

CBD Gets New Tenant Profiles

The changing tenant profile within the country's inner city residents reflects a greater degree of stability in this market segment.

But it also calls on owners and building management to reconsider their investment to take cognisance of shifting requirements.

Andrew Schaefer, MD of residential letting and property management group Trafalgar, says inner city dwellers have shifted from transient single-entity tenancies to family units now considering the area as home for the medium- to long-term.

This change prompted a pilot investment into the Helderberg block of flats within the Johannesburg inner city to overhaul a deteriorating building.

The focus with this project was on the family element of the changing inner city profile, meaning the renovations and upgrades incorporated facilities – jungle gyms, a playground, race track and two trampolines – that encourage outdoor activities.

Schaefer says research continuously supports the findings that children's developmental phases are impaired by too much television and insufficient vigorous outdoor play. Yet, the lack of adequate facilities, coupled with the reality of inner city living whereby parents are forced to leave children either unattended or in the care of informal crèches, means television is used as an electronic babysitting service.

Schaefer says the R1,5m investment to overhaul the block was aimed at securing a facility management programme that Trafalgar can potentially roll-out into other properties.

The more mundane refurbishments on the Helderberg included upgrading the lifts – a typical problem in older buildings where the lifts installed in the 1960s and 1970s have deteriorated beyond safety measures – replacing and securing the perimeter security and installing closed circuit television cameras for internal protection measures.

A biometric security access and intercom facility was introduced to keep tabs on visitors and ensure their exit each evening. The washing lines were also expanded and reinforced in line with the higher demand for washing facilities required by family units, thus alleviating tenants from having to hang washing from their flats.