected through an independent, merit-based process, with a strong focus on technological breakthroughs, client impact, market contribution, and ongoing innovation.



It also places us firmly within a global wave of technology leaders harnessing AI, automation, and data-driven insights to deliver meaningful transformation across industries. Within South Africa's property sector, we're applying these innovations to solve the complex, high-impact challenges faced by community and rental asset managers every day.

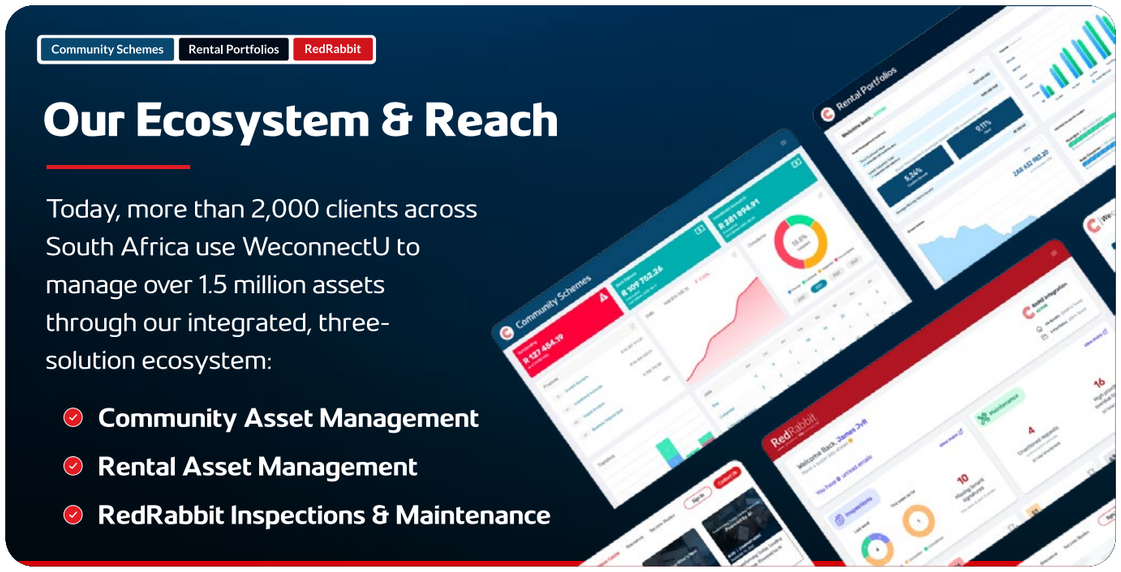
It's this kind of innovation – grounded in purpose and proven in practice – that the Technology Innovator Awards exist to recognise.

Our Ongoing Mission

At the heart of this achievement is our ongoing mission: to create more valued and more valuable property managers. More valuable, because our software replaces manual work with intelligent automation, freeing up time for strategic conversations and better client outcomes.

More valued, because this shift positions property managers as trusted advisors, not merely administrators.

This isn't just a vision – it's actually happening. Our latest industry survey shows that users of our ecosystem are seeing measurable gains in efficiency, client satisfaction, and profitability. That's the impact we'll continue to strive for as the most advanced end-to-end ecosystem for the management of Community Schemes, Rental Portfolios, and Inspections & Maintenance Management.



Our People

The more we grow, the more grateful we are for the people who make it possible.

Every solution we deliver, every improvement we roll out, every milestone we celebrate – it all begins with the talent, dedication, and heart of our team.

From developers and designers to product specialists and customer success teams, these are the individuals who eat, sleep, and breathe innovation. They bring creativity, care, and relentless focus to everything they do – not just solving problems, but anticipating them, reimagining them, and turning complexity into clarity.

Their commitment is the reason we continue to lead, evolve, and retain the trust of property professionals across South Africa.

To our team: *Thank you. This recognition is yours, too.*

Our Origins

The creativity and care that drive WeconnectU today are rooted in the story of how it all began.

Founded by property professionals who understood the industry from the inside, WeconnectU was born out of first-hand experience and a determination to build something better. Managing community schemes and rental portfolios shouldn't be complicated.

So we set out to create a unified ecosystem that simplifies the work and elevates the profession.

That founding vision still guides us, keeping us close to the realities our clients face and focused on solving real problems with customer-centric innovation.

Looking Ahead

While this award marks an incredible milestone, it's also a reminder that our work is never truly done. The future of property management is still being written and we're writing it together.

Every insight you share, every challenge you raise, every ambition you hold – it all fuels what we build next. Because progress doesn't happen in isolation. It happens in partnership.



PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Renovate for Profit: Smart upgrades, stronger returns

By Neale Petersen



Renovating for Profit: How to build smart, avoid pitfalls and choose the right partners

- **Pick contractors with compliant credentials, clear contracts, and proven experience to avoid costly delays and disputes.**
- **Focus upgrades on kitchens, bathrooms, space optimisation, and energy efficiency, the biggest profit drivers in any market.**
- **Protect your investment through insurance, tight project planning, transparent communication, and solid legal agreements.**

Renovating or building a property for profit is one of the fastest ways to force appreciation, but it's also where investors burn the most cash through poor contractor choices, weak contracts, and overcapitalisation.

When done right, upgrades can boost value, attract quality buyers or tenants, and significantly increase long-term returns. When done wrong, projects spiral into delays, disputes, legal battles, and financial damage.

Across South Africa, bodies like the Building Industry Bargaining Council (BIBC) and Master Builders Association Western Cape (MBAWC) have repeatedly warned that disputes in the renovation and retrofit space are rising sharply.

The reasons are simple: rushed decisions, unclear agreements, non-compliant builders, and homeowners who don't fully understand contractual and insurance requirements.

Here's how to renovate like a professional investor with discipline, due diligence, and partners who protect your profit.

1. Choose builders who are compliant and credible

Before you think about finishes or layouts, verify who you're hiring. A contractor should prove:

- Registration with bodies like the BIBC, NHBRC, and relevant trade associations.
- Labour and tax compliance, including safety and occupational health adherence.
- Up-to-date insurance: public liability, workers' compensation (COIDA/FEM), and ideally professional indemnity.

Non-compliant builders often take shortcuts with materials, labour, and



2. Demand proven experience in your type of project

A builder specialising in new homes is not automatically skilled at renovations, structural changes, or retrofits.
Ask for:

- Photos of completed projects
- At least two client references
- Details on subcontractors and whether they're properly registered

Experience reduces risk — and avoids costly rookie mistakes.



3. Insist on a detailed written contract

Handshake deals are how disputes start. A professional contract must include:

- Project scope and specifications
- Milestones and timelines
- Payment schedule linked to progress
- Insurance obligations
- Penalties for delays
- Retention terms
- Warranty details
- Dispute resolution mechanisms

"It's essential that both parties understand clauses like retention or provisional sums," says Chandré Abrahams of MBAWC. "These details matter when things go wrong."

4. Don't Be Fooled by Cheap Quotes

Low pricing often hides low quality or missing elements you'll pay for later.

As the BIBC notes: "If someone competes on price alone, dig deeper. Cheap quotes often hide shortcuts."

A good contractor is never the cheapest, they're the one who delivers value, safety, compliance, and longevity.

5. Clarify work hours, site conduct and shutdown periods

Regulated working hours, year-end shutdowns, noise restrictions, and safety protocols must be understood upfront.

This avoids misunderstandings, neighbour complaints, and project delays.

6. Communicate clearly and manage the project like an investor

Many disputes arise simply because homeowners didn't articulate what they wanted, didn't understand technical terms, or changed plans mid-project. Before work begins, have:

- A clear project plan
- A visual brief (photos of outcomes you expect)
- A budget buffer for unexpected costs
- Weekly onsite check-ins
- Discipline upfront saves huge money down the line.

7. Upgrades that deliver the highest returns

Certain improvements consistently boost resale appeal and rental demand:

- **Expand Living Space**

More space - open-plan layouts, room additions, loft conversions has a direct impact on valuation.

- **Modernise Kitchens and Bathrooms**

Buyers judge a home by these two rooms. Even moderate upgrades (countertops, taps, lighting) boost perceived value.

- **Enhance Outdoor Living**

Decks, patios, and landscaping increase lifestyle appeal and make a home feel larger.

- **Invest in Energy Efficiency**

Solar, insulation, and LED upgrades boost desirability and reduce running costs, especially for younger buyers.

- **Boost Curb Appeal**

Fresh paint, neat gardens, new exterior fittings, and repaired pathways dramatically improve first impressions.

- **The Upgrade Money Can't Buy: Emotional Appeal**

"Well-loved homes simply sell better," notes Lotz. "Buyers feel the energy immediately and it often influences the offer."

8. Know the biggest risk of all: Overcapitalising

Upgrading beyond what your area's market supports destroys profit. Always consult a quantity surveyor, accountant or real estate professional before going on a major spend. They'll validate:

- Buyer expectations
- Price ceilings
- Neighbourhood norms
- Current buyer behaviour



Action steps for home owners and investors

- Verify NHBRC/BIBC/MBAWC compliance
- Request a full project plan and cost breakdown
- Get at least two comparable quotes
- Sign a detailed contract with retention clauses
- Check insurance proof before work starts
- Use quality materials — cheap is expensive
- Monitor progress weekly
- Don't pre-pay large amounts upfront
- Maintain clear written communication
- Bring in a property professional for pre-renovation advice

The payoff: Why renovating properly pays big

When executed with discipline, the right team, and a clear strategy, renovating delivers powerful advantages:

- Forced Appreciation
- You create value immediately, not passively over years.
- Faster Sales and Stronger Offers
- Modern, well-finished homes attract more buyers and stand out.
- Higher Rentals and Lower Vacancies
- Upgraded units command premium rents and attract better tenants.
- Reduced Long-Term Maintenance Costs
- Quality work now prevents expensive repairs later.
- Fewer Disputes and Zero Legal Surprises
- A compliant contractor and solid contract protect your money and your sanity.
- A Smooth, Professional Experience

With the right partners, you stay in control from start to finish.

Renovating for profit isn't just about adding tiles and paint. It's a strategic business decision that demands due diligence, credible partners, solid agreements, and market intelligence.

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TECHNOLOGY

5 Truths every Entrepreneur must know to win with AI innovation

By Neale Petersen



How real world problems, not hype create the next generation of AI breakthroughs

- **AI success comes from solving real problems, not chasing hype or moonshot ideas.**
- **Messy data, human oversight and constant iteration are essential to building reliable AI.**
- **The future belongs to entrepreneurs who apply AI responsibly to everyday frustrations and high-impact decisions.**

Forget the glossy promises, viral demos and breathless headlines. The next wave of AI breakthroughs won't be built in labs chasing perfection, they'll come from entrepreneurs who tackle real pain points, embrace messy data, and commit to relentless iteration.

As Jon Grishpul, Co-CEO of GreatBuildz and creator of a consumer-facing AI platform, puts it:

"The entrepreneurs who win with AI aren't the ones chasing hype, they're the ones solving real problems for real people."

The world is flooded with tools, models and machine-generated magic. But meaningful AI, the kind that reshapes industries requires empathy, discipline and grounded innovation.

Here are the five truths every founder, technologist and business leader must understand to build AI that matters.



1. Start with a real problem

AI should begin where human frustration is highest. The strongest AI products come from deep understanding of:

- Daily user friction
- Complex workflows
- Decisions that feel slow, costly or confusing

The mission: remove pain, not add features. Real value comes when AI makes life simpler.

2. Expect and design for messy data

In the real world, data doesn't arrive in tidy rows. It comes in handwritten forms, blurry photos, PDFs, broken spreadsheets, half-completed fields.

Good AI teams don't fight this reality they engineer for it.
Great AI teams embrace it and build robustness around imperfection.
Messy data isn't a barrier. It's the training ground for dependable AI.

3. Keep humans in the loop

AI doesn't become accurate on its own. Every responsible system needs:

- Review
- Correction
- Feedback
- Accountability

Humans sharpen AI the way craftsmen sharpen tools.
Trustworthy AI is never a "set-and-forget" system, it's guided, shaped and aligned by people.

4. Iterate relentlessly

The first version is never the final version. Real innovation happens through a loop of: Test > Break > Learn > Refine > Repeat.
User feedback often reveals blind spots no algorithm can predict.
Iteration isn't failure, it's momentum.

5. Measure impact, not hype

AI is impressive. But impressive isn't the goal. Impact is the goal. Ask:

- Did it save time?
- Did it improve clarity?
- Did it reduce errors?
- Did it make someone's life easier?

If it didn't, it's noise - not innovation.

The Future of AI: Fairness, clarity & accessibility

The next era of AI is about democratising capability. Tools that once required expert knowledge are becoming widely accessible. AI is transforming:

- Construction workflows
- Healthcare decision-making
- Insurance and claims processing
- Home ownership and maintenance
- Small business operations

Expect AI to remove friction from systems that have long been opaque and overwhelming. Expect it to break down complexity and empower ordinary users. Expect it to shift power back to individuals, through clarity, transparency and confidence.

TECHNOLOGY

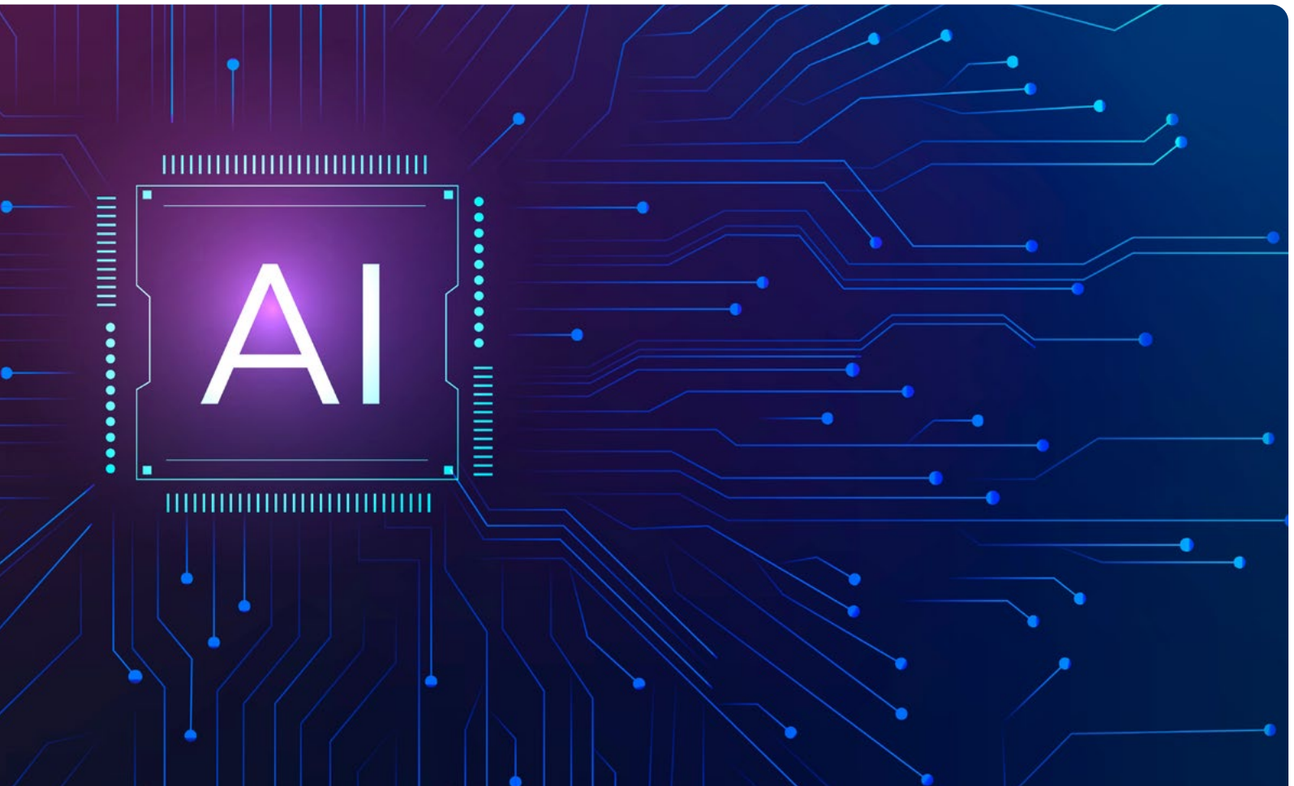
Advice for Entrepreneurs: Start where people struggle

Innovation starts with observation. Watch what:

- Slows people down
- Frustrates them
- Wastes time
- Feels outdated
- Requires constant double-checking

Then ask: “Could AI make this clearer, faster, or more accurate?” Experiment. Question assumptions. Don’t wait for perfect data or models. Never assume the limits of AI, they’re moving every week. The entrepreneurs who win won’t be the loudest. They’ll be the ones who solve what matters.

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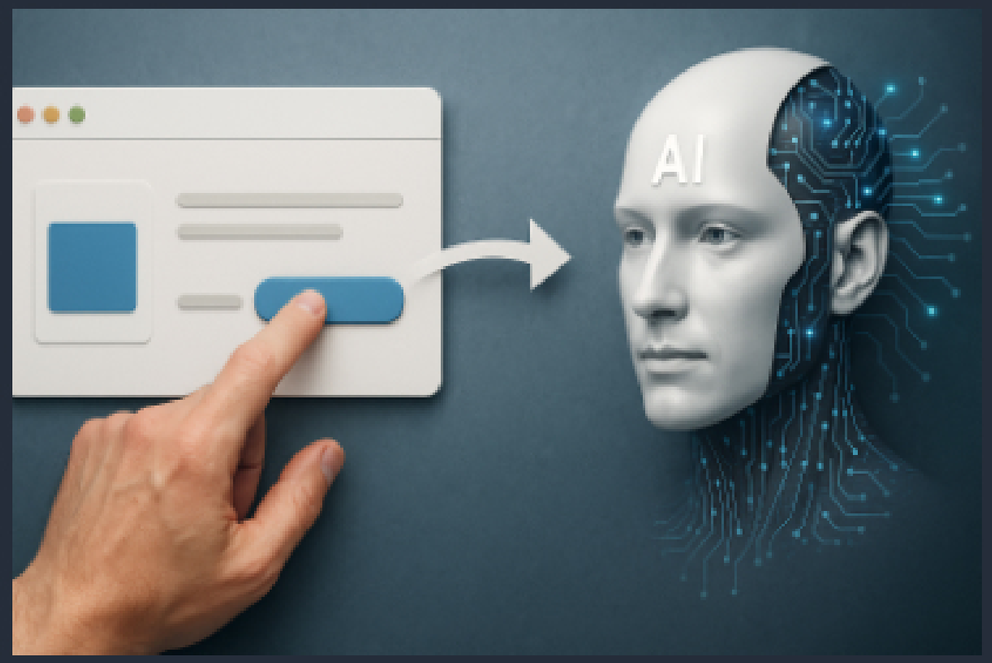
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INVESTING

Why time in property always beats market timing

By Jason Lee



- **Property rewards patience, long-term ownership outperforms short-term speculation.**
- **Leverage, rental income and inflation make 20-year property holds exceptionally powerful.**
- **Well-located real estate builds lasting, generational wealth unmatched by other assets.**

Introduction

In property investing, one simple truth has stood the test of decades: time in the market beats timing the market — every single time. The people who lose money in property are usually those trying to "catch a dip" or predict a peak.

The people who win big? They buy when it makes sense, hold for the long term, and allow time, compounding and real-world demand to do the heavy lifting.

Think of your parents or grandparents. Many made more money from the home they bought 20 to 40 years ago than from any other investment in their lives. That's not market genius—it's time.
An auctioneer once told me:

"You can never pay too much for a property... you can only buy it too early."

That's the power of long-term ownership.

To illustrate this, here are 10 long-term advantages of holding real estate for 20 years in South Africa, explained in a practical, conversational way that shows why property remains one of the most reliable wealth creators we know.

1. Long-term Capital Growth

Property doesn't rise in a straight line, but over 20 years, the upward trend is undeniable.

Short-term cycles come and go, sentiment shifts, and headlines change... but values steadily grow as cities expand, neighbourhoods improve and replacement costs rise.

If you buy a well-located property today, the long-term appreciation plus equity buildup, can be life-changing.



2. Rental income becomes a second pension

In year one, rent often feels modest.
Five years in, it looks decent.
After 10 - 15 years of annual escalations, it becomes meaningful.
Over 20 years, rental income often becomes:

- A bond reducer
- A reinvestment tool
- A cashflow machine
- A retirement income stream

This is where the magic of property really shows itself.
structures.

3. Leverage lets you build wealth with the bank's money

Very few investments let you buy a multi-million-rand asset mostly with borrowed funds. Real estate does.
The bank finances the bulk, tenants help repay it, and after 20 years you've built equity using other people's money.
When the bond is paid off, the property becomes:

- Debt-free
- Cashflow positive
- A major net worth booster

It's one of the most powerful financial mechanisms available to everyday South Africans.

4. Property naturally beats inflation

South Africa lives with structural inflation. Here's the good news: inflation pushes property upward.

- Building costs rise
- Land value rises
- Rent escalates
- Replacement values increase

While inflation eats cash alive, property quietly grows in real terms.
It's one of the best inflation hedges you'll ever own.



5. Portfolio Diversification

Real estate offers diversification benefits compared to:

- Equities
- Cash
- Bonds

Property often performs differently from financial markets, reducing overall risk in your investment portfolio.

It smooths out volatility and protects you when markets get stormy.

6. Potential Tax Advantages

Property investors can deduct:

- Interest
- Repairs
- Maintenance
- Rates
- Certain management fees

CGT only applies on sale, and there are exemptions and structures (companies, trusts, partnerships) that can increase efficiency.

Over 20 years, these tax advantages significantly enhance your real return.

7. Physical and Tangible Asset

Property isn't a number on a screen. Property has intrinsic value. It can't disappear in a bad trading week.

It's physical. It's useful. It houses people, businesses and goods. And unlike many paper assets, it's not going anywhere.

This "realness" and tangibility becomes increasingly valuable over long-term horizons.



8. Ability to add Value

Most investments don't let you influence returns.
Property does. Over 20 years, you can:

- Renovate
- Add units
- Improve energy efficiency
- Modernise interiors
- Rezone for higher density

Each enhancement pushes rental income and capital value up.
Forced appreciation is one of property's greatest advantages and it's entirely in your hands.

9. It creates real Generational Wealth

- Hold a property for 20 years and you typically end up with:
- A paid-off asset
- A monthly income stream
- An inflation-protected retirement supplement
- Something meaningful to pass on

It becomes a family legacy, not a short-term trade.
Generational wealth is built with patience, not clever timing.

10. Strong demand in High-Growth Areas

Urbanisation continues to reshape South Africa. People move toward jobs, safety, lifestyle and opportunity, especially into the Western Cape, Gauteng's economic nodes, and parts of KZN.

Where people go, property values follow. Invest in the path of progress, hold for 20 years, and the results speak for themselves. If there's one message property investors should take into the next decade, it's this: you don't need to time the market, you need to spend time in the market.

- A 20-year property horizon unlocks:
- Capital appreciation
- Rising rental income
- Inflation protection
- Tax advantages
- The power of leverage
- A paid-off, income-generating asset

And most importantly, it unlocks peace of mind.

Start now!

You're never too old or too late to start. At 50 or 60, buying a rental property today could mean stepping into your 70s or 80s with a fully paid-off asset that delivers steady cashflow, exactly when many South Africans run short on retirement income.

Time turns ordinary properties into extraordinary wealth.

Happy investing!

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Don't just take our word for it – here's what estate agents have to say about partnering with BetterBond

BetterBond is amazing. As an estate agent, I count on their expertise to assist my clients, and **they always deliver**. They get **the best rates** and keep us informed throughout the process.

★★★★★ SELINA N

BetterBond isn't just a bond originator – they're my **business partner**. I know that when I refer clients, they'll be looked after. That peace of mind means everything to me and my clients.

★★★★★ LEBO M

Working with **BetterBond** has been a **game-changer** for my business. They take the stress out of the homebuying process. My clients feel empowered, and I have the support I need.

★★★★★ ANDRÉ S

BetterBond makes every transaction smoother. Their professionalism, efficiency and care mean my clients are happy and I can focus on selling. They're a **trusted partner** I wouldn't want to work without.

★★★★★ CARLA L

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RESIDENTIAL

Avoiding Real Estate traps in 2026: How smart investors are playing it safer and winning bigger

Daniel Lombard Founder of Assist Group,
Gerhard Van Der Westhuizen the Chief Investment Officer of Wealth Assist





The New Risk Reality: Living Longer

The first principle we must address for 2026 is the "Longevity Principle." We have learned this year that the risk horizon isn't just until retirement; it is very much after the big day has arrived. As we discussed in our August issue ("Retire 15 Years Sooner"), life expectancy is increasing. If you retire at 65 but live to 90, your capital must work for another 25 years.

This change in the "investment term" means we need to manage portfolios with a much stricter aversion to risk. We cannot rely on market upswings (hope); we must rely on contractually secured returns (principle).

We simply cannot allow market volatility to infect our harvest when we need it most.

The 2026 Landscape: Distress versus opportunity

How will 2026 pan out for us as real estate investors?
One thing is certain: we will see significant opportunities to assist real estate owners in financial distress.

This brings us to the core of the Wealth Assist philosophy. When we look at property investment, we have a much lower risk appetite than the average speculator. Our investors have benefited from this defensive attitude.

To succeed in 2026, you must protect the downside. If you follow the principle of "Capital Preservation First," the growth takes care of itself.



The Two Main Pillars of Risk Avoidance

The basis of a good risk avoidance strategy in real estate comes down to two things: Paperwork and People.

1. Well drafted agreements - 50% of the risk

The foundation of any real estate deal is the contract. Get this right, and 50% of the risk is immediately taken off the table.

At Wealth Assist, our “Re-Start” and “Recovery” products are not built on handshake agreements or standard templates; they are built on robust legal frameworks that secure rental income upfront. This is the difference between hoping a tenant pays and ensuring a tenant pays.

2. Management - the other 50%

We can use the analogy of planting ‘investment’ trees: if the contract is the soil, management is the daily care.

You cannot allow insects to eat your fruit. The reality of property portfolios is that the more trees you have, the higher the risk of a pest infestation, be it maintenance issues, tenant disputes, or regulatory hurdles.

Caring for the asset is key to success. This is where most “passive” investors fail, they underestimate the activity required to keep the investment passive.





Common mistake’s investors make and how to avoid them

#1 Mistake: Relying on capital growth alone

For years, investors rode the wave of rising property prices. But that’s risky now. In 2026, the smart play is cash flow first.

#2 Mistake: Jumping into distressed deals without proper backup

Distressed doesn’t automatically mean profitable. Without proper due

#3 Mistake: No certainty. High-risk, low-predictability investments

This means:

- Tenants that are not motivated to maintain the property
- No pre-vetted joint venture flips with fixed exits
- Income deals where the returns are pre-funded and protected

The Wealth Assist Roadmap

- **Know how and when you'll get paid before committing.**
- **Avoid verbal promises. Only contracts count.**
- **Work with people who've proven themselves. Our investment committee includes eight seasoned experts who vet every deal.**
- **Don't go solo. Partner with professionals.**

How to make an impact

We are in the business of making impact in the lives of all real estate owners. Whether they are owners in financial distress or investors building portfolios to create wealth.

One thing is for certain. The principles of sowing and reaping will never fall away and the more we sow in the right soil the bigger end better the windows of opportunities we will receive. Real estate investment starts with making the best decisions not correcting bad ones.

The right soil determines the quality of the fruit, and we are assisting people in combining the two actions to sow and to harvest and ultimately to see these principles repeating itself into perpetuity.



FINANCE

Flipping for Success: How Jenny Heron turned renovation into a life strategy

By Neale Petersen

When Cape Town-based renovator and author Jenny Heron came back to the Mother City about 13 years ago, she wasn't looking for a "project", she was looking for a way to survive.Newly single, limited by age in the traditional job market and needing to generate her own income, she did what she's always done best: leaned into her eye for interiors, rolled up her sleeves and started flipping houses.

Today, after a string of profitable projects across the Southern Suburbs and False Bay and a growing sideline in consulting and teaching. Jenny has distilled her approach into her book, **Flipping for Success,** a practical, no-nonsense guide to adding value and banking profit from real-world flips.

This is her story and the playbook behind it.

Starting Over: From paint techniques to property flips

Jenny's background has always been about spaces:

- interior decorating
- specialist paint techniques
- picture framing
- antiques and furniture

For 25 years she created faux marbles, murals and textured finishes in homes, hotels and restaurants. Creativity wasn't her problem. Secure income was.

Returning to Cape Town, "newly single" and needing to support herself, she realised two things:

She understood interiors and how to add value.
She couldn't rely on a salary or a boss to sort out her future.
After "a couple of glasses of wine and some honest thinking," she decided: property flipping would be her business model, but done carefully, deliberately and with numbers that made sense.



Flip #1 - Glen Cairn Heights: Jumping in with both feet

Her first project was a small, tired, three-bedroom house in Glencairn Heights a deceased estate that had been rented for years.

What Jenny saw:

- Every colour of paint under the sun
- Opportunities in the garden
- Dated, closed-off kitchen and living areas

What most buyers saw: hard work. What Jenny saw: bones, views and potential with sea, vlei and mountain.

She:

- Bought it for around R950 000 (cash)
- Moved in (critical for tax and cashflow)
- Spent about R200 000 on mostly cosmetic upgrades
- Opened the kitchen to create flow
- Focused hard on curb appeal and liveable spaces

Her turnaround target? Three months. Her actual turnaround? Around five months, still fast given she was living in the dust and doing plenty of “sweat equity” herself.

Listed at around R1.45 million, the property sold quickly to a downscaling couple. Profit: roughly R300k - R400k on a very tight budget.

Today that same house is probably worth well north of R7 million. Jenny still drives past and feels the sting: “I regret selling that one.” But the profit from that flip funded everything that followed..

Rolling the Cash: Milkwood Park, Glencairn, Fish Hoek & Plumstead

From there, Jenny ran a simple, disciplined strategy:

- Buy under R1 million - R1.1 million where possible (for tax efficiency and affordability).
- Move in, renovate, sell, roll the cash into the next deal.
- Target 5-month turnaround and minimum R200k - R250k profit, with many deals closer to R300k - R400k.

Over the next decade-plus she:

- Flipped run-down Victorian-style and cottage homes in Milkwood Park and Fish Hoek often owned by elderly or distressed sellers.
- Turned garages into income-generating flatlets, added patios and entertainment spaces, and transformed neglected gardens into selling features.
- Graduated into sectional title – small, solid blocks in Plumstead and Fish Hoek – where she could spend less on structure and more on visible upgrades.
- Carefully picked blocks with sound financials and decent body corporates, then created value with clever layouts, new kitchens, better bathrooms and thoughtful storage.

The common threads:

- No crazy structural rescues
- No collapsing roofs or subsiding foundations
- Cosmetic, high-impact work aimed at the buyer’s eye and lifestyle

She focused on what sells: light, flow, practicality, storage, outdoor living, and finishes that feel expensive without costing a fortune.
capital accumulation and, therefore, for genuine growth.



The Big Test: Bantry Bay & Full Project Management

Jenny's skills eventually led to commission work for other owners – including a full-gut renovation of a two-bedroom apartment in Bantry Bay that hadn't been touched in 25 years.

This time she wasn't the owner, she was the project manager and design brain:

- Chose all finishes, fittings and layouts
- Managed contractors, timelines and the ever-present politics of a difficult body corporate and a very territorial ex-tenant
- Took the apartment from dark and pokey to modern, bright and desirable

Before-and-after valuations showed almost double the value from roughly R3.2 million to close to R6 million off one project.
That's when it became obvious: Her methods weren't just "nice ideas" they materially moved the needle.

From Flipper to Mentor: Why She Wrote Flipping for Success

After multiple profitable flips and a string of consulting assignments, Jenny noticed something: Most "flipping" books and seminars were either:

- too theoretical, or
- full of hype with very little practical, on-site reality.

What she wished she had at the start was a straight-talking, step-by-step guide that covered:

- how to pick a street and a suburb
- what to look for (and avoid) on a first walk-through
- how to phase renovations while you live in the property
- where money is wasted behind the scenes vs seen by buyers
- how to plan, budget and manage trades without losing your mind

So she wrote Flipping for Success a compact, practical handbook that walks beginners through the real process, warts and all.

It's not about "easy money" or fantasy passive income. It's about planning, graft and disciplined execution.

Jenny's hard-won lessons - Point by point

Here are some of the key lessons Jenny has distilled from more than a decade of projects:

1. **Buy in the right street, not just the right suburb**
   Don't be the first shiny renovated house in a dead road. Look for streets where neighbours have already upgraded, that rising tide lifts your resale.

2. **Middle of the market beats bottom feeder areas**
   Cheap for a reason is dangerous. She targets middle-income, up-and-coming areas where demand is strong and buyers can actually get finance.

3. **Only buy properties with good bones**
   No major cracks, subsidence, rotten roofs or serious damp. Structural rescue work burns money that buyers never see – and kills your margins.

4. **Spend on visibles, not invisible heroics**
   Light, flooring, kitchens, bathrooms, storage, curb appeal and outdoor entertainment space create perceived value. Hidden engineering rarely pays you back in a flip.

5. **Live in your flip when you can**
   Making it your primary residence can help with tax and cashflow. She always makes the main bedroom and bathroom liveable first, then works around herself.

6. **Plan like a general, then move fast**
   Jenny pre-buys materials, lines up trades and aims for overlapping work, three teams on-site instead of one. That's how she hits around 5-month turnarounds.

7. **Build a trusted contractor ecosystem**
   Start with referrals from people you trust (agents, past clients). Expect at least one bad experience and replace weak links fast. Reliability is non-negotiable.

8. **Know your buyer before you design**
   Downscalers, young families, single professionals – each wants different things. She designs each flip with a specific buyer in mind, not her personal taste.

9. **Budget ruthlessly and chase bargains**
   She sets a capex limit and sticks to it. Specials, pensioner discounts, trade accounts and clever sourcing all protect the margin.

10. **Profit or pass, never do a flip for thin margins**
    For her, anything under roughly R200k profit on a deal isn't worth the risk, time and stress. If the numbers don't work on paper, she walks away.

11. **Relationships move deals**
    Strong relationships with local agents brought her deceased estates, neglected homes and quiet opportunities before the general market saw them.

12. **Flipping is work, not passive income**
    Dust, stress, decisions, tenant drama, body corporates, trades gone missing, it's all part of the game. The money follows the effort, not the other way round.



How other investors can do the same

|Not everyone can see a neglected house and visualise the finished product the way Jenny does. But the principles behind her success are learnable:

- Start small and local, one property, in an area you know.
- Focus on cosmetic value-adds, not heroic rescues.
- Get help on the numbers, tax and legal setup if that's not your strength.
- Build a core team of contractors and one or two sharp agents.
- Treat it like a project business, not a side hustle you "wing".

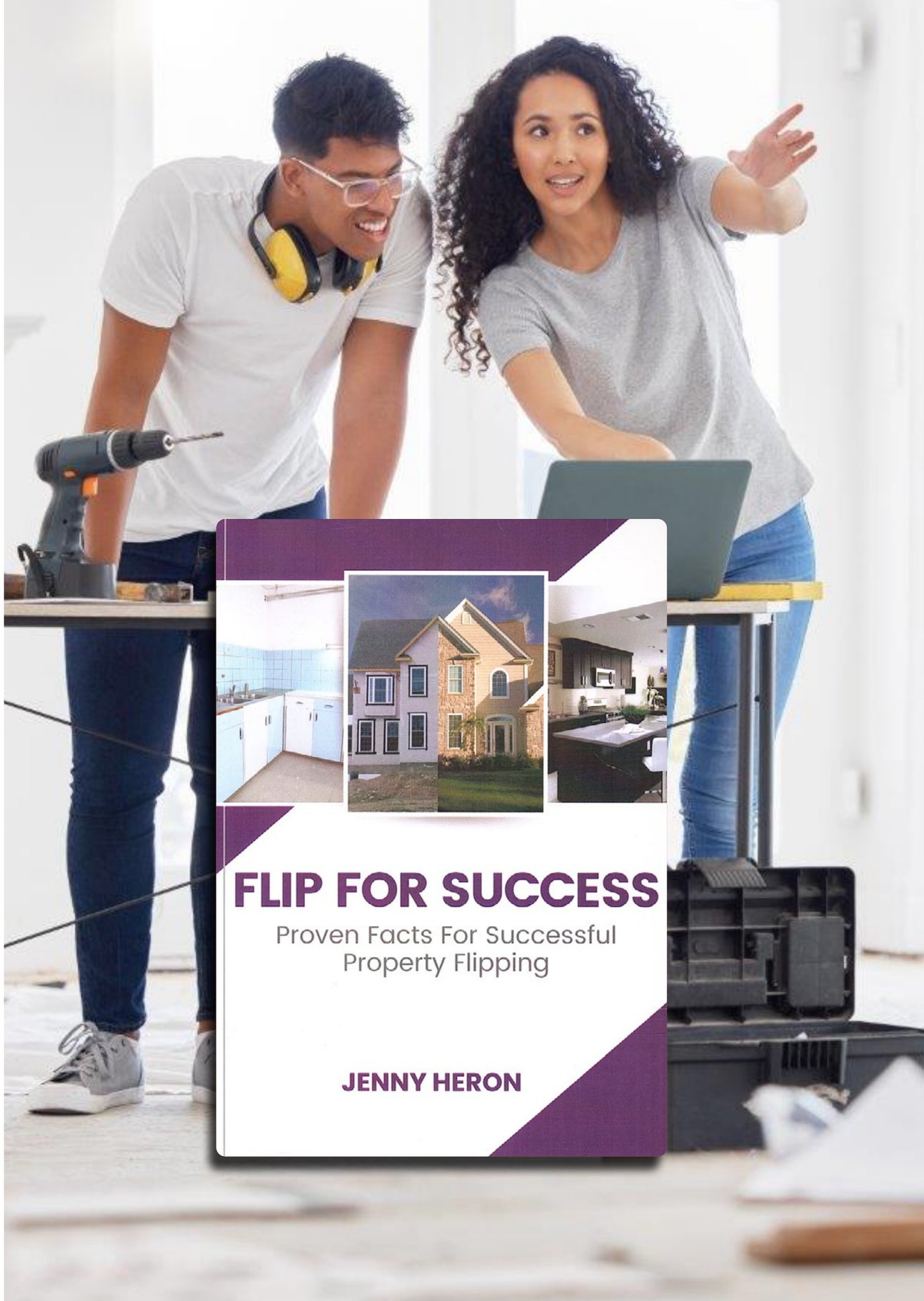
Jenny's message is blunt:
You don't need to be young, rich or a full-time builder to flip successfully, but you do need a plan, discipline and the courage to start. Flipping for Success exists for exactly that reason to give ordinary investors a clear, practical roadmap so they don't have to learn every lesson the hard, expensive way.

If you're serious about using renovation and flipping to grow your wealth, instead of just dreaming about "one day" - Jenny's journey proves it's possible.

Not easy. Not passive. But possible and repeatable,
if you're willing to do the work.

Buy Flip for Success book by Jenny Heron https://www.rei.co.za/rei-education/allebooks

Reach out to Jenny click here: https://www.rei.co.za/contact-us



WEALTH

South Africa's Property Market in 2026

Slow economy, big yields and once in a decade opportunity

By Jaco Grobbelaar



As we prepare to step into 2026, many South Africans are feeling the weight of a sluggish economy, muted GDP growth, and ongoing fiscal pressure. Headlines paint a challenging picture. But the data and the reality for strategic property investors tell a very different story.

Despite economic uncertainty, South Africa is entering one of the strongest high-yield property cycles in more than a decade, especially for investors who embrace alternative strategies such as multi-lets, student accommodation, short-term rentals, and low-cost housing.

At Prosperity Enterprises, our clients are consistently achieving

- 20%+ gross rental yields
- 15%+ net yields
- High occupancy
- Strong long-term capital growth

In a world where most markets are facing declining yields and affordability crises, South Africa stands out as a rare opportunity.

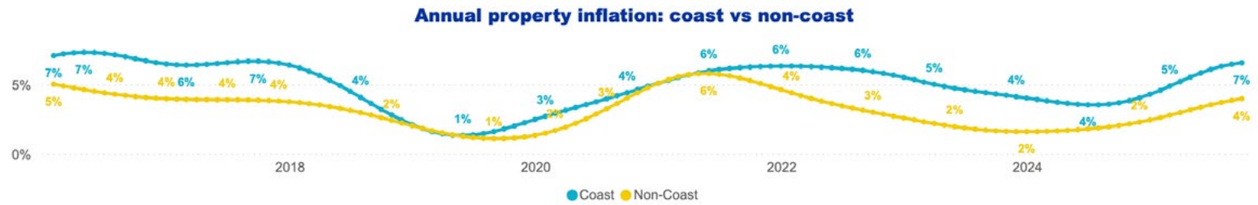
1. The economy is slow... but the property market is not

GDP growth is subdued, and economic pressure remains, but inflation has stabilised, and the interest rate cycle is finally turning.

Property Price Growth Is Quietly Strengthening
Lightstone's latest Residential Property Indices (Sept 2025) show

- National annual house inflation: 4.2%
- Coastal areas: 6.6%
- Non-coastal: 4.0%
- Low-value properties (< R500k): 9.8% annual growth

The Lightstone Coast vs Non-Coast Index compares property located within enumerator areas 500m from the coastline to those located further inland.



Property inflation: value bands

The Lightstone Area Value Bands Index reviews inflationary rates for property based on being located in areas where typical property values are:
Luxury: > R2mil
High Value: R1mil to R2mil
Mid Value: R500k to R1mil
Low Value: <R500k

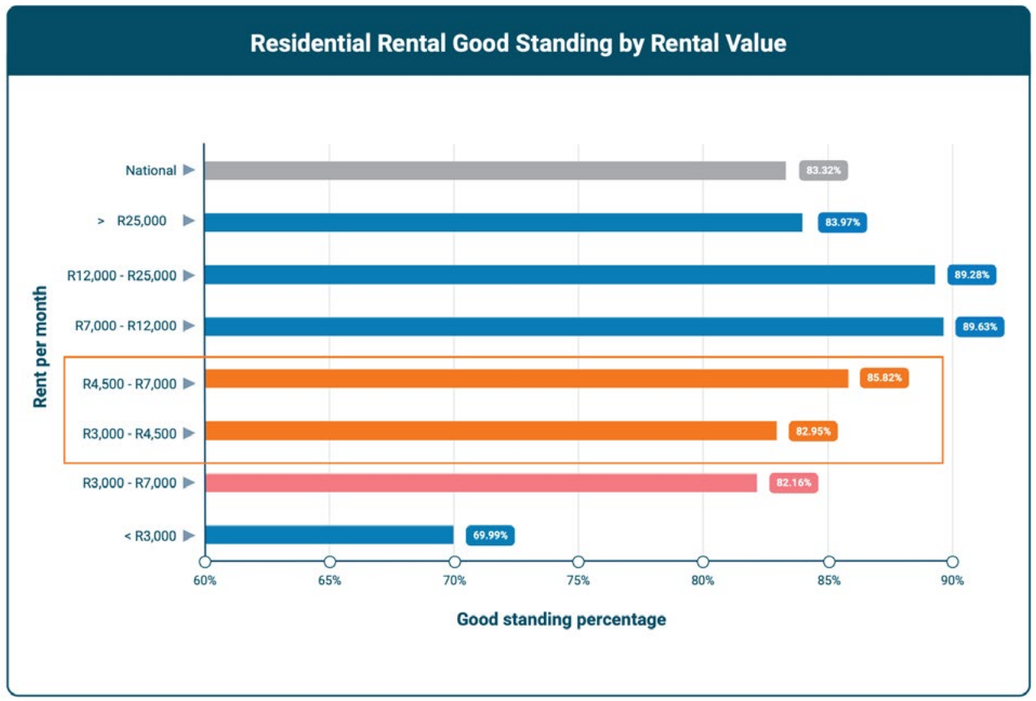


These numbers are crucial because the strongest growth is happening in the most affordable segments, where alternative strategies thrive.

2. Rental demand is surging across the country

TPN's Q1 2025 Rental Monitor highlights an incredibly resilient rental marke

- 83.32% of tenants are in good standing nationally
- The R7,000 - R12,000 rental band now represents 30%+ of the market
- Homeownership continues to fall, only 6.3% of households are paying off a bond

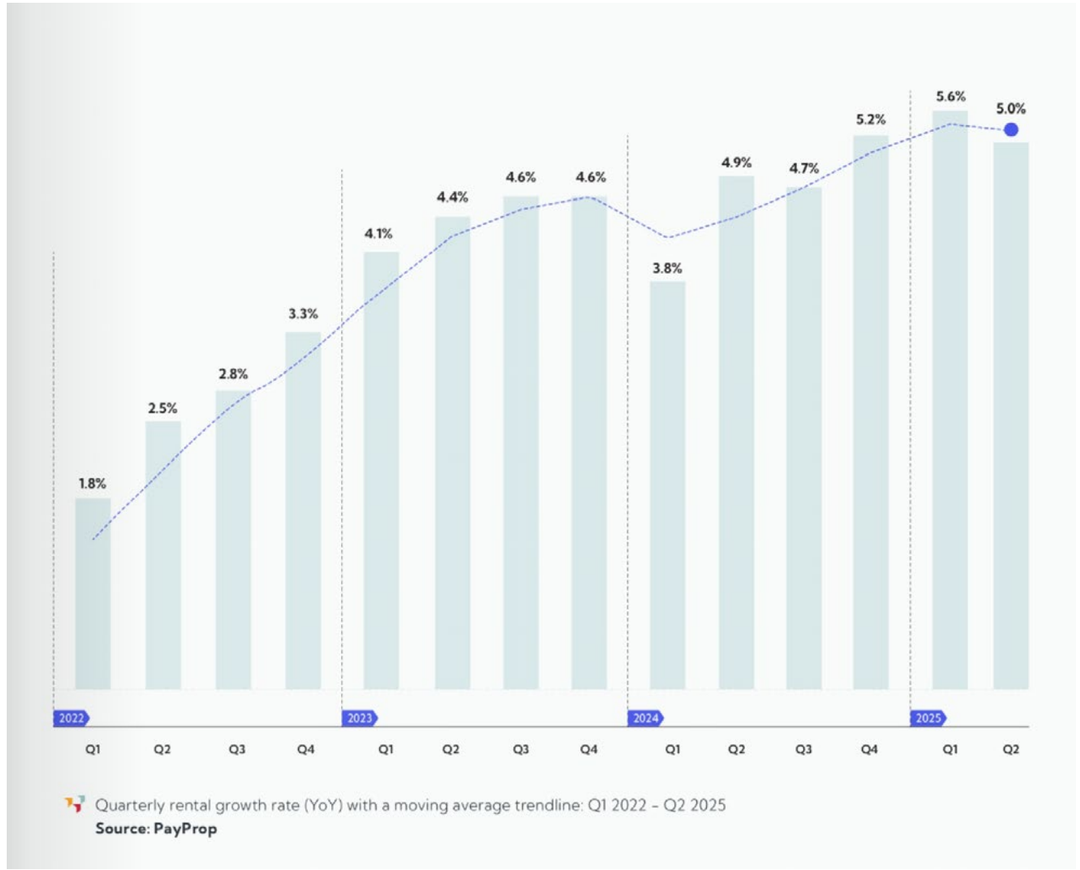


The decline in homeownership is structural, not temporary. Rising living costs, high debt levels, and financial uncertainty mean more households are renting for longer, pushing rental demand to new highs.

3. Rental growth Is outpacing inflation

TPN data shows national rental escalation at 4.49% in Q1 2025, with certain brackets performing even better.

- Below R3,000: 4.36%
- R3,000 - R7,000: 3.95%
- R7,000 - R12,000: 5.12%
- Above R12,000: 5.68%



This is well above CPI and confirms that rental property continues to beat inflation, especially in areas ideal for alternative strategies.

4. South African property is shockingly affordable compared to the rest of the world

While global markets grapple with a severe housing affordability crisis, South Africa sits in a uniquely favourable position.
South Africa is one of the most affordable housing markets on earth. A global affordability study released in 2025 found that:

- South Africa ranks #1 in the world for housing affordability
- Home prices exceed average wages by only 6.22%

In contrast

- Countries like Turkey exceed 80%
- Many European markets face affordability ratios that make homeownership nearly unattainable

Global databases such as Numbeo reinforce this.

- South Africa's price-to-income ratio: ±3.2
- Prime foreign markets like Monaco: 40+

This means property here is not just affordable, it is undervalued relative to global norms.

Pair that with

- Strong rental escalations (4% - 6%)
- High tenant demand
- Low supply of affordable stock
- Capital growth of 4% to 10%, depending on segment

You get one of the best investment landscapes in the world.

A once-in-a-decade window

South Africa offers a rare alignment.

1. Globally cheap purchase prices
2. Strong, rising rental income
3. High yields from alternative strategies
4. Growing demand and limited supply
5. Capital growth accelerating in key segments

This combination never lasts forever. As affordability becomes recognised globally, international capital, semigration trends, and local investors will drive prices upward compressing yields. The window is now.

5. Why we are achieving 20%+ gross yields in a "weak" market - Because we don't invest traditionally.

Multi-Lets
Convert one property into multiple rentable rooms or units.

- Higher rental per m^2
- Lower vacancy
- Strong demand
- 18% - 24% gross yield

Student Accommodation
Stable, recession-proof, consistent.

- 20% - 28% gross yield

Short-Term Rentals
Especially strong in semigration and travel hubs.

- 15% - 25% gross yield

Low-Cost Housing
Backed by the strongest property inflation in the country (9.8%).

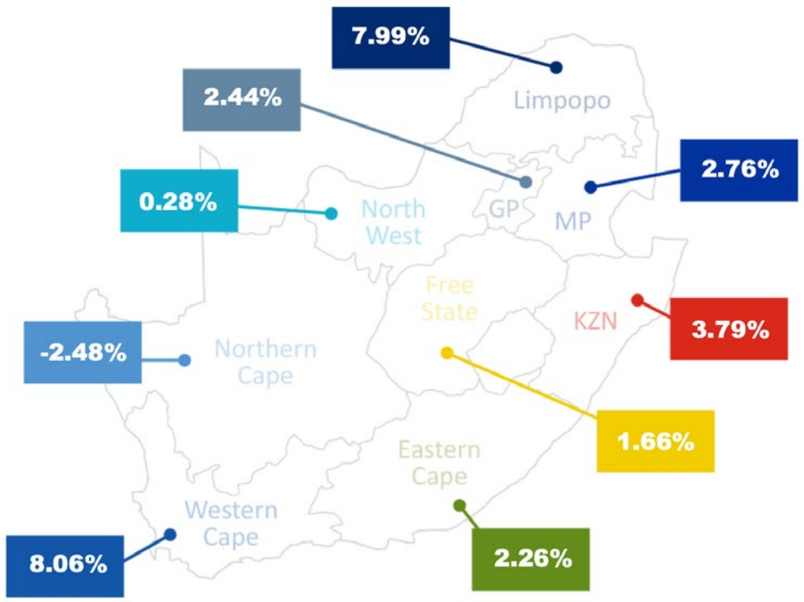
- 16% - 22% gross yield

With proper structuring and management, clients consistently achieve 15% net yield, even after expenses.

6. Provincial and metro insights for 2026

Lightstone's provincial data (Sept 2025) shows

- Western Cape: 8.06% inflation
- Limpopo: 7.88%
- Gauteng: 2.44%



Municipalities

- Cape Town leads major metros at 7.6% inflation
- Johannesburg stabilising at 1.7%
- Tshwane and Ekurhuleni showing renewed strength

TPN reveals

- Western Cape tenants: 89.10% in good standing
- Gauteng: 82.21%
- KZN: 76.92%

This all points to excellent yield opportunities in Gauteng and inland provinces and high capital growth in coastal and semigration hubs.

7. Rising construction costs are increasing the value of existing stock

Materials, labour, and compliance costs continue to rise faster than inflation. This raises:

- Replacement costs
- Resale values
- Rental prices

It also makes conversions and repositioning strategies (multi-lets, student housing) far cheaper and more profitable than building new stock.

8. Why 2026 could be your most profitable property investment year yet

- **Interest rates are expected to drop further**
  This improves affordability and enhances cash flow.

- **Rental demand is climbing**
  South Africans are renting for longer, and rental bands continue to shift upward.

- **Affordable stock is outperforming**
  The under-R1 million market shows the strongest inflation and rental growth.

- **Alternative strategies continue to out-yield traditional rentals**
  Student housing, multi-lets, and low-cost rentals are outperforming national averages dramatically.

- **South African property is globally undervalued**
  This makes 2026 a rare entry point for long-term investors.

Don’t wait: Buy the right property now

The economy may be slow, but the fundamentals driving rental property are the strongest they’ve been in years.

- Demand
- Affordability
- Yield
- Replacement cost
- Tenant behaviour
- Capital growth

Combine that with the fact that South Africa currently offers the most affordable property market in the world, and you have a once-in-a-decade opportunity.

In a world of volatility, property remains one of the most reliable, inflation-beating, wealth-building vehicles, especially when you use the right strategy.

Don’t wait to buy property. Buy property and wait.
View the recording of our recent webinar, Property Investment Trends and Analyses.





EVENTS

Green Building Convention 2025: A sector stepping boldly into the future

A year of leadership, innovation and momentum for SA's sustainability movement

By REI Editorial



‘Stepping up to Next’: A milestone year for Green Building

- **GBCSA 2025 showcased breakthrough projects, rising leaders and a sector proving that green building is profitable, not just principled.**
- **Georgina Smit announced as incoming CEO, signalling continuity, technical depth and bold direction for 2026.**
- **Leadership Awards recognised excellence across projects, professionals and organisations driving SA’s transition to a greener built environment.**

The 18th Green Building Convention, held at Century City Conference Centre, wrapped up with a clear message: South Africa’s green building movement has entered a new era of scale, confidence and commercial viability.

With more than 800 industry players in attendance, the 2025 theme Stepping Up to Next captured a sector accelerating towards deeper impact while proving that sustainability delivers measurable returns. A major announcement set the tone for the year ahead: Georgina Smit, GBCSA’s Head of Technical, was introduced as the organisation’s next CEO, effective May 2026. Outgoing CEO Lisa Reynolds celebrated Smit’s commitment, expertise and passion, calling her a “worthy and capable successor” poised to drive the next chapter of the Council’s growth.

Ideas, leadership and innovation take centre stage

The plenary sessions brought world-class voices to Cape Town. Architect and thinker Olajumoke Adenowo bridged identity, legacy and innovation.

Environmental advocate Dr Adenike Akinsemolu made the case for sustainability as a catalyst for systemic change.



Housing and ESG strategist Alexandra Notay unpacked how social value underpins successful sustainable development.
Biomimicry pioneer Michael Pawlyn challenged delegates to design for regeneration and circularity.

AI visionary Dr Jacques Ludik explored how emerging technology will accelerate impact across the built environment.
Beyond the plenaries, the Next Stage and SMME Village, sponsored by Property Point, showcased cutting-edge ideas from green start-ups and innovators, reinforcing how sustainability is creating new enterprises and career pathways.

A landmark year recognised through GBCSA Leadership Awards

At the Gala Dinner, sponsored by Balwin Properties, the GBCSA Leadership Awards honoured the projects and professionals raising the bar in sustainable construction and management.

Standout winners included:

- Old Mutual Mutualpark - Highest rated existing building
- Balwin Properties HQ at 105 Corlett Drive - Highest rated new development
- Redefine Properties - Net zero champion & EDGE Commercial leader
- Divercity, IHS, Century Property Developments & Balwin - EDGE Residential Leaders
- Thato Molapo - Rising Green Star
- Fabio Venturi - Established Green Star
- Growthpoint Properties - Green Star leader for existing operations

These awards reflected a single truth: the “green premium” narrative is over. Sustainable buildings are more profitable, easier to lease, cheaper to run, and outperform traditional assets findings reinforced by the Green Building SA: Guide to Costs & Trends and the latest MSCI Green Property Index.



A sector ready for scale

Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure Dean Macpherson added momentum by announcing the department’s membership of GBCSA a commitment that will influence the management of 80 000 public buildings and embed sustainability into government infrastructure.
With over 500 professionals trained by the GBCSA Academy this year alone, the industry is building the skills pipeline needed for long-term transformation.

South Africa’s green building movement ends 2025 with more proof, more leadership, and more urgency than ever. As Lisa Reynolds noted, “Sustainability has proven to be more profitable. Green building is now mainstream.”

NEWSSTAND ARCHIVES



NOV 25



OCT 25



SEP 25



AUG 25



JULY 25



JUNE 25



MAY 25



APRIL 25



MARCH 25

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CLUR CONNECT
your live view on retail

CLUR INTERNATIONAL

Belief

NEWLY RELEASED 2ND EDITION NOW AVAILABLE TO WATCH

"A Belief Economy has emerged as the Attention Economy fades. The new consumer language centres on meaningful values, sincerity and trust. The new consumer currency is emotional, human and community connection. Consumers now want something real."

Belinda Clur – Founder & Managing Director, Clur International

Clur Connect™ is a video series profiling **South African retail property**, its economic and community contribution and international leadership. The **second edition features** inspiring industry leaders discussing the Belief Economy.

Itumeleng Mothibeli
Managing Director Southern Africa
Vukile Property Fund
President
South African Property Owners Association (SAPOA)

Amelia Beattie
Head of Business Efficiencies, Property & Sustainable Impact Insurance and Asset Management
Standard Bank Group

Vuso Majija
Executive Director & Head of Retail
Fortress Real Estate Investments Limited
Director
South African Council of Shopping Centres

Lindi Van Der Merwe
National Leasing Manager
Mowana Properties

Malose Kekana
Group Chief Executive Officer
Pareto Limited

Jason McCormick
Chief Executive Officer
Exemplar REITail

Belinda Clur
Founder & Managing Director
Clur International

WATCH ON YouTube
PLEASE CLICK HERE TO VIEW BELIEF, THE NEWLY RELEASED 2ND FULL EDITION.

This edition of **Clur Connect** presents a comprehensive picture of **how retail property is performing and responding to change**, driven by the arrival of the **Belief Economy**. It shows how the sector is **connecting with communities** and how a **rapidly evolving consumer system** will influence shopping centres going **into the future**. Critically, it shows the **positive catalytic impact shopping centre owners are driving** through investments in sustainability, education, skills development and recreational facilities.



Clur Connect™ is part of the **Clur Collective™**, South Africa's leading early-warning performance, strategy, analysis and benchmarking platform built **exclusively for shopping centres**. This endorsed industry standard and economic indicator covers **over 5.4 million square metres** of space across listed and unlisted property funds in South Africa and Namibia. **Clur International™** is a widely recognised asset management support house with a partnership approach, which produces the **Clur Shopping Centre Index™** and the **Clur Connect™** video series.