

Buying our first flat in Tottenham

Barbara first heard about Newlon Housing Trust and First Steps when she was getting her eyelashes done. Her beautician was a Shared Owner living in one of Newlon's flats at Hale Village and when she learned that Barbara was interested in buying a property in London, she recommended Newlon and told her how to get started as a Shared Owner.



She told Barbara to register with First Steps, a housing programme from the Mayor of London helping low and modest income Londoners to buy or rent.

“We went on the First Steps website and put in all the details of what we were looking for. They told us, yes, we were able to buy a property in London.”

After signing up, the couple received emails about suitable properties and they went to view a large number of them. In May, they came to see a show flat at Isobel Place, a Newlon developments behind Tottenham Town Hall. Barbara and Tomasz had already been renting in the area for over five years, so had been watching the building of Isobel Place with interest. When they visited the flat they decided there and then that it was exactly what they wanted.

“I ran back to our flat in the rain to get my cheque book so I could make the deposit that day,” Barbara laughed. “We waited two days and then the call came informing us that we could have one of the flats.”

Shortly after the development was completed they received the news that they were eagerly awaiting: their flat was ready. Barbara cried with happiness on the phone, as she was so glad to be able to move in before Christmas and have family and friends celebrate the holiday with them in their new home.

Barbara and Tomasz are still in love with their new home and envisage a happy future there: "We have 2 bedrooms – one for our guests and one for us. In the future it's one for our kids and one for us".

"Some of our friends said it's not nice to live in a flat if you don't have a garden. Stuff like that. But if we want to go to a garden, we will go to the park. The balcony is enough for us. It's more important to live comfortably and securely."

They also think Tottenham is a good place to live as it is less expensive than other areas and has great transport links. There are plenty of shops nearby, a large Tesco and a market in Walthamstow.

"You don't really need to go to central London if you don't want to," said Tomasz.

Barbara and Tomasz's move is an important milestone in their lives and it all started with a recommendation from a beautician in a salon. Through the First Steps website they were able to find a suitable flat. But did Newlon live up to the recommendation as well?

"They are really very helpful people," Barbara replied. "Most of the time we spent with people like Robert in the Sales Team. All of our emails were replied to and things were explained to us in an easy to understand way. This was good because we cannot speak English very well so there are a lot of things we couldn't always understand."

"We recommend Newlon – the staff there did a really great job."