

# Rightsizing - A Case Study

## Southway Housing Trust and Minehead Court, Withington, South Manchester

### What is rightsizing?

Rightsizing is about finding a home that suits people's current and future needs. This may involve moving from a larger home when spare bedrooms are no longer needed into a smaller home or somewhere on one level with adaptations to make life easier for people as they grow older, or residents with disabilities.

Moving to a home that's easier to maintain can have financial benefits too with lower rent and household bills. Rightsizing helps to free up larger, three and four-bedroom homes for families that are in need of a good quality and permanent home. There is a huge national shortage of these types of homes, leaving some families homeless living with young children in temporary accommodation.



### The current situation

In South Manchester, community-based Southway Housing Trust manages over 6,000 homes and 4,366 of its main tenants are over the age of 55. Of these residents, 43% are also living with physical or other health conditions.

In addition, over 1,300 single people and couples over the age of 55 live in Southway's family homes (2 bed+) which were not designed with older people and ageing in mind. (2023 data).

Support for people living in Southway's homes and in neighbourhoods that were not designed with ageing in mind is going to increase in response to population changes.

Southway has a limited number of one and two bed homes in some of its main wards like Chorlton Park, Burnage, Old Moat and Withington with larger traditional semi-detached homes with gardens making up most of its properties. Many older people living in these family homes have long standing connections to their local area and often don't want to move away.

To help meet this demand, Southway has committed to build more housing to help people age well in good quality homes and has so far built 272 new homes including two extra care schemes. These are Age Friendly homes with features and adaptations to help make them inclusive and accessible so people can live independently.

# Rightsizing - A Case Study

## Southway Housing Trust and Minehead Court, Withington, South Manchester

### Right sizing at Minehead Court, Withington

In 2019, Southway built a new development of 54 Age Friendly homes in Old Moat in Withington which has helped older people to find more suitable homes and re-housed homeless families.

Of these homes, 33 have been let at affordable rent (around 80% of market rent, capped at local housing allowance) and 21 homes have been delivered as Older Persons Shared Ownership.

Thirty one residents who moved into these homes were Southway tenants who had rightsized, with one from another Greater Manchester-based housing association.

An Age Friendly lettings policy was agreed with Manchester City Council for Minehead Court for people over 55.

As a result of people moving to Minehead Court, larger homes became available again and were given to families with the greatest need for social housing, seven of which were prioritised for homeless families.

*A single woman with learning difficulties had been left a three-bed home after her mother passed away but she could no longer manage or afford the property. Because of her working age, she was struggling to access support and her family contacted Southway for help with re-housing. She now lives in a home with one bedroom at Minehead Court which is easier to maintain and more affordable.*



### More about rightsizing in Greater Manchester

Rightsizing is available to all Southway tenants who are living with spare bedrooms and the housing association works with tenants over 50 who want to move to a smaller property that is better suited to their current circumstances. This is usually done via Manchester City Council's Manchester Move with specialist advice available to help people find the right homes.

Rightsizing covers a range of different types of housing depending on people's circumstances. This could be an age friendly scheme for people aged over 55, supported housing, extra care or homes for shared ownership or open market.

Partnership work is being carried out across Manchester to free up larger family homes to help families that are in housing need to get a home.

- **More information about rightsizing for Southway tenants.**
- **Read more about Age Friendly living with Southway.**

*A single, older gentleman with several health conditions was previously living in a 3-bed house and was finding it very difficult to maintain his home and garden. He found it difficult to get around and was mostly living in his bedroom so he could access the bathroom easily. After suffering a few falls, his family got in touch with Southway for advice on re-housing. He now lives in a two-bed, ground floor apartment at Minehead Court and can do much more for himself as his new home is more manageable. He no longer has the expense of someone maintaining his garden and can do small cleaning jobs around the home.*

# Rightsizing - A Case Study

## Southway Housing Trust and Minehead Court, Withington, South Manchester



### Proposals for Ryebank, Chorlton

Southway plans to build 42 one-bed affordable homes for over 55s at Ryebank in Chorlton, as part of wider proposals for housing and public green space working with private developer Step Places. These homes would have Age Friendly adaptations and ground floor wheelchair accessibility, and the aim is to let these at Social Rent.

These types of homes in high value, desirable areas like Chorlton are extremely hard to find and are great for people looking to right-size and who want to stay close to their existing communities, family and support networks.

By moving to homes that better suit their needs, it also means we can re-house families on the housing waiting list who may be homeless, living in overcrowded conditions or temporary accommodation because of the shortage of larger homes with three and four bedrooms that are available.

### How would rightsizing work at Ryebank?

Southway's approach to lettings for the Age Friendly affordable homes it plans to build at Ryebank would be very similar to how the housing association has let new homes at other developments.

This would involve identifying residents in South Manchester living with spare bedrooms who may need a more bespoke home that might include things like adaptations. Other housing associations in the area with under occupied homes would also be able to put forward their own tenants with a rightsizing need if it frees up a larger home.

Ryebank's location in Chorlton makes it an ideal place to build smaller homes to help older people and those with specialist needs to continue living independently in a vibrant and multigenerational community, close to local amenities, families and support networks.

