

Buying our first flat

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 Barbara how to get started as a Shared Owner.

The beautician 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 in May, they came to view the show flat at Isobel Place, Newlon's new development behind Tottenham Town Hall. Barbara and Tomasz already lived in Tottenham and had been renting there for over five years. They had watched the development of Isobel Place with interest and when they visited the show flat they decided there and then that it was exactly what they wanted.

In December they heard the news that they were eagerly awaiting: their flat was ready. Barbara cried with happiness on the phone to Newlon, 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.

One month on, 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. You don't have a garden. Stuff like that. But if I want to go to a garden, I will go to the park. The balcony is enough for me. It's more important to live comfortably and secure.'

They also stick by Tottenham as a good place to live as it is less expensive than other areas and has good transport links. There are shops nearby, a large Tesco and a market in Walthamstow. 'You don't need to go to central London really,' 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 said in response to this question. ‘Most of the time we spent with Robert and then with Symone. Every single email they replied to and they explained things in an easy way for us because we are not English and our English is not that good and a lot of things we couldn’t understand.

‘If we can recommend Newlon we will recommend it and say those people did a really great job.’