

the government's new ownership scheme price threshold

Sarah Howison recently bought her first home in a house and land package at Marsden Park. Picture: Sam Rutty

How grants pushed Sarah over the line

KATE MCINTYRE

FIRST-home buyer Sarah Howison said she wouldn't have been able to buy her property had it not been for government incentives.

Sarah, 25, began saving for a deposit at the age of 14 and had still not been able to get a foot on the property ladder until she was able to use two government stimulus initiatives last year.

She purchased a house and land package in Marsden Park, with the combined help of a \$10,000 first-home buyers grant and a \$15,000 builder's grant. She also had her stamp duty waived.

She welcomed the government's expansion of the First Home Guarantee scheme.

"I wouldn't have been able to buy a house if it wasn't for that builder's grant," Sarah said.

"What they have brought out now is going to be perfect for some people.

"It might not be perfect for everyone, but I know a fair few people that it would have helped."

Her broker, Daniel O'Brien from PFS Financial, said he received a lot of enquiries from clients in Western Sydney when the scheme first came out.

"It allowed people to get in the door faster," he said, adding that the expansion to 35,000 places was a positive thing.

"It's going to allow more people to buy properties and save them a ton of dead money in mortgage insurance," he said.

THRESHOLD SUBURBS

Suburb/area	Median House Price	Annual growth (past 12 months)	Suburb/area	Median House Price	Annual growth (past 12 months)
Tregear	\$649,000	25 per cent	Kanwal	\$720,000	28 per cent
Lethbridge Park	\$650,000	19 per cent	Shalvey	\$722,500	37 per cent
Willmot	\$655,000	31 per cent	Blue Haven	\$725,000	32 per cent
Blackett	\$657,500	30 per cent	Charmhaven	\$725,000	33 per cent
Airds	\$660,117	30 per cent	Leumeah	\$727,000	13 per cent
San Remo	\$660,125	35 per cent	Dharruk	\$729,000	26 per cent
Whalan	\$667,500	28 per cent	Wyongah	\$730,000	26 per cent
Mannering Park	\$670,000	23 per cent	Lake Haven	\$733,000	33 per cent
Emerton	\$675,000	26 per cent	Eschol Park	\$735,000	15 per cent
Watanobbi	\$691,000	30 per cent	Ambarvale	\$750,000	21 per cent
Gorokan	\$694,075	30 per cent	Gwandalan	\$750,000	34 per cent
Mount Victoria	\$703,696	37 per cent	Rosemeadow	\$750,000	20 per cent
Halekulani	\$705,000	\$29 per cent	St Helens Park	\$750,000	21 per cent
Lake Munmorah	\$710,000	29 per cent	Bradbury	\$750,500	23 per cent
Buxton	\$712,500	17 per cent	North St Marys	\$753,500	20 per cent
Hebersham	\$715,500	22 per cent	Eagle Vale	\$757,000	21 per cent
Budgewoi	\$720,000	32 per cent	Bow Bowling	\$760,000	17 per cent

Lee Rosenfeld, director of Innovative Home Loans, said the 5 per cent deposit had to be in the form of genuine savings and in the borrower's account for at least three months before they applied. Gifts or parental guarantees could not be considered.

Available places were divided between 27 participating banks that did not readily advertise the number of spots available, and banks could charge a higher interest rate for a 95 per cent lend.

6 PAGES OF REAL ESTATE Tomorrow in the Sunday Telegraph



EAGLE VALE \$790,000



BLUE HAVEN \$754,000



NORTH ST MARYS \$715,000

Getting back to business

BUSINESS turnover increased for all 13 selected industries in February 2022, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Business Indicators Branch head Branko Vitas said most industries recovered the falls during the peak of the Omicron Covid-19 variant in January 2022.

"In February, six industries recorded rises in turnover that were greater than 5 per cent," Mr Vitas said. "The increase in business turnover comes after Covid-19 cases peaked, there was a large fall in hours worked and businesses experienced labour shortages and supply disruptions in January."

Transport, postal and warehousing recorded the largest rise (9.3 per cent) compared with January, as airlines and other transport businesses generally reported higher turnover. The wholesale trade and mining industries also continued to benefit from rising commodity prices, with turnover rising by 3.9 per cent and 3.8 per cent respectively.

Immune fingerprint to ID a fix

MOST auto-immune diseases are easy to diagnose but hard to treat.

A paper published in the journal Science proposes using your unique immune cell fingerprint to rapidly identify which treatments will work for your auto-immune disease.

"We analysed the genomic profile of over one million cells from 1000 people to identify a fingerprint linking genetic markers to diseases such as multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, type 1 diabetes, spondylitis, inflammatory bowel disease and Crohn's disease," says Professor Joseph Powell, joint lead author at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research.

The discovery could help individuals find tailored treatments that work for them as well as guiding the development of new drugs.

The study by researchers in Sydney, Hobart, Melbourne, Brisbane and San Francisco helps us understand why some treatments work well in some patients but not in others.

Kids clothing grows into a \$2bn 'mini-me', gender neutral giant

NADIA SALEMME

FROM mini-me fashion to the rise of gender neutral designs, babies and children's fashion has become big business in Australia.

The Australian market for kids' clothing is expected to grow to \$2.5 billion in 2025, up from \$2.18 billion in 2020, an industry report revealed.

The sector has an annual growth rate of 3.1 per cent for babywear and 3.6 per cent for kidswear between 2020-24, according to the latest

Childrenswear in Australia report by market research company, Euromonitor International.

And Australian retailers, from mass department stores to boutique brands, are reaping the benefits.

Budget store Best & Less' baby and kidswear sales grew from \$287 million in 2019 to \$311.2 million in 2020. Head of kidswear at Best & Less Vanessa Noy said shoppers were demanding clothes for kids "that looks fun and on trend, in cotton rich fabrications while being

functional and durable". Ms Noy said playful prints, modern silhouettes, and mini-me dressing were key trends in children's fashion.

"We have seen this (mini-me) trend emerging over a few years where we first saw mini-me dressing driven predominantly by mother and daughter images on social media," Ms Noy said.

Emma Hawkins, the founder of kids' label Homegrown, said social media had changed the market for children's fashion in the past three

years. Ms Hawkins said there had been a shift towards gender-neutral dressing for kids and an awareness of environmentally friendly fabrics such as organic cotton.

Sydney mum Kelsey Boot said she spent about \$1500 per year on clothes for her three children. "I shop around for best prices and buy off small businesses and friends," Ms Boot said. "Kids are messy and I want them to be able to be comfortable and play without worrying about their clothes," she said.



Kelsey Boot with Olive and River.