ABSTRACT

Downsizing: motivations, processes and outcomes for older Australians

It is often assumed in housing and planning policy that there is a need for older people to vacate their larger family homes and downsize into smaller, more appropriately designed dwellings. However most older people show a preference to remain living in their seemingly ‘under-utilised’ homes with, where necessary, community-based support services and home modifications rather than downsizing. To what extent this preference is due to financial and other barriers to relocating in later life is less clear. Based on a recent AHURI research project involving a national survey and in-depth interviews in three states (NSW, Vic, SA), this paper explores the extent, motivations, processes and outcomes of downsizing and the implications for housing and planning policy.