

Instant UpRight Sponsors Township Housing Project in South Africa

Instant UpRight, the world's leading provider of Access Tower Systems has sponsored the Niall Mellon Township Trust providing a 40ft container of product to help build low cost housing in the townships of South Africa. Instant UpRight supported by suppliers, Amra Metals, Sapa and Geodis, joined the Annual 'Building Blitz Week' in November organised by the Trust, contributing Instant Span Towers and Snappy Work Platforms.

The Niall Mellon Township Trust was established in 2002 and has a charitable status in Ireland, South Africa and the USA (with an application pending in the UK). There are currently more than 2500 volunteers committed to the charity whose objective is to build low cost houses in partnership with local communities in the townships of South Africa.

Building Blitz at Freedom Park



Each year since 2002, Irish tradesmen have volunteered to join the 'building blitz week' and in 2007 the number of volunteers reached 1350. This year, in addition to their huge Irish contingent, Niall welcomed volunteers from across the globe including Great Britain, Australia, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, France, Holland, Canada and USA. In just one week in November, 203 houses, a community centre and the 'Garden of Hope' were built at Freedom Park which is 40km outside of Cape Town. (Freedom Park was so named, when it was established on Freedom Day- a South African public holiday in 1998). The expected house build is projected to be 5000 by the end of the year.

The construction project was coordinated by splitting groups of up to 120 people into colour coded groups, identifiable by the colour of their t-shirts.

Celebrity gardener Diarmuid Gavin took charge of constructing the Garden of Hope and Community Centre assisted by Freedom Park's local community who included men, women and children of all ages. Built on 800 square metres, this central meeting point for the community includes a community hall, five play areas, five patio areas, a gable wall with painted mural and double sided mirror image of Africa standing 2.5m high.

Future Expansion has a twin-track approach

Both brick-built and timber frame construction is planned by the Trust for the future. A Super Housing factory which was acquired from Marnol (a low cost timber frame housing construction company) enables production to significantly increase. The 'Annual Build Blitz' will continue each year with the number of volunteers expected to grow year on year.

Instant – providing safe working platforms

During the 'Building Blitz' week, Instant's Span Towers and Snappy Work Platforms were used for a variety of tasks including plastering, plumbing and painting the inside of new houses. With its fast erection time and simple set up, the Snappy work platforms provided a safe and solid work area for the local tradesmen.

Louise Tevlin (Pink Ladies) and John Breen (Red Group) represented Instant UpRight at the Building Blitz week in South Africa and participated in the construction project working with the Irish tradesmen and the local community. As a sponsor, Instant UpRight will continue to support the Trust and raise awareness amongst its customers and employees. Suppliers of Instant UpRight who also sponsored product for this year's Building Blitz week included Amra Metals, producers of bushing and t-joints; Sapa producers of aluminium tubing, and Geodis logistics provider. Instant UpRight would like to thank these suppliers for their sponsorship.

South Africa's Housing Crisis

- 2.4 million families are in need of housing and the backlog increases by 20,000 units every year.
- The South African government currently delivers approximately 250,000 units a year.
- 500,000 houses will need to be built by 2014 to eradicate townships.

Ends

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Images are available in high and low resolution pdf or jpg. Please contact Louise Tevlin for copies.



Instant UpRight's Dublin team load the container with Snappy destined for South Africa



23 buses transport the 1350 volunteers to and from Freedom Park each day



1350 Irish Tradesmen arrive on site at Freedom Park



Freedom Park residents welcome the tradesmen



Instant Snappy is put to full use inside one of the newly constructed houses



Before – the 'shack-type' housing



And after....the newly constructed brick built houses

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Diarmuid Gavin, TV celebrity gardener (pictured centre back) supervises construction of the Garden of Hope and Community Centre



Dressed and Ready for Duty!



Snappy provides a perfect platform for painting the mural on the gable



Hundreds gather round as the Garden of Hope is opened



Not camera shy! Smiles all round from the local children



Louise Tevlin of Instant UpRight with Niall Mellon, founder of the NM Township Trust