

## Daily Dispatch online

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### Police house becomes crime haven

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Mayflower Terrace residents have labelled the house an “eyesore”, saying it was fast becoming a hub for vagrants and criminals. The house would need serious attention should it be put on the market, according to Unified Property Management’s Geoff Stephen, whose company premises are next door.

“They broke into the house last week during the early hours of the morning and stole the geyser. This house is an eyesore in the street and welcomes unsavoury characters to our neighbourhood.” Stephen said they had approached the department to buy the vacant house and renovate it but were unsuccessful.

“It would cost about half a million rand to restore this house. It is filthy inside and the electrics are out of date. It is an open house which makes it an open target.” Another resident Joanne Audie, who lives opposite the vacant house said the house was the perfect hiding ground for criminals.

“It is a security risk for the rest of the road and it is a definite eyesore. Something needs to be done about this house,” Audie said. National department of public works spokesman Thami Mchunu said while they owned the property, it was leased to the police.

He said the SA Police Services indicated last Friday they were planning to return the house to the department. "The department has also initiated a process to urgently appoint a security company to prevent any further vandalism to take place," Mchunu said.

Mchunu said the department planned on inviting tender proposals to lease the house. Provincial police spokeswoman Brigadier Miranda Mills confirmed they would be handing the trashed dwelling back to the department.

"The occupant of the residence was relocated to Port Elizabeth and an immediate replacement tenant was not found. Mills added that a case docket was opened for the vandalism since the property was vacated.

"The station commander of Beacon Bay police station has also been requested to address the issue of vagrants making a nuisance of themselves and to ensure that regular visits and patrols are made to this property to prevent any security risks to the local community," Mills said.