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Property Tax and Assessment News from Around the World

NEW ZEALAND – May 2021

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Wellington City Council agrees on 13.5 per cent rates rise

Wellington City councillors have agreed on their Long-Term Plan, a budget of infrastructure, resulting in a 13.5 per cent rates rise for the incoming year.

The capital is facing myriad cost pressures including ageing water pipes, insurance hikes, seismic issues, transport plans and its social housing portfolio.

They come on top of the economic fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Over the next 10 years $2.7 billion will be spent on the city's Three Waters network.

Business as usual capital expenditure for the pipes has increased by a third compared to what was in the previous Long-Term Plan.

The council's climate change action plan, Te Atakura – First to Zero, is also fully funded at a cost of $27 million.

This will support initiatives like converting the council's vehicle fleet to electric cars and greening building projects.

Big transport spends will also do a lot in the climate change space.

Councillors today decided to increase spending on the city's cycleway network by more than $100m to a total of $226m.

As well as this, $220m is budgeted over the next 10 years for Let's Get Wellington Moving to deliver better walking and cycling and bus priority measures.

Business cases on bigger projects like a second Mt Victoria Tunnel and Mass Rapid Transit are yet to be completed, making it impossible for the council to budget for them yet.

In Te Ngākau Civic Square, the Civic Administration Building and Municipal Office building will be demolished because of seismic issues at a cost of about $5m each.

The closed central library will be earthquake strengthened at a cost of $187.4m.

Additions to the budget

Additional funding requests were made after the budget was consulted on, which meant the proposed 13.5 per cent rates increase ballooned to almost 16 per cent.

One of those requests was $7.7m over three years for city safety improvements.

This is part of the Pōneke Promise, a social contract between Wellington hospitality workers, retailers and police.

Today, councillor Laurie Foon also successfully passed an amendment to reinstate $6.5 million for the Frank Kitts Park development, which includes the Chinese garden.

Officers have also been directed to work with the Chinese Garden Society to explore whether a gateway entrance, or a Pai Lau, can be installed early.

Foster voted in favour of reinstating the funding, even though he was the one who initially pulled it out.

In response to these additions to the budget, cost savings have subsequently been found to get the rates increase back down to 13.5 per cent.

This was done through measures including organisational savings, removing the Building Resilience Fund, and the extension of Covid-19 debt repayments and weathertight homes repayments.

The extra spending on cycle ways will affect rates in the outer years of the plan, but has little impact on the incoming year.

What councillors and the mayor have to say about the budget

Mayor Andy Foster has called the council's Long-Term Plan the resilience and infrastructure budget.

"This is by far the most challenging budget that I have ever seen, and I've seen a few."

He told councillors it was the biggest capital programme the council had ever undertaken.

Foster acknowledged councillors were never going to agree on everything, but said most had reached a point where they could live with the agreed budget.

Councillor Fleur Fitzsimons said the budget backed basic core infrastructure.

"What we can see around our city is that water infrastructure is failing and we've had a clear message from Wellingtonians to make sure the basics of our city are running properly."

Councillor Nicola Young, whose key priorities are lowering rates and investing in water infrastructure, said there were some really good things in the Long-Term Plan as well as some "batshit" ones.

Councillor Diane Calvert said today's deliberation was a spaghetti junction of amendments.

"Since consultation we had an opportunity to actually build some consensus through the leadership of the mayor. It hasn't happened."

She said the extra spending on the cycle way programme was committed to without thinking whether it could be better spent on housing or water infrastructure.

Big win for cycling

Earlier in the meeting, climate change portfolio leader councillor Tamatha Paul brought an amendment for the council to adopt the full accelerated investment programme for cycleways. This is a $226m spend on the network.

Councillors Calvert, Young, Simon Woolf, Malcolm Sparrow and mayor Foster voted against committing to this option.

The amendment included bringing forward $52m of capex into years 1-3 of the budget.

It asks for council officials to report back on an accelerated delivery of cycleways to create a temporary network across the city using things like paint, hit sticks, and rubber connections.

Paul's amendment includes $14m for fixing the botched cycleway in Island Bay.

Jen Lawless addressed councillors ahead of their decision-making to talk about her brother Ben.

"Ben can't be here today because 10 years ago he was killed by a careless driver in Karori when he was cycling home to Mount Cook."

Lawless said the only option on the table which delivered the full programme was the $226m one.

"This is also the only option which will deliver a cycling network Ben would have taken that night, from his house in Mount Cook and back all the way out west to Karori."

Southern Ward councillor Fleur Fitzsimons supported Paul's amendment but cautioned against doing cycleways too quickly, making reference to the current state of Island Bay.

"It divided and shocked a community."

Paul said undertaking a report on accelerated delivery should address any "allergic reaction".

Mayor's 1.25am alert

Wellington mayor Andy Foster sent councillors a raft of last minute changes to the 10-year-budget at 1.25am this morning, much to everyone's exhaustion and concern.

Councillor Diane Calvert responded to the mayor's email: "You just don't get it. Too little, too late."

She said in another email to Foster the whole budget process had caused far more angst for everyone than it should have.

"Sending an email at 1.25am on the day of the debate proposing substantive amendments to your paper and little communication with elected members is alarming."

Calvert suggested laying the paper on the table to reach a consensus through discussion rather than "through an ultimatum placed over" the mayor.

Councillor Jill Day also responded, saying the changes were hard to track.

"This feels like deja vu and is terrible governance."

Foster responded to both councillors saying all the issues had been pre-signalled, well canvassed and were familiar to everyone.

"All I am doing is formatting everything to make for an efficient meeting and reduce the number of amendments," he said.

Auckland Council approves 10-year budget with big increases in rates and water bills

Auckland councillors have approved a "Recovery Budget" that will increase rates by 5 per cent from July, but hit households with hefty rate and water bill increases over 10 years.

Mayor Phil Goff said the budget will do great things for the city and protect the services and infrastructure the city needs.

"We have tried to get the best we can for the city, that is what the people of Auckland expect from us, and we have delivered.

"We have a middle ground of support."

Goff said the city's Recovery Budget is the single largest infrastructure package in its history costed at $31.8 billion, up nearly $6b on the previous 10-year budget in 2018.

The budget was passed by councillors, albeit with some councillors recording a vote against specific issues, including the 5 per cent rate rise and changes to community services.

Several councillors raised concerns over a gloomy outlook for hundreds of community assets like libraries, halls, community centres, arts venues and playgrounds where there could be no money to upgrade or replace them.

Despite community assets getting an extra $900 million over the next 10 years, the money will not be enough to save some facilities from closure or possible sale.

Councillors Shane Henderson, Daniel Newman and Wayne Walker had their vote recorded against the community services package.

Five councillors had their vote recorded against the 5 per cent increase - John Watson, Wayne Walker, Sharon Stewart, Christine Fletcher and Greg Sayers.

Watson said the "borrow, sell and rate model" adopted in the budget is not sustainable.

The budget will see household rates rise by an average of 5 per cent and water bills rise by 7 per cent from July.

The 5 per cent rate rise is a one-off followed by rate rises of 3.5 per cent thereafter.

Household water bills rise by 7 per cent over the next two years followed by 9.5 per cent over the following six years and 3.5 per cent in the remaining two years.

Over 10 years the average household rates bill will go up from $2810 to $4018 and the average water bill from $1069 to $2261.

That's an overall average increase of 62 per cent in council costs for a typical Auckland household.

The budget also includes $152m for climate change, but councillors Pippa Coom and Chris Darby called for more to be done.

"The council has to have a reset and do things different if we are going to address climate change," Coom said.

"We are just scratching the surface," Darby said.

Councillors also voted to pump an extra $182m for renewals at the city's venues, including North Harbour and Mt Smart stadiums, the zoo and repairs to the Auckland Art Gallery.

Auckland Council rates: Cheaper suburbs to be hardest hit in rate rise

Auckland property revaluations likely to hit rates hardest in the south from 2022.

Auckland's traditionally cheaper suburbs are likely to be the hardest hit from a record rates rise, blended with the impact of the first property revaluation in four years.

While the median property value across Auckland has risen almost 24 per cent since July 2017, according to homes.co.nz, the top ten sharpest rises are mostly in cheaper southern suburbs.

It is the increased value of an individual property, compared with the Auckland-wide average, which will decide whether the rates it will pay from July 2022, will rise more or less than the average set by Council.

Auckland Council will on Tuesday debate lifting average residential rates by around 5 per cent from July 2021, the biggest citywide increase since the council was formed in 2010.

While the new valuations are being set now, they won't feed through to rates bills until 2022 after the being formalised later this year, with the trend affecting cheaper suburbs, similar to 2014.

Seven of the 10 highest-rising median values over the past four years, include Māngere East on 34.75 per cent, East Tamaki and Clendon Park over 34 per cent, Clover Park on 33 per cent, and Otara, Māngere and Rosehill over 32 per cent.

Typical of the surge was Māngere East where the median value rose from $640,000 to an estimated $862,000, and Clendon Park from $530,000 to $711,000.

Also in the plus-30 per cent league are some more central Auckland suburbs such as Morningside on 35.23 per cent, Grafton, Onehunga, and Ellerslie, along with southern Glen Innes and Otahuhu.

The figures are not the official council figures, but collated by real estate data firm homes.co.nz taking the median CV used by the council in July 2017, and estimating a current median value in May 2021.

“Many higher value areas have seen relatively lower price increases,” said Tom Lintern, the chief data scientist at homes.co.nz.

"Gentrifying (central) suburbs may see their CVs increase relatively more than some more established neighbourhoods," he said.

Epsom and Remuera which both had median values around $1.7 million in 2017, have seen increases below the city wide average, of 22.7 and 22.3 per cent respectively.

The bottom 10 median value rises were all on the North Shore with Browns Bay and Murrays Bay up around 16 per cent, Forrest Hill and Pinehill up 15 per cent, Schnapper Rock 7.8 per cent and Dairy Flat’s median fell 1.5 per cent.

Bunched around the average 24 per cent increase were Auckland Central, with its high number of apartments, and the western communities of Hobsonville, Swanson and Kelston.

Some high-value suburbs such as Grey Lynn and Kohimarama, with new estimated medians of $1.8 million and $2 million, were up just slightly above the citywide average.

Auckland Council’s statutory three-yearly property valuation was postponed in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and will estimate what a property would sell for on June 1 2021.

The new valuations will be released after October 2021, and individual properties valuations may be different to the averages for their suburbs.

“A change in a property’s capital value does not automatically mean rates will increase or decrease because of that change,” cautioned the council.

Rating title dilemma for Waitomo farming blocks

Rating changes introduced by the Waitomo District Council six years ago are to be reversed because of demand for rural land.

Councillors were told at last week's audit, risk and finance committee meeting that the Office of the Valuer General (OVG) would be taking a special interest in farming properties on the outskirts of townships that had smaller titles.

Because of demand for residential land, the OVG said the smaller titles should constitute separate rating units - which may reverse some property amalgamations the OVG required as part of the 2015 revaluation.

In 2015, smaller titles used as part of a single farming unit were amalgamated to reflect the one farming unit.

Quotable Value (QV) staff will be reviewing the district valuation roll for any properties that need to be subdivided as a result of the change in approach.

Waitomo District Council business support general manager Alister Duncan said council staff did not expect a large number of properties would need to be subdivided as the district's townships were not currently experiencing significant growth.

It will be an issue for districts with significant growth, he said.

"Is this Quotable Value taking a property and saying they are going to revalue as three," Waitomo Mayor John Robertson asked.

Duncan replied the direction had come from the OVG.

"Three or six years ago, the OVG came through and said where three or four separate titles were being used as one unit then they should be combining them and having one rating.

"Now they're saying properties bordering towns where there is development, then possibly they should be having them as single titles. A ratepayer could end up with four rateable titles where at the moment there is one.

"The end result is exactly the same. There was significant work required to amalgamate them, now there could be quite a bit of work to de-amalgamate them."

He didn't expect there to be a "huge" amount of properties involved across the district, but there could be a block of work.

He was unable to answer deputy mayor Guy Whitaker's question about how far from the town the outskirts would be. There had been no notification.

"When you say they are boundary, do they need to be on the boundary or how far," Whitaker asked.

"Somebody with three titles who has been getting one rates bill will now receive three rates bills," Duncan said.

The rating revaluation is required every three years. The last one was September 2018, and the next one is due 21 September.

"The preliminary work this year is about a month late because of deferrals for Auckland and Queenstown, which sought delays because of Covid-19. Auckland has close to 600,000 reassessments which will require all OVG resources to complete," Duncan said.

Waitomo District Council staff sent out 624 rental and production surveys during April with completed surveys to be returned by 28 May. Surveys were sent to a selection of rural, commercial and industrial property ratepayers to ensure that the revaluation program is undertaken as accurately as possible. Surveys may be completed online at survey.ratingvalues.co.nz, emailed or returned by post.

The majority of the valuation fieldwork relating to the general valuation would be undertaken between July and September 2021 by QV, Duncan said.

The key highlights of the 2021 General Revaluation will be presented to council by QV staff before the valuation notices were sent to the ratepayers.

Auckland property prices: Homeowners to get 'bombshell' valuations: new date out

Auckland homeowners can expect a "bombshell" rise in their council valuations when city-wide revaluations are released later this year, a property lawyer says.

City house prices have soared 35 per cent since the last valuations in 2017, with Auckland Council revealing it now expects to issue new valuations – officially known as capital values or CVs – this October.

Mum-and-dad homeowners, retirees and property investors will all be keeping a close eye on the new valuations as it can affect how much they pay in council rates, and how much they can borrow from banks.

But many will be bracing for higher rates bills on the back of their new CVs.

The Herald has also learned some property owners have delayed listing their houses for sale in the hope higher CVs will help secure a better price.

Property lawyer from Schnauer and Co, Nick Kearney, said most of Auckland's 560,000-odd homes would have made big jumps in value.

"It will be a bombshell for many."

The Real Estate Institute confirmed prices had skyrocketed, leaping 35 per cent in the four years since Auckland's last mass rating valuation.

"Back in July 2017, Auckland's median price was $836,000 and is currently sitting at $1,125,000, a new record high for the region," a REINZ spokeswoman said.

And while the new council valuations are important, they are unlikely to have an immediate impact on most owners, as they won't affect council rates bills till July 1 next year.

CVs were also only one factor in determining how much people paid in annual rates, an Auckland Council spokeswoman said.

If a home's CV jumped by a certain percentage that didn't mean the owner's rates bill would rise by the same percentage.

"Valuations are just one component used to determine what portion of the region's total rates a property owner is invoiced for," she said.

Changes to CVs did not increase or decrease the total dollar value council collected from rates, the spokeswoman said.

Instead, council set a fixed amount of money it wanted from rates each year and then used CVs as one factor to help determine what share each home and commercial property owner needed to pay.

Council hoped to raise $2.249 billion from rates in the 2022/2023 financial year – the first year the new valuations would come into effect.

That was a 3.5 per cent jump on 2021/2022's proposed $2.138b rates revenue.

Staff from council along with property valuers Quotable Value would assess Auckland's rateable properties, including residential, commercial, industrial and retail properties.

CoreLogic head of research Nick Goodall said rises and falls in rates were usually more the result of whether your home had risen or fallen by a greater value than other homes in your suburb.

For instance, if your street had become more desirable and was found to have risen faster than other streets, you might be in line for a greater increase in your rates bill, he said.

Homeowners often wanted their CV to fall in the hope their rates bill did likewise.

But owners looking to sell in the near future typically wanted their CV to rise because it could influence how much buyers were willing to pay.

Property Investors Federation's executive officer Sharon Cullwick said landlords were unlikely to pass on potential rates hikes to tenants through higher rents.

Investors often had mixed feelings about valuations, she said.

She personally preferred higher valuations because during downturns in the market, a higher CV could help convince banks to lend bigger home loans to buy other properties

Aucklanders upset with their council valuations can lodge an objection with the Valuation Tribunal.

Cullwick once contested an Auckland Council valuation and had her property's CV increased by $170,000 because valuers had undervalued it.

However, the council spokeswoman and real estate agents warned home owners not to treat CVs as a definitive value of their property.

"The general revaluation of all properties helps us work out everyone's share of rates. The aim of the general revaluation is not to provide values for property owners to use for marketing, sales or any other purposes," the spokeswoman said.

Goodall said the city's tenants shouldn't necessarily fear rent hikes on the back of the new council valuations.

His firm's research had shown landlords were not typically able to pass on increased costs from owning investment properties to their tenants in the form of higher rents.

Stats NZ data showed rents had typically risen by 3 per cent each year in a pattern following rising incomes rather than increased costs to landlords.

Property values are public information and can be viewed online.

Housing crisis: Average NZ house price now above $900,000, no sign of slowing down - QV

The average house price in New Zealand will hit $1 million before year's end, if recent trends continue.

The latest Quotable Value figures, out Monday, show the average value nationwide is now $913,209 - up 8.9 percent in just three months. At that rate, the $1 million mark will be reached by September.

The average is now more than twice what it was as recently as December 2013, has risen just under $300,000 in two years and is up 37 percent since Labour took power in September 2017.

Despite the Government's moves in March to remove tax "loopholes" from investors, prices just keep going up, fuelled by ongoing lack of supply and low-interest rates. The pace actually increased in the three months to April, up 21.4 percent in the past year compared to 18.2 percent in the year to March.

"We'll all just be guessing the impacts of the recent tax changes until we get another couple of months of sales data to analyse," said QV general manager David Nagel.

"But there's certainly an expectation that we'll see at least a slowdown in the rate of value growth, with potentially less investors and maybe a few more first-home buyers entering the market over the coming months."

That's a view held by other analysts, such as CoreLogic, which last week said there's growing anecdotal evidence of lowered demand from investors.

On May 1, the Reserve Bank brought in tougher loan-to-value ratio (LVR) restrictions on investors, requiring a 40 percent deposit, up from 30 percent in March. The most recent change came too late to show up in QV's latest figures. Last time the Reserve Bank put in a 40 percent deposit requirement, in 2016, prices stagnated until they were removed.

But recent predictions the market would slow down have so far proven false - predictions the market would crash thanks to COVID-19 proved woefully off the mark, and QV late last year said March's implementation of 30 percent deposit requirements for investors would hurt - but there's no evidence of that showing up yet.

Figures from other property data sources have found similar spikes in prices lately - CoreLogic reporting an 18.4 percent year-on-year increase to $845,491 and the Real Estate Institute of NZ (REINZ) coming up with a 24.3 percent rise to $826,300 in March.

Both CoreLogic and REINZ use median figures, while state-owned QV uses the mean, which typically tracks higher than the median as it's more influenced by prices at the upper end of the market. The last time prices rose more than 20 percent in a year was early 2004, and before that, brief peaks in the 1980s, CoreLogic data shows.

The regions

Auckland's average price now sits at $1.3 million, up 19 percent in the past year and rising faster than in March. The most expensive suburbs are the North Shore and central suburbs, around $1.5 million.

West Auckland's now a million-dollar area, at $1,053,677 - but still below the city's average, as are Rodney ($1,200,127), Manukau ($1,152,181) Papakura ($902,832) and Franklin ($840,173).

Papakura had the fastest quarterly growth, up 10.4 percent.

"There has been little in the way of a slow down after last month's Government announcement, but the market does appear to be less frenzied now than it was earlier this year," said QV senior consultant Rupert Yortt.

"Some buyers have adopted a 'wait and see' approach, which has resulted in less attendance at open homes and auctions. This could potentially indicate that the balance between vendor and purchaser expectations may be switching slightly. Overall, I expect to see the market stabilise further as we head into winter."

The biggest quarterly gains anywhere were found in Napier and Hastings, up 14.2 and 14 percent respectively.

"We're starting to see some interesting regional trends emerging, with the strongest value growth occurring in the southernmost regions of the North Island," said Nagel.

"The Hawke's Bay region, Manawatu-Whanganui and also the greater Wellington region are all showing very strong month-on-month value growth with Hawke's Bay leading the pack at 4.9 percent monthly growth.

"The two southern regions of Otago and Southland are showing much more conservative monthly growth of just 2.1 percent and 2.5 percent respectively."

Tauranga's hit $992,087, and will hit $1 million before June, QV expects.

In February, Auckland's property values were ranked amongst the least-affordable in the world, with prices 10 times household incomes - with prices going up 40 percent more in 2020 than the median household earned.

The regions and cities, ranked:

Queenston Lakes $1,383,181
Auckland $1,306,913
Wellington $1,028,913
Tauranga $992,087
Napier $798,568
Hastings $797,034
Hamilton $792,772
Nelson $765,247
Taupo $754,700
Palmerston North $687,537
Rotorua $663,642
Dunedin $659,447
Taranaki $636,439
Christchurch $624,285
Canterbury $594,279
Invercargill $436,759

First signs of New Zealand housing market slowing

New data has found a reduction in demand in nationwide housing valuations, which could be the first signs of the housing market slowing.

CoreLogic's House Price Index tracks property value changes and its latest report has found a reduction in demand for valuations, down 11 per cent compared to the previous six months.

"There are signs that there are fewer buyers talking to banks about issuing them mortgages to buy another property," CoreLogic Head of research Nick Goodall said.

From now, the impact of the official reimplementation of the LVR is expected to cool the market.

Goodall said anecdotes throughout April were of quieter open homes, a greater share of auctions "passing in" and fear of over-paying having replaced buyers' fears of missing out.

CoreLogic had not seen any evidence of homeowners looking to exit the market, however.

"Looking ahead, our expectation for future gains has been tempered, as the profitability of investment property has reduced due to the tax changes around interest deductibility.

"This will likely mean a slowing of the recent growth rate over the next few months, which will give the Reserve Bank some time to assess whether they need to announce any intention to limit interest-only loans or put a cap on high debt-to-income lending."

According to Trade Me Property, new listings to market remained relatively steady throughout April at about 3000 new listings per week, until Anzac weekend (1800).

The total number of properties listed for sale on Trade Me Property dropped to 22,300 by the end of the month, from 23,100 at the beginning of the month.

This meant buyers would continue to compete for a relatively small pool of advertised properties, Goodall said.

Auckland
Auckland saw average property values rise by a further 2.4 per cent in April, and the average value there is now $1.25 million.

"The increase over the past 12 months has been 15.6 per cent, or about $168,000. Housing affordability in our largest city continues to worsen as reflected in the reducing share of sales to first home buyers in 2021, which has dropped to 24 per cent in 2021 YTD, down sharply from a peak of 29 per cent in Q3 last year (and 25 per cent in Q4)."

Hamilton
Strong momentum remains in Hamilton, with quarterly growth climbing to 9.4 per cent and the annual rate of growth exceeding to 20.5 per cent.

"This equals a rise in values over the past year of almost $130,000. The strength of the dairy sector will be supporting economic activity in and around Hamilton, and this is likely to be underpinning the property market too.

"Mortgaged investors have certainly been very keen on Hamilton, with a 39 per cent share of purchases so far this year - but the latest policy changes will start to impact this group, almost immediately."

Tauranga
The average property value in Tauranga now exceeds $900,000 for the first time ($922k). That is 19.0 per cent higher than a year ago, which equates to a rise of more than $147,000.

"Owner-occupiers moving house remain an active buyer group in Tauranga, picking up 30 per cent of sales in 2021. However, investors, either using a mortgage to secure the purchase or not, continue to pick up the greatest share of sales, at 45 per cent so far in 2021."

Wellington
The capital's property values continue to increase, with the quarterly rate of growth exceeding 10.4 per cent at the end of April.

The annual growth rates show strength throughout the region, from 21.3 per cent in Wellington (average value $1.1m) to 35 per cent in Masterton (average value $579k).

"Upper Hutt's rise over the past year has been 29.9 per cent, or more than $188,000. As with many other parts of the country, however, there is now clearer evidence that these rampant gains are seeing more would-be first home buyers drop out of the market, either by choice or because prices have exceeded their borrowing capacity."

Meanwhile, the Kāpiti Coast District, as measured by the HPI, also experienced an exceptional rate of growth over the past year, with the average value appreciating to $882k at the end of April, an increase of 32.7 per cent.

Kapiti's appeal to Wellington workers continues to increase, as remote working is more widely embraced and an improved commute is on the horizon thanks to Transmission Gully, which inches closer.

Christchurch
The quarterly growth in average property values in Christchurch inched higher, to 6.9 per cent at the end of April, pushing up the annual growth rate to 15.1 per cent.

"Values in the city are now approaching $600,000 ($594k), up by almost $78,000 from a year ago.

"Christchurch remains more affordable than the other main centres, but even there, first home buyers are showing signs of 'fatigue', and mortgaged investors have certainly intensified the competition. They had a 27 per cent share of purchases so far in 2021, a steady rise from about 21 per cent two years ago."

Dunedin
Dunedin's average property values rose by a further 2.4 per cent in April, although the annual rate of growth did dip slightly to 15.1 per cent (from 15.4 per cent at the end of March).

"This equates to a rise over the past year of more than $83,000. The sustained growth rate, which has now seen prices double in just five years, is putting pressure on prospective first home buyers, and as has been the case around the rest of NZ, mortgaged investors have been a rising presence - a 31 per cent share of purchases in Dunedin in 2021 is their highest figure on record," Goodall said.