

# RELOCATION, RELOCATION!

If you plan to buy a property in New Zealand, you need to get your finances in order before you leave, advises **Mary O'Brien**

If you are in the process of applying, or you have been accepted, for a New Zealand visa, your thoughts will no doubt be turning to the logistics of your relocation.

There are some very important steps you should take before moving to New Zealand, particularly if you intend to purchase a property when you get there.

First, do set up a New Zealand bank account. This can be done easily while you are in the UK by simply phoning the bank, and they will verify your identity. Once you have done this, it is then more convenient to send money over to New Zealand, and you will have the immediate use of the account as soon as you arrive.

## SETTING UP A MORTGAGE

If you are interested in purchasing a property in New Zealand, do phone a reputable mortgage broker to find out your financial qualifications of obtaining a mortgage there.

In addition, you will also need a deposit saved for your New Zealand house. If you choose to not sell your property in the UK and rent it out instead, you could look into topping up your existing mortgage to obtain a deposit.

The larger the deposit you can provide, the more comfortable the bank feels! The standard variable rate is around 5.65 per cent and has not increased for three years. New Zealand banks normally require less deposit for owner occupied properties than investment properties.

The average bank will lend around 75-80 per cent to non-residents, however, if the intention is to live in the property as "owner occupiers" then there is a chance of borrowing 85-95 per cent finance, depending on your present and future income circumstances. These income circumstances might be influenced by



You could live in a modern townhouse in Auckland's Parnell

whether you're relocating on a company job transfer, whether you have certain job skill demands that are in demand, and whether you are in possession of a permanent residency or business visa.

If you do not have a job lined up, this offer is likely to be conditional on finding a job in New Zealand within a certain salary bracket.

Try to obtain a conditional New Zealand bank approval on a bank letterhead, stating what they can lend you, as this will give you confidence in knowing where you stand in purchasing a property there.

This bank approval is likely to be conditional to the location, the house itself that you wish to buy, and/or your potential job and income when you arrive in New Zealand. It is usually valid for up to six months, which can give you enough time to settle in and find a job.

## WHERE TO LIVE

Choosing the ideal location to move to is your next big consideration, so do try and do as much research of your own before you go, looking into factors such as the climate, job situations, rent and property prices for that area.

If you have children, you also need to bear in mind the school zones of different

areas. Locations that are in good school zones are usually more expensive with rental and property prices.

It's easy to view properties for sale or rent in New Zealand while you are in the UK. Look at websites such as [www.nzherald.co.nz](http://www.nzherald.co.nz), [www.realestate.co.nz](http://www.realestate.co.nz) and [www.trademe.co.nz](http://www.trademe.co.nz).

The Real Estate Institute of New Zealand has a good website, with news and useful links at [www.reinz.co.nz](http://www.reinz.co.nz). You can also view valuations and other property statistics at [www.qv.co.nz](http://www.qv.co.nz). The website for the Government Statistics Department offers quick links and statistics for property, migration and jobs at [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz).

It's important to feel comfortable about the location you are interested in and its affordability for rental or purchase, so do phone and talk to real estate agents in New Zealand, and recruitment agencies.

The Department of Building and Housing's website at [www.dbh.govt.nz](http://www.dbh.govt.nz) is very informative if you plan to rent, providing tenant guidelines and information on average rental prices. 🇳🇿

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