

Harcourts Property Focus.

Bringing you the latest news, facts and figures from the world of New Zealand real estate.

Declutter your home, and your life.



Decluttering, minimising what you own and generally living a simpler life with less possessions is trending in 2019. Japanese 'tidying celebrity' Marie Kondo has kicked off a fascinating movement in 'organising' which has taken the world by storm and has now become a New Zealand phenomenon.

Even if you don't like the idea of throwing away your worldly belongings, you might like the benefits which come along with owning fewer possessions. These include owning less to clean, less to organise, reducing stress, or even the possibility of having more money and energy to put into your hobbies and passions. Decluttering doesn't need to be painful; in fact, it can be fun, so here are 7 creative ways to declutter your home:

- 1. Start small. Give away one item each day.** If you don't let yourself get overwhelmed early into your decluttering journey, then before you know it, you will have re-homed a week's worth and then a month's worth of items – and not miss them.
- 2. Fill one bin bag.** One of the most talked about decluttering techniques is to grab a simple large bin bag and see how quickly you can fill it. While much of what is collected may well be rubbish, there is also a chance it contains items of value that can be donated to charity.
- 3. Think back to front.** Hang all the clothes in your wardrobe with the hangers in the reverse direction. After you wear an item, return it to the closet with the hanger facing the correct direction. After six months, you'll have a clear picture of which clothes you have worn and which you haven't, thus making it easier to pass on clothing.
- 4. Make a list.** Create a list of areas in your home to declutter; starting with the easiest – anecdotally this might be the collection of pens which are kept near a phone in your home or near the fridge where you write notes. Do you really need all those pens? Do they even all work? It's worth seeing how this goes and taking your decluttering from here.
- 5. Take the 10-10-10 Challenge.** A simple task of locating 10 items to throw away, 10 items to donate, and 10 items to be returned to their proper home can be a really fun and exciting way to quickly organise 30 things in your house. Once you have done it, maybe you could encourage any other members of your family who live with you to join in.
- 6. Experiment with clothing.** Choose some key items of clothing and challenge yourself to only wear those pieces of clothing for a whole month. Challenging yourself in this way will enable you to change your perspective on how easy it is to live with less clothing. Once you've nailed this, it can flow on to other parts of your life and home.
- 7. Use your imagination.** It's good to ask yourself what an item is worth to you before you throw it away. Although Marie Kondo poses the question 'does it spark joy?' we can use alternative ways to question something's worth to us. You can also use this technique when buying new items to stop you making an unnecessary purchase. Just ask yourself if you really need the item or not.

No matter what way you choose to get started and whether it be one of these tips or one of countless others; the goal is to take your first step with excitement behind it. There is a beautiful world of freedom and a fresh way of living that's hiding behind that clutter. How you remove it is up to you!

What's happening in the property market?

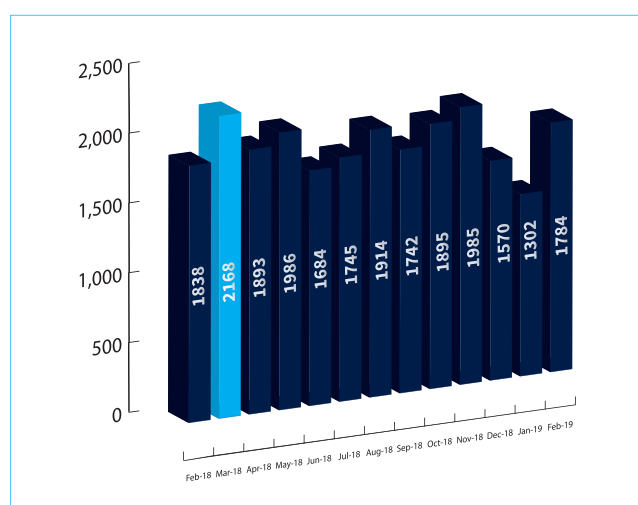
The average **national** house price in February 2019 increased by 2.4% from \$584,727 in February 2018 to now sit at \$598,970.

When we break it down by the cities and regions we report on, in **Auckland**, the average house price in February was up 1.6% on the same recorded period for 2018 with the average for the month sitting at \$906,944. In **Wellington** which includes the Taranaki and Hawke's Bay regions, the average sale price is up 26.5% on the same period in 2018 from \$449,014 to now sit at

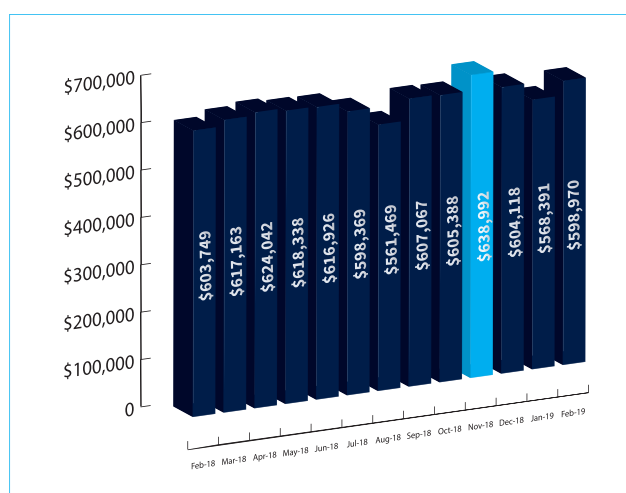
\$567,875 which is the most substantial rise in average house price across New Zealand. In **Christchurch**, the average house price has dropped from \$555,957 in February 2018 to \$540,459 in February 2019 which is a reduction of 2.8%. For the **Central Region**, taking in Bay of Plenty and Waikato, the average sale price has risen by 2.6% to now sit at \$542,627 for February 2019. In the provincial **South Island**, the average sale price has seen a 9.2% decrease on February 2018 to fall from \$461,319 to now sit at \$419,096 in February 2019.

Chief Operations Officer Harcourts International Jo-Anne Clifford says, "To make the most of the market conditions I'd advise sellers to make sure they are working closely with their sales consultant to create the best possible marketing campaign to connect them with the right buyers, for the best result. When the market is quieter an experienced sales consultant can really prove their worth."

NATIONAL: Written sales year to date



NATIONAL: Average sale price year to date



Disclaimer: All Harcourts MarketWatch figures are current to the end of the reported month and are compared to the same month ended for the previous year. 'Written Sales' is defined by all sales brought to contract status, where 'Settled Sales' are the results of contracts completed at the close of the reported month. Written Sales are a snapshot of the markets temperature while Settled Sales show what has happened in the previous month.