



**ELEGANT:** Another Herbert Baker home in the central section of Rosebank, Cape Town, is for sale at R6.75 million through Greeff Properties. Mark Shagam of Greeff Properties says it has many standard Baker features and the 2 000m<sup>2</sup> site is said to have been chosen by Baker for his chief engineer, who wanted a comfortable home with sweeping lawns for his growing family. Today the erf is one of the largest residential sites in the area and can be subdivided. "The home still has many elegant Edwardian traits including long wooden balustraded balconies on the ground and first floor, small-pane windows and full-length small-pane French doors. Interior features include Oregon pine floors, imported cast-iron fireplaces, and high ceilings typical of homes of this period. "There are five bedrooms and three bathrooms, and the three reception rooms have an interesting layout, lending themselves to the display of appropriate furniture," says Val Petzold, Shagam's partner at Greeff Properties. Other features include a pool and a conservatory.

## Landlords beware – scamsters pose as world charity staffers

LANDLORDS new to the property market who are considering letting their properties should take precautions against charlatans or habitual defaulting tenants.

Even experienced property managers can be caught unawares by those wanting to abuse their trust, says Michelle Dickens, managing director of TPN, a credit bureau that profiles tenant behaviour and rental payment profiles.

"One of our subscribers recently encountered a fraud-

ster with an old trick but a new angle for 2010. He claimed to be an advocate and a representative of the UN Children's Fund (Unicef) and *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF or Doctors without Borders)," she says.

Pat Redford, owner and operator of Reds Property Management, manages several luxury apartments in Sandton's CBD for private investors.

He says: "I received a call from a 'Dr Esslinger', who said he was chairman of a trust fund that sponsors doctors

from Europe to train for Unicef and MSF. He said his associate, an advocate who was a local representative for the organisations, would contact me about accommodation for a year for their volunteers.

"I met the man, who was elegant and very well-spoken. I had no reason to disbelieve him. He listed all the doctors by name and even provided contact details of an assistant who would liaise with me about the lease agreement."

The fraudster took occu-

pation of a luxury apartment and said he would pay R300 000 within 14 days, but paid nothing, says Redford. "It was a harsh lesson to learn, but from now on, as a TPN subscriber, I will run credit checks on all tenants over the age of 18 on all the properties I manage."

Dickens says: "People are less inclined to be suspicious of individuals in responsible positions, especially those who represent good causes.

"If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is."

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