

10.1 LIVING IN THE FUTURE

1 Read the article *The Freedom Ship*. Find out what the following figures refer to.

1 \$40 million

3 20,000

5 40,000

7 25%

2 \$150,000

4 10,000

6 \$9 billion

8 2,000

The Freedom Ship

It may sound like something from a science fiction story – a floating city of 40,000 people that will slowly circumnavigate the globe – but the building of what will be the world's largest ship is underway.

The Freedom Ship is the brainchild of project director Norman Nixon. He claims that the vessel will be one of the wonders of the world. The Freedom Ship will be nearly a mile long (1,395 m), 234 m wide and 110 m tall and will have room for 40,000 people, including a staff of 10,000. There will be a school and university on board, not to mention a landing strip, a hospital, a casino, a shopping mall and 200 acres of open space.

The idea is that it will slowly travel the world, pausing a few miles out from chosen destinations such as ports or exotic tropical islands that can only be reached by sea. It will be on the move for 25% of the time – the rest of the time it will be anchored off different ports.

People who want to live on board can purchase their homes for prices which range from \$150,000 for a small unit to \$40 million for something rather larger. There will be 20,000 units in total and the whole venture will cost \$9 billion. Developers are being encouraged to pre-purchase space and sell it on in the same way as their real estate counterparts do on dry land.

The hope is that the vessel will have a

'global environment' with a large mixture of different nationalities and ages. Talks have taken place with Nova Southwestern University to ensure that an established academic institution will be responsible for running the degree courses on the ship. It is not meant to be seen as a retirement cruise ship but one where people could run their businesses and educate their children. And what's more, there will be no local taxes to pay.

'We're just a giant landlord,' said Roger Gooch, marketing vice-president for the project, adding that anyone who wanted to start and run a business on the ship was free to do so. There has been scepticism, he accepted, about the safety of such a vessel, but the company's engineers are confident that such a ship will be secure and viable. A former FBI man will head a 2,000-strong security force and the ship will be equipped with 'state-of-the-art defensive weapons' to prevent it from being taken hostage by international pirates or the like.

The laws on board will be those of the country under whose flag the ship eventually sails; this is still to be decided. Serious offenders would be held and then surrendered to the authorities when the ship reached its next port. And will the city have its own government? Representatives would be elected by different decks of the ship, Mr Gooch said, but 'the captain's word will be final.'

- 2 Work in groups and discuss these questions.
- 1 Do you think 'The Freedom Ship' is a good name for the floating city? Why / Why not?
Can you think of any alternatives?
 - 2 Would you like to buy an apartment on the Freedom Ship?
 - 3 Would you like to work on or run a business from the Freedom Ship?
 - 4 In your opinion, what kind of people will want to live on the Freedom Ship?
 - 5 If you were marketing vice-president for the Freedom Ship, what strategy would you adopt for selling units?
- 3 Find words in the article that mean:
- 1 idea _____
 - 2 the very latest, modern _____
 - 3 people who break the law _____
 - 4 somebody who does the same job as you _____
 - 5 levels or floors on a ship _____
 - 6 in progress _____
 - 7 doubt and uncertainty _____
 - 8 to lead, be in charge of _____
- 4 Work in groups. Choose one of these projects. Read the information and prepare a presentation for a group of investors who may provide you with the capital you need to finance the project. Try to persuade them that your project is realistic, financially viable,

Subterranean city (Earthia)	Space city (Starlactica)	Underwater city (Atlantia)
<p>You have drawn up plans for an underground city complete with shops, schools, restaurants, cinemas, and health clubs. Overpopulation above ground has led to congestion, pollution, and stress. Increasingly, people want to get away from it all, and you have designed 'Earthia', a labyrinthine underground city housing up to 25,000 people, which could be constructed almost anywhere in the globe. You firmly believe that this is the future model for relieving overcrowding and preserving the landscape. Virtual windows and sounds and smells will help to create a feeling of peace, calm, and a closeness to nature within the city.</p> <p>Funding required \$26 billion.</p>	<p>You have drawn up plans for a city which will circle 20,000 kilometres above the earth in space. Technology has been developed to reverse gravitational pull, enabling engineers to create a fast, fuel-efficient rocket shuttle that can transport up to 500 people at a time between the earth and 'Starlactica' in only 20 hours. A one-off payment of \$450,000 entitles customers to a medium-sized apartment on 'Starlactica' and two return trips to earth a year for the rest of their lives. The city will function in much the same way as they do on earth. Transport will be different, with space jet-skis used for travelling around locally.</p> <p>Funding required \$39 billion.</p>	<p>You have drawn up plans for an underwater city complete with shops, schools, restaurants, cinemas, and health clubs. Increasingly, people want to get away from it all, and you have designed 'Atlantia', an underwater city made entirely from glass which would be anchored to the sea-bed. Up to 35,000 people could live there and you believe that there is a potentially huge market for this type of city, as overcrowding on dry land leads to increasingly cramped and stressful lives.</p> <p>Funding required \$13 billion.</p>