

**THE  
RESENE  
EASY  
DECORATING  
GUIDE**



**THE  
GREAT**

**VACANCY  
SPRUCE UP**

The time between tenants is a perfect opportunity to do some maintenance on your rental, writes **Sharon Newey**



**RENOVATION:** BETWEEN TENANTS

**YOUR RENTAL PROPERTY** is tenanted, everything is sweet, there's the odd phone call for minor maintenance but essentially, life just ticks along nicely.

Aside from the odd inspection or visit, when your rental property is happily tenanted, there's hardly any need to go near the place, let alone clip on the tool belt and do anything to it.

But when tenants leave, that's the time to give the property a thorough check-over and decide if anything needs renovating or repairing. It's the time to have a good hard look at the place and decide whether major work needs to be done, if just a spruce up is needed, just a thorough clean, or nothing needs doing at all.

More serious renovations may be needed to make the place more habitable or appealing but before embarking on these purely for visual appeal, make sure you are going to enjoy a corresponding rent rise to help pay for them. Does the carpet really need replacing or will a good professional clean do? Will a new laminate benchtop and some splash-back tiles perk up the kitchen or do you really need a completely new one.

Let's assume your rental property is mid-way between a major overhaul and nothing at all. A spruce-up, in other words.

**Paint the walls and ceilings.** Painting the interiors is one of the cheapest and most visually effective ways of sprucing up a property between tenants. You may only need to do the living areas and bathrooms as these are more likely to have scuffed surfaces and more wear and tear. The bedrooms may be okay, or if these haven't been aired properly, the ceilings may need attention.

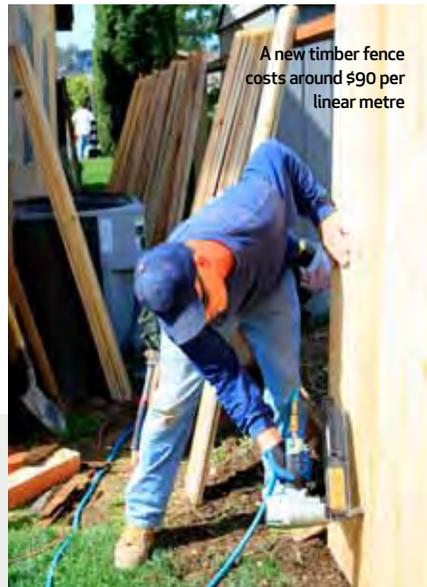
Consider using Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen Kitchen & Bathroom which combines anti-bacterial silver protection and MoulDefender mould inhibitor. It can be good for ceilings in south-facing rooms, too. Resene also makes a high-effective fly deterrent paint additive.

If the kitchen cabinets are looking dreary, paint them too.





## GIVE THE PROPERTY A THOROUGH CHECK-OVER



A new timber fence costs around \$90 per linear metre

## HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT TO SPEND?

For a three-bedroom house with one living area, approximately 120m<sup>2</sup>, what will it cost you to renovate between tenants?

### UNDER \$100

Tidy up, basic clean and declutter: It won't cost you anything but your time and it can make a world of difference to the look of your property, both inside and out.

Clean the carpets:

Hire a Rug Doctor for four hours for \$39.99, plus \$13.95 for a litre of carpet cleaner, total \$53.94.

Mow the lawn and tidy the garden: Lawn mowing by Jim's Mowing starts from \$30. [www.jims-mowing.co.nz](http://www.jims-mowing.co.nz), 0800 454 6546

### UNDER \$500

Tidy up the garden

Jim's Mowing will tidy up your garden, including rubbish removal, with prices starting from \$100.

Install a mould defence

Reduce condensation and mould damage with a universal Showerdome, which eliminates condensation in the bathroom. A \$276 Showerdome fits showers of any size or shape and prevents future mould damage. DIY rail installation kit which is \$9.00 or

between \$125 - \$150 to have it fitted by a local installer. [www.showerdome.co.nz](http://www.showerdome.co.nz), 0800 541 2233

Professional clean and sanitise

For \$315 you can get the house thoroughly cleaned and sanitised by Mr Green Commercial and Domestic Cleaning. Ceiling or wall cleaning is extra, and for an extra \$120 to \$160 you can also get the oven cleaned (price depends on the state of the oven). [www.mrgreen.co.nz](http://www.mrgreen.co.nz) 0800 435 725

Wash the house

A soft-wash of the house will cost \$300 to \$350 + GST, says Kowhai Home Restoration. [www.kowhaiguys.co.nz](http://www.kowhaiguys.co.nz), 0800 KOWHAI (569424)

Spruce up the roof

A quick moss-kill to smarten up the roof - about \$250 + GST from Kowhai. For an additional \$200 to \$250 + GST, they'll clean out your gutters, too.

### UNDER \$1,000

Refurbish the shower

Approximately \$500 to \$600 (depending on size), according to GroutPro. This includes re-grouting the shower base with waterproof epoxy grout, cleaning and coloursealing the shower wall grout to match, replacing all the old silicone and cleaning the shower glass back to an 'as new' clear finish. [www.groutpro.co.nz](http://www.groutpro.co.nz) 0508 422 532

### UNDER \$5,000

Replace vinyl or carpet flooring. Carpet is sold in lineal metres. 1 lineal metre

is 3.66m wide. For \$2,975 Damn Cheap Carpets will re-carpet the bedrooms and living area in our sample house, or there's a mid-range option for \$4,750. Prices include the carpet, underlay, installation and GST. For the kitchen and bathroom, Damn Cheap Carpets can get rid of the old vinyl, prepare the floor and install 10m x 2m of new vinyl from \$1,400. [www.damncheapcarpet.co.nz](http://www.damncheapcarpet.co.nz) 0800 022 345

Build a new fence

Fence building is between \$86 to \$90 + GST per linear metre for 1.8m timber paling fence. So 30m of fencing will cost between \$2,967 and \$3,105 all up.

Repaint inside or outside

It takes about 100 litres of paint for a full interior repaint on a 120m<sup>2</sup> house, and between 100 and 140 litres for the exterior, according to Resene. To do both you would need to spend about \$3,000 to \$5,000 on paint. Of course, you'll blow your \$5,000 budget if you hire a painter, so it will have to be DIY if you want to keep it cheap. [www.resene.co.nz](http://www.resene.co.nz)

Roof painting and restoration

Kowhai will paint and restore your concrete or stone-chip tiled roof for \$3,000 to \$4,000 + GST. [www.kowhaiguys.co.nz](http://www.kowhaiguys.co.nz), 0800 KOWHAI (569424)

Regular maintenance helps to avoid major problems



**Check for mould** in bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms. Is that musty smell just because the tenants didn't open the windows often enough or is there a bigger problem? You may need to review your insulation, or check for other causes of moisture, ie a leaking pipe dripping into the wall cavity, or a blocked drains slowly backing up. Or you may need to review your steam extraction systems, or install one if there are none at all.

Be free with the anti-mould spray in the bathroom – it does wonders if your tenants have been less-than-enthusiastic cleaners.

Get the place professionally cleaned as well as the carpets. Also have the curtains laundered. If the property comes semi-furnished, have appliances and furniture cleaned too.

While the property is empty is a good chance to let off a bug bomb – it will take care of any fleas, some borer and other unwanted nasties.

**Trim any trees or shrubs** that are crowding up to the house or entranceway. Trees close to the house will encourage dampness and mould and will make the property colder in winter.

Also waterblast any paths that may have become slippery or use a wet-and-forget style product.

**In the bathroom**, replace the toilet seat and check the shower lining and/or tiles to make sure they're watertight. Fix any leaking taps, particularly if your local council metres you separately for water.

**Replace any broken fittings.** Check for sticking doors and windows, cracked putty, and loose fittings and hinges. While you're at it, change the locks – it's a good selling point to future tenants that there are no unaccounted-for keys still in the possession

of former tenants. Depending on the area, installing security stays on the windows will also be helpful to you and the tenants – they'll feel safer and be more inclined to open windows and therefore air out the house.

Now it's just a matter of writing up your 'to let' ad and welcoming your new tenants! ■

## SAMPLE RENOVATION PROJECT

A small three-bedroom rental property in South Auckland's Manurewa was recently renovated by Sharon Trafford of Renovate to Profit ([www.renovateforprofit.co.nz](http://www.renovateforprofit.co.nz)). She gave us the costs, including project management:

- **INTERIOR REPAINTING THROUGHOUT**  
\$4000.00 + GST; aluminium windows throughout, and two coats of paint on walls
- **NEW VINYL THROUGHOUT**  
\$1918.25 + GST; new vinyl in the kitchen, dining room, toilet and bathroom
- **NEW CARPET**  
\$2608.69 + GST; supply and install polypropylene carpet throughout the whole house
- **KITCHEN SPRUCE UP**  
\$200.00 + GST; new drawer and cupboard handles and replacement of missing kickboards