

Property trends: Living in a 'quarantine bubble'

With Covid-19 forcing many people to spend the majority of their time at home, it has become more than a sanctuary. Homes have now evolved into what are being dubbed 'quarantine bubbles'.



Image source: www.pexels.com

“As a result,” says Dr Andrew Golding, chief executive of the Pam Golding Property group, “it has become evident that many families and individuals are assessing and re-evaluating their existing accommodation in order to determine how it matches up with their new lifestyle requirements, both now and into the future, and taking into account any potential future quarantine requirements.

“If their current living space cannot be adapted to suit their changing needs, they may look to relocate to a home and a location which provides the options they seek, whether it be for a larger home – with outdoor space, a better lifestyle in a more desirable destination, or even a newbuild in a residential development custom-designed to cater for their specific requirements.”

Redefining homes as a quarantine space

Given the above, and looking to the future, the question arises - how are developers, architects and home owners alike responding to redefining homes as a quarantine space?

Says Golding: “Today, people are wanting to get the most out of their homes or living space. Work from home space is rapidly becoming a priority, increasingly so if two family members need to be catered for in this regard, as well as study space for children. This may result in a guest bedroom making way for work space, or in the case of a new development, the kitchen area may downsize to provide for additional space for the alternative use. However, during lockdown, with more people cooking – and with newfound culinary skills, the kitchen may be playing a bigger role in close-knit family life. It may even require additional space, such as a pantry for storing food items, and freezers.

“In the US, in response to the pandemic and lockdown, a developer is already branding a new-build residential development as a ‘sanctuary’ with air purifiers and a wellness theme. In new residential developments, access to private outdoor space is another feature likely to become in increasing demand, and in line with this, some developers are already looking to incorporate courtyards or outdoor terraces - or even a small balcony - for apartments as a means of providing tranquil ‘green’ space.



Dr Andrew Golding, chief executive of the Pam Golding Property group

Mixed-use developments

“Already popular, mixed-use developments also hold potential for higher demand, especially those incorporating a range of amenities including co-working spaces, retail, leisure and open space, making them increasingly self-contained and self-sufficient. This same concept applies to residential estates, which are proving more sought after due to the limited exposure to potential health risks, and which offer a host of facilities, including sport, leisure and exercise amenities, retail and even schooling.”

In terms of interior layouts of residences, another developer is looking at introducing a transition zone - which could be a conversion of the traditional hallway - as a sanitising station which acts as a buffer between the outside environment and the virus-free, interior living space. This could include a wash basin or even a shower.

Multi-functional, flexible rooms

Adds Golding: “We’re also likely to see a leaning towards multi-functional and more flexible rooms or areas. At the same time, interior configurations will ideally still allow for quiet corners or an alcove with sliding doors for video-conferencing or some privacy from other family members, or small indoor gardens as an escape for destressing, bearing in mind that indoor plants also help ‘clean’ the air while soothing the senses.

Says Sandra Gordon, Pam Golding Properties senior research analyst: “Increased space for storage will help keep homes

uncluttered and easy to keep clean. With an increased focus on the home zone, additional space for exercise and family activities becomes a prerequisite, while fibre connectivity is critical both for business and leisure purposes.

Other must-haves

“Another must-have is good natural (fresh) air flow via large windows and floor-to-ceiling doors – allowing for cross-ventilation, while fixtures and fittings such as copper, bronze and brass for door handles are naturally antibacterial and antiviral, and hard, smooth counter tops and surfaces make for easy cleaning and sanitising.”

Concludes Golding: “The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown has shown us that there is much to be said for multi-generational living, with shared accommodation that also caters for grandparents and adult children - both from a humanitarian perspective – eliminating lone isolation - as well as economics, enabling shared costs.”

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