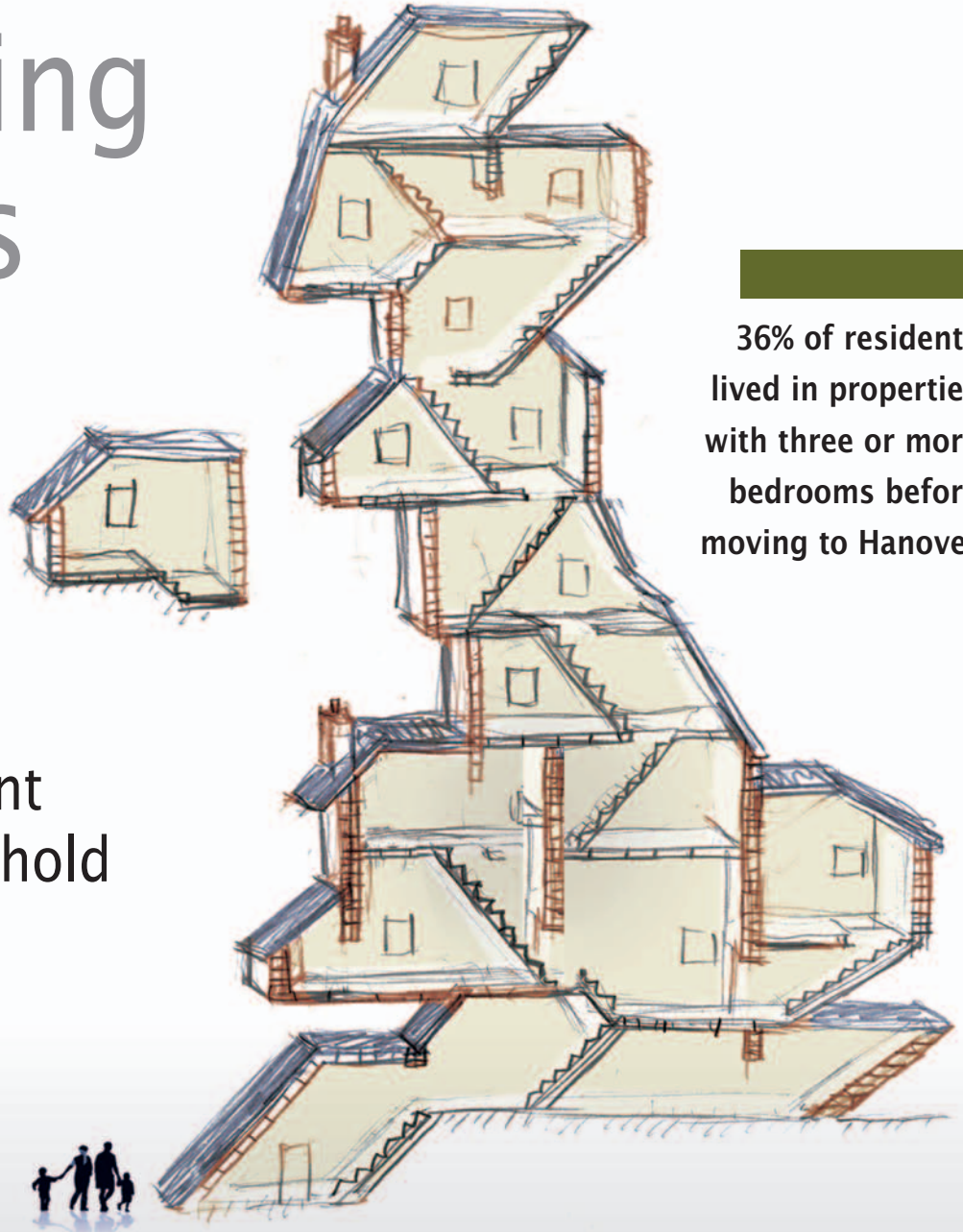


Unlocking Britain's empty rooms

– could
retirement
housing hold
the key?



36% of residents
lived in properties
with three or more
bedrooms before
moving to Hanover

Conclusions

Evidence points to
'under-occupation'
in older households

Consequences

Retirement housing can
increase supply of family
housing through 'downsizing'

Challenges

Retirement housing would be
more popular if affordable two-
bed homes became the standard

Moving to retirement housing

Hanover commissioned the University of York's Centre for Housing Policy, to conduct research¹ with new Hanover households to identify:

- 1 why older households move to retirement or extra care accommodation;
- 2 the extent to which older people are vacating family sized accommodation;
- 3 the extent to which the moves involve a change of tenure.

Evidence points to 'under-occupation' amongst older households in their own homes, many with considerable equity which they may wish to retain for financial or inheritance reasons.

Conclusions

More than two in five residents chose to move to a Hanover property because they needed some help but wished to retain their independence

- 36% wanted housing with 'designed in' facilities for older people
- 37% moved due to health concerns
- 32% wanted to feel safer from crime
- more than a quarter wanted to 'downsize'
- 26% of previous home owners wanted to improve their financial situation by 'trading down'

Previous accommodation

- 36% of residents lived in properties with three or more bedrooms before moving to Hanover
- One in four new Hanover tenants were previously owner occupiers

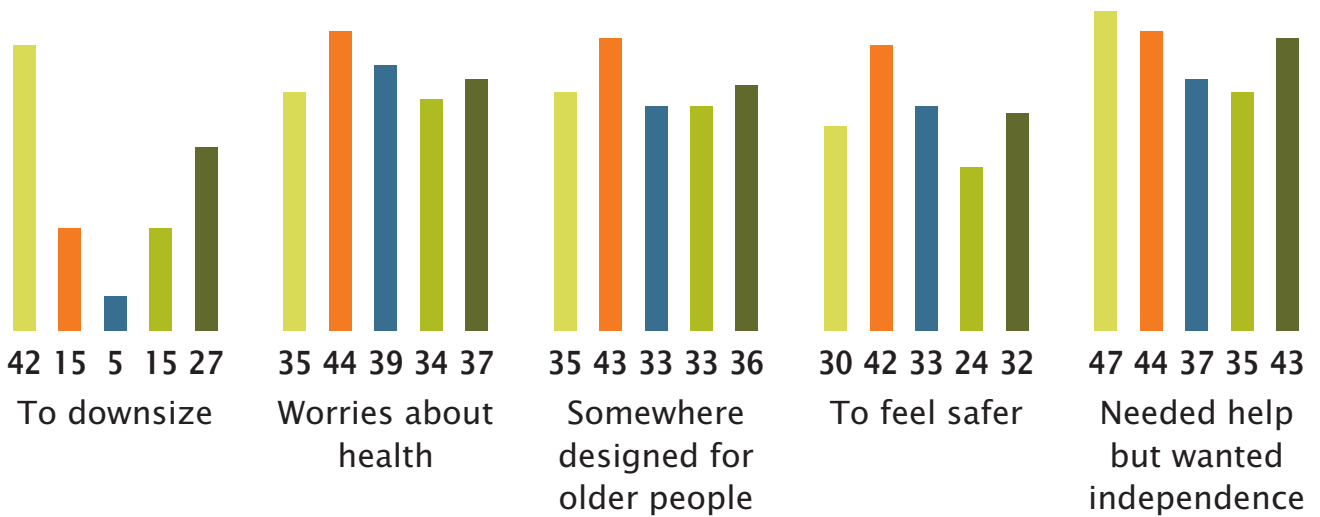
¹ Data compiled postal survey of 2000 households, drawn from the approximately 5000 households who had become Hanover residents since January 2005. The findings are based on 920 responses.

Entrants to Hanover’s housing included previous renters and owners. The factors influencing the decision to move varied by tenure as shown below.

Reasons for moving

% by previous tenure: Owner LA HA Private rented sector All

[Note: respondents could provide more than one reason for moving.]



Consequences

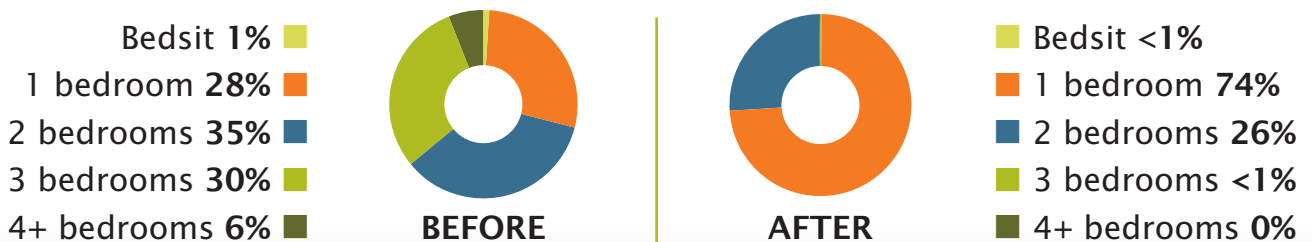
Downsizing to loosen the financial belt

Prior to moving, 47% of households were owner occupiers, but at moving, nearly half switched tenure to become tenants. 26% cited **equity withdrawal** as a reason for moving.

Releasing surplus space for families

As a consequence of moving into retirement housing, Hanover residents have released significant amounts of family-sized accommodation. In three-quarters of cases the vacated property had a garden.

Changes in size of property occupied immediately before and after the move to Hanover



Retirement housing provides potential to increase family housing stock

- Affordable retirement housing provides a ready-made solution to manage the increasing demand for family-sized homes
- The research backs this view: 36% of our residents used to live in properties with three or more bedrooms
- Qualitative comments from the research indicated that some residents would prefer more space
- In order to free up sought after family-sized homes, more 2-bedroomed retirement housing must be made available
- The attraction of outright sale or shared ownership needs to be fully explored; our survey evidence suggests a preference for the former
- A generation of potential retirement housing residents have accumulated equity in their properties even though they may still be cash poor
- Developing fair and safe financial arrangements to release funds, while facilitating home ownership, is a priority
- Policy-makers need to address how retirement housing can be made more attractive, to support a virtuous circle, and providing older people with what they want

Full report available on request; please email communications@hanover.org.uk