



Little's Place, which opened in May of this year, was at capacity shortly after opening. Little's Place is a women's housing facility. (Photo: Lauren Collins)

North Surrey women's housing facility 'almost immediately' at capacity

Little's Place opened in May following a six-month renovation

LAUREN COLLINS / Nov. 27, 2018 2:10 p.m. / [LOCAL NEWS](#) / [NEWS](#)

Despite Little's Place only opening in May, Atira Women's Resource Society says they're turning away women almost daily.

Janice Abbott, CEO of Atira, said the organization is "thrilled" to be able to offer 22 units of housing, but "a lot more is needed."

Little's Place, which opened in May, provides 22 housing units for women, Abbott said.

"There's still a lot of women that we're turning away because we don't have any more room for there."

Abbott said 91 women requested for space in October when the building was already 100 per cent full. By mid-November, Abbott said 40 women had already put in a request for spaces.

She said the facility was “almost immediately” at capacity.

The women at Little’s Place, Abbott said, will be staying for “roughly a year,” but the women won’t be asked to leave if they don’t have anywhere else to go.

Little’s Place is located on King George Boulevard in a converted motel.

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Abbott said when Little’s Place first opened, there was some hesitation from women.

A lot of the women who moved in had horrific experiences in that hotel, and I think there was a little bit of reluctance,” said Abbott, adding women were “triggered by their experiences” there.

Abbott said there were stories of violent sexual assaults at the former motel which is the reason why Atira wanted to convert the former hotel.

“When we first went into the building, there were a number of rooms where women had written their stories of rape on the walls.”

Since then, Abbott said there was about a six-month renovation period. The work included removing mould and graffiti and adding new flooring.



Atira Women's Resource Society

about 7 months ago

This is an uncomfortable part of Surrey's recent herstory and a place where scores of women were unspeakably harmed.

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Abbott said that over time, Atira is hearing from women about how different Little's Place is from when it was the motel.

“In addition to this kind of reluctance based on past experience, there was also this kind of relief and shock at how different it was.”

Little's Place was named after Santanna Scott-Huntinghawk after she died after overdosing in a tent in November of 2016. Scott-Huntinghawk's nickname was "Little" because of her short and petite stature.

"We were clearly wanting to rename the building and, to be honest with you, it was nothing more than a synapse that snapped in my brain," Abbott previously told the *Now-Leader* of the decision to honour Santanna.



Atira Women's Resource Society
about 6 months ago



Welcome to Little's Place. In your name, we honour the "girl in the tent" and work to ensure her short life has meaning and that no other young woman suffers the same end. Welcome, too, to the awesome women who offer support and encouragement to the women who will live at Little's Place.

"Little" was Santanna's nickname. Learn more about her here:
<https://www.surreynowleader.com/.../surrey-motel-being-trans.../>

Having just turned 19, Scott-Huntinghawk had recently aged out of the B.C. foster-care system, and her story garnered much media attention. She was one of 122 people who died of drug overdose in Surrey in 2016.

— *with files from Amy Reid*