

Downsizing Survey Report

Brief survey of tenants carried out in October. Promoted in Voice and distributed by:

- Email (to about 200 Melville tenants)
- Facebook post that reached 2,316 people
- www.melville.org.uk
- Tenant rep group

48 Melville tenants replied with 8 people saying they were *interested in finding out more about downsizing*.

Q *How important do you think it is that Melville helps tenants to downsize if they are in homes they're struggling with because they're too big for them?*

Very important/important	96%
Very unimportant/unimportant	2%
Neither/not sure	2%

Q *If you were thinking about downsizing, what help would you like from Melville (tick more than one box)?*

Money to help with costs	75%
Practical help/advice	48%
Something else (see below)	10%

- Actual help with the move, van and labour
- Ideally it would be a move into a suitable empty house and not have to be an exchange
- Ensuring the house was in a nice tidy area with no anti social behaviour problem
- I would personally want assured I was being placed in a property that was equal to where I was living. For example if I had a 3 bedroom house in Bonnyrigg I wouldn't want to give that up for a 2 bedroom flat in Woodburn

Q *What practical help/advice do you think Melville should provide (tick more than one box)?*

Decorating/flooring	83%
Getting boxes	50%
Recommendations for removal firms	48%
Help with energy suppliers or redirecting mail	42%
Something else (see below)	10%

- Tailor the needs required to the individual
- Moving costs and better swapping site
- People should be able to do the above mentioned things themselves or get family to help, if they want to move. If they need help with that because of health or education needs problems then social work should pay not Melville
- Adaption and disability advice

Additional Comments

1	Do you actually survey your tenants to see who should be downsizing?
2	I think some people that have been in their home for a very long time have a lot of memories in that home but also have to be mindful that there are families in desperate need of a bigger home.
3	I think a lot of my friends would consider downsizing if smaller properties were more suitable for elderly or disabled tenants and that practical help was given. A good friend moved into a one bedroom flat. She is extremely unwell and needed a mobility scooter or she was housebound. She purchased a scooter and stored it in the hallway to the 4 flats as she couldn't get it up 3 steps into her own space. She was advised that she was blocking the hallway and was advised to move it even though she had no other way of storing it so she sold it. I would say that my work head was a bit yes I get the point but she had no storage and was not offered more appropriate accommodation for her personal needs.

4	To downsize from a house they have they have living there must be incentivised for example I would only move if the property was nicer than the one I'm in now ppl spend money and time doing a house up. I think help to move is also a good thing.
5	New properties could be offered to those who wish to downsize as an incentive
6	Does Melville have bungalows for example and maybe have a information page on website for people who are considering this option with q & a section. I appreciate the need to spend money wisely however if tenants have been in their homes for a number of years cost of moving and redecorating etc not always feasible because of cost so people will stay put if they can't afford it
7	People on housing benefit should be encouraged to move as it would save council a lot of money.
8	it is a very daunting process and although the house might be too big, they may have built up close bonds with neighbours and the thought of leaving the security behind might be over whelming
9	As someone who has an autistic son who needs a room to himself and also five other kids three who are cramped into one room and myself sleeping in my livingroom with a baby its affecting my mental health I've been waiting on a bigger house for three years so as you can imagine it infuriates me when I hear of single people living in four bedroom houses
10	Helping with flooring and curtain costs, maybe offer a grant would maybe encourage people to move. Also awareness of the issues, let people know numbers on waiting lists etc
11	Smaller properties may need adjustments for disabled people such as elderly struggling. If older persons are being asked to downsize, it should be a ground floor property, main door that a stairlift can be fitted, or a flat with a lift regardless of current health needs as health could decline
12	Ideally all local housing associations should work together. For example for medical reason a bungalow would be my ideal choice but Castle Rock have a separate biding system.
13	You need to provide a better service than having to pay for homeswapper where a lot of people are not serious or are applying for incorrect home sizes which wastes time
14	I think this should be supported and highly encouraged. There are many families who aren't able to have room for their family due to some people who have more room not wanting to downsize and others not knowing where to get the support to do so. Moving is costly and support with this would be hugely advantageous.
15	Not at present but it is something I may think of doing when I retire. It would depend on housing stock in my area as that would be where my support and friends are.
16	A person that is assigned to do this job one person to deal with is less stressful. There could be a meeting between both parties to discuss what they both want if it was a down size swap. This way there's less animosity between them and there more happy to move
17	It should be written in the tenancy where there is a significant material change in circumstance i.e grown up children have left a three bed house the remaining couple/person has to actively look to down size and this should be documented something similar to UC when seeking a job
18	Great idea in theory I hope we can get more people down sizing it's logical .. not too great to have bedrooms sitting unused year after year .., hope this survey helps ..
19	Perhaps build more family sized houses.
20	I think what puts people off downsizing is the type of properties they get offered. Many elderly want sheltered housing which there isn't enough of.
21	Used to have but now just staying where I am, know and trust my neighbours.
22	Contact tenants directly by phone or drop in to discuss the facts they are in a house too big for them. Make it more personal to the individual so you can find out what their concerns are
23	Having clear understanding information on options and incentives for people to consider their options if they wanted to downsize
24	This house was perfect for me and my family in 2002 and was just what we needed. One son left home years ago and my other has recently moved out to go to uni. The size of the garden is now becoming unmanageable for me and I cannot afford a gardener. I would love a two bedroom house in a nice street but would consider a one bedroom with a garden. Although the expense of moving right now us not something I can afford I look to move in the future.
25	It should be brought in cause it isn't fair on people requiring bigger to wait and go overcrowded when the lists are already struggling
26	Help with moving would be a big help as stressful time. Longer to move too
27	I don't understand how people who have homes too big for them are not automatically downsized