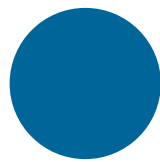


# THE : FUTURE : LABORATORY

: : BEKO

: : THE AGE OF NESTING



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The Future Laboratory is one of the world's foremost trend forecasting, consumer insight and strategic innovation consultancies. Through its online network LS:N Global, it speaks to clients in 14 lifestyle sectors on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.

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# Introduction

The past nine months have changed our lives for ever, and businesses and governments have an important role to play to help us adapt to this new world order. The home in particular will undergo a radical shift, as we rethink where and how we live and look for solutions that reflect increasing concerns over hygiene, sustainability and wellness. This report outlines the trends we can expect to see over the next 10 years, and some of the innovations that will help us tackle today's biggest problems.

- Hakan Bulgurlu, CEO, Arçelik

PREVIOUS PAGE: PRECHT DESIGNS PARC DE LA DISTANCE FOR OUTDOOR SOCIAL DISTANCING. THE MAZE-LIKE PARK WILL GUIDE VISITORS ON 20-MINUTE SOLITARY WALKS, WITH ONLY ONE PERSON ENTERING EACH LANE AT A TIME



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# Executive Summary

The outbreak of Covid-19 turned public spaces into no-go zones and forced residents around the world to suddenly retreat into their apartments and houses. As a result, the way in which we use our homes has undergone a significant transformation.

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Once a place to leave in the morning and return to at night, many homes are now occupied nearly 24/7 and this shift marks the beginning of a new era: The Age of Nesting.

This report, created by Beko in partnership with The Future Laboratory, delves into the next decade at home and looks at where we reside and why, and how we're going to live.

Pre-pandemic, we existed in an era of Hyper-visibility where presenteeism, non-stop scrolling and constant consumption dominated. Lockdowns dramatically disrupted these trends, as people were required to 'shelter in place'. Three major shifts have seen the Age of Nesting already beginning to shape what we expect from our domestic dwellings:

- : The Big Remote – as consumers across the globe experience days without long commutes, the home has become the front line of a new working landscape.
- : Homebody Hospitality – staying in is in. From virtual cocktail parties to luxury meal kits, Covid-19 has seen the home become the only and ultimate hangout.
- : Domestic Wellness – as people embrace online gym classes, virtual meditation and even remote healthcare appointments, living spaces have become wellness spaces.

Rocked by the impact of weeks spent in lockdown and learning how to stay safe in the face of the pandemic, people's mindsets and expectations have fundamentally shifted. In the Age of Nesting they are demanding solutions and solidarity from brands, seeking out connections with their local communities, and flexibility in their homes.

By 2030, the Age of Nesting will be in full swing and where we live, how we live, and the homes we live in will have significantly transformed. In this report we identify and explore three key markers of this future and the new living concepts the Age of Nesting will inspire:

- : Rurban Revolution – where consumers seek health, hygiene and recuperative living, leading to an urban exodus that will reboot the suburbs and rural areas, and providing cities with an opportunity to become more human-centric.
- : Multi-modal Properties – where homes adapt to become 'blended spaces', able to fluidly facilitate different kinds of work, recuperation, rest and play.
- : Pandemic-proof Living – where people's collective concerns about hygiene and wellbeing will drive new directions in how we live, as hyper-hygienic, super-sustainable and pandemic-proof lifestyles come to the fore.

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*‘The home has played a pivotal role in the recent global crisis, forced to double as office, school, gym, restaurant or even a healthcare setting, our homes have become the front line of our external lives’*

*Chris Sanderson, co-founder, The Future Laboratory*





HACKNEY MARSHES-INSPIRED FOOTBALL PITCHES TO KEEP SOCIAL DISTANCE BY ACCEPT & PROCEED FOR WHERE WE STAND

# Part One: Foresight Overview

The speed at which Covid-19 hit trade, travel, communications and relationships around the world has resulted in some of the most profound changes to our daily lives in the past century.

Emerging trends which were forecast to be adopted over the next decade have instead been realised overnight, while others have been placed on hold or extinguished entirely by the impact of a pandemic that has left no person or industry untouched.

As the outbreak of Covid-19 turned public spaces into no-go zones and forced the majority of the world to retreat into their apartments and houses, few places have experienced greater transformation than our homes. ‘The home has played a pivotal role in the recent global crisis,’ says Chris Sanderson, co-founder of The Future Laboratory. ‘Forced to double as office, school, gym, restaurant or even a healthcare setting, our homes have become the front line of our external lives.’

Once a place to leave in the morning and return to at night, the home has been transformed by almost 24/7 occupation. This marks the beginning of a new era: The Age of Nesting.

The Age of Nesting describes our new-found reliance on our homes and the new behaviours taking place inside them, from work to workouts, gaming to gourmet dining, and maths lessons to meditation sessions. ‘Now, the home is everything to us,’ says Annie Auerbach, author of *Flex* and co-founder of

cultural insights agency Starling. ‘It matters more than ever – it is our sanctuary, our castle.’

With lockdowns slowly lifting, so too is the pressure on these spaces, but there will be a long-lasting legacy as people reconsider the home, its location, its design, its function and its purpose. One thing that is certain is that the home, and how we live within it, must change if we are to survive the next phase of the pandemic. According to Auerbach, ‘The future home needs to solve problems created by Covid-19 and become fit for purpose for a new world.’

This report, created by Beko in partnership with foresight consultancy The Future Laboratory, uncovers and explores the forces driving the Age of Nesting, it investigates the impact this new era is having on consumer behaviour, and reveals how our homes will adapt to a new and rapidly unfolding future.

‘Events that impact on an entire population in a similar fashion are a once-in-a generation occurrence. This is a hard, unsettling reset – but it can result in positive, unprecedented changes in how ordinary people behave and interact,’ says Sanderson.



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# Part Two: The Age of Nesting

To understand how the home will change so radically over the next decade, we must first explore the influential social, cultural and technological shifts happening today.

Before to the pandemic, our work hours were growing longer, as were our commutes. With social media added to the mix, we were living in an era of Hyper-visibility –presenteeism, constant sharing and constant consumption of content placed the focus on extroversion and external stimuli. But three major shifts due to the coronavirus – the largest home-working case study in history to a booming homebody economy and a welcoming of wellness into the home – are seeing the Age of Nesting already beginning to shape how, why and where we will work, rest and play in the future, and what we expect from our domestic dwellings.

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## 01. The Big Remote

As people across the globe experience days without long commutes, the home has become the front line of a new working landscape.

The largest home-working case study in history has seen webcams replace the water cooler as the place to meet colleagues. ‘Unshackled from the archaic structures of traditional working life – and the assumption that presenteeism equals productivity – workers across the globe have been able to experience days without long commutes, and create their own routines instead,’ says The Future Laboratory’s co-founder Martin Raymond.

Pre-crisis, a growing number of workers were pushing for this kind of flexibility, with half of employees globally working outside main office headquarters for at least 2.5 days a week, according to the International Workplace Group.

Instead of a major shift to flexible working emerging over a number of years, Covid-19 saw it accelerated and fully realised almost overnight. ‘The barriers to flexible working that so many businesses had said were insurmountable just seemed to melt away, because when it comes down to protecting your workforce at a time of emergency, you adapt quickly,’ observes Auerbach.

This change was initially assumed to be temporary, but the signs now point to a permanent alteration of

the working landscape. While people no longer have to commute, they are spending 48.5 minutes more at their desk each day, according to a report published by the National Bureau of Economic Research, and research from Gartner reveals that almost three quarters (74%) of companies across the globe plan to shift permanently to more remote work.

As a result, The Big Remote represents a fundamental reset in how and where we work. ‘We’ve proved that there is a new way,’ says Auerbach. ‘People won’t want to go back to the old normal.’

Different working behaviours have emerged as we adapt to this new landscape. Use of video conferencing has exploded, with Zoom reaching 200 million daily participants in March 2020, up from 10 million in December 2019, while people are turning on video in Teams meetings twice as frequently as before the crisis. Creative agency Kids has created an ambience tool for those who miss the office hubbub – the I Miss the Office concept generates office sounds such as a whirring printer, the footsteps of colleagues and the clicks of typing on a keyboard.

But there are even more profound changes on the horizon for the world of work, as businesses and innovators grapple to recreate at home the collaboration, fruitful chance encounters and social elements that traditional office culture can offer.



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## 02. Homebody Hospitality

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Staying in is in. From virtual cocktail parties to luxury meal kits, Covid-19 has seen the home become the only and ultimate hangout.

Not only do homes represent the new front line of a remote working world, but a homebody renaissance means they have also become a new realm of customer experience. Faced with lockdowns, social distancing measures and radically reduced footfall, the hospitality industry – which for so long represented an escape from domestic life – has entered the home and is there to stay.

Much of this is down to the ingenuity of hospitality brands. The rising popularity of meal kits and delivery apps has seen domestic dinners become the new dining out, while digital tools combined with delivery services have helped reframe drinking at home as a positive social activity. The global online food delivery services market, which accounted for just over £18 billion in 2018, is expected to reach nearly £76.3 billion by 2027, due to the proliferation of services such as Deliveroo, Just Eat and Uber Eats.

Food, drink and other hospitality brands are now providing inspiration, connection and education behind the front door. ‘The fact that you can get amazing, high-end food and drinks brought to your doorstep can make homes, albeit temporarily, feel like a thriving place of fun, entertainment, sociability and growth,’ says Auerbach.

The surge in subscriptions to streaming platforms such as Netflix – which added 26 million paid subscribers in the first two quarters of 2020 compared to 28 million subscribers across the whole of 2019 – further illustrates how the home is now at the forefront of entertainment and experience. It’s a shift that will continue long after lockdowns are lifted, and create new pressures on the home space.

A recent global study from Accenture demonstrates this, finding that 69% of consumers only expect to socialise over the next six months in either their own home, at a friend’s home or virtually. As Oliver Wright, managing director and head of Accenture’s global consumer goods practice, states: ‘Home is now the new frontier, so companies must account for this reality.’

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*‘The fact that you can get amazing, high-end food and drinks brought to your doorstep can make homes, albeit temporarily, feel like a thriving place of fun, entertainment, sociability and growth’*

*Annie Auerbach, co-founder, Starling*





### 03. Domestic Wellness

As people embrace online gym classes, virtual meditation and even remote healthcare appointments, living spaces have become wellness spaces.

Fear of touch and contact, combined with the communal surfaces and spaces previously intrinsic to fitness and wellness, have compounded the difficulties for brands in these spaces, with global shutdowns of physical locations and experiences forcing them to enter the digital realm.

Fortunately, consumer appetite for brands to play a recuperative role in their lives has seen at-home wellness mushroom. Taking physical and mental wellness into their own hands at home, people have embraced workouts guided by influencers, personal trainers and freemium branded content and apps, elevating living spaces into hives of physical activity.

According to a March 2020 survey by Statista, 16% of adults in the US were using more online exercise videos due to social distancing and self-quarantining measures – and RunRepeat reports that, as of August 2020, just over 59% of gym-goers had either cancelled their memberships or were considering doing so, due to Covid-19. In September 2020, the Financial Times reported that stock in Peloton, the cycling-focused home gym equipment company, had climbed 200% during the year. Sales of weight training equipment rose 307% due to the mass closures of gyms and fitness centres, according to Research and Markets.

Brands have been quick to spot the opportunity. Barry's gym put equipment intended for its studios up for sale online, allowing its customers to have their own DIY Barry's experience at home. The Mindbody app has accelerated the launch of its integrated video-on-demand products so its partner studios can cater for at-home fitness. 'Wellness is neither a fad nor a luxury,' says Rick Stollmeyer, CEO of Mindbody. 'It is an expectation for hundreds of millions of people, and more are joining their numbers every day.'

This focus on domestic wellness extends to eating habits too. Research by Mintel suggests that Covid-19 could have made a vegan diet more appealing, particularly to 21-30-year-olds, while eating five portions of fruit and vegetables a day has become a priority across the board and, notably, 51% of respondents subscribe to the healing power of plants, believing that plant and botanical ingredients can have medicinal benefits.

The home is also encompassing healthcare. As medical professionals and settings experience unprecedented pressure, Arizton forecasts a compound annual growth rate of more than 33% for the remote healthcare market up to 2025. Domestic wellness should be viewed holistically, according to Yves Béhar, designer of new at-home fitness tool Forme. 'The need is not just one thing, lifting weights or being in an exercise class, or yoga or meditation – it's all of it. It's delivering something into the home that becomes your health, body and mind station,' he told Architectural Digest.



# Part Three: Generation Nester

Concerned about their own immunity, rocked by the impact of weeks spent living in lockdown and grappling with a new normal, people are shifting their outlooks, expectations and mindsets.

‘As the world begins its pivot from crisis management to recovery and the reopening of economies, it’s clear that the emotional bookmark of lockdown has had a profound impact on how people live,’ says Raymond. The period of contagion, self-isolation and uncertainty will change the way people behave for years to come, as a new demographic of home-focused consumers emerges: Generation Nester.

This developing demographic can be defined by four behavioural shifts, which have important implications for businesses and brands: Hygiene Mindset, Community Connection, Guidance-seekers and Flexibility Favoured. Many of the changes in behaviour are still forming, giving companies an opportunity to help shape the next normal, while understanding these new cares and concerns begins to reveal a vision for the long-term future of the Age of Nesting.

## 01. Hygiene Mindset

The sheer speed at which Covid-19 spread from nation to nation revealed just how easily contamination can take place, and made people hyper-aware of germs and contagion, creating a hygiene mindset among consumers.

Transmission anxiety became real, intensified by the discovery of asymptomatic carriers and the difficulties of tracing the spread of the virus from object or person. In an April 2020 survey by the University of Oxford, 61% of respondents said they were worried about getting the disease themselves, and 64% were anxious about transmitting the infection to someone else.

This is leading to an amplified quest for hygiene, immunity and sanitised spaces, as consumers seek products to help them feel safe, spurring unprecedented growth in the hygiene market, according to Research and Markets. Simultaneously, online searches for immunity-boosting supplements have exploded. According to research by Spate, Google searches for elderberry have risen by 52.4% since 2019, while vitamin C searches are up 25% and those for echinacea are up 13.1%.

Behaviours changed quickly. According to a series of surveys by the Office for National Statistics, nearly all adults (99.7% in one instance) reported having washed their hands with soap and water to avoid infection in the past seven days, with similarly high percentages saying they washed their hands with soap and water or sanitiser when they arrived home. According to an EY report, 55% of consumers intend to buy more personal hygiene and safety products.

This can be seen already in the increased sales of hygiene products across the globe. According to BusinessWire, after the World Health Organisation reported that regularly cleaning hands is the single most important contribution people can make to stop the spread of coronavirus, sales of prestige hand soaps increased by 102% in Britain, while in the US sales of liquid hand soap rose by 7.5%. And in the UK, skincare sales – potentially linked to the

new phenomenon of ‘maskne’ (acne caused by mask-wearing) – have grown. More British women are buying face wash, and usage has risen from 50% in 2019 to 55% in 2020, according to Mintel.

In France, according to Le Figaro, consumers have swapped cosmetics products such as make-up, sales of which fell by 27.7%, and grooming products such as razors (–24%), for personal hygiene items such as household gloves (+153%), soaps and dermatological products (+48%) and bleach (+63%). Similarly, in Germany, Merkur.de reported a 38% increase in sales of soap and a 152% rise in sales of disinfectant products.

‘When it comes to immunity, it’s not just one product that consumers are buying, it’s a combination of things,’ explains Michel Brousset, former president of L’Oréal USA and founder of beauty and wellness incubator Waldencast. ‘It will be a retrenching back into care of oneself – of rituals around how people take care of their skin, bodies and immune systems.’

With anxiety about hygiene growing, design will be incorporated not just to boost consumers’ physical immunity but their peace of mind and mental wellbeing, too. When travelling for necessity out of the home, already 25% of travellers say they will try to avoid crowded commercial flights and public transport post-Covid, according to Luggage Hero. PriestmanGoode has launched a concept for aircraft cabin interiors that features dirt trap-free surfaces and colour psychology to alleviate passenger anxiety, while Layer collaborated with a leading US-based cinema seating company to create Sequel Seat that both elevates the cinema experience with integrated speakers and seamless 3D knit, and ensures the utmost cleanliness with copper-infused textiles with anti-microbial properties, UV sterilisation and wipe-clean surfaces.

Auerbach predicts that the impact of being a child during the pandemic could have long-lasting effects on future generations. ‘Younger kids who are growing up will no doubt be anxious about hygiene,’ she says. ‘This is something that they are likely to carry forward with them long term.’

## 02. Community Connection

With many forced to shelter in place, Covid-19 has transformed our relationships with the people and places around us, and evidence suggests that the crisis has helped to fuel a renewed desire for community and connection.

It’s an attitude now present among the majority of people, with four in five feeling more or as connected to their communities as they did pre-crisis, according to Accenture. Importantly, this is a long-term shift, with a massive 88% expecting

these connections to remain intact long after the virus is contained.

The same goes for connections with family and loved ones too, with more than half of us (55%) set to prioritise time with family post-crisis. ‘Family life was under huge pressure, because working life was so rigid,’ says Auerbach. ‘People are realising the huge benefits of missing out the commute, or the pressure of the beginning and the ends of the day. They are now just being there for each other instead.’

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### 03. Guidance-seekers

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Around the world, brands and businesses have drawn on their expertise, supply chains and services to help governments and communities mitigate the impact of Covid-19. Their efforts haven't gone unnoticed by consumers. 'Brands that demonstrate their dependability, transparency and willingness to take action to ensure product safety will be rewarded by consumers,' notes Clare Hennigan, senior beauty analyst at Mintel.

As shoppers flock back to trusted household names they recognise as safe and supportive, and build new relationships with businesses that have taken innovative approaches to the crisis, the way consumers view brands is shifting, with many seeking guidance and protection from the companies they engage with. According to GlobalWebIndex, 83% of people now want brands to help them cope with the current global situation

through the provision of information and tips. Edelman's Trust Barometer reveals that 78% of people globally expect businesses to act to protect the local community.

Covid-19 saw businesses and governments working together to meet the challenges of the pandemic. Big names including Beko's parent company Arçelik, Dyson and LVMH pooled their manufacturing and R&D expertise to supply the world with life-saving ventilator equipment and hand sanitiser.

'Now, more than ever, brands or organisations must be prepared for a future in which they help humankind to feel secure, supported and inspired,' says Sanderson. 'If businesses aren't prepared for this, in many ways they deserve to become the casualties of a new paradigm shift in how we broker the way we live, work and play.'

### 04. Flexibility Favoured

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The early days of the Age of Nesting have transformed the type of products people are seeking from brands, as well as consumers' relationships with brands. One pre-eminent shift is the growing demand for flexible, functional products that can serve several purposes. It's a development that's driving growth in the global furniture market, according to 360 Market Updates, with one retailer seeing demand for

folding desks rise 942% year on year as people invest in compact pieces and ergonomic design.

'There has been a surge in demand for dual-purpose products and goods, particularly within the home space,' says Raymond. 'Across the spectrum, people are having to squeeze more from less, which is why a new attitude focused on flexibility and function is emerging.'

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*'There has been a surge in demand for dual-purpose products and goods, particularly within the home space, across the spectrum, people are having to squeeze more from less, which is why a new attitude focused on flexibility and function is emerging'*

*Martin Raymond, co-founder, The Future Laboratory*



IKEA'S RESEARCH LAB SPACE10 AND EFFEKT ARCHITECTS HAVE COLLABORATED TO CREATE A VISION FOR HOW TO DESIGN, BUILD AND SHARE FUTURE HOMES, CITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS. THE URBAN VILLAGE PROJECT IS A PROPOSAL FOR SUBSCRIPTION-BASED HOUSING THAT AIMS TO MAKE CITIES MORE LIVEABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND AFFORDABLE.



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## Part Four: Nesting Futures

By 2030, the Age of Nesting will be in full flow. The legacy of lockdown, combined with Generation Nesters' new behavioural shifts, will have fundamentally transformed where we live, how we live, and the homes we live in.

In this report, we identify and explore three key tenets of this future and the new living concepts the Age of Nesting will inspire: Rurban Revolution, Multi-modal Properties and Pandemic-proof Living.

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*‘Community is making a comeback in a big way, and this will continue as we see the rise of working near home, as well as working from home. Today, co-working spaces like WeWork occupy central city locations, but we’ll see the rise of community hubs that are multi-functional, offering for example spaces for art projects and support to the elderly, as well as a mobile workforce’*

Annie Auerbach, co-founder, Starling

## 01. Rurban Revolution

As people seek health, hygiene and recuperative living, an urban exodus will reboot the suburbs, exurbs and rural areas, while cities will have an opportunity to become more human-centric.

The Age of Nesting is changing where we choose to live. After decades-long urbanisation, the Covid-19 pandemic has inspired an interest in moving to rural areas.

Research by Centre for Cities shows that, pre-crisis, young people were attracted to city centres because of access to jobs, transport and amenities such as shops and restaurants. City-dwellers traded off these benefits against disadvantages such as smaller living spaces, pollution and limited green space. But as Sanderson notes, ‘Many traditional drivers of urbanisation are losing their appeal. There is now a need for larger living spaces where people can work remotely, and a focus on hygiene, health and wellness.’

In the UK, a third (32%) of people are more interested in living in a rural area now than they were before the pandemic, according to a survey from Totaljobs, while a Harris Poll reveals a similar figure, with 39% of Americans considering moving to less densely populated areas.

In Japan, a survey by job information provider Gakujo C found that 36% of respondents in their 20s hoped to change their job and move to a rural area, while in Russia, an estimated one third of the urban population has fled to their country homes (dachas) according to Le Monde.

‘Rural demand is so much stronger right now than urban demand, and that’s a flip from where it’s been for the longest time, where everybody wanted to live in the city. There seems to be a profound psychological change among consumers who are looking for houses,’ says Glenn Kelman, CEO of property brokerage firm Redfin.

But as Karen Rosenkranz, author of City of Quitters, points out the trend doesn’t represent a return to traditional rural lifestyles; instead, thanks to digital connectivity and flexible working, consumers are looking for similar quality in amenities – including members’ clubs like Soho House’s Mollie’s Motel or new co-working space Birch in suburban London – but more access to outdoor space and larger interiors.

As a result, we’ll see the emergence of rurban living, where rural and suburban areas will take on the best aspects of city living, benefitting from a vital reboot as workers, no-longer tied to city-centre offices, relocate.

Young people who were previously drawn to cities are finding that high rents, relatively low salaries and

the impact of city life is having a detrimental effect on health, leading to Millennial and Generation Z Nesters looking to rural and city-adjacent areas for better physical and emotional wellbeing.

The presence of these populations means firms can thrive outside of cities and business hotspots can form. ‘Green-collar communities are primed to emerge in coastal towns, while new belts of innovation will develop on the outskirts of cities. This counter-tide of workers will create the opportunity for equality across geographies,’ says Raymond.

Auerbach agrees, pointing to the creation of workspaces across the country based around local communities. ‘Community is making a comeback in a big way, and this will continue as we see the rise of working near home, as well as working from home,’ she says. ‘Today, co-working spaces like WeWork occupy central city locations, but we’ll see the rise of community hubs that are multi-functional, offering for example spaces for art projects and support to the elderly, as well as a mobile workforce.’

A Rurban Revolution doesn’t mean the writing is on the wall for city living, however. Instead, it represents an opportunity for an urban reset, as cities with fewer residents and commuters crowding streets and infrastructure refocus towards being human-centred lifestyle hubs, rather than simply financial cores.

Evidence shows that air quality has improved in cities around the world since the start of the pandemic, as economy activity has reduced and there is less traffic.

This is a starting point for a new future, where reduced strain on infrastructure means potential for pedestrianised streets and less crowded public transport: more than 250 cities globally have already introduced measures to give more space to cyclists and pedestrians, with Paris and Rome expanding their bike infrastructure permanently. New platforms such as Urbano, meanwhile, are stepping forward with free software that helps planners and architects assess and add walkability features to urban designs.

Urban areas will continue adapting to the needs of Nesters and, if opportunities are harnessed, the city of 2030 will look very different from today’s. Wellness architecture, for example, will see architects and designers radically rethinking the way we live in and build urban spaces by incorporating nature’s therapeutic effects.

Wellness architecture not only promotes wellbeing through intuitive design and sustainable materials but also encourages symbiosis with the natural world. The approach takes account of biophilia – humans’





innate affinity to the natural world – and uses techniques including biomimicry, whereby natural structures are emulated. ‘Let’s grow buildings where we can graft tree cells on to frameworks and the contractors can become arborists, but before we get to this point let’s continue to use philosophies such as biomimicry and biophilia,’ says wellness architect Veronica Schreibeis Smith.

It won’t just be an individual’s wellbeing that is taken into consideration – buildings will be designed to also support the environment. The Global Wellness Institute, for example, believes there will soon be ‘living’ buildings with energy-producing algae embedded in their walls, while Cradle-to-Cradle certified buildings made of sustainable materials such as clay and wood will reduce the waste produced by the construction industry.

One powerful example of this kind of architecture – Algae Dome – has been developed by Ikea’s research lab Space10. A four-metre-high wooden structure wrapped in 320 metres of coiled transparent plastic tubing flowing with green micro-algae, the dome demonstrates how buildings could help feed urban populations sustainably in the future.

Speculative concepts are shedding further light on what future cities could look like in the Age of Nesting. Danish architectural practice Henning Larsen is developing Fælledby, an all-timber neighbourhood in Copenhagen. Designed in collaboration with biologists and environmental engineers, it aims for residents to live alongside nature and to participate in bettering it. ‘With the rural village as an archetype we’re creating a city where biodiversity and active recreation define a sustainable pact between people and nature,’ says Signe Kongebro, partner at Henning Larsen.

Meanwhile, Italian architect Piero Lissoni’s studio designed a conceptual skyscraper in New York to highlight the importance of self-sufficiency. Featuring a vertical urban farm it demonstrates what a post-Covid lifestyle might look like.

Overall, the Age of Nesting will result in cities becoming calmer, more human-centric and wellbeing-focused, while rural and suburban places will be revived. Younger generations will form creative circles in greener areas, while office workers will reduce their commutes and spend more time with their local communities and families.



## 02. Multi-modal Properties

By 2030, the Age of Nesting will see homes adapt to become ‘blended spaces’, able to fluidly facilitate different kinds of work, rest, recuperation and play.

Whether in re-imagined mega-cities or rurban hubs, Generation Nesters’ reliance on the home will lead to the rise of Multi-modal Properties as space becomes fully utilised and functionality placed at the top of the agenda.

Auerbach envisages how this future will manifest itself through properties that are suited to multiple functions. ‘Many families have faced the reality of the kitchen table being overloaded with uses – children doing homework while one parent is on Zoom and the other tries to cook dinner – so the trend for the open-plan kitchen as a family hub is becoming outdated,’ she explains. ‘We’ve woken up to needing different zones in the house that play different functions: office space, a space for meditation or wellbeing, as well as the traditional rooms within the home.’

Designers are already responding to this future of zoning and adaptability. London-based architecture and design practice Jak Studio has redesigned the conventional L-shaped sofa. Its concept can be altered from seating or a bed into a work pod to suit the home workplace of the future.

Similarly, Mexican architect Enrique Tovar has designed a desk for post-Covid work environments which folds up so it can be carried to different locations, including outdoors. With foldable legs and a surface that can be written on with temporary markers, the Nōmada design challenges the definition of a typical office and a set location for work.

Taking this idea one step further, Norwegian design studio Livit has created a detached office, the Studypod. The design aims to provide a place for quiet work in a user’s garden and, given its multi-functional potential, it could be used as a personal yoga studio or external bedroom.

Simon Saint, principal at architecture firm Woods Bagot, highlights how the pandemic has shifted what we require from our living spaces: ‘We see this leading to the need for resilient homes and for homes with the adaptability to support a range of activities throughout people’s days.’

Woods Bagot’s own Ad-Apt moveable units concept proposes just this: living spaces can be modified depending on the time of day and the user’s mood. Residents can switch between three modes – morning, work and play – each of which prioritise space in different ways and provide areas for different activities.

Technology will also play a crucial role in allowing people to move between modes in their own homes. Spatial’s collaborative working tool uses augmented reality and virtual reality so that employees feel as if they are in the same room, even if colleagues are in different continents.

Meanwhile, virtual sanctuaries are helping people to relax in their own homes. Arima Onsen – said to be Japan’s oldest hot spring town and dating back 1,000 years – launched a virtual reality tour to allow people to immerse themselves in traditional bathing during the pandemic. Launched on a dedicated YouTube channel, the concept requires viewers to soak in their own bathtub while wearing a VR headset.

Future-facing innovations will incorporate more of the senses, such as hearing. Sound designer Yuri Suzuki believes that people became more sensitive to everyday noises during lockdowns and are seeking better aural experiences from their devices and their homes. He has launched a crowdsourced project to archive the sounds of the pandemic in collaboration with the Dallas Museum of Art.

Building on this, the creation of ‘sonic landscapes’ could enableNesters in 2030 to change the sound of their home spaces depending on their needs during different times of the day. Similar intuitive solutions for work, rest and play will develop, connected to smart-home systems as demand grows: the global smart-home market is expected to increase from £59.4 billion in 2020 to £102.7 billion by 2025 according to MarketsandMarkets.

‘Appliances of the future will be synchronised to adapt seamlessly depending on which mode the home’s resident is in, lighting up in different hues or emitting modulated sounds as the user switches from work to play mode, for instance,’ says Raymond.



L20 SOFA BY JAK STUDIO



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*‘Hygiene has come into focus because of the psychological trauma of the pandemic. It is breeding a germ-conscious generation who rely on the mental relief of their inner sanctums to provide succour from a virus-ridden world’*

Martin Raymond, co-founder, The Future Laboratory

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### 03. Pandemic-proof Living

By 2030, collective concerns about hygiene, wellbeing and immunity will drive new directions in how we live, as hyper-hygienic, pandemic-proof lifestyles come to the fore.

In response to people seeking to protect themselves and their families from the current and future pandemics, home innovations are being designed to reduce exposure to viruses and pollutants and to maximise personal hygiene.

‘Just like the vanity room – a place to wash your hands when entering the home which developed in the wake of the Spanish flu – houses will have entrances where decontamination can take place as you move from the outside world to your inner sanctuary,’ says Auerbach. These will be extensions of Japanese genkans and the English country-house mudroom, which are both small indoor areas where shoes and outdoor clothing are removed before entering the home.

Making use of naturally anti-bacterial materials such as copper and cork, these spaces will be furnished with innovations such as Beko’s HygieneShield Cabinet. Items that are frequently used outside of the home, such as keys, wallets and phones, are placed in the cabinet and UV light, heat and a fan system cleanse the items without damaging them. A range of convenient programmes, ranging from 20 to 40 minutes, can be selected. UV light is a powerful tool, as it kills micro-organisms that are exposed to it and damages viruses, rendering them harmless.

‘Hygiene has come into focus because of the psychological trauma of the pandemic. It is breeding a germ-conscious generation who rely on the mental relief of their inner sanctums to provide succour from a virus-ridden world,’ says Raymond.

In response to Covid-19, personal device Handy has been created by Matteo Zallio in the US to allow people to open doors without touching them. Meanwhile, international design firm Carlo Ratti Associati has unveiled Pura-Case, a portable wardrobe purifier that uses ozone to remove most micro-organisms, bacteria and viruses from clothes and fabric.

Air purification will thus become an important part of the 2030 home, along with biophilic design, and aeroponic systems which allow even the smallest spaces to benefit from greenery. ‘A growing preoccupation with exercise and health could also see more people thinking about the impact internal environments can have on our wellbeing, and they will prioritise natural light and access to nature. This could lead to reduced reliance on electrical lighting and greater demand for gardens that

encourage biodiversity,’ says Tara Hipwood, lecturer in architecture at Northumbria University.

Purification elements will also be integrated into materials and appliances. Beko’s HygieneShield appliances, for example, incorporate sanitisation into each function and programme. The range, which includes a built-in oven, dishwasher and refrigerator, as well as laundry appliances such as a washer-dryer, uses a combination of steam saturation, heat, and UV hygienic refresh to keep household items not only clean but thoroughly sanitised. UV light is a powerful tool in particular for fighting infection, as it kills microorganisms that are exposed to it, damaging the virus and rendering it harmless.

And increasingly, Generation Nesters will not have to touch their appliances to operate them, thereby reducing the spread of germs and viruses. An early example is a new device designed by German hardware company FSB which can be attached to standard handles for hands-free operation.

‘We’ve seen an increased demand for solutions that can be operated touchlessly through sensor technology and are seeing a higher demand for hygiene-enhancing products,’ says Paul Flowers, chief design officer at Lixil’s Water Technology Group.

Raymond also points to the growing role that emerging technologies will play as we reach 2030. ‘Haptic technologies and smart sensors will allow the germ-free generation to use gesture and voice activation to passively control their homes through their own microbiome and fitness trackers,’ he says. ‘In the future, you will be able to tell your oven to switch on while waving your hand over the hob. Your taps will only run when they sense your hands, and your front door will be iris sensitive, unlocking and opening automatically after scanning your eyes.’

Finally, all such innovations will be produced with longevity and sustainability in mind. Already galvanising before the onset of the pandemic, concerns about sustainability are increasingly top of consumers’ minds, prompted by the immediate disruption of Covid. According to a recent report by McKinsey, reliability and durability, value for money and energy efficiency are the three primary decision factors when purchasing large appliances across Germany, Italy and the UK, and their importance has further increased during the coronavirus crisis.

The new rural consumer is aware of the link between human health, the pandemic, and environmental degradation and will embrace brands and companies who are committed to improving the eco-credentials of their products and appliances.







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## Part Five: Conclusion

The Age of Nesting has been ushered in at a time when more people are home-working than ever before – a shift that is likely to have long-term consequences for how and where we work, live and play. With people now focused on their homes, our apartments and houses have transformed from being transitional spaces where we stop to switch modes to multi-modal living places and sanctuaries that actively enhance our moods.

Hygiene, sustainability and wellness are at an all-time high priority for today's consumers and will shape the next generation who have been brought up in the shadow of the pandemic. It is, however, a chance to reset and re-adjust how people relate to their internal and external spaces. With a focus on community bonding, on time decelerating and a zoned-yet-fluid approach to living, the Age of Nesting will see us becoming healthier and happier in our homes for decades to come.

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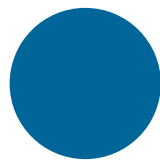
*‘Now, more than ever, brands or organisations must be prepared for a future in which they help humankind to feel secure, supported and inspired. If businesses aren’t prepared for this, in many ways they deserve to become the casualties of a new paradigm shift in how we broker the way we live, work and play’*

*Chris Sanderson, co-founder, The Future Laboratory*

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