Loan Market

Dan Breed

Making Sense of Your *Mortgage*

A straightforward guide to refinancing, buying your first home, and working with an adviser who's genuinely in your corner.

Introduction

Buying a home or refinancing your mortgage is one of the biggest financial decisions you'll make and it can feel overwhelming if you don't know where to start.

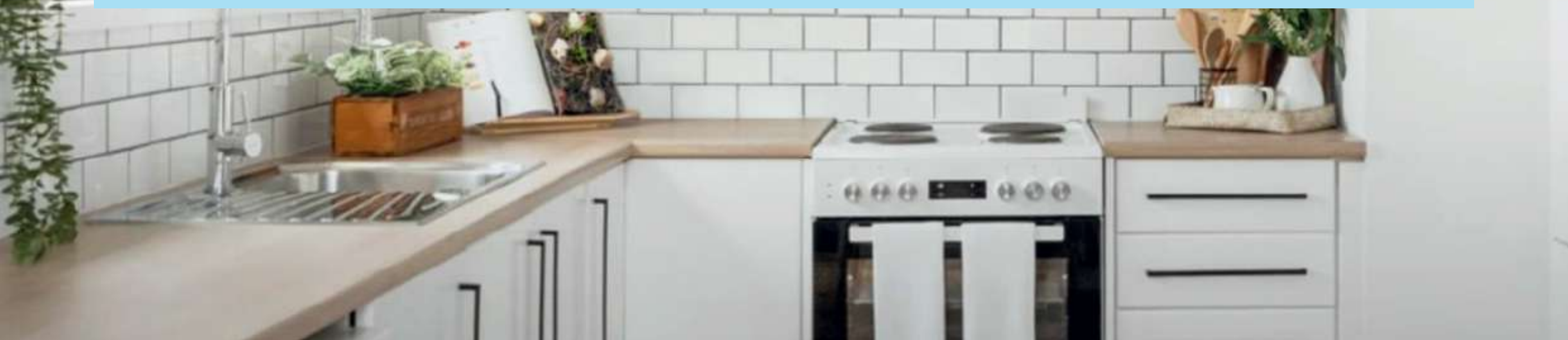
I've spent my career helping everyday New Zealanders make sense of their options, whether that's a first home buyer nervous about asking a “silly” question, or a homeowner who assumes their bank of twenty years still has their back.

This guide will walk you through how working with an independent mortgage adviser actually works, what refinancing really involves, what to expect if you're buying your first home, and how I help clients get into the strongest possible position without ever pushing you into a decision that doesn't feel right for you.

Why an Independent Mortgage Adviser Makes the *Difference*

I'm not a bank employee, I work for you, not for one bank. I'm accredited with all the major banks and most third-tier lenders, which means I get to know you, your situation and your goals, and then match you with the bank (or banks) genuinely best suited to your buying or refinancing purpose.

It costs you nothing. Whichever bank you end up drawing your mortgage down with pays me on settlement, out of their pocket not yours. Every bank pays roughly the same percentage, so I have no incentive to steer you toward one over another. In fact, under my licence, I'm not allowed to.



What a Partnership With Dan
Actually Looks *Like*

Available When It Suits You - Not Just 9 to 5

I answer calls until 9pm most nights because that's when people actually have time to ask questions — after work, after dinner, once the kids are in bed. I'd rather answer something in five minutes than have you lying awake wondering. You're already juggling enough without having to work around a 9-to-5 window.

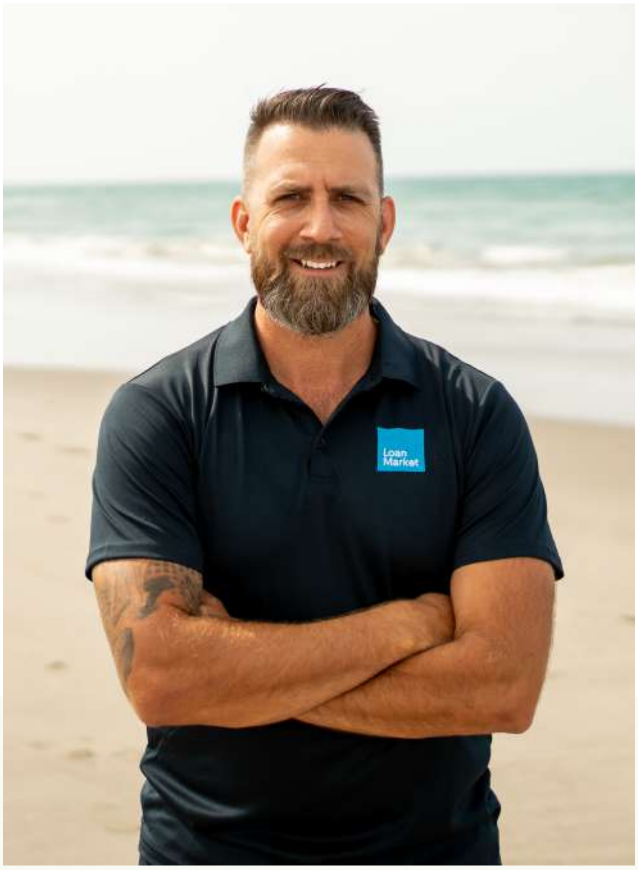
Beyond the Paperwork - Auctions, Valuations and Contract Conditions

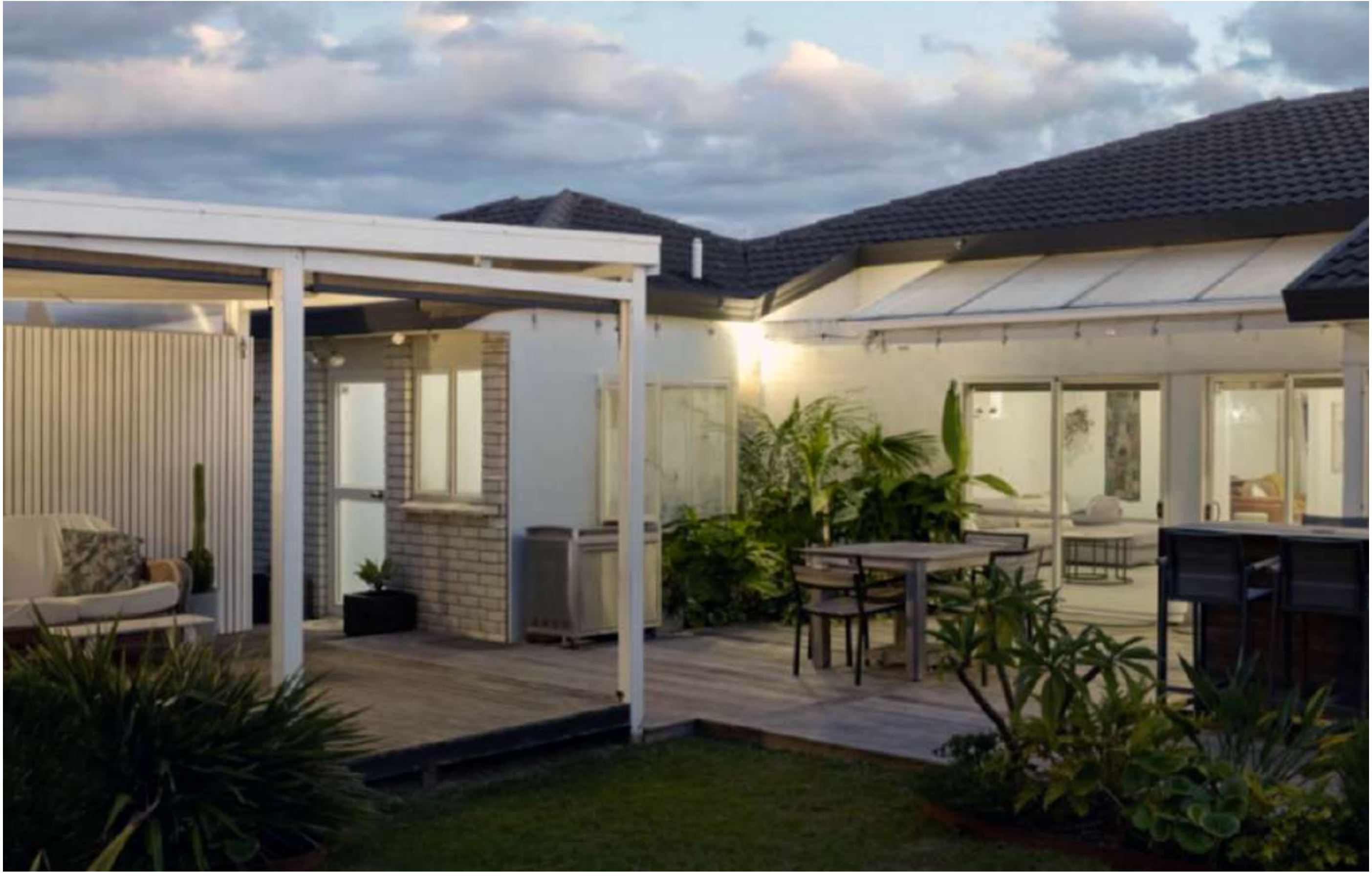
I go to auctions with my clients, put together informal valuation reports, and help them understand contract conditions because it's where I can genuinely add value. I can see where banks value a property, whether they'll lend more on it, and help structure your loan to save you money. That's what I want for my clients.

Recognised Nationally, Focused Locally

I've been named one of New Zealand's Top Mortgage Advisers for 2026, one of around 25 nationally. But it comes down to giving clients the service they need, when they need it. Buying a home or refinancing is a big decision, and nobody should feel silly asking questions. I want every client to feel comfortable, informed, and on the same page.

I'm in this for the people - as cheesy as that sounds, it's the truth.





For Homeowners Considering *Refinancing*

If you've been with the same bank for years, it's easy to assume they're looking after you. Here's what's actually worth knowing before your next fixed-rate renewal.

Is Your Bank Really Looking After You?

Banks used to have a "bank manager" who knew your name, your kids, your history - someone who'd effectively banked you for decades. That relationship is now largely gone from residential banking (it still exists in rural and business banking, but not for everyday homeowners).

In a lot of ways, an independent adviser has become the new version of that relationship except working across every bank directly on your behalf, not just one.

What You Might Be Missing By Staying Put

Staying with your bank can mean missing out on lower rates elsewhere, or a cash incentive if you've had your mortgage for a few years and move to a new lender. It can also mean missing out on sustainability loans reduced or 0–1% interest options for improving your home's efficiency or moving to a hybrid vehicle and offset accounts, which not every bank offers.

My job is to expose you to all of these options so you can make an informed choice.

The Refinancing Myth - You Don't Have to Move Everything

One of the biggest myths about refinancing is that it means uprooting your entire banking relationship. It doesn't. You don't need to shift your KiwiSaver, your insurance, or move everything across. In most cases, all that's required is having one salary paid into an everyday account with the new bank, that's it.

The idea that you need to move everything is really just a preference from the new bank, not a requirement. And it makes sense why they'd like you to: they're gaining a client with a mortgage that could earn them tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars in interest over time.

What the Refinancing Process Actually Involves

Refinancing is far less involved than applying for your first mortgage.

Because you already have a mortgage and a track record of paying it, the process mostly comes down to evidencing that repayment history, along with ID and declarations.

Once the bank assesses and approves it, it's a handover. Your solicitor will need to receive the new bank's documents, which does come with a cost, but this is generally offset by the cash incentive the new bank provides.

What Happens If You Just Roll Over

Rolling over with your current bank isn't necessarily the wrong move, your current bank could genuinely have the best rate and options available to you. The risk is in not checking. The biggest mistake homeowners make when their fixed term ends is assuming their current bank is automatically the best option, or mistaking a generic “please refix” email for genuine advice and service.

That moment is exactly the opportunity to check whether your bank is still the right fit, and whether there's a smarter way to structure your loan and pay it off faster. That's where I come in, I look at your full financial position and help you understand whether you could be repaying more and saving in the process.

For First Home
Buyers

Buying your first home can feel like learning a new language. Here's what I think every first home buyer should know before they start.

What No One Tells You Upfront

You can't purchase a home without a solicitor, they're there to protect you, and they're how the funds are transferred when you buy. You also don't need a 20% deposit to purchase; it's entirely possible to buy with less. And if one bank says no, that doesn't mean they all will. This is where an adviser makes the difference: we have access to every lender, not just one.

1

Getting to Know You -
We start with a phone call to talk through your financial position and get to know each other. I'll send you a short form to complete so I can run pre-assessment calculations tailored to you.

2

Building Your Application -
We meet face to face to build your application properly. You then provide the required documents through a secure system, and I put together and submit your full application to the bank.

3

Pre-Approval -
Once you're pre-approved, you're in a strong position to start looking seriously and make an offer with confidence.

4

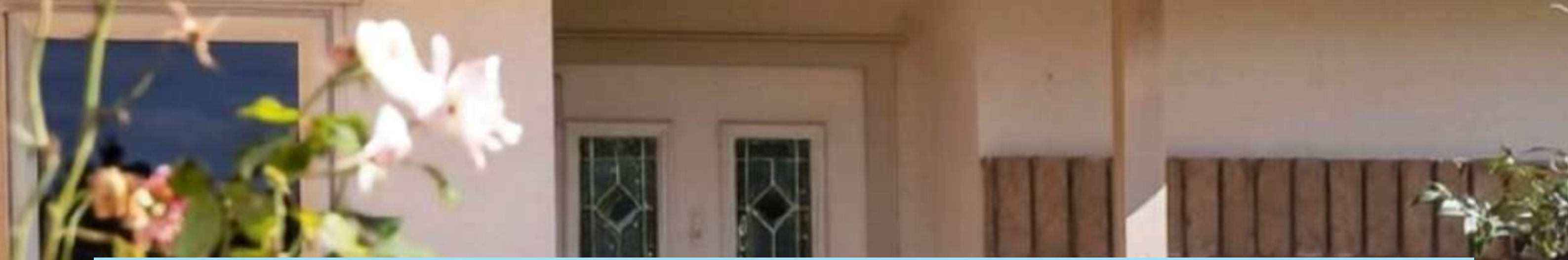
Finding a Home and Going Under Contract -
When you find the right property and make an offer, I'm there every step. We go under contract with conditions to protect you, like solicitor checks and a building report, then I send the agreement to the bank for sign-off.

5

Meeting Conditions and Going Unconditional
Once your conditions and finance are satisfied, your home is officially approved. We talk through rates, loan term and repayment structure, and I organise your loan documents.

6

Settlement
Your loan documents go to your solicitor to sign, then we wait for settlement day. Once the funds are released, the home is yours.



Understanding Pre-Approval

Pre-approval means the bank agrees you meet the criteria for a certain loan amount. It gives you a shorter timeframe to work with when making an offer, makes you a more credible buyer in the eyes of a seller, and gives you the reassurance that finance won't be the thing that lets you down.

> *Pre-approval doesn't mean you're 100% approved. There will still be conditions - including a signed sale and purchase agreement - which protect both you and the bank, and confirm the value and security of the home you're buying.*

Winning in Multi-Offer Situations and Auctions

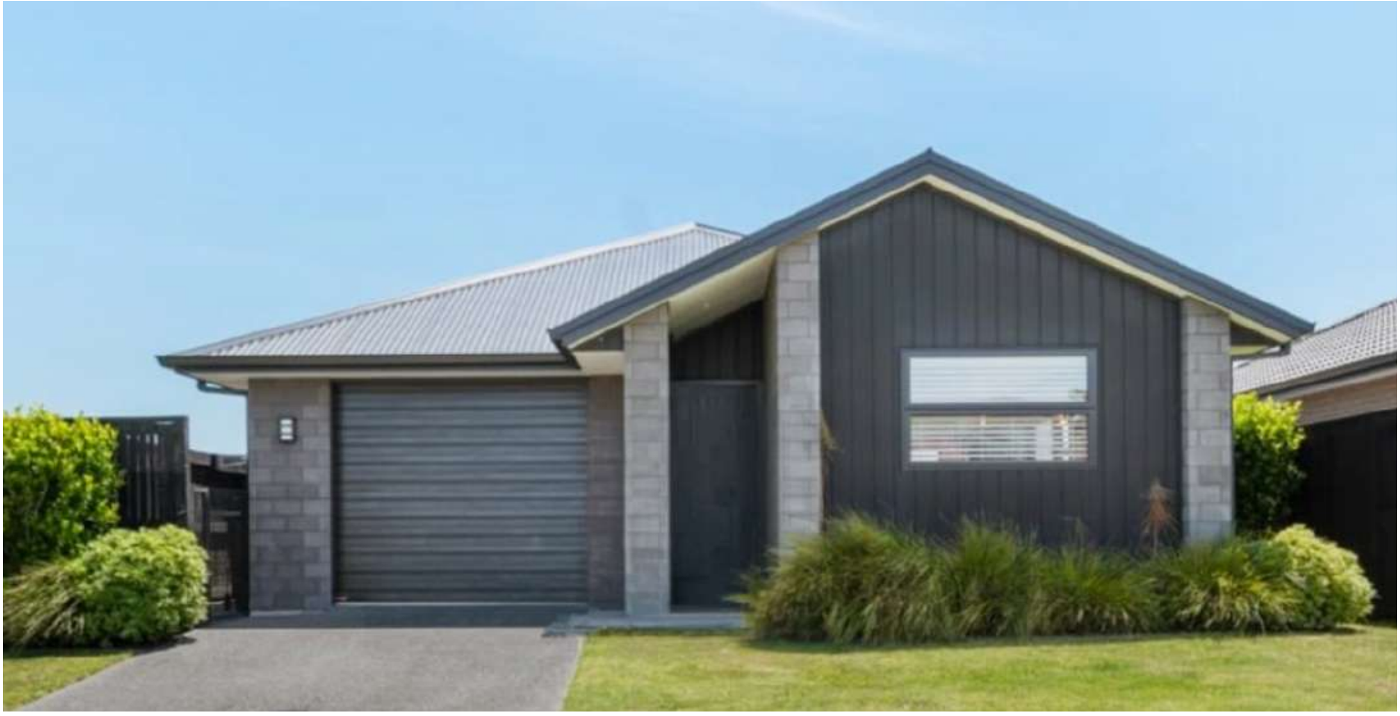
Good finance preparation is one of the biggest advantages you can have in a competitive situation. Being pre-approved, with your conditions already cleared, usually means all that's needed to finalise things is a signed sale and purchase agreement and proof of insurance. That's a far stronger position than going in with a long list of outstanding finance conditions, or without pre-approval at all.

Contract Conditions and Finance Timelines

Every offer is different, because every buyer's situation and requirements are different. Talk to your adviser before setting a finance timeframe, if you put in a deadline that can't realistically be met, you risk losing the property to another buyer who comes in once that date passes. Knowing how banks and lenders actually operate, and how long things genuinely take, is exactly what an adviser brings to the table.

KiwiSaver, Grants and Loan Structures - Made Simple

Between KiwiSaver, the First Home Grant, and different loan structures, there's a lot for a first home buyer to take in. I never try to explain everything in the first meeting - it's simply too much to absorb at once. Instead, we work through each scenario together as it becomes relevant to you. That's the value of having one person guiding you throughout, rather than explaining your situation to a different person every time you call the bank.



Pricings, Banks, and *Strategy*

Choosing the Right Bank or Lender

I have no preference for any particular bank — the right choice depends on you and your position. Every lender has different lending policies, so what one sees as a negative, another may not. That's the advantage of working with an adviser: access to the whole market means we can find the lender that fits you.

Fixed, Floating or Split - Making the Right Call

Rates are constantly moving. I keep you up to date with current rates and what we're seeing in the market, so you can make an informed decision. From there, we structure your fixed, floating or split loan around your circumstances and what you want to achieve.

Loan Structures That Can Genuinely Speed Up Your Mortgage

Small additional payments can make a big difference. An extra $50 per repayment could save you thousands in interest and help you reach your next purchase or investment sooner. It's an option many people, especially first home buyers, don't realise they have - and one I build into every client's plan

Common Questions

Q1

I'll just deal with my bank when the time comes - why do I need this?

Ask yourself this: do you want someone in your corner, working around your schedule, in your best interest, for free? Working with an adviser means having someone looking out for you specifically, rather than a bank looking after its own interests.

My aim is for every client to walk away from their purchase or refinance feeling like they've made a friend who genuinely had their best interests at heart.

Q2

Why don't more people reach out to a mortgage adviser sooner?

Genuinely, most people just don't know what we do or how we operate. It's not something anyone teaches you, we're conditioned to hand everything over to the bank and trust it will be looked after.

The best way to understand the difference is to hear it from people who've been through it, which is exactly why client reviews matter so much to me.

Q3

Is it too early to talk to you if I'm not ready to buy or refinance yet?

Never. This isn't about pressuring you into a loan, I work with plenty of clients who are a year or more away from being ready. It's about giving you context, information, and an understanding of what banks are actually looking for, so that when the time comes, you're prepared.

I will never push anyone into something that isn't right for them.

Thinking About
Your Next Move?

Whether you're weighing up refinancing, taking your first step onto the property ladder, or just want to understand your options before you're ready to act, the conversation costs you nothing and comes with no obligation.

I know there are people reading this who assume they're not in a position to buy, or that their current bank is already giving them the best deal. In most cases, there's more available to you than you think, and a clearer understanding could be the difference between where you are now and where you want to be.

It's free, it's just a conversation to start, and I'm pretty relaxed about it. Let's talk.

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