

## Downsizing leads to cluttered home

### **The problem**

The client had recently downsized from a 4 bedroom house to a 2 bedroom flat as a result of a relationship breakdown. The client had moved back in with her son and girlfriend who were in their 20's and had enjoyed the run of the flat for the last year or so.

The clutter was causing many problems, in particular moving around the flat was becoming increasingly difficult. It was difficult to enter the client's bedroom – there was no longer any floor space and the client could only reach her bed. The furniture in the lounge was becoming increasingly unusable as the clutter was spreading across the room.

The client was finding it increasingly difficult to concentrate at work and she was finding it hard to relax at home. She had lost interest in keeping her home clean or using the kitchen for cooking. There was no where to eat a meal at a table.

### **The Stakeholders**

The clutter mostly affected the client, but her son and girlfriend were also becoming increasingly affected. As the clutter was beginning to spread throughout the whole house it was making it increasingly difficult to use the shared areas such as the lounge and the kitchen. The son and girlfriend had taken to living mainly in their bedroom and this was impacting relationships within the flat.

### **The professional organiser**

The client knew she needed to address the clutter, but she didn't know where to begin. She had lost her motivation and the clutter was a daily reminder of her failed relationship. It was contributing to tensions between everyone living in the home and it was making it difficult to keep the flat clean.

### **Goals & Objectives**

The client had very clear goals for wanting to clear the clutter: to make space for her grand daughter to sleep over, to create a place to have meals with her friends and family, to feel able to invite friends over without embarrassment, to have a relaxing lounge to share with her son and girlfriend, to have a clear space in which to work.

### **Solution**

After an initial one hour consultation, a programme of decluttering was agreed that would tackle the access into the flat, the shared lounge and kitchen and the client's bedroom.

We began with a 3 hour session working on the access into the flat, the stairs and the hallway. This first session enabled us to move things out of the flat more easily

and safely. It encouraged the client to see some of the clutter starting to leave her home.

Our second 3 hour session concentrated on the lounge. We spent some time at the start of the session visualising how the client wanted the room to look when we were finished. We discussed what the room would be used for, what activities would take place there and what supplies and storage were needed.

We began by clearing the floor and then tackling the furniture. We handled each item, letting go of anything that was no longer needed or used. The client began slowly at first and after a few minutes found it easier to let go of things she no longer needed.

Old books, CD's and DVD's were cleared from the bookshelves to the charity shop or put aside for re-sale. Things which had not been unpacked since her house move were taken out and decisions were made about whether to keep them or let them go.

A call was made to the Richmond Furniture Scheme to book a collection for some unwanted furniture.

We re-arranged the furniture, hovered and polished. A full boot load of was taken to the charity shop and recycling point after each session.

Many areas in the flat remain a work in progress and decluttering has been put on hold due to the client starting a new job and now saving up to pay for future sessions.

### **Time and cost**

Overall, 2 sessions were spent working on the lounge and hallway – 6 hours in total. Two boot loads of items was taken to the charity shop and recycling point and one collection was made by The Richmond Furniture Scheme.

### **Outcome & benefits**

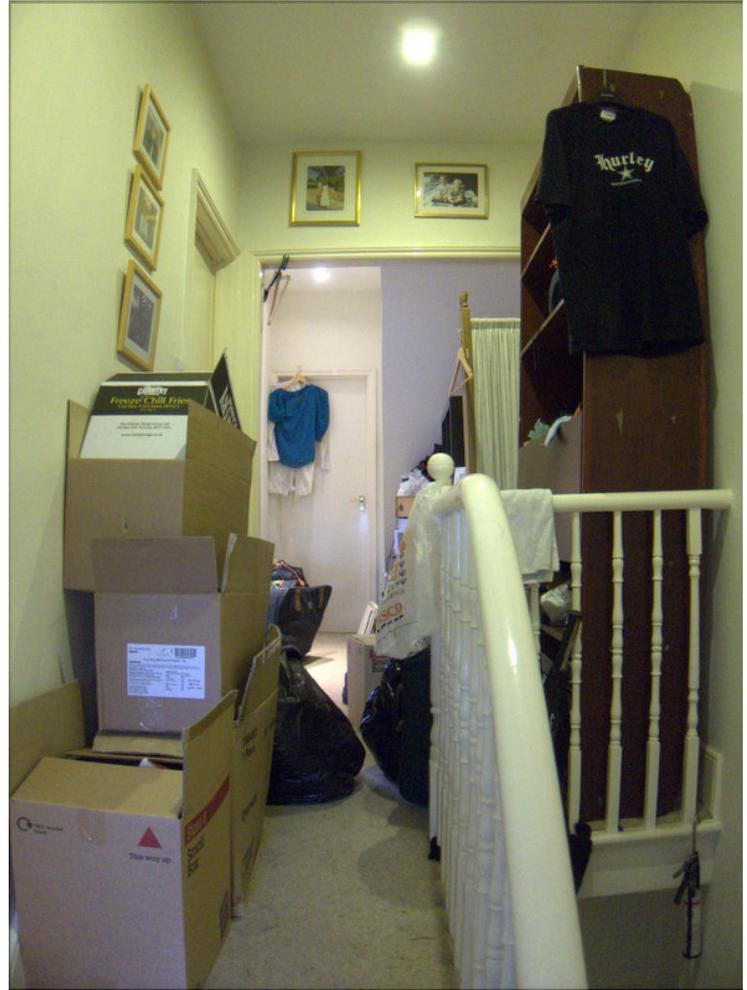
The client can now access her flat more easily and has a clear space for relaxing in her lounge and eating a meal at the dining table. She is motivated to continue and will do so when she has the funds.

### **Client quotes**

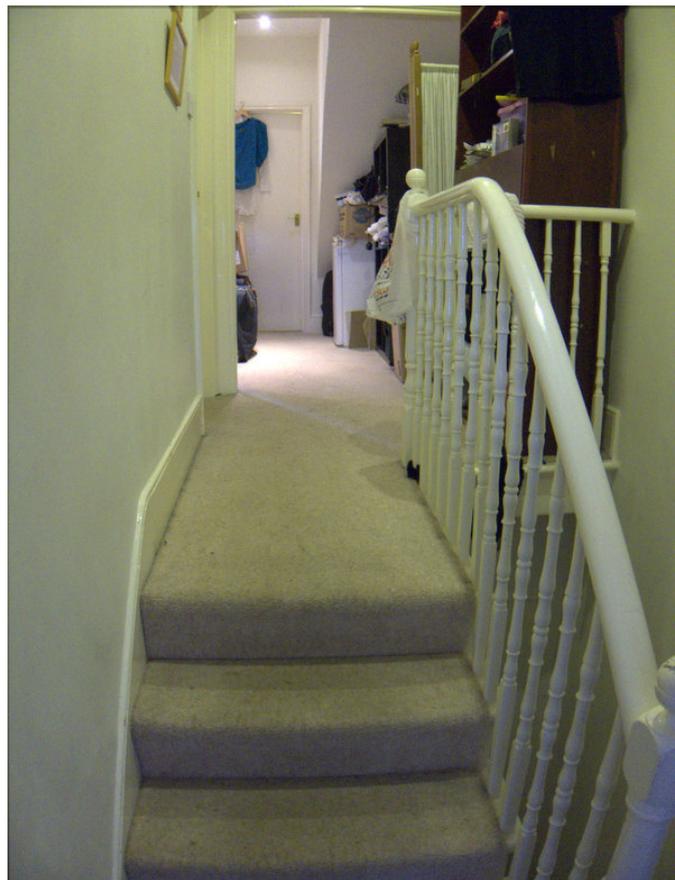
After our session in the lounge our client said, 'thank you so much for today. I am sitting on my sofa with a big smile on my face. It makes so much difference to my state of mind'.

# Hallway

Before



After



## Living Room

Before



After



**Before**



**After**

