

# Looking to 2030

What does the future hold? At IKEA, we know that there are many possible futures, and we all have the chance to influence how closely they meet the needs and dreams of life at home. In fact, given that 72% of people say having a home that helps them feel positive and prepared for the future is important, dreaming about what comes next is one of the ways we can create a better life at home today.

Thinking beyond the here and now taps into a human desire to make plans that help us grow and prepare us for the uncertainties we all face ahead.

So whilst we can't predict the future, we can prepare for different future possibilities. We believe that by anticipating what lies ahead of us, which we continually do, we can react so that the path ahead points to a more optimistic outcome.

**What do we know about the future?**  
Based on the paths our lives are taking now, it's possible to point to a number of certainties for our shared

future. The difficult reality is that the road ahead is sure to be bumpy. We know that the climate crisis will continue to grow in scale and intensity, and it will impact all aspects of life—including where and how we live at home.

We will continue to see the effects of systemic shocks, such as pandemics, conflicts, and financial crises. We also know that social fragmentation might deepen and that the fabric that holds societies together will continue to weaken in the wake of continued division around inequality and ethnicity. In this context, the distance between the haves and have-nots will most likely widen.

Despite these probabilities, the future is not fixed. The uncertainties ahead often fluctuate between extremes. Where we find ourselves in the years to come will have a lot to do with how intentional we are about the future we want to walk towards. The possibilities that await us become opportunities for inspiration and spaces where we can create our own stories.

## The uncertainties:

- **Communal Belonging**  
or **Individual Privacy?**
- **Autonomous Technologies**  
or **Individual Control?**
- **New Experiences**  
or **Permanent Stability?**
- **Controlling Nature**  
or **Harmonious Nature?**

Here, we share three possible futures for life at home that reflect on these uncertainties. We believe the stories inspired within them depict a desirable role for the home in a volatile world. These possible futures also tap into one of the three tensions currently faced by people in their lives at home, which we explore in this report.

**Fast forward to life at home in 2030 and beyond!**

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... and beyond



# Possible Future 01

The future of this world is marked by movement. Lifestyles are transient, through choice or circumstance, but the emphasis is on the enthusiastic search for a better life that might be just around the corner—or even further away, perhaps in a different dimension. In any instance, people use their homes to allow them to be their best selves, with a deeply individualised approach to how they curate and act in their home space. Independence is essential, as is the ability to feel resilient amidst constant change. Different homes become different places for us to get our hit of accomplishment and enjoyment and to find time to retreat inwards when it all feels a bit too much. The good news is that we can access all of our homes at any time and from anywhere, thanks to personalised technology.

Life at home in this future is embedded with technology that focuses on individual progress, privacy, and the pursuit of new experiences.

***WE ASK: What if there wasn't just one home, but multiple homes to help people foster resilience in their every day and nurture themselves?***



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## Meet Jin

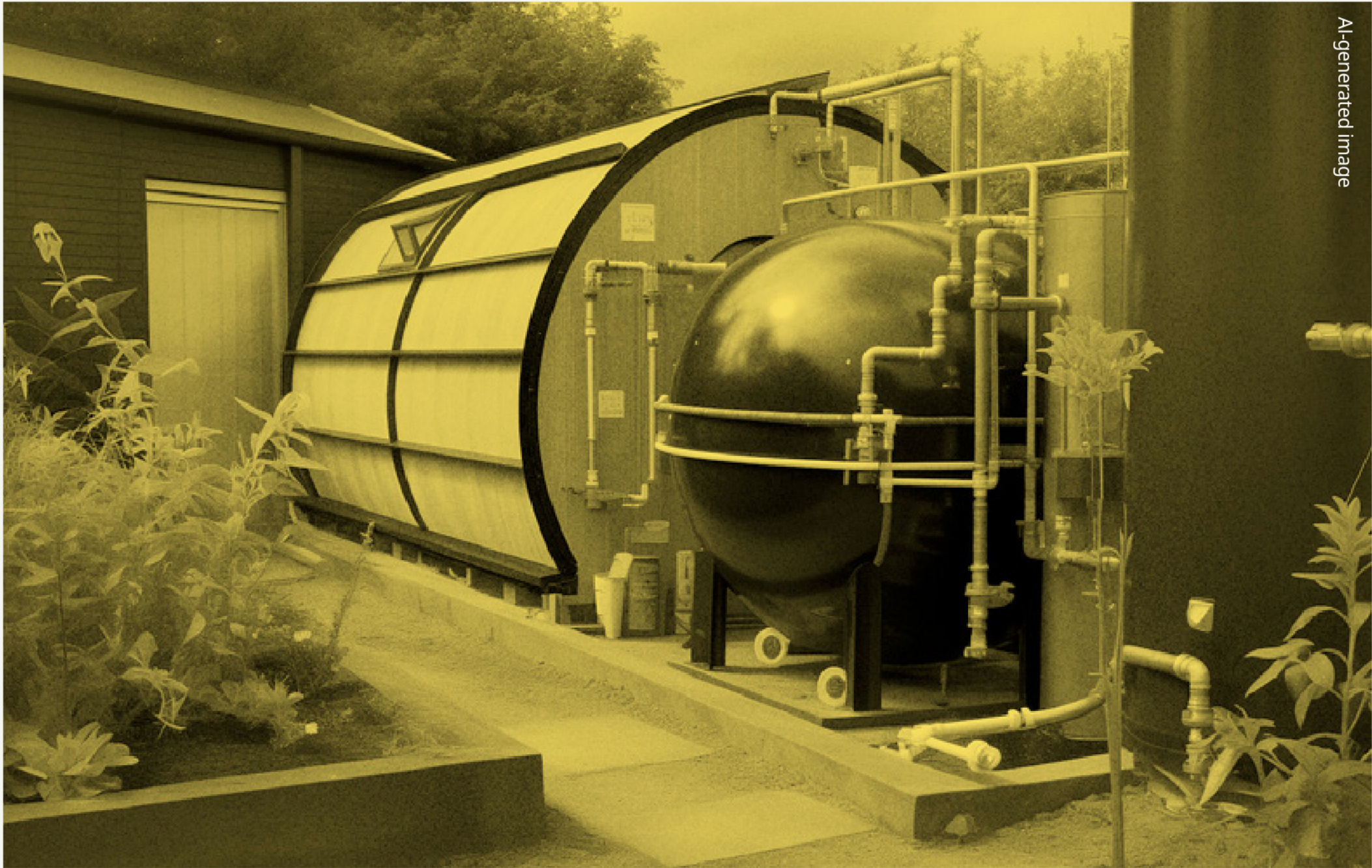
Jin is currently living in a pod in a high-rise apartment in central Seoul this week after climate reports proposed a temporary evacuation from the lowlands. He'll head back to the coast in a few days as he's keen to get his home ready for his graduation party. He's invited new friends from the local area to join physically, and several thousand of his cohorts from the remote University he attends to join online. Jin is planning to host karaoke in one of the breakout rooms, so he needs to rent the lights and sound equipment before the prices go up again.

This summer, Jin plans to travel. It's so easy to organise now that all his living administrative requirements get monitored through his personalised AI advisor. Without his trusted advisor, travelling would be almost impossible as the transport is harder to arrange with fluctuating prices. If the borders close again, then Jin will just travel digitally so he doesn't miss out. The new headset he rents really helps with immersion, and he can access virtual environments that help him get into the feeling of travelling, such as exotic backdrops like the London skyline!

Jin likes living alone because it gives him space to rest after hours of meeting people online. He's excited to start his new job in experience design in the autumn and is thinking about joining the co-living programme connected to the company. They have pods all over the world so he can do his job from anywhere. Just so long as he has a place to sleep at night, Jin is happy to explore as much as he can. ■

Home on the go





## Possible Future 02

The future of this world sees the planet's population broken into various separate communities that live unconnected lives of their own. People tend to stick to those they most closely identify with, whether that's through politics, parenting styles or music taste. Interactions between different communities are transactional at best. With so much social fragmentation, self-sufficiency is in demand and communities place a high premium on people who can

share a wide range of skills. Learning is a constant, and therefore stability inside the community is a priority.

Life at home in this future is focused on communal belonging and permanent stability, whilst people are shunning technology and leaning into support from people within their own groups. In this world, nature is interwoven into everyday life, but it doesn't take centre stage.

***WE ASK: How can our homes foster our sense of identity and togetherness without further alienating distinct communities from one another?***

# Resilient

## Meet Angela

Angela has just bought into a women-only housing collective in Massachusetts, USA. This collective is working to become completely self-sufficient. She's one of the older residents, but her recent divorce after 30 years of marriage triggered a deeper exploration of her identity and the kinds of people she relates most closely to.

To be actively involved in her new community, she borrowed some money from the neighbourhood co-operative bank so she could complete a basic welding course. They never want to break the community code and ask others outside their community to help out, even in a crisis. The group has designed a central workspace, which they call their She Shed, where they can repair almost anything in the collective. It's where Angela will teach others to weld once she's received her training at the technical college across the other side of the township.

Angela has recently started dating Patricia, one of the other women in the collective. Patricia is spending her Saturdays learning how to deliver emergency medical treatment. She's also helping fortify all the collective housing units against climate change. Patricia and Angela connected over their mutual love of sustainable interior design. The two of them are installing bio-solar wallpaper with a lovely retro feel using patterns from the early 2000s. The wallpaper uses algae to generate electricity from sunlight.

A few weeks ago, some of the women in the collective decided to carve out some space in the She Shed for an anaerobic digester that processes all their biowaste. They built it themselves using a 3D flat plan they found on an open-source site. They made quite a few customisations which means they've been getting several enquiries from other groups nearby who want to barter for access to their IP. It's a real point of pride for the women in the collective that their community is thriving so well. ■

# Communities



# Possible Future 03



The future of this world has significantly adapted to the realities of the climate crisis. Bilateral policies have created international and interconnected eco-initiatives and prompted the widespread adoption of smart home systems to support the efficient use of resources. People are forced into transparent behaviours when it comes to consumption. Everyone recognises the consequences of and connectedness between the way they live, their homes, communities and the natural environment. Homes in this future are more responsive to external forces and integrate both technology and nature into their design.

Life at home in this future is directed towards individual control. By living more in tune with nature through technology, people are free to explore new experiences.

***WE ASK: How might our relationship with both technology and nature allow us to live with a more regenerative mindset?***

# A nurtured home

## Meet Jamie

Jamie is a non-binary primary school teacher, living with their two partners and children in a small township north of Uppsala in Sweden. The three adults are parents to a two-year-old and a five-year-old, so life at home is often chaotic and messy. It helps that the surfaces of the kitchen and all the floors are self-cleaning, and they can outsource meal planning and grocery shopping to the cloud. But some things still require human hands. Jamie likes to be able to take over from technology when it comes to working with their adjacent land because of the well-being benefits.

Most days, Jamie downloads a report from Gaia, the in-house AI that monitors their energy use and overall wellbeing. It suggests improvements in their living situation based on accurate climate and health forecasts for the next six months. Gaia proposes they switch on their wind readiness turbines given that it's going to get blustery on the back of Hurricane Lex which made landfall further south a few

days ago. Gaia also plays a new ambient soundscape to help manage Jamie's spike in anxiety around their workload.

Next week, Jamie's parents are coming to visit 'for real' after a year or more of digital visits. Jamie's XXL remote teaching screens have been a real boost for the virtual Sunday lunch and smaller online get-togethers they like to have. But nothing beats a real hug. Jamie and their family live in a modest regenerated farmhouse, so they will 3D print some furniture from a mushroom compound for one of the outhouses and turn it into a cosy guest space. Over dinner that evening, Jamie talks to the kids about the upcoming visit from Gram and Gramps. They get so excited they struggle to go to bed after their mist baths. Jamie's partner, Joakim, decides to read them a story from a physical collection he's saved from his own childhood rather than outsource to the bot that's programmed with his voice. With the kids finally in dreamland, the adults enjoy some of their home-distilled whiskey while they listen to new music. It's good to connect whilst also taking time to be private with their thoughts. As far as life goes, theirs is a pretty good one. ■



“Imagining myself living in these possible futures, it’s significant to see the impact of climate change on life at home as we know it. But there is careful optimism, with technology helping us live more sustainably. We will need a shift towards new ways of powering our world, such as intuitive home monitoring and energy alternatives, as well as emerg-ing techniques for distributed manufacturing. These scenarios also emphasise the role of relationships between people. The shift towards co-operatives, community-centric lifestyles, and collective self-reliance can be a way to improve overall quality of life for everyone.

There are lots of opportunities for action within these future scenarios. I’m curious to see how IKEA can support when ‘home’ becomes a relative term in the wake of increased mobility. Being able to quickly establish a home environment and social connections will be vital in these uncertain circumstances. I’m also excited to see more developments in alternative energy sources and climate mitigation.

Coming back to the importance of relationships, I still believe that nothing can replace authentic intimacy, like the kind you see between families. We don’t need technology to take over the role of parenting, but to give us more time to spend with our kids.”

**Mat Lincez**  
Partner, Foresight Director



The residents of our three possible future scenarios all interact with home in a variety of relatable ways, from emotional to functional, no matter the reality of their life outside. Whilst many of their experiences feel different from our life at home today, their desires and expectations continue to span the eight needs of the home. The future may not be a fixed destination, but we believe that we can all dream about the future possibilities ahead.

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