

Owner devastated as tenants leave house wrecked and contaminated with meth

By Georgina Campbell

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A Wellington property owner has lost his nest egg to methamphetamine.

Yesterday he handed over the keys to the Wainuiomata home he bought in the 90s, selling it for \$230,000, well below its rateable value of \$295,000, after discovering it was riddled with the drug.

More than 20 registered bidders turned up to the auction, among them first-home buyers, property developers and investors.

The two-bedroom home with a 809m² section sold for \$230,000.

The vendor, who did not wish to be named, said he was devastated.

"They're just scumbags, they don't deserve a roof over their heads.

"I worked all my life to buy property and pay the mortgage, the rates, and yet tenants can move in and do that kind of damage."

He said it was a tough lesson to learn.

"If I was to do it again I would just accept the financial costs and get a property manager to police it properly and not try and do it myself."

New owner Leon Ure said he owned several properties in Wainuiomata already.

"\$230,000 seems like a lot to me for a wreck of a house, probably it's the most I've paid for a property in Wainui."

The rateable value for the home is \$295,000.

Ure said he was not fazed by the presence of methamphetamine and estimated it would cost him \$25,000 to bring the home up to standard.

He said the house was trashed.

"It really needs to be gutted and it's not going to take me any more work, like new ceilings, new walls, than what it would if it was just in a really bad state."

Ure said drug use was just another risk landlords had to take on.

"You really don't know what they're doing to your property, any landlord really doesn't know."

Professionals real estate Lower Hutt managing director John Ross said the property was worse than what it looked from the street.



It looks bad - but it's even worse inside, says real estate company. Photo / Supplied

"You see these doors and windows boarded up for good reason given the health and safety risk around the property, but when you do go inside it you will find holes smashed in the walls and when the property was measured for methamphetamine it rated very highly."

Ross said he was surprised by how much interest there was in the auction.

He said it showed the lengths people were willing to go to just to get on Wellington's property ladder.

"For a first-home buyer taking on a property like that and entering the market even at \$230,000 with so much work to do could be absolutely daunting for some of them."

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