

LIFE AT HOME
2020

THE BIG HOME REBOOT

The start of a closer
relationship with home

SECURITY

GARDENING

EXERCISE

#HOMEREBOOT

SUSTAINABILITY

WORK

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

BALANCE

SCHOOL

MULTIPURPOSE

COMMUNITY

COMFORT

SPACE





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RECONNECTION OR DISCONNECTION?

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THE BIG HOME REBOOT

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Against the turbulence of the outside world, 78% of us  globally agree that home was our **SANCTUARY** during the 2020 pandemic restrictions.

As a result, **2** in **5** of us have made changes to our **HOMES**

What does this tell us about how people want to live now, and about the future of life at home?



Exploring life at home in a pandemic

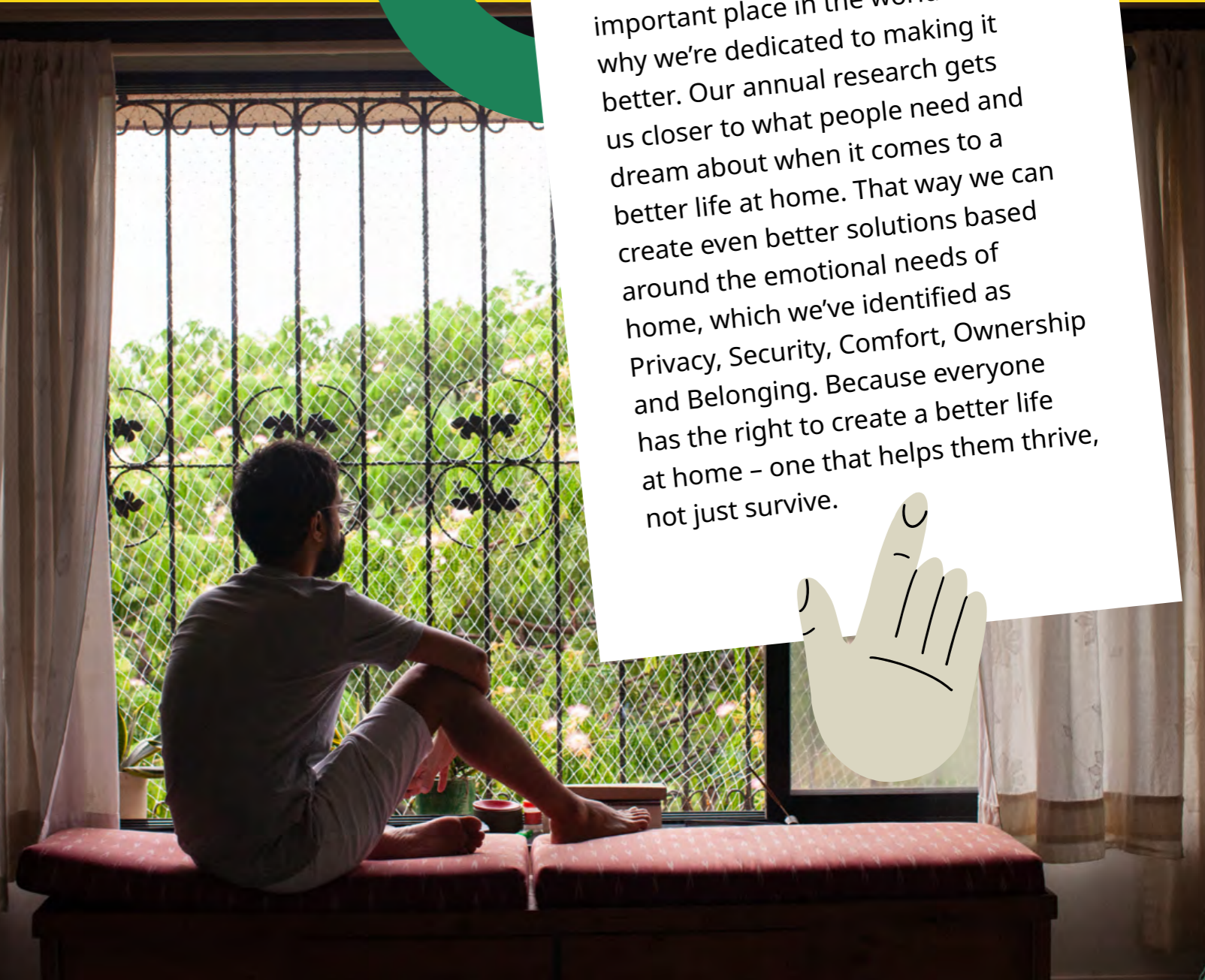


Every year, we connect with thousands of people all over the world to help us understand what makes a better life at home. This is the seventh edition of our global Life at Home Report - in a year like no other.

In 2020, life at home was unexpectedly and fundamentally disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic, affecting and determining every aspect of people's lives at home. We've always understood the importance of a safe place to call home and the role it plays in helping people to thrive. So, this year, understanding the impact of the global pandemic on life at home - now and in the years to come - was our focus.

OUR MISSION

We know that home is the most important place in the world. That's why we're dedicated to making it better. Our annual research gets us closer to what people need and dream about when it comes to a better life at home. That way we can create even better solutions based around the emotional needs of home, which we've identified as Privacy, Security, Comfort, Ownership and Belonging. Because everyone has the right to create a better life at home - one that helps them thrive, not just survive.



This year's research

WE VIRTUALLY CONNECTED WITH
20 HOUSE HOLDS

over 8 weeks in real time (Sweden, Italy, China & Hong Kong, Australia, USA)

WE CONDUCTED IN-DEPTH DESK RESEARCH

WRITTEN & CREATIVE TASKS

WE SPOKE WITH EXPERTS

- Sally Dominguez**
Sustainable Resilience Expert
- Philip Hubbard**
Professor of Urban Studies, King's College London
- Robert Thiemann**
Founder of Frame
- Sharlene Gandhi**
Sustainability and Global Inequality Journalist

We launched a **GLOBAL QUANT SURVEY IN OVER 37 COUNTRIES** with 38,210 people

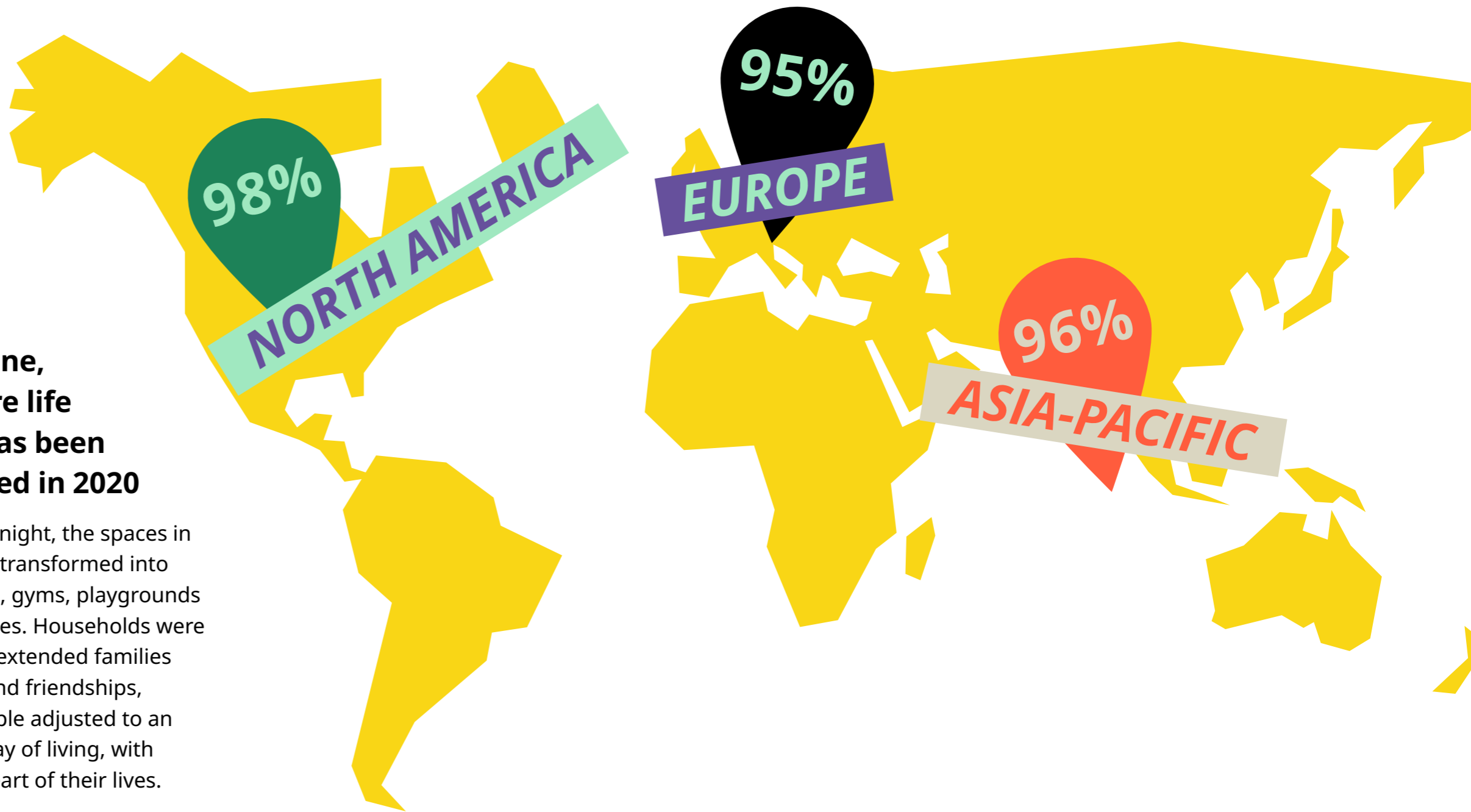
Staying at home

As the coronavirus spread across the world, it changed our lives in ways most couldn't have imagined. It forced governments to place restrictions on their citizens with unprecedented speed and scale, requiring millions of people to stay in their homes all over the world. The similarity of this experience across countries and cultures is remarkable. For almost everyone, everywhere and all at once, home became the centre of our worlds.



For everyone, everywhere life at home has been transformed in 2020

Practically overnight, the spaces in which we lived transformed into offices, schools, gyms, playgrounds and social spaces. Households were together 24/7, extended families were divided and friendships, distanced. People adjusted to an entirely new way of living, with home at the heart of their lives.



96%

of people stayed in their main home during the lockdown or restrictive measure

Home has always played an important role in our lives

SALLY, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE EXPERT

"This pandemic has forced people to shelter in one place. Suddenly you can't be a nomad, working on the go. This is a complete pivot from where we were headed, with the trend towards a sharing economy and working from cafes and common spaces. The pandemic has revealed that we need our own shelters, and those shelters need to provide us with much more than we thought we needed."

A healthy relationship with home satisfies a particular set of needs

Our research continues to tell us that most people experience the feeling of home when their home meets five fundamental emotional needs. With these needs met, we feel content and happy, and can really thrive in our lives there.

Recently our relationship has been tested

Over the past couple of years, we've seen a gap open up between how people expect their needs to be met by their homes, and their real experience. As a result, more and more of us have looked to social media, messaging apps, parks, friends' houses and community centres to find the feeling of home – bridging the gap our homes couldn't, by looking to the outside world.

2018 we looked beyond our four walls

A third of people all over the world told us there were places where they felt more at home than the space they lived in.

2020 we demanded much more of home

As restrictions limited our access to the outside world, it could no longer meet our needs. We were challenged to rely on home, and only home, to satisfy us. Our homes have never been under such scrutiny and intense demand to fulfil all our needs.

PRIVACY

This is being able to disconnect, reflect and choose how we interact with others. A little 'me-time' with a book or doing some exercise goes a long way.

COMFORT

This isn't about having a comfy bed or a fluffy throw, it's about feeling content and at ease in our surroundings. Knowing we can really relax and be ourselves where we live, means a lot.

OWNERSHIP

Having a sense of control over the space and place where we live is important to us. When we can paint a wall or choose our furniture, a house really starts feeling like a home.

BELONGING

This means feeling part of a group that accepts us, in a place that reflects who we are. We might get this from family or housemates, or even from friends in our community.

SECURITY

More than physical or financial security, this is about feeling safe and grounded when we're at home. When our homes feel like a sanctuary from the uncertainty of the outside world, we can really thrive there.

RECONNECTION

OR

DISCONNECTION?



Despite everything, home more than fulfilled our needs



RACHEL, AUSTRALIA

"My connection with my home is definitely stronger - I'm so thankful for having this space and have really learned to love it and relax into it."

Almost half (46%) of us felt our homes better met our emotional needs during lockdown

While it was difficult to adjust to the tiredness, demotivation and feelings of confinement that life spent largely within four walls created at first, many of us put aside these day-to-day challenges and began to reconnect with the role and value of our home in our lives.

Home stepped up to the challenge of lockdown

While there were some variations from country to country, almost half (46%) of those who mainly stayed at home felt that their homes fulfilled their emotional needs even more during the restrictive or lockdown periods than before it.

44% MORE COMFORT

51% MORE SECURITY

46% MORE BELONGING

43% MORE OWNERSHIP

45% MORE PRIVACY

The highest levels of emotional needs being met during pandemic restrictions was reported by people in India, Philippines and Sweden

In Japan, people had the lowest reported levels of their emotional needs being met during the lockdown

Home became our **SANCTUARY**



ASHLEY, USA
“My home is basically the only place that feels safe to me right now – it’s the only place where I have control. I know that everything is clean and I have the ability to ensure my safety. Outside of here I don’t have that control, so that uncertainty over whether other people are taking it as seriously as me highly impacts my security.”



Our homes went much further than better meeting our emotional needs. For most of us, they offered a place to escape to and find solace from the turbulence of global events. As we struggled to adjust to the everyday reality of pandemic restrictions, at home we found comfort in familiarity, security and ownership in the little that was within our control.

This sense of sanctuary remains with us as the evolving global context continues to create feelings of uncertainty, fear and anxiety towards the outside world.

78%

Regional Variation
65% Nordic
75% West Europe
81% Asia

of people globally who stayed in their main home during the restrictive or lockdown period agree that home was their sanctuary during that time

ILENIA, ITALY

ILENIA'S REBOOT



"I've created some new daily habits that kept me busy besides work and I know what to do when I feel nostalgic – I can videocall those I miss or I can look around and smile, thinking about old memories. Maybe at the beginning it was more difficult, but now I'm more confident with my house, I consider it like an extension of my parents and friends"

Ilenia lives and works in Milan, Northern Italy. She is 30 and, when we spoke to her, had been confined to her apartment for almost six weeks. She was working at home and had not seen her parents in two months. She created new rituals, routines and projects that helped her find sanctuary in a home she had previously regarded as a base. She adapted her home and routines to suit her, established new rituals to sustain her and created a space that she felt became "a part of [her]".



How we got closer to home

YES TO THIS

RACHEL, AUSTRALIA

"I learnt to take advantage of not having to travel, to spend more time on my self-care and fitness. Be present and happy in the moment. Take a positive from every day."

As many of us realised and appreciated the important role of home in our lives, we began to value our relationships with the people in them differently, too. Together and apart, we started using our homes in new ways. By making more time for each other and for ourselves, we had the chance to get in touch with the things, people and activities that connect us more intimately with our homes.

When we asked the people who took our survey which of 12 activities they enjoyed more of during pandemic restrictions, more time and meals with family came out on top.

MORE TIME WITH FAMILY

Although we sometimes felt cramped, with daily lives spent on top of one another, we learnt to respect everyone's different routines and so rediscovered the value of spending time together.

53% enjoyed spending more time with FAMILY

50% enjoyed eating more FAMILY MEALS

MORE TIME TO ENJOY HOME IN NEW AND DIFFERENT WAYS

Although most of us didn't really consider our homes as a place to work, learn or exercise, we quickly realised just how flexible they could be, and how good that could feel.

40% enjoyed more home EXERCISING

32% enjoyed more home WORKING

MORE TIME FOR 'US'

Although it was difficult to balance work, family life and the challenges of the outside world, we found relief by carving out time for ourselves.

43% enjoyed more ME-TIME

43% enjoyed more READING

43% enjoyed more PLAYING GAMES

35% enjoyed more VIRTUAL SOCIALISING

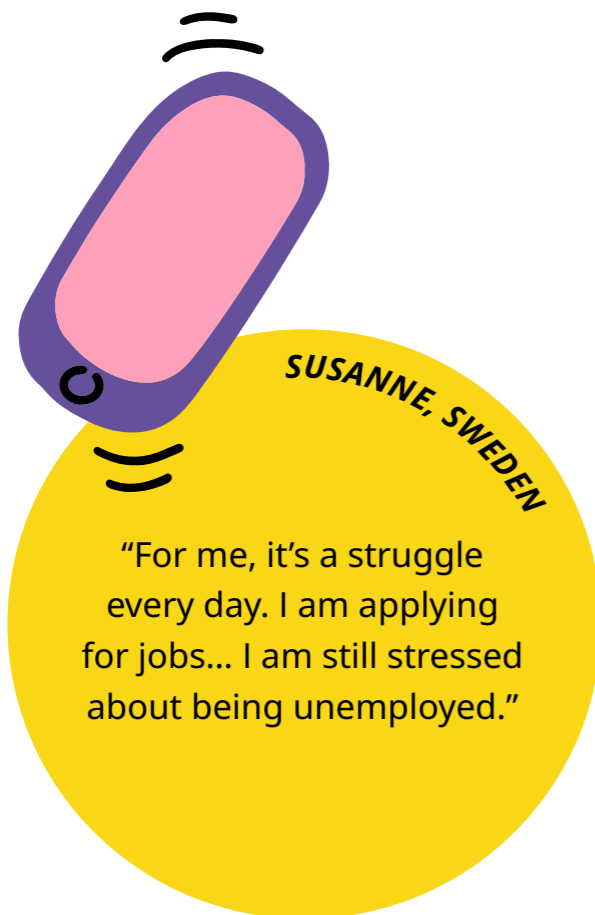
49% enjoyed more COOKING

21% enjoyed more GARDENING

ABE, HONG KONG

"The relationship with my daughter is better. The situation has forced us to change things around the home and now she has more privacy. The home is working better for us both."

But more time at home was challenging for some of us

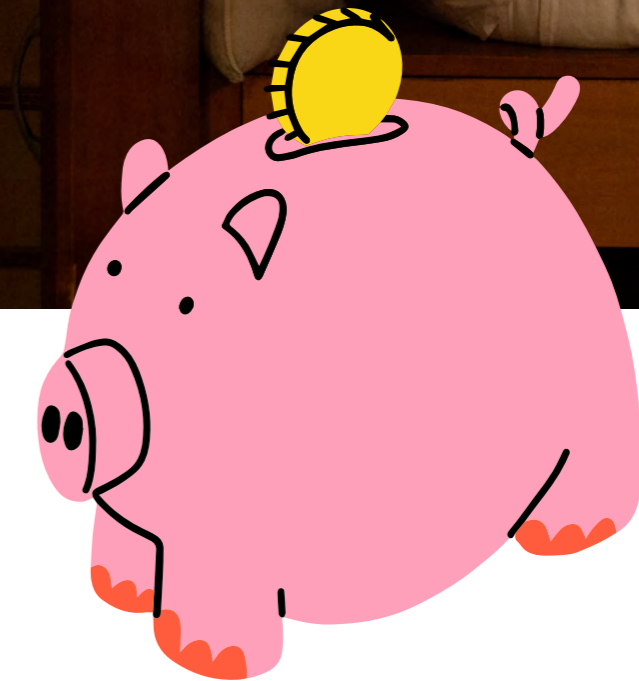


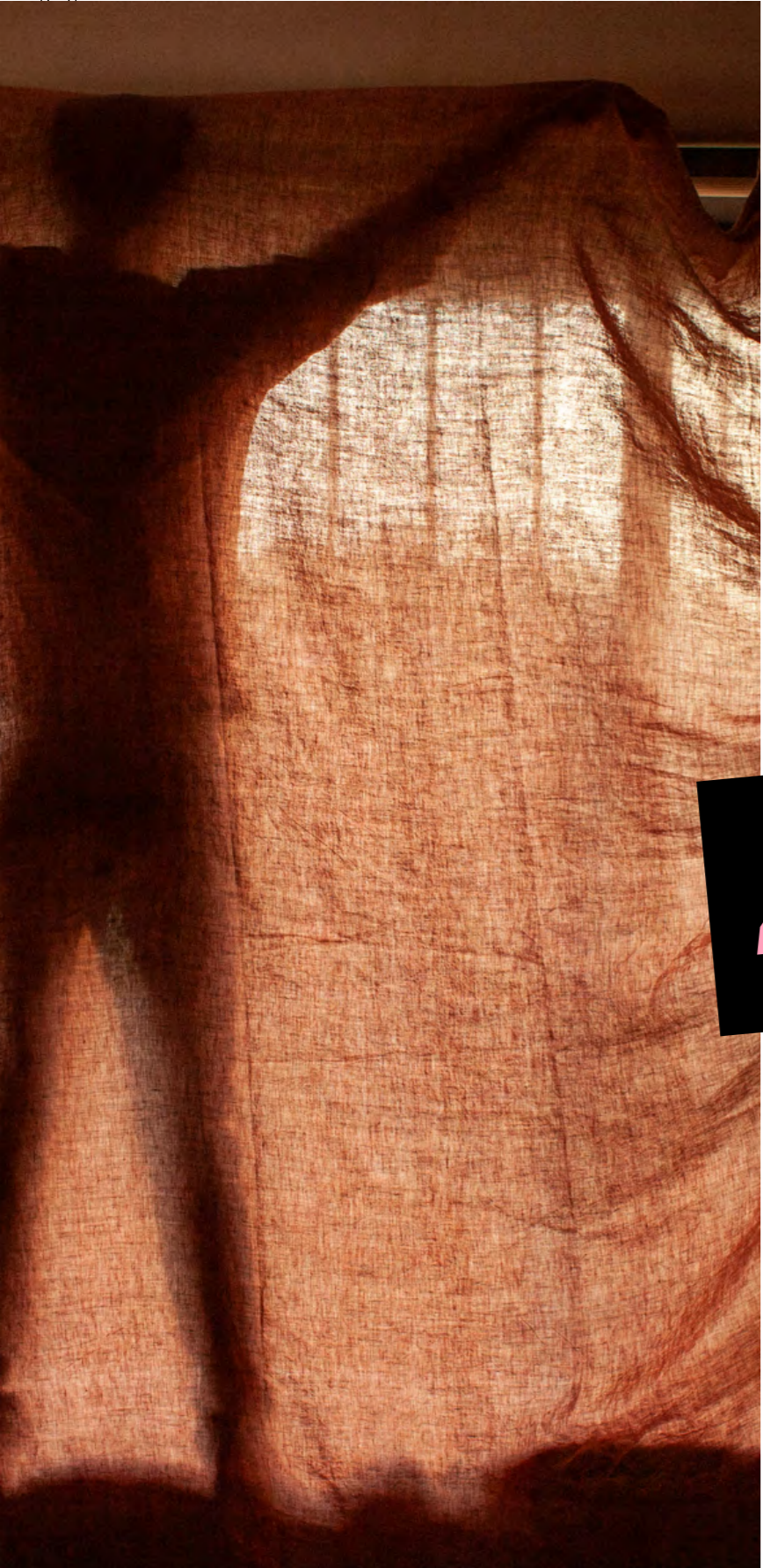
While for most people home was a sanctuary, some of us found so much time at home more challenging. Many factors reduced our ability to feel 'in control' in an out-of-control global situation and, without that, it was much harder to have a positive experience.

Our research reveals a few things that affected whether we felt content and in control at home during the pandemic: our financial situation, the size of and space inside our homes and our age.

Financial situation

For those of us under financial pressure, the pandemic made a situation where our homes were already less likely to meet our emotional needs, worse. Our relationships with each other suffered too: only two thirds (65%) of people with lower incomes agreed that 'those in my household support each other in achieving common goals', compared to 83% with medium or high incomes. Money worries proved to be a critical factor in our emotional relationship with our homes, and each other.





Size and space at home

While more space isn't an answer to everything, feeling like we have enough does matter. When we have less space, we have less flexibility to create a home that suits how we want to live. Like less money, less space gives us less choice. Our research told us that people living in smaller homes were less likely to say their homes helped them to thrive during the pandemic.

43%

of people living in a studio apartment or flat agreed that their home is designed for how they want to live, compared to 76% of those living in homes with four or more bedrooms

Age

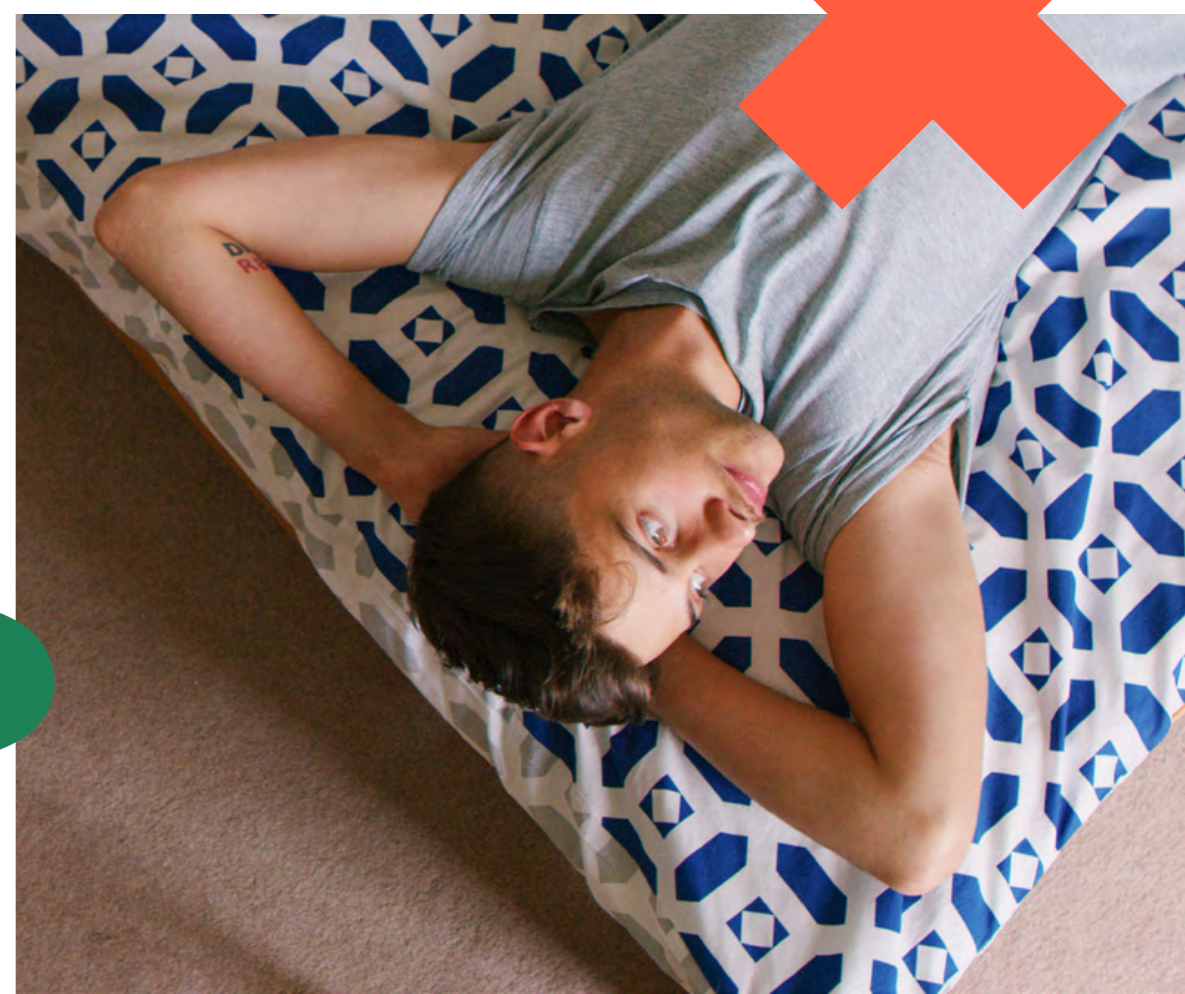
The younger someone is, the more likely they are to be living in a shared or family home, so the more they depend on the spaces outside it to fulfil their emotional needs. For those who were emerging into adulthood and finding independence when pandemic restrictions hit, home was less likely to be a sanctuary. Our research spanned every age group, and we found that young people were less likely to be as positive about life at home.



People aged between 16 and 24 were

HALF

as likely as those aged between 65 and 75, to strongly agree that their home is designed in the right way for how they want to live in it (25% and 49% respectively)





THE BIG HOME REBOOT HAS STARTED

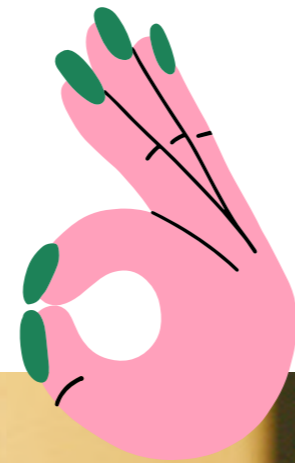
REBOOT



Reconnection or disconnection?

THE BIG HOME REBOOT

Today, life at **HOME** is being re-evaluated all over the world



DILIP, SWEDEN
"If I was to make a post-2020 resolution, it would be to treat home as a place to live, rather than a hotel where I come in the evening to sleep before my next day at work."

ALBERT, CHINA
"I previously had to live close to my office. It was more important to me than anything else. But over the last few months I've realised this is not so critical. What I want is a better home, somewhere where I can be comfortable and safe."

Whatever our experience of pandemic restrictions, their impact is prompting many of us to re-evaluate what makes a good home. Location is slipping down the priority list, with nearly half of us now saying that we would consider moving further away from work – with that figure rising to 53% for those under 35.

Home is more important than ever, with three new key priorities:

TIME

We've had time to think about how we spend our daily lives, and whether our routines reflect what matters most to many of us: time with family, friends and for ourselves. Now, we're reprioritising these relationships in our lives at home.

SPACE

We want our homes to now support lots of activities. From new hobbies like reading and gardening, to bigger lifestyle changes like a space to work from home. Having room for ourselves and everyone we live with to find privacy is important, too.

NATURE

Many of us wished for more access to nature, greenery and green spaces long before the pandemic, but now it's a major priority.

47%

of people globally agree they would consider moving further from their place of work for a better home

REBOOTING

our definition of a 'good home'

More – or bigger – bedrooms are no longer top of our wishlists. Our experience of working and living more flexibly at home has meant the things that many of us considered most important in a 'good home' have been turned on their heads. These new and different priorities could have dramatic implications for what we mean by a 'good home', and for the way we live in the future.

ALFRED, HONG KONG

"I am thinking about my next home, and a garden or bigger terrace has become key. This experience has made me realise the importance of nature in my home life."



When we asked the people we surveyed to choose two or three things from a list of nine options that they would most like to change about their homes, based on their life at home so far in 2020, they focused on space:

38%

would like a space to pursue hobbies or interests

35%

would like a private garden or outdoor space

33%

would like a study/ home-working space

NEW PRIORITIES



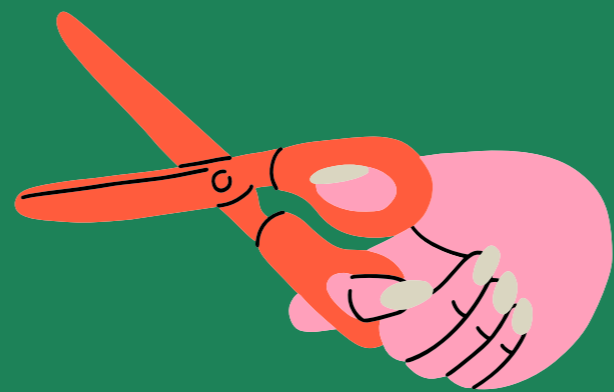
A closer relationship with home is here to stay

Settling into the rhythm of a permanently changed way of life at home, many of us are choosing to continue with behaviours, rituals and activities that worked for us during lockdown. Our homes have cemented themselves as a focal point in our lives, where we can invest in ourselves and our relationships.

When we asked the people who took part in our survey which of twelve activities they enjoyed more of during pandemic restrictions they would continue to do more of in the future, spending more time with family came out on top.



“I have now reached a stage where I am adapting to this new way of living, and have started to think [about] what will be required or how I can equip myself and my family for what...life is going to be like post-COVID-19”



Shai's workplace was ahead of the curve. Back in June, his employer told him to work from home until November, providing certainty for a few months. Knowing that he'd be working from home in the long-term meant he prioritised how he might best prepare his home and family to live in this way. Early on, he thought about how to maintain their health and fitness and how best to set up his workspace.

SHAI'S REBOOT

SHAI, AUSTRALIA

FUTURE HOME REBOOTS

ROBERT, FOUNDER OF FRAME

"It is now extremely clear to everybody that we cannot continue as we have been going so far - it's an extreme reset."

The future of our relationship with home depends on home changing

2020 marks a reboot of our relationship with home - but this is only the beginning. In the future, we can expect heavy scrutiny and investment in the ways homes are created.

Bringing together our primary research over the last seven years, interviews with experts and an exploration of trends likely to affect the way we live in the next decade, we've identified three big shifts that will gather pace and influence our future lives at home.

Homes evolving in the right way will be vital to satisfy our emotional needs and maintain our closer relationship in a new and changed world. These are the three shifts that will underpin the relationship reboot.

THE MULTIPURPOSE HOME



A MULTI-FUNCTIONAL FUTURE

Getting enough Comfort and Privacy will depend on optimised and flexible spaces

The multipurpose home has been emerging as a shift in the way we live for some time. In 2020, it became our make-do reality, and many of us glimpsed the possibilities of a more fluid way of life at home. It got us thinking about the importance of enough space, comfort and privacy, as well as more flexible ways of living at home in the long term.

As pandemic restrictions lift and change, our research suggests these shifts will pick up pace and more permanent structural and lifestyle changes will emerge. Homes will need to adapt – and quickly – to become truly multipurpose.

Small can be plenty
 Urbanisation has meant homes around the world have gradually shrunk. Conventional thinking sees this as a limitation to a comfortable life at home, but future mindsets will be different. We'll value small spaces as much as large ones, with creative solutions and new innovations that maximise the possible uses of the space as a design requirement – not just a bonus feature.

The role of rooms will change
 For hundreds of years, home has been designed around specific functions: a room to sleep, a room to eat, and so on. The next generation of architecture will break free from incremental improvements to distinct rooms and, instead, design spaces to meet a long list of needs and activities. Home design will become more creative and thoughtful. There will be new home layouts and redefined spaces, as we see home with new and open eyes. This different type of home will need to find ways to offer privacy to those of us living together inside them.

ROBERT, FOUNDER OF FRAME
 “The layout of homes today prevents any flexibility, with spaces dedicated to specific functions. Walls need to be broken down – our homes need to be more adaptive. The future will see fewer dedicated rooms, but they will cater for a wider range of activities.”

THE LOCAL HOME

Getting enough Belonging, Ownership and Security will depend on connecting our homes and communities

Our experience of the pandemic has brought about a renewed belief in the value of community, seeing many of us relying on local networks for physical and emotional support, the resources we needed and social interaction. As we saw in our 2018 Life at Home Report, things beyond our four walls are an important source of Belonging, Ownership and Security, both on- and offline.

We can't know when the next global shock will be, but we can be ready for it. We can start thinking about how we'll access community support systems in and around our homes. Home needs to be prepared to provide a source of online and offline support and resilience, including easily accessible social networks, especially for the most vulnerable of us around the world.



SHARLENE, SUSTAINABILITY AND GLOBAL INEQUALITY JOURNALIST

“Meaningful community spaces, such as youth and sports clubs, community centres, green spaces, interest groups and places where hyperlocal communities meet, will start to become more important. They’ll expand the definition of home in a spiritual sense, as opposed to a physical sense.”

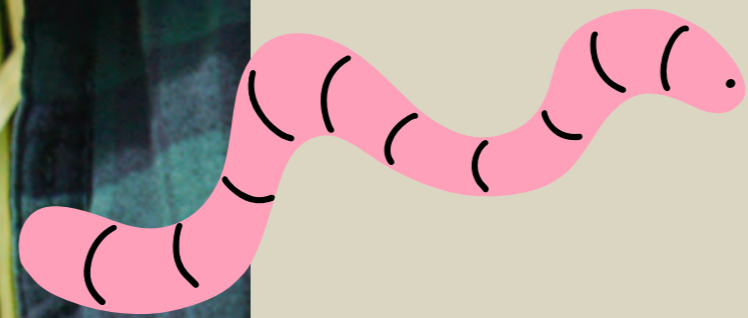
A COMMUNITY FUTURE



Forgotten spaces will be revived
From dusty lofts to abandoned retail spaces, under-utilised places in our homes and communities will spring back to life to help us live more locally. We’ll be using these spaces to support our individual and community interests, like homegrown food and urban community gardens. As a result, we’ll once again see our immediate surroundings as part of an extended home network. This will play the biggest role for the most vulnerable groups in our communities, who will rely on it to satisfy the needs that home can’t.

Life will have a 15-minute radius
Rather than travelling long distances for work or leisure, people will live ‘more locally’. We’ll depend less on public transport and more on local services, work spaces and facilities, thinking of home more as our immediate surroundings and communities than as the bigger city or region.

Self-sufficiency will increase
More and more of our homes and communities will be optimised to access key infrastructure that produces and consumes energy. As technology advances, we’ll produce more of our own electricity individually or through community schemes. Self-sufficiency will become mainstream.



THE HEALTHY HOME



Meeting our emotional needs will depend on health and wellbeing becoming the gold standard for a better life at home

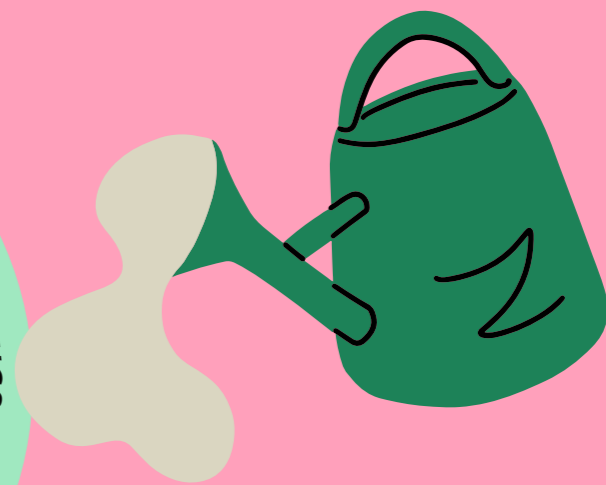
The pandemic has put health and wellbeing at the front of our minds, both at home and in public places. We've been forced to confront not only the hygiene and safety of our homes, but our transport networks, workplaces, schools, gyms and social spaces.

For the first time, we've had to intensely think about the impact these have on our physical and mental health – and it's become obvious that homes haven't been designed, as a fundamental principle, with our wellbeing in mind. With hygiene and health now top priorities, our homes of the future will need to be ready for the next health crisis, as well as meet our emotional needs.

PHILIP, PROFESSOR OF URBAN STUDIES, KINGS COLLEGE LONDON

"We will see the mantra of affordable housing being replaced by more emphasis on decent homes, with a recognition that the quality of our home space is an increasingly important determinant of our physical and mental health."

A HEALTHY FUTURE



Nature will be integrated

The outside and inside of our homes will become more integrated, with priority given to the impact of light and nature on health and wellbeing. Our homes will get lighter and greener, with large windows, communal gardens, balconies and roof terraces included as standard.

Standards will be reset

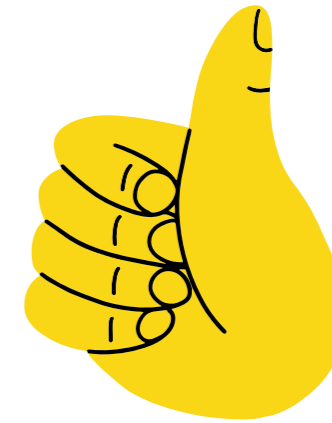
We have an opportunity to learn from the pandemic – to set a new standard around what defines a 'healthy home', and to insist that all of us have access to this. The definition of 'good' or 'decent' housing will go further than affordability or accessibility, to include health and wellbeing as an equally important priority. The healthy home of the future won't simply be about basic physical functions, but it will be a vital tonic for our mental and physical health.

Materials will be chosen for hygiene

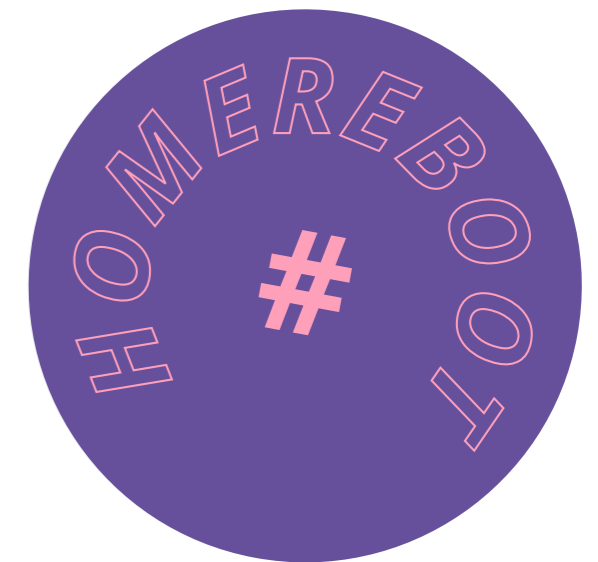
The materials that we use to build and improve our homes will be chosen for their hygienic properties, and spaces will be designed to improve their health credentials, for example innovations to increase the flow of fresh air. Lift buttons, door handles and shared public and private spaces will all be rethought, incorporating smart and easy-to-clean materials as an important design principle. Making sure everyone has access to these changes will be a key challenge to overcome.

Summing things up

2020 has been a year like no other, having a huge impact on many areas of life, including on our relationship with **HOME**. Confined within our four walls all across the world, many of us have come to a realisation: we want something different from our lives at home. With new priorities emerging everywhere, and at the same time, the way we will live in the future looks dramatically different.



This is **THE BIG HOME REBOOT**
– and it's just getting started.



What could this mean for you and your home?

FIND OUT AT [LIFEATHOME.IKEA.COM](https://lifeathome.ikea.com)

Technical note:

The quantitative research was carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Ingka Holding B.V. – IKEA Group. Ipsos MORI interviewed a total sample of 38,210 adults aged 16-75 in the United Kingdom, France, Germany; aged 18-75 in Canada and USA; aged 16-70 in Belgium, the Netherlands and Italy; aged 16-65 in Spain and Sweden; aged 18-65 in Austria, Denmark, Finland, Japan, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, Ireland and Australia; aged 16-60 in Poland, Russia, Romania and Hungary; aged 18-55 in Croatia, Czech Republic, South Korea, Serbia, Slovakia, Singapore, Latvia and Lithuania; aged 18-50 in China, Malaysia Thailand and Estonia; and aged 18-45 in India and the Philippines. The survey was conducted in 37 countries using an online i:omnibus and online ad hoc methodology, depending on the country, between 28 July and 28 August 2020.

Quotas have been applied on gender, age, region and working status, and data has been weighted to the known offline population proportions for those variables. Final global data has been weighted to the known offline population proportions of those countries, except in China and India, where only urban population has been considered. The country weights have been used to ensure each country is representative of its own proportion and population in comparison with actual real proportions of the countries in scope. All polls are subject to a wide range of potential sources of error.

Bases:

All adults = 38,210

All adults who mainly stayed in their main home during the restrictive/lockdown period = 36,216

All adults who enjoyed doing more of any of the listed activities during the restrictive/lockdown period = 34,940



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