



PROJECT  
SHANGWEI VILLAGE PLUGIN HOUSE  
DESIGNER  
PEOPLE'S ARCHITECTURE OFFICE  
LOCATION  
SHENZHEN, CHINA  
BUILT  
1900s

## The Prefab Home That Could Regenerate Communities

The Plugin House concept came about when the local government of Shangwei, Shenzhen, started exploring ways to support a budding community of local artists and craftspeople that had taken up residence in the formerly half-abandoned village. A pilot scheme, in partnership with People's Architecture Office, led to an ingenious approach to upgrading the ancient derelict houses: slotting a new home inside an old ruin using a modular building system of prefabricated panels. Connections are integrated into each panel so that they can be easily assembled with one tool, in less than a day.

The shapes of the Plugin Houses are defined by the envelope of the existing buildings, therefore fitting comfortably within the fabric of the village. "The purpose of the Plugin House system is to provide an affordable and quick alternative to tearing down buildings, rebuilding from scratch, and relocating populations," say the architects. "It shows that living in small, historic spaces does not have to conflict with modern comforts and a high standard of living." →