



Professionals

news

Home Prices Continue to Increase

The cost of houses in Australia's eight capital cities continues to rise, according to preliminary estimates from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The ABS found the average price of established houses rose 20% in the year to March 2010 with a 4.8% rise since last December.

"This preliminary result is the largest annual increase since the series commenced in March quarter 2002," a spokesperson from the ABS said.

The main contributors to the rise were Melbourne and Sydney.

In Melbourne, house prices rose 6.7% during the quarter and almost 28% in the 12 months from March 2009 - March 2010. Sydney recorded 5.3% for the quarter and 21% for the year.

There were also positive contributions from Canberra (5.4% and 20.6%), Perth (3.5% and 15%), Brisbane (2.0% and 12.1%), Adelaide (2.7% and 10.8%), Hobart (4.2% and 14.1%) and Darwin (3.6% and 17.5 %.)

According to the Australian Property Monitors and the ABS the median price for a house in Australia's capital cities is now \$542,827.

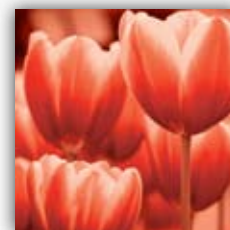
Sydney continues to top the list, with \$609,353, followed by Darwin on \$576,125, Melbourne on \$549,980, Canberra on \$549,647 and Perth \$519,526.

Houses in Brisbane were a median \$451,388, \$449,704 in Adelaide and \$318,119 in Hobart.

The figures however, remain irrelevant if you are one of the thousands of people unable to find a home to buy.

According to the National Housing Supply Council's second State of Supply report, Australia has a shortfall of 178,400 homes. The gap widened by 78,000 last financial year and is expected to continue to soar, reaching 300,000 by 2014.

According to Housing Industry Association chief executive Graham Wolfe, the main causes are planning delays and restrictions, developer charges, labour and capital availability and taxation, with no short term solution on the horizon.



Hot Tip:

When selling, consider investigating other options rather than private treaty. While private treaty may be the most common method for sale, depending on your area, market and property specifications, it may be more beneficial financially to sell through auction or tender.

Know Your Agent

So you have decided to sell a property. In that case, you have a lot of things on your mind, many aspects to consider and some serious decisions ahead.

One of the first choices you must make after the initial decision to enter the market is which real estate agent you will engage to work with you.

Finding the agent that suits your needs will ultimately direct the way the selling process unfolds. The highest profile agent may not work in your case, and equally, perhaps the local commission cutter is not right for you either. Take your time, back your instinct and make sure you are comfortable with your agent.

The best agent for the task of selling your home can potentially make or save you thousands of dollars if they understand you.

When considering an agent, don't be afraid to ask questions about fees, marketing expenses and any guarantees or conditions that may not be specified in conversation. If you feel more comfortable, prepare a list of questions so you can rest assured this is the person to get you top dollar while making the process as smooth as possible.

Consider choosing an agent who lives and works in the area where you are selling. Ask them why they live there, what they like about the area and if they know the area. Ask them about some local shops or attractions to see if they are being honest!

Ask what other properties they have sold in the area and what they know about the property prices and trends, services, even the climate for the local region.

Request testimonials from past clients and even try 'googling' the agent to see if there are any reviews or feedback online, and perhaps check their facebook page to help you understand the type of person you are dealing with.

Check if the agent's marketing material is good quality or generic, and if they are innovative or traditional. Ask to see flyers and advertising material they have prepared for other properties like yours.

Find out what the agent's market share is and how big their data base is.

Ask how your agent will keep in touch with you, and how often. A good agent knows you do not want to feel forgotten or neglected.

The right agent can make this process a lot less stressful than most sellers report. Take your time in selecting an agent, know what you are looking for and don't be afraid to ask questions.



Know Your Strata

If you are moving into a property with a strata title scheme, there are some things you may need to know.

Strata title is a form of ownership devised for multi level apartment blocks and subdivisions with shared areas.

Strata title schemes comprise individual lots, each with a named owner, and common property which is shared, such as stairwells, driveways, gardens and recreational facilities including swimming pools, tennis courts and community centres.

The lot owners form a body corporate which elects a committee responsible for the management of the building and common property.

The committee is like the board of directors of a company. It has specified powers, though generally it shares power with the general meeting of the body. You can have a say in what is decided by attending meetings and making your vote count. If you cannot attend, appoint someone as your proxy.

If you want to make alterations to common property, make sure you obtain approvals first.

Always consider the neighbours, especially when it comes to noise, or where you and your visitors park your vehicles.

If you have a problem, talk to your neighbours about it. They may not realise their actions are causing a nuisance.

By-laws are in place to guide the behaviour of owners and tenants. If a problem persists in breach of the by-laws, you should contact your executive committee or strata title managing agent to issue a notice to comply.

Try to be flexible. Remember, there may be times when you need to give a little more leeway to accommodate different personalities, so in turn, you will be granted some flexibility with your own requests.



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