

HOME truths

Maintained houses sell faster

Market commentators advise that house prices are increasing but the volume of sales has slowed down. This slowdown is unexpected in our traditionally peak sales period.

Some reasons are that investors are waiting to see what the Government is doing with capital gains tax and land tax, and others are holding off until they know how any tax changes may affect them. Prime Minister John Key recently made it clear changes to the way investment property is taxed will be announced in the Budget. To date, the Government has ruled out a land tax, a comprehensive capital gains tax and a risk-free return method (RFRM) for taxing residential investment properties — all options suggested



Well-maintained properties achieve quick and seamless sales but unfortunately we still see too few of these.

Sarah Symon

Manager of house inspection company Realsure

by the Tax Working Group. From our perspective, the market is still steady. A client sold her home after only a week on the market during the school holidays — she received seven offers.

The difference between a sale and a non-sale usually comes down to the standard of homes at inspection. Well-maintained homes achieve quick and seamless sales. It's not just

about the new kitchen, bathroom and paint job, more importantly it's about the foundation, cladding and roof condition. I have just spent a rather large sum of money over the past summer months on my home. The larger part went on a new roof over the garage, new toilets, and repairing and repainting the interior. I'm now focused on the exterior and undertaking basic maintenance to prepare for winter, with the remainder to be tackled next summer.

This budget and expenditure is planned and based on a recent building survey.

The survey identified and prioritised required work. It enabled me to defer the main exterior work until next summer, knowing there is

no risk of leaking or damage to the interior work I have just done.

By keeping your maintenance programme up to date you maintain the value of your home and minimise repair costs. You should be prepared to have a professional Accredited Building Surveyor assess your home and provide an accurate report. The report simplifies and documents what work is required. Furthermore, if or when you come to sell, the new changes in the Real Estate Act require you to disclose any defects to the salesperson in writing. You can accurately respond to this if you use an Accredited Building Surveyor and keep your home and maintenance in good shape.

■ www.realsure.co.nz

WHO BOUGHT THAT HOUSE? By Robyn Welsh

3D GEORGE COURTS BUILDING 238 KARANGAHAPE RD AUCKLAND CITY

Fifteen years ago Professor Nick Holford bought a ground floor apartment in Mercury Lane, but he always thought it'd be nice to live in the George Courts Building across the road.

But, being the busy university lecturer that he was then, he never

gave a shift of house any serious thought until recently, even though the abandoned former heritage department store built in the 1920s had had a well-publicised revamp.

A timely prod from his son's fiancée got him thinking about this third-floor apartment (*Herald homes*, September 26) and he set off across the road for a closer look just three days before the September 30 auction.

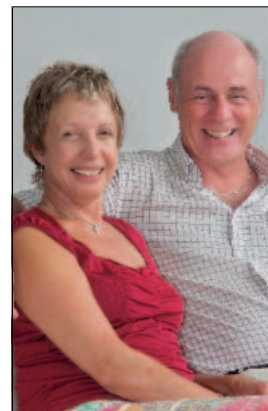
His French-born partner, Martine Nédélec, was in France at the time but looked at the property on the internet and told him to make every effort to buy the place.

"I put my hand up at the right time and that was it," he says.

Professor Holford, presently in South Africa on a research project as part of his specialty in clinical pharmacology, has literally moved up in the world — quite apart from his professional elevation to full professorial status.

At day's end, he walks in the door and is uplifted by the magnificent urban view, which takes in Rangitoto Island, the Harbour Bridge and the Sky Tower. and it

■ **Sold by Liz Derbyshire and Trent Colyer, Barfoot & Thompson, ph Liz 021 661 978, Trent 021 989 466.**



BIRD'S EYE VIEW: Professor Nick Holford, seen here with daughter-in-law Evie, bought the apartment perched above K Rd with his partner Martine Nédélec.



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