

# Harcourts MarketWatch

May 2009

April 2009 has seen a continuation of the more active real estate market we have been seeing since February when compared to the same period last year, with the volume of sales returning to more 'normal' levels over the past few months.

Last month Harcourts' wrote an average of 44% more sales than in April 2008, with Harcourts' Auckland and Christchurch regions recording the greatest increases.

There are a number of reasons for the lift in activity in the New Zealand property market that are well known, with lower interest rates and more affordable property prices being the primary ones.

Perhaps however there is another factor that can't be measured on a graph. That is, that many Kiwis have become sick and tired of all the negativity and fed up with putting their lives on hold so they've decided to be positive, to stop stalling and to take action in the real estate market.

Also, it's now well over a year since the New Zealand property market 'turned' after a number of years of heady price rises and high turnover, so most sellers

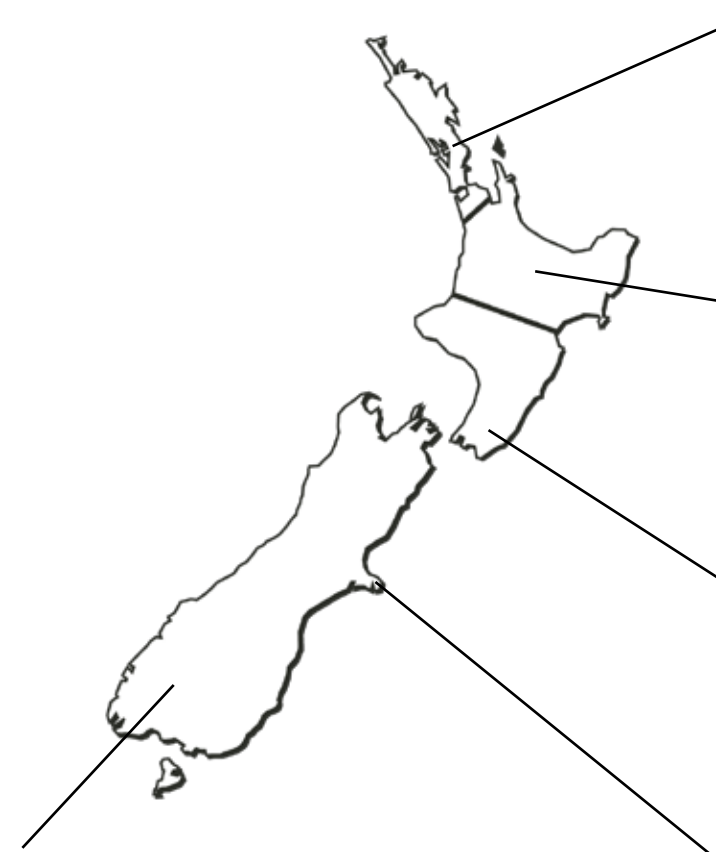
coming to the market right now are fully conversant with the new environment and current values - as are buyers. The outcome is an increase in sales numbers.

What is also a reality is that sellers who have been hanging on and hoping for higher prices are being ignored by buyers who are competing for quality property being offered by more realistic sellers.

With a lower number of properties coming onto the market as we move into winter competition from buyers will only increase, so all sellers should consider auction as a selling strategy.

Buyers meanwhile need to ensure they are conversant with current values and competition, as if they came to the market with unrealistic expectations in regard to prices and are also slow to act then they too, just like overly optimistic sellers, will be disappointed.

**Bryan Thomson, CEO, Harcourts New Zealand**



<b>NORTHERN</b>	<b>April 2009</b>	<b>April 2008</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Exclusive Listings	374	461	-19%
Auction/Tender	106	95	+12%
Property on Hand	3638	3566	+2%
Written Sales	433	252	+72%
Average Price	\$536,000	\$476,000	+13%

A much stronger sales month in our Northern region, with a continuation of low listing numbers. Several significant commercial sales have impacted positively on the average sale price.

<b>CENTRAL</b>	<b>April 2009</b>	<b>April 2008</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Exclusive Listings	362	476	-24%
Auction/Tender	58	50	+16%
Property on Hand	2898	2952	-2%
Written Sales	342	226	+51%
Average Price	\$374,000	\$495,000	-24%

A good boost in sales numbers is a welcome sign of a more 'normal' market in this region. The absence of large rural sales this April has impacted the average selling price.

<b>WELLINGTON</b>	<b>April 2009</b>	<b>April 2008</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Exclusive Listings	330	432	-24%
Auction/Tender	78	108	-28%
Property on Hand	2294	2774	-17%
Written Sales	387	303	+28%
Average Price	\$328,000	\$372,000	-12%

A strong selling month in the lower North Island coupled with a lower level of new stock is creating pressure on buyers to find their new property.

<b>SOUTH ISLAND PROVINCIAL</b>	<b>April 2009</b>	<b>April 2008</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Exclusive Listings	257	304	-15%
Auction/Tender	45	54	-17%
Property on Hand	2454	2551	-4%
Written Sales	223	233	-4%
Average Price	\$283,000	\$292,000	-3%

A month more in line with the previous year in this region shows the stability of these provincial markets compared to larger centres.

<b>CHRISTCHURCH</b>	<b>April 2009</b>	<b>April 2008</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Exclusive Listings	561	730	-23%
Auction/Tender	117	80	+46%
Property on Hand	3920	4047	-3%
Written Sales	622	356	+75%
Average Price	\$352,000	\$429,000	-18%

A significantly busier sales month in the Garden City, with sellers utilising aggressive, high-profile marketing campaigns securing an advantage over more passive sellers.

Harcourts has been in existence since 1888 and is New Zealand's leading real estate group with around 180 offices nationwide. Harcourts also has over 250 offices in Australia and offices in Indonesia, Fiji, Singapore, China, South Africa and Zambia. Visit [www.harcourts.co.nz](http://www.harcourts.co.nz) for more information.

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