

SEPTEMBER 2016

**HOME** **LOAN**  
**AFFORDABILITY**  
**REPORT**  
NEW ZEALAND



# HOME LOAN AFFORDABILITY REPORT

September 2016



Home loan affordability is a measure of the proportion of take-home pay that is needed to make the mortgage payments for a typical household. If that is no more than 40%, then a mortgage is considered 'affordable'. The following are typical assessments for households at three stages of home ownership.

## FIRST HOME BUYERS 25-29



First home buyers earn the median income for their age group, and buy a lower quartile priced home in their area. Both parties work full-time.

Mortgage payments as a percentage of take home pay

September 16	20%
September 15	20.1%
September 14	21.1%
September 11	20.3%

This report estimates how affordable it would be for a couple where both are aged 25-29 and are working full time, to buy a home at the lower quartile price in New Zealand.

It assumes they earn the median rate of pay for people of their age in their region, which would give them a take home pay of \$1,555.12 a week.

It is assumed they would have saved \$67,000 to use as a deposit, by putting aside 20% of their net pay each week for up to four years, earning interest on the savings at the 90 day bank deposit rate, or 20% of the house price, whichever is lower.

To buy a home at New Zealand's lower quartile price they would need a mortgage of \$268,000.

They would need to set aside \$310.27 a week to cover the mortgage payments, which would be 20% of their take home pay.

Mortgage payments are considered affordable when they take up no more than 40% of take home pay.

On that basis it would be affordable for a young couple earning the median pay rate to buy a lower quartile-priced home in New Zealand.

	Weekly Income \$	Deposit saved \$	LQ House Price \$	Int. rate %	Weekly pymt \$	Index %
Sept 16	1,555.12	67,000	335,000	4.42	310.27	20
Sept 15	1,516.57	61,800	309,000	4.97	305.13	20.1
Sept 14	1,488.96	55,900	279,500	6.13	313.62	21.1

## Second Rung - YOUNG FAMILY 30-34



Young family buyers earn median incomes in their age bracket, and buy a median priced home in their area. One partner works half-time.

Mortgage payments as a percentage of take home pay

September 16	32.7%
September 15	35.2%
September 14	37%
September 11	33.9%

This report estimates how affordable it would be for a couple with a young family to move up the property ladder and buy their next home at the current median price.

It is assumed that one partner works full time and one works half time and both are paid at the median rate for people of their age in New Zealand, and that they receive the Working for Families allowance. That would give them total after tax weekly income of \$1,321.69 a week.

It is also assumed they purchased their current home five years ago for \$247,000, which was the lower quartile selling price in New Zealand at the time.

If they sold that home for the current lower quartile price in New Zealand of \$335,000, they would have equity of \$142,076 to use as a deposit on a new home.

If they purchased a home at New Zealand's current median price of \$515,000 they would need a \$372,924 mortgage.

The repayments on this would be \$431.75 a week which would be 32.7% of their weekly income.

Mortgage payments are considered affordable when they take up no more than 40% of take home pay.

	Weekly Income \$	Deposit saved \$	Median House Price \$	Int. rate %	Weekly pymt \$	Index %
Sept 16	1,321.69	142,076	515,000	4.42	431.75	32.7
Sept 15	1,290.46	116,619	484,650	4.97	454.28	35.2
Sept 14	1,262.56	87,051	420,000	6.13	467	37

## Second Rung - OLDER FAMILY 35-39



Older family buyers earn median incomes in their age bracket, and buy a median priced home in their area. Both partners work full-time.

Mortgage payments as a percentage of take home pay

September 16	21.9%
September 15	22.8%
September 14	21.2%

This report estimates how affordable it would be for a couple who are both aged 35-39 and working full time, to move up the property ladder and buy their next home at the current median price.

It is assumed that both are paid at the median rate for people of their age in New Zealand, and that they no longer receive the Working for Families allowance.

That would give them total after tax weekly income of \$1,786.05 a week.

It is also assumed they purchased their current home 10 years ago for \$228,000, which was the lower quartile selling price in New Zealand at the time.

If they sold that home for the current lower quartile price in New Zealand of \$335,000, they would have equity of \$176,717 to use as a deposit on a new home.

If they purchased a home at New Zealand's current median price of \$515,000 they would need a \$338,283 mortgage.

The repayments on this would be \$391.64 a week which would be 21.9% of their weekly income.

Mortgage payments are considered affordable when they take up no more than 40% of take home pay.

	Weekly Income \$	Deposit saved \$	Median House Price \$	Int. rate %	Weekly pymt \$	Index %
Sept 16	1,786.05	176,717	515,000	4.42	391.64	21.9
Sept 15	1,742.87	163,197	484,650	4.97	396.78	22.8
Sept 14	1,705.47	161,727	420,000	6.13	362.26	21.2

# KEY DRIVERS OF HOME LOAN AFFORDABILITY

September 2016



## HOUSE PRICES

The median dwelling price was \$515,000 in September 2016, down from \$492,000 in August. In September 2015 it was \$484,650, which puts annual growth at 6.3%. Five years ago the median was \$350,000.

They were 7,427 homes sold in September, up from 7,527 in August. That compares with 8,174 sales in September last year and 5,235 sales five years ago.

The lower-quartile house price was \$335,000 in September 2016, down from \$319,000 in July. Annual growth was 8.4%, from the \$309,000 lower-quartile house price in August 2015.

		Lower Quartile House Price	Median House Price
<b>New Zealand</b>	September 16	\$335,000	\$515,000
	August 16	\$319,000	\$492,000
	September 15	\$309,000	\$484,650
	September 14	\$279,500	\$420,000
	September 11	\$247,000	\$350,000
	<b>All NZ</b>	September 16	\$335,000
August 16		\$319,000	\$492,000
September 15		\$309,000	\$484,650
September 11		\$247,000	\$350,000

## INTEREST RATES AND MORTGAGE PAYMENTS

The average bank interest rate for two year fixed rate mortgages was 4.421% for September, -55 basis points less than the 4.974% 12 months earlier.

The RBNZ has started a rate cut program with the first reduction occurring in June 2015 and the latest one in August 2015. The reserve bank recently signaled that further rate cuts are likely. Wholesale rates have been rising recently and that has eased downward pressure on fixed mortgage rates.

Our model assumes borrowers switched to a 2 year fixed rate in June 2014, following the shift reflected in RBNZ data.

	Average 2 Year Fixed rate
This Month	4.421%
A Month Ago	4.426%
A Year Ago	4.974%

	Mortgage Payment (Weekly)
First Home Buyers	\$310.27
Second Rung- Young families	\$431.75
Second Rung- Older buyer	\$391.64

## INCOMES (WEEKLY TAKE HOME PAY)

### First Home Buyers

First home buyers are aged 25-29. A household is a male and a female both earning median incomes. There is no child in this household. Take home pay is gross pay less income tax.

The change in take home pay is as follows:

	Weekly	Change
Sept 16	\$1,555.12	2.54%
Sept 15	\$1,516.57	1.85%
Sept 14	\$1,488.96	2.42%
Sept 13	\$1,453.78	

### Young Families

Second Rung- Young families are aged 30-34. A household is a male, a female and a child aged five. One partner works part-time. Take home pay is gross pay less income tax.

The change in take home pay is as follows:

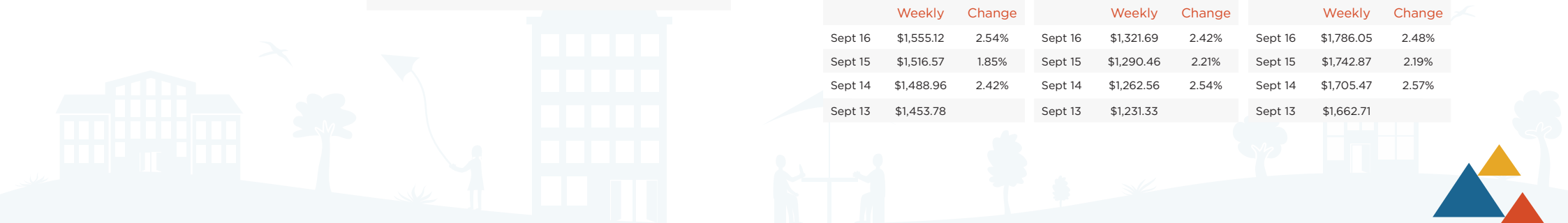
	Weekly	Change
Sept 16	\$1,321.69	2.42%
Sept 15	\$1,290.46	2.21%
Sept 14	\$1,262.56	2.54%
Sept 13	\$1,231.33	

### Older Families

Second rung- Older family buyers are aged 35-39. A household is a male, a female, and school aged children. Both parents work full time. Take home pay is gross income less income tax.

The change in take home pay is as follows:

	Weekly	Change
Sept 16	\$1,786.05	2.48%
Sept 15	\$1,742.87	2.19%
Sept 14	\$1,705.47	2.57%
Sept 13	\$1,662.71	



# SEPERATE HOME LOAN AFFORDABILITY REPORTS ARE AVAILABLE TO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS

## National

New Zealand

## Auckland Region

Auckland Central  
Auckland West  
Pukekohe

North Shore  
Papakura

Auckland South  
Rodney

## Wellington Region

Wellington City  
Katpiti Coast

Hutt Valley  
Wairarapa

Porirua

## Northland

Whangarei

## Waikato and Bay of Plenty

Hamilton

Tauranga

Rotorua

## Hawkes Bay and Gisborne

Napier

Hastings

Gisborne

## Taranaki, Manawhatu and Whanganui

New Plymouth

Palmerston North

Whanganui

## Nelson and Marlborough

Nelson

## Cantebury

Christchurch

Timaru

## Otago, Central Otago Lakes and Southland

Queenstown

Dunedin

Invercargill



# Notes

**This work must be referred to as The interest.co.nz Home Loan Affordability series.**

From May 2016 it refers solely to households. There are other important changes. There are now three related components – The First Home Buyer household series which tracks home loan affordability for households aged 25 to 29 years, Second Rung young family buyers, aged 30-34 years, and Second Rung older family buyers, aged 35-39 years. They have all been produced by interest.co.nz.

## Sources / Definitions / Methodology

First home buyer households have two partners working full time, and use a purchase deposit based on what they saved over the prior four years to buy a lower quartile priced home. Second Rung young family buyers have one partner working full time, one half time, and a child under 5 years of age. It is assumed they buy a median priced house, using the equity and capital gain from their First Home. (If Working for Families tax credits apply, they are added to the household income.) Second Rung older family buyers have two partners working full time. It is assumed they buy a median priced house using the equity and capital gain from their First Home.

## Interpreting the Index:

The home loan affordability index in each segment measures the proportion of their after-tax income they would need to set aside each week for their mortgage payments. An index measure is generated for each region (some sub regions), and nationally. A mortgage is 'affordable' when the mortgage payment is no greater than 40% of household weekly take-home pay. The value of the mortgage is based on the criteria below.

## Weekly Income:

From the July 2007 Report onward, the source on which we base our estimates of weekly income is the LEEDS (Linked employer- employee data survey) data from Statistics New Zealand. Income tax is deducted to give take-home pay. Income tax rates are from the IRD are vary over time and income levels.

## Mortgage payments:

Mortgage repayments are based on the value of the home loan, paid weekly for 30 years, using the average bank interest rate. The home loan is assumed to be a standard table mortgage, where both interest and principal is repaid in a fixed weekly payment made in arrears. The repayment is calculated using the tools at <http://www.interest.co.nz/calculators/mortgage-calculator>

## Mortgage Rates:

Average mortgage interest rates are sourced from [www.interest.co.nz](http://www.interest.co.nz). These averages are for banks only as banks have 90%+ of the mortgage market. Affordability calculations are done for mortgages at the floating rate and one year through to the five fixed-rate terms. In these Reports, the two-year fixed mortgage interest rate is used. Until August 2010 this series used a 2 year fixed rate loan as the basis for interest rates. In September 2010 it was switched to the floating rate, reflecting actual market shifts by borrowers. In June 2014, it was switched back to the 2 year fixed rates, again reflecting market shifts.

## House price data:

Median house prices are as reported by the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand. Although the REINZ series is more volatile than the QV equivalent, there is a highly positive correlation between the two series. The REINZ series is more current and offers an earlier indication of market trends.

## Saving Rates:

These are used to calculate the First Home Buyer deposit. Average savings interest rates are sourced from [www.interest.co.nz](http://www.interest.co.nz). These averages are for banks only, and use the 90 day term deposit rate. Saving calculations take into account the individuals, marginal tax rates as defined by IRD.

## Disclaimer

### IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ

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