

# HARCOURTS MARKET WATCH.

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## REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The latest residential housing figures from New Zealand's largest real estate group, Harcourts shows that written sales were up strongly throughout the country except in Christchurch where buyers are benefiting from increased choice in the market.

The Central Region, which includes the Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Coromandel, showed the strongest level buyer activity that Harcourts has recorded in a decade. Vendor activity was positive as well with new listings for the month hitting a two year high.

In Auckland/Northland, an increase in new listings was a feature of the market as vendors rushed in ahead of the onset of the cooler months. The change of season has seen a lift in auction listings as vendors seek more certainty on when their property will sell.

Harcourts CEO Hayden Duncan says that the strong sales outside of Auckland and Christchurch this month could be an indication that other regions are ready to follow on from the main centres' capital gains growth.

"The strong sales we've seen this month throughout the country are encouraging for the regions where property markets have struggled since 2008 and where the LVR restrictions have had the most detrimental effect on the market. Demand in Auckland remains strong despite rising house prices. With development lagging behind strong positive migration there is no sign of relief for Auckland home buyers."



South Island Provincial	Feb 2015	Feb 2014	Change
Total Listings	364	297	22.6%
New Auctions	31	19	63.2%
Property on Hand	1582	1776	-10.9%
Written Sales	264	236	11.9%
Average Sale Price	\$345,943	\$330,590	5.0%

The South Island had a strong February with written sales up 11.9% compared to last year. Average sale prices rose 5.0% to \$345,943. The increased buyer activity is coupled with an increase in new listings adding buoyancy to a market that has struggled over the past few years. Sales consultants have reported an increase in enquiries in Central Otago, which may indicate the market is on its way to recovery.

Auckland/Northern	Feb 2015	Feb 2014	Change
Total Listings	908	734	23.6%
New Auctions	419	317	32.0%
Property on Hand	1781	1872	-4.9%
Written Sales	547	512	6.8%
Average Sale Price	\$768,128	\$639,313	20.0%

Total new listings for Auckland/Northland were up 23.6% compared to last year and now sit at the highest level since March 2014 as vendors rush in with the end of summer upon us. Despite rising house prices, written sales were up 6.8% compared to last year, demonstrating that buyers acknowledge property prices will not abate in the foreseeable future. Auction listings were strong in February accounting for almost one in two of all new listings.

Central	Feb 2015	Feb 2014	Change
Total Listings	600	452	32.9%
New Auctions	83	69	21.2%
Property on Hand	2038	2232	-8.7%
Written Sales	460	341	34.9%
Average Sale Price	\$304,486	\$313,811	-3.0%

The residential property market has hit full swing in the Central Region with Harcourts recording the highest volume of written sales we've seen in the region in a decade. There was an influx of new listings in February that created a good balance of demand and supply. Average sale price was down 3% compared to last year, but with inventory levels tightening we expect to see this rebound next month.

Wellington	Feb 2015	Feb 2014	Change
Total Listings	472	471	0.2%
New Auctions	64	62	3.2%
Property on Hand	1535	1711	-10.3%
Written Sales	323	308	4.9%
Average Sale Price	386,156	379,615	2.0%

The end of summer rush was evident in Wellington with new listings up 17.1% compared to January, consistent with last year's strong end to summer. More houses are selling this year with written sales up 4.9% compared to last year. March is generally a busy time in Wellington for residential property sales and with inventory down 10.3%, we expect to see stronger sale prices next month.

Christchurch Metro	Feb 2015	Feb 2014	Change
Total Listings	618	528	17.0%
New Auctions	182	207	-12.1%
Property on Hand	2116	1683	25.7%
Written Sales	397	411	-3.4%
Average Sale Price	\$473,621	\$494,209	-4.0%

There is evidence of new builds coming onto the market with listings up 17.0% compared to last year.

Inventory sits at 25.7% above last year's levels; a continuation of the trend we've seen since mid-last year. There were 7,308 new dwellings consented in Christchurch in 2014 so we expect the trend for a greater level of stock to continue into 2015. Written sales were down 3.4% on last year; evidence that with more property to choose from buyers are not rushing into purchases.