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**12/4/2012**

**We ‘Need Our Own Space’ in Retirement**

British people need to have their own space in retirement, according to a new report published by The Intergenerational Foundation ([www.if.org.uk](http://www.if.org.uk)).

Entitled, ***Understanding Downsizing****,* the IF research uncovered this interesting fact whilst conducting in-depth interviews with a group of people who had downsized and a group who had not.

Further findings from the Report included downsizers feeling liberated from the tyranny of household chores, upkeep costs, increasing heating bills and large gardens, whilst non-downsizers worried more about where they would keep their possessions in smaller properties that they called ‘poky and tiny.’

Both groups agreed that people want to live as independently as possible for as long as possible and not be “banished” to retirement homes making IF’s call for better retirement accommodation for downsizers all the more timely.

IF commissioned the report to understand better why people choose to downsize or not. It follows the ***‘Hoarding of Housing’*** report published in October 2011, where IF identified that the UK has 25 million unoccupied bedrooms and called for our existing housing stock to be used better, whilst also building more and easing planning restrictions.

Of those who had downsized, none regretted their decision and found their new home more manageable, although they were saddened to be leaving the family home. They did however like the idea of services from estate agents that were tailored to their needs as downsizers and advised those thinking about downsizing to stay in the local area rather than uprooting to other parts of the country

Jeremy Leach, Senior Researcher for IF and author of the Report comments, “The report clearly demonstrates that, with the right incentives, those people wishing to downsize could be helped to do so since the burden they feel about staying in the family home will increase with age.”

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Angus Hanton, Co-founder of IF comments, “16 million people currently live in under-occupied households. If developers can be encouraged to provide the right accommodation, at the right price, in the right location, offering services and amenities that encourage older people to downsize, backed by government incentivises to do so, then we have a real opportunity to help get younger families into the larger spaces that their children need to thrive.”

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**Note to Editors:**

IF exists to promote the rights of younger and future generations in UK policy making. We are an independent non-party-political charity that works to rebalance spending and taxation more fairly across the generations.

Jeremy Leach, Report Author, and Angus Hanton, Co-founder, are both available for interview.

Please contact

Liz Emerson on [liz@if.org.uk](mailto:liz@if.org.uk)

Mob: 07971 228823