

Wrong size house.?



We can help!

**Overcrowding and Underoccupation Project**

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# Background

- Housing Scrutiny Commission asked a question about the level of underoccupation of Council tenancies.
- Data sets provided interesting results.
- Opportunity identified to resolve Tenant's under-occupation/overcrowding problems via swaps.
- Why now? - Moves before Flexible Tenancies commence will allow Tenants to keep their existing rights.



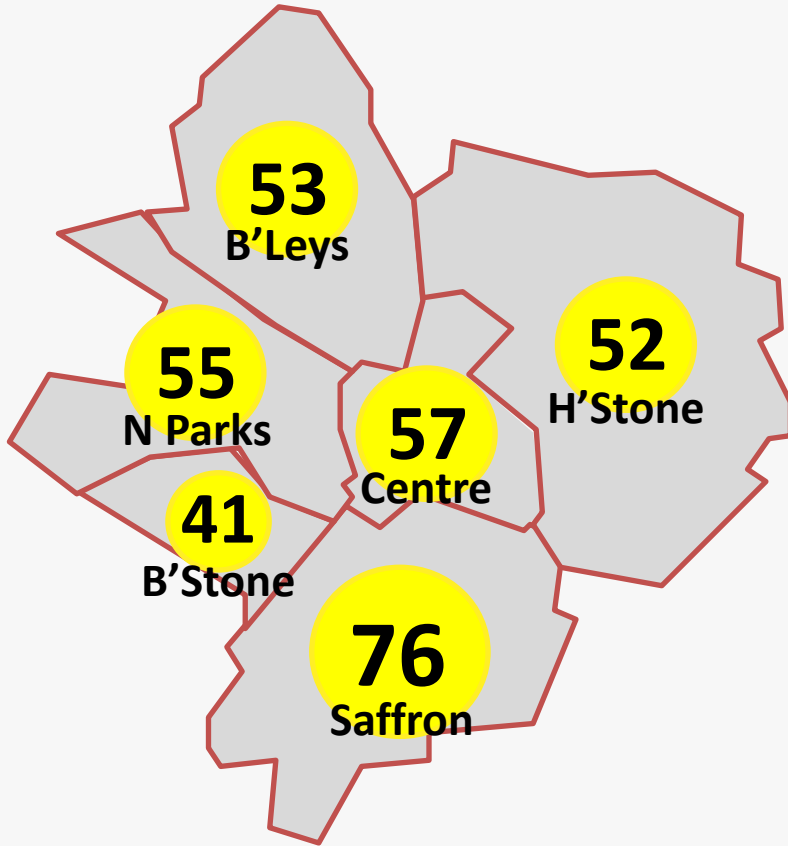
# What we know

## **The scale of overcrowding and underoccupation**

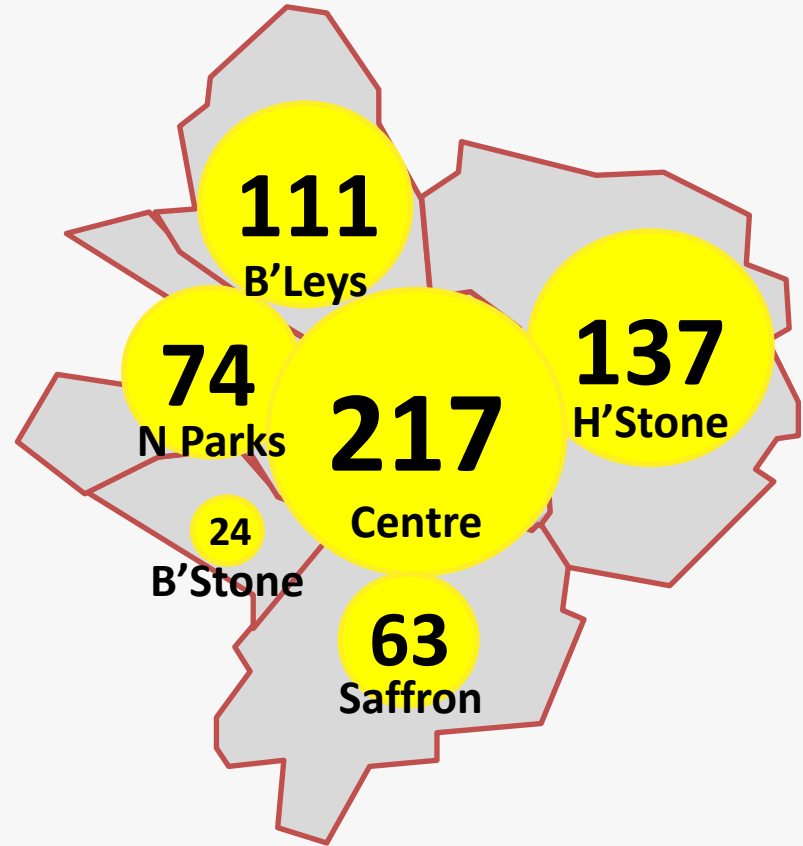
- 962 Applications from under-occupied/overcrowded tenants.
- 627 (65%) overcrowded, looking for a bigger property.
- 335 (35%) under-occupied, looking for a smaller property.
- Majority of Tenants (over 50%) only needed 1-bed smaller, or 1-bed bigger than their current accommodation in order to be adequately housed.

# What we know

## A broad look across Areas



**Under-occupying**



**Over-crowding**



# Potential swaps

- Number of potential swaps, based on complimentary need, identified as 172.
- Spread across the 6 main areas of the City:

Centre	B'Leys	B'stone	H'stone	N Parks	Saffron
41 (82 tenants)	29 (58 tenants)	7 (14 tenants)	38 (76 tenants)	29 (58 tenants)	28 (56 tenants)
24%	17%	4%	22%	17%	16%

- This means a potential for around 340 housing resolutions.



# What we do now

## HomeSwapper.

- A website where social tenants can arrange swaps with each other.
- No cost to tenant because cost covered by LCC as part of an annual subscription.
- No obligation for the customer to swap. The customer is in full control of how they make use of the website.



# What we do now

## **HomeSwapper is a good, but under-used product.**

- Our research shows there is potential for raising the level of use amongst tenants with housing problems.
- There were only 38 swaps via HomeSwapper in 2016.
- There is a potential for LCC to be more active in assisting tenants to use the website effectively.



# What plan to do

- Launching a pilot scheme to facilitate more swaps for LCC tenants.
- No obligation for tenants to take part, but for those who do we will offer a better service.
- Focus on:
  - Increase number of tenants using HomeSwapper – mail shot to be sent to the 962 tenants identified.
  - Helping tenants who want to use the website to resolve their housing situation - identifying potential swaps ourselves and suggesting them to tenants.





# Advantages

- Increased potential for resolving housing need for Tenants who take part. In turn, slight reduction in people on the Housing Register.
- Makes better use of the HomeSwapper product. Pro-active process, meaning more exchanges likely to happen via HomeSwapper. Better value for money.
- Makes better use of stock. Less empty homes, reduced void costs.



# Future possibilities

- Dependent on success of pilot - possibility of making this a mainstream service.
- Tenants identified through the Housing Register as being overcrowded or under-occupied could be directed to HomeSwapper as their primary housing solution.
- We would also work with HomeSwapper to improve the product and add more features that will benefit tenants who use the site.



Thank you.

**Questions?**