

# Home Smart Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2021



## Lockdown slows Auckland activity, rest of country see spring rebound

Property prices continue to increase year-on-year, but September saw month-on-month median residential property prices across New Zealand fall 6.5 percent to \$795,000.

Despite the slow down in activity, seven regions still reached new record median prices in September, with the biggest annual percentage increase seen in Manawatu/Wanganui. Prices are up 35.4 percent to \$626,000 since September 2020, and the region has set new records for 11 of the past 12 months, according to the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand (REINZ) data.

Hawke's Bay saw an increase of 31.6 percent to \$770,000 in the past 12 months, and Canterbury was up 31 percent on a year ago with median sales prices at \$660,000.

Bay of Plenty has also set a new record, up 24.2 percent to \$878,000 in the past year. New records were also set in Tauranga City (reaching \$990,000) and Whakatane District (\$695,000).

"September was always going to be a month to watch as we assess the impact various COVID-19 Alert Levels have on the New Zealand property market," REINZ Chief Executive Jen Baird said.

"What the data shows, is that confidence remains high, buyer demand is still strong, and outside of Auckland, buyers will be pleased to see more property coming to the market. Prices are proving resilient, with some regions noting a decrease in the number of first home

buyers, in part due to rising prices."

In September 5,385 properties were sold, which is the fewest number of properties sold in a September month since 2011. Outside of Auckland, the number of sales were down 28.7 percent on last year to 4,047, but that was an increase of 13.8 percent compared to August 2021.

The impact of lockdown and COVID-19 restrictions in Auckland saw a 55.3 percent year-on-year decrease in property sales, with 1,338 homes sold in September. The number of properties sold were also down month-on-month, with 2,408 properties were sold in August.

"While alert level restrictions have had an impact on the ability and confidence of people to buy and sell across the country, as alert levels have eased in regions, we have seen an increase in the number of properties sold. Comparatively, Auckland activity remains low, with the region experiencing its lowest sales count since April 2020 and its lowest count for a September month. It's interesting to note that the drop has not been as sharp as in the first full lockdown back in 2020. The use of digital solutions across the real estate profession has enabled activity to carry on to a degree, with virtual auctions continuing throughout September," Baird said.

Get the value of our experience today by booking a **free property appraisal** with your local real estate expert.

[ljhooker.co.nz/property-appraisal](https://ljhooker.co.nz/property-appraisal)

# What to consider before buying your first lifestyle block

After a period of lockdowns, travel restrictions or just growing tired of being boxed into a densely populated community, the extra space that comes with a lifestyle block can be tempting.

If you are eyeing up those green paddocks, some extra land to plant fruit trees, or an uninterrupted view across rolling landscapes, a lifestyle block could be the ticket. But before you buy your first plot of land outside of town, make sure you are truly aware of the responsibilities that come with owning a lifestyle property.

## Who is interested in lifestyle properties?

People like to spread out and have space to be able to enjoy their home and stretch beyond a large quarter acre section, if you can find one of those in town these days. LJ Hooker Te Awamutu's Fiona Collins sells lifestyle properties in the Waikato, and she has seen a lot of farmers who are walking away from the cowshed and downsizing to lifestyle blocks.

"There is plenty of interest in lifestyle blocks, people don't want neighbours too close, and they want their privacy," Collins said. "There are also many people who want to offer the lifestyle they had growing up to their own kids, so they're in search for open spaces for adventure."

On the other hand, you have people who have spent their entire life in the city, and they are now tired of the traffic, seeing their neighbours from their kitchen window or the noise. Now they are looking for a change.

If you are giving up the city life for the country, LJ Hooker Carterton's Kylie Baron wants to remind you that you could be moving into an area where there are working farms.

"Therefore stock, trucks and tractors could become part of your daily view and traffic – switching peak hour traffic for tractors and stock being moved on the road," Baron said.

## Identify what you want from a lifestyle property

Before you start your search, make sure you consider all the reasons you want to buy a lifestyle block, as they can offer so much.

You need to consider whether you want enough land to grow your own orchard, create a pond for fish and ducks, have a chicken run, or tend to livestock. Whatever you want to achieve you need to make sure the property will be able to satisfy your wish list.

If your wish list is too vast, there is a chance you will not find a property that caters to all your needs and wants. So set your expectations within reason, this way you will not end up with a property that is too big or small for what you intended.



## Do your research and be ahead of any problems

A lifestyle property will be a little different to a city apartment or a house in town with council services, so it is important to make sure you are aware of all those differences.

Doing your research is important for any type of property, but when you are looking out of the city limits, there are a few other things you might want to consider.

- Check the state of the plumbing and septic system – how much life is in the septic tank? Will it need to be replaced soon?
- If there are pumps, check the state of them and their service records
- Where are the local schools and where is the bus route?
- How good is the broadband and mobile reception? Don't just assume the area has fast internet service.
- What is the property's water source? Is it connected to a town supply? Or does it have its own bore or collect rainwater to fill tanks? Or is it on a private water system?
- Is there a risk of property flooding? Check the distance from local rivers and wetlands to make sure the property is well drained.
- What size of property are you willing to maintain? More land means more responsibility, including lawns to mow, fencing and other maintenance.

## Finding your new lifestyle

Lifestyle properties offer so many benefits, and it could be the change you are looking for. To make sure you make the right decision, ask all the right questions and seek expert advice. Then you will be ready to trade in the business shoes for gummies and start tracking through the mud.



# Your Guide to Spring Cleaning Your Home

After a wet winter and long lockdown (for some), spring is here and there is still time to get stuck into a deep spring clean before summer.

Setting aside time to deep clean is important to keep your home healthy, organised and happy.

Through spring cleaning, you can remove dust, mould and mildew before it becomes an issue. Go beyond vacuuming and wiping down the bench to give your whole home a fresh feel, ready for the warm months ahead.

To ensure you don't feel overwhelmed or if you are not sure where to start, here is your spring-cleaning guide to make this daunting task seem a little more manageable.

## Where to Start

Start with tasks that apply to all rooms, then hit each room one-by-one for more specific cleaning.

Finish an entire room before moving onto the next and clean your home top to bottom and left to right.

- Dust ceiling fans and light fixtures
- Vacuum cobwebs in the ceiling corners
- Clean windowsills and tracks
- Wash curtains according to the fabric instructions or clean blinds with a damp cloth
- Disinfect doorknobs, handles and light switches
- Most importantly – test all your smoke detectors

## Bedrooms

- Declutter your space by organising drawers and closets. Remove everything, washing the bases of draws and sort clothes into piles – keep, donate and throwing away – before hanging and folding neatly
- Wash all bedding and pillows
- Move your bed to vacuum those hard-to-reach places and rotate your mattress
- Disinfect kids' toys (throw plastic toys in the dishwasher!)
- Use a homemade concoction of vinegar and water to give you a streak free result on all mirrors

## Bathrooms

- Clean away any mould from the ceiling by washing the area with a store-bought mould cleaner
- Organise vanity and cabinets by throwing out expired medicine, toiletries and cosmetics
- Scrub the shower and bathtub, paying special attention to grout lines
- Wash (or replace) the shower curtain and floormat
- Thoroughly scrub the toilet inside and out

## Kitchen

- Go through your cupboards, fridge and freezer checking for expiry dates and discard anything past its used by date – remember to wash shelves as you go
- Clean the oven and scrub the stovetop and splash back
- Degrease and wash extractor fan filters
- Clear out your utilities draw and replace/cull any broken or unused items. You can always donate any double ups to charity

## Living Room

- In lieu of getting your lounge suite professionally cleaned after a few winter spills, remove all cushions to vacuum all the little nook and crannies
- Wash any cushion covers, blankets or throws
- Dust pictures and photo frames then clean the glass as well as any mirrors that are hanging
- Disinfect doorknobs, handles and light switches
- Tidy up all loose caballing behind the TV

## Home Office

- Clean and blow away any keyboard debris with canned air (brought from any hardware store)
- Disinfect your computer mouse and landline phone (if you still have one)
- Declutter your desk space by filing away past papers, designating one draw to stationary and reserving desktop surface to only current projects

Congratulations, you've reached the end of the spring-cleaning checklist!

The information contained in this publication is general in nature and is not intended to be personalised real estate advice. Before making any decisions, you should consult a legal or professional advisor. LJ Hooker New Zealand Ltd believes the information in this publication is correct, and it has reasonable grounds for any opinion or recommendation contained in this publication on the date of this publication. Nothing in this publication is, or should be taken as, an offer, invitation or recommendation. LJ Hooker New Zealand Ltd accepts no responsibility for any loss caused as a result of any person relying on any information in this publication. This publication is for the use of persons in New Zealand only. Copyright in this publication is owned by LJ Hooker New Zealand Ltd. You must not reproduce or distribute content from this publication or any part of it without prior permission.



When you know  
you have made  
the right move.

 **LJ Hooker**  
When you know, you know.™