

Ronnie Michel-Elhaj and Peter Blackall from Nicheliving are creating a futuristic development on Beaufort Street, Inglewood.
Picture: Ross Swanborough

WELCOME

Be smart, be green and love thy neighbour. This is life in 2030, as **Kim Macdonald** reports.

A developer building a futuristic residential complex predicts the homes of the future will be green, smart, relatively affordable and underpinned by a strong sense of community involving neighbour-to-neighbour commerce.

Nicheliving's managing director Ronnie Michel-Elhaj is creating this futuristic community in a five-storey complex comprising 58 one and two-level units and five commercial tenancies on Beaufort St, Inglewood.

Mr Michel-Elhaj says the homes, due for completion in 2022, will be the most technologically advanced in Australia, and the only residential complex in WA to use 100 per cent renewable energy.

He said the nearest competitor used 96 per cent renewable energy.

"Nicheliving goes back to the future, bringing the technology of the next decade to our sky homes today," he said.

Nicheliving has commissioned new blockchain technology that would report exactly

how much energy each apartment used and where the energy had come from — with 80 per cent expected from solar and 20 per cent from other renewable sources.

The system would feed energy back into the grid, helping reduce utility bills for residents.

The extensive use of timber in the complex would ensure carbon storage, and other green-friendly building methods to help reduce the carbon footprint.

Every home will have smart appliances connected to the Internet of Things and would be operated via a dashboard app on one's phone or tablet.

The apartments will include everything from smart toilets, which automatically sense how much water is needed to flush, to voice and touch activated keyless entry, as well as smart air-conditioning, lights and blinds.

The complex would also accommodate modern living by including remote-controlled storage systems enabling deliveries such as Uber Eats to be deposited in a large remote-controlled locker in the foyer.

"Some of these smart technol-

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ogies already exist, but no one has used it to this level of density and all in one project," he said.

"Some of the technologies, such as the IoTs appliances, do not exist yet are but expected to come to market in the next six months.

Mr Michel-Elhaj said every effort had been put into making the dwelling affordable, with apartment prices ranging between the \$300,000s to below \$800,000.

The median price in Inglewood is \$359,000 for units and \$835,000 for houses. "Anyone can

do a smart development, but what we're doing is leveraging technology to ensure affordability as well as maximising connectivity," he said.

He said cost reduction would



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come in part from tweaking traditional communal areas and amenities to minimise strata fees.

Instead of a large gym dominated with equipment, for

example, a multipurpose exercise room would include a large screen to beam virtual fitness instructors conducting classes from body combat to Zumba.

According to Nicheliving's

project director, Peter Blackall, affordability goes beyond the purchase price.

"Running costs such as electricity and water will be reduced through smart technologies that

introduce greater efficiency and awareness to residents.

"A shared electric vehicle will allow residents to forgo the high costs of owning and maintaining a second car."

Mr Blackall said one of the most important aspects of technology was to promote a sense of community.

He said the popularity of social media showed a wide-

spread desire for people to connect with like-minded people. This would be enhanced in part by an online system involving about 200 neighbouring businesses offering residents special discounts and loyalty programs.

An online marketplace app would encourage residents to share services, swap items, and hire each other's services in neighbour-to-neighbour commerce. Mr Michel-Elhaj said this could eventually progress to a barter and points system, so money did not change hands.

"That is the future," he said.