

Emerging green trends shaping the residential landscape in SA

With climate change having a tangible impact on our lives, there's a growing demand for future-forward homes with sustainable features.



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In South Africa, the added challenge of disruptive load shedding and rising electricity costs mean that alternative power solutions have become essential, says Bradd Bendall, BetterBond head of sales.

“With experts estimated that load shedding is likely to be a regular occurrence for at least the next three years, we expect green living to be one of the leading residential trends in 2024.”

BetterBond's top green trends for 2024 include:

1. Sustainable living

“Green” features are becoming highly sought-after as South Africans attempt to mitigate the impacts of power and water cuts on everyday life. Solar installations and power-storage systems, boreholes, rainwater harvesting, LED lighting, energy-efficient home technology, water-wise landscaping and more are being used to make us less dependent on the main supply grids.

“Some of our banking partners are also offering ‘green bonds’ with preferential rates to help homebuyers purchase property in sustainable residential housing developments,” adds Bendall.

2. Solar

Back-up power solutions have become increasingly desirable in South African homes as we plan our lives around power cuts and learn to live with load shedding. Once viewed as nice-to-haves or even luxury add-ons, solar installations have now jumped to the top of homeowners’ and landlords’ must-have lists, with the positive spin-off of prices coming down sharply.

iAfrica reports that the price of solar decreased more than 90% between 2008 and 2023.

“Not only does a solar installation at home help reduce your monthly energy bills, it could increase the value of your home by as much as 8%. With a variety of finance options now available through our banking partners, as well as the 25% government rebate, up to R15 000, solar will become a feature of more and more homes in 2024,” says Bendall.



Construction begins on The Fynbos

19 Dec 2023



3. Climate change

The implications of a warming planet cannot be ignored. Both the Western Cape and Eastern Cape provinces were battered by unusually heavy rainfall and flooding in the winter of 2023. “We foresee that considerations about the impact of extreme weather on a particular region could become a factor in home buying, in future,” says Bendall.

Coastal regions could be at greater risk of flooding, while inland areas could face drought conditions or wildfires. The increased risks of weather damage could mean that insurance cover, such as Homeowner’s Cover or Buildings Insurance, may become more essential to protect homeowners’ biggest assets in future.

4. Green roofs and vertical gardens

Not only beautiful to look at, especially in smaller homes, vertical gardens improve insulation and contribute to well-being by enhancing your home’s air quality, says Bendall. Green, or eco-roofs, are rooftops partially or completely covered with vegetation.

Other than adding a beautifully natural feel to a home or outdoor structure, living roofs have a host of benefits, such as offering roof protection from the harsh sun and reducing a home’s indoor heating and cooling requirements, particularly in summer. Green roofs also help wildlife flourish and keep cities cooler - plus, once installed, they’re low maintenance.

5. Eco-aware lifestyle estates

South Africa is home to beautiful lifestyle estates, with two of New World Wealth's top 10 lifestyle estates globally based in SA. Increased security and a range of amenities are part of the appeal for buyers interested in estate living, but as environmental awareness grows, estates with a commitment to the environment are increasingly sought after.

"Eco-friendly features like energy-efficient homes, renewable energy sources, and green spaces that prioritise biodiversity are becoming popular features in residential estates," says Bendall.

"From indigenous gardens to water conservation measures and eco-conscious designs, we'll see an even greater focus on sustainability and eco-conscious initiatives in these estates."

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