

# **Community Together College Bank and Lower Falinge Newsletter (text only version). Autumn 2022 edition.**

## **A message from Gareth Swarbrick, RBH Chief Executive.**

Welcome to another edition of Community Together, your dedicated town centre newsletter.

The nights are drawing in but there is still lots of activity in and around our homes with work ongoing to build and improve homes for residents. That's reflected in this newsletter with lots of great news stories from around Rochdale.

Firstly, we have some more residents moving into their new homes in Lower Falinge, and it's lovely to hear the stories of Maciej, Gary and Jacqueline as they settle in, enjoying the facilities, the peace and quiet and deciding where everything should go.

As that process starts to draw to a close, we've got an update on the next steps for the Underwood refurbishment with the project team getting to work planning the designs for the new homes there. They'll be looking at how to maximise energy efficiency, which is so important for developments like this.

We're also looking ahead to the next development of new affordable homes for older people.

We've also got some inspiring updates from our New Pioneers, like Joshua, Michael and Alice, who are all thriving after being given opportunities thanks to the project.

Finally, the cost of living crisis is something which is impossible to ignore as we head towards the winter months. We're planning a big event for all RBH tenants and employees on Saturday 5th November.

## **More residents are continuing to move into their new homes.**

Works in Lower Falinge are nearing completion.

The mix of 19 two-bedroom houses, three houses with three bedrooms, 20 one-bed apartments and 13 two-bed apartments, are all RBH affordable rented homes.

### **Jacqueline**

Jacqueline lives in Lower Falinge, across the road from her new one-bedroom flat and will be moving in soon.

"I absolutely love it. It's brand new, and nice and clean. I've got a balcony, I love my kitchen and I've got room for a new table," said Jacqueline.

She praised Michelle at RBH for making the process to move so easy. "It's all been quite easy and really good. Michelle has been absolutely brilliant. I can't fault her," she said.

"I needed to put some beds in storage, and Michelle helped me sort that out. She helped me get gas and electric in. I was just so grateful for what she did that I got her a big bunch of flowers."

Jacqueline has been busy getting everything ready to move in. She said: "I've got all my white goods in, a new fridge and freezer and I'm just waiting for my laminated flooring to go in.

She added: "I'm waiting for my suite to arrive today. I've gone for a dark grey leather suite, so I don't have to be moaning at the grandkids if anything gets spilt!"

Jacqueline's new home has also gone down a treat with the grandchildren - "my granddaughter loves my new flat!"

### **Maciej**

Maciej has also moved from Lower Falinge and now has a brand new two bed flat that he shares with his girlfriend and son.

He said: "The apartment is very, very nice. It's new so everything is brighter and fresher and new so it makes you feel better and happier to be there."

Maciej added: "Our flat before had three bedrooms, but there's plenty of space here for me, my girlfriend and my son. It's very spacious."

He found the process of moving really easy: "Everything went alright, there was no problems whatsoever and everything got sorted as it was supposed to be."

### **Gary**

Gary has moved from his one bed flat in Lower Falinge to a new build flat. The move was requested when his wife was very ill and struggling with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Sadly, she passed away last Christmas, but Gary is now in his new home and is very happy to have moved.

"I'm made up with it now, it's great," he said. "Having a walk-in shower is a big help, but I just love everything about it really. I've got my enclosed little area out at the bottom, and I really love the walk-through from the lounge to the kitchen.

"I just like everything. Where I lived before was too noisy, but where I am now is much quieter and so much better for me. You can't hear a thing here!

"The move has taken just over a week because I wanted them to get my blinds up before I moved in so now that's sorted they're moving furniture and I'm looking forward to getting settled in."

Gary summed up his experience by saying: "I'm just as happy as Larry!"

## **The latest from our New Pioneers.**

There's been some great news stories from our New Pioneers in recent months.

Michael joined us in March after being out of work lockdown when he had sold his small business. We funded a SIA (Security Industry Authority) Level 2 course which guaranteed him work with Capricorn Security and he started with them in April. He's been a huge success there and works in hospitality at Manchester City's Etihad Stadium, working his way up the ranks and absolutely loves his job.

Another good news story comes from Joshua who had previously been unemployed and sofa-surfing before coming to us. He's become an active part of the community, helping to manage the Heywood Community Garden and delivering food parcels to families experiencing food poverty.

He's taken that community spirit into an application to work for Unlimited Potential in a community engagement role, working with people to build stronger relationships. We supported him on his successful application and he started the role in August.

Meanwhile, Alice joined in March and has been working closely with Daisy on writing the monthly New Pioneers newsletter. She's working on improving her confidence and overcoming anxiety issues and says she's always inspired by the stories she includes in the newsletter.

## **International summer Festival**

In August, we held an international summer festival at Spotland Community Centre.

Our Pioneers, volunteers and brokers came together to share and taste authentic food from countries all over the world, including Poland and Ukraine.

The aim was to spread positivity and increase understanding of different cultures and there were children's activities and music from the New Pioneers Choir as well as vocalist and Pioneer Roksana Wrzesein, along with traditional African dance and music.

## **Dates for your Diary - Groups, Classes & Courses at Spotland Community Centre**

- Maths Class: Mondays, 10am-12pm
- Literacy Class: Tuesdays, 10am-12pm
- Sewing Lab: Tuesdays, 9.30am-12.30pm (FULLY BOOKED)
- Choir: Tuesdays, 6pm-8pm
- Women's Group: Wednesdays, 9.30am-12pm
- Belly Dancing: Wednesdays, 6pm-7pm

For more information or to book your place on these free events please contact Sharon Dunn on 07970285870 or email [sharon.dunn@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.dunn@rochdale.gov.uk).

## **Next steps for Underwood's £12m revamp.**

Our project team is working hard to help shape the £12 million transformation of Underwood in College Bank.

Work on the block is set to start late summer 2023 with the project set to finish in late 2024.

The project team includes two Underwood residents who will represent the views of residents. We are pleased to be able to work with a professional team who have significant experience of successfully delivering similar schemes.

Last month, the project team visited Underwood to discuss the design options for the building. The building will be completely transformed inside and out with new kitchens, bathrooms, doors, windows and heating systems. This will create modern, energy efficient, high quality homes that residents need and expect.

The refurbishment will also make sure that Underwood meets the highest building safety standards as well as transforming the appearance, practicality, and sustainability of the block for many years to come.

Want to find out more?

We're creating a separate monthly email update on the project for residents - if you would like to receive this update also, please email [towncentre.regen@rbh.org.uk](mailto:towncentre.regen@rbh.org.uk).

## **Underwood Rehousing Update**

Syed and Michelle from our Regeneration team are continuing to work closely with residents who wish to return to Underwood once the refurbishment is completed. We are working hard to get the temporary homes in Holland Rise and Mardyke ready for these residents to move into.

The team is also helping Underwood residents who have told us that they would prefer a permanent move away from College Bank.

Additional specialist surveys and appointments have now been commissioned on building and fire safety. As people move out and full floors become vacant, detailed survey work can be undertaken with minimal disruption to residents who are yet to move.

This will include designing the best remodelling solution to improve the size and layout for some apartments as part of the final scheme.

By the end of these refurbishments, Underwood will be given a new lease of life and will be transformed inside and out, a key part of the wider regeneration plans for College Bank and Lower Falinge.

## **A HAPPI Update**

As residents move into their new homes in the current phase of development at Lower Falinge, design work is now beginning on the next development sites for new homes.

Our plans are about people, not places – and we're looking forward to delivering the quality and mix of homes that you expect from us.

We will shortly be sharing more information about our HAPPI Living scheme for older people. HAPPI stands for "Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation". – HAPPI schemes provide age friendly housing which is based on 10 Design Principles to help with health, wellbeing and providing a sociable place to live.

The HAPPI living principles are:

- Light
- Flexibility
- Interaction
- Community
- Storage
- Layout
- Adaptability
- Environment
- Home Zones
- Energy

### **Talk to us on 24th November!**

We're holding a consultation event on Thursday 24th November to share more information about our proposed HAPPI homes as well as our plans for the next phase of new homes in Lower Falinge.

Join us from 4.30pm until 7pm at Spotland Community Centre. Information will also be available online from 25th November.

## **Support and advice on the cost of living**

On Saturday 5th November 2022, 12 noon until 3pm. At The Lighthouse Project, Middleton town centre.

Join us on Saturday 5th November for advice and support on facing the cost-of-living crisis as well as fun activities for all the family.

Activities include:

- Interactive cooking sessions - and you can take the ingredients home to try yourself!
- Cost of living advice - find out how we can work together to help get through the current challenges
- Making your money go further - visit stalls including Your Local Pantry and the RBH Money Advice Team
- Meet the RBH Paint Shop and Pass It On team
- Access RBH community funding to help make a positive difference to your community
- MyRBH portal demonstrations - find out how to access RBH services 24/7 on any device
- Become a sustainability champion and help us to tackle climate change locally and globally
- Family Crafts and Face Painting - fun activities for all ages and all the family!
- Food will be provided for all who attend
- Prize draw - three £50 high street vouchers up for grabs for all who register!

Book online now at [rbh.org.uk/events](http://rbh.org.uk/events) or call us on Freephone 0800 027 7769.

We're proud to be a mutual housing society, and this event is sponsored and supported by the RBH Representative Body.

This information is available in Braille, audio and community languages. Please phone: 0800 027 7769 or email [customer@rbh.org.uk](mailto:customer@rbh.org.uk)

Ces informations sont disponibles en Braille, format audio ou dans des langues communautaires. Veuillez téléphoner au 0800 027 7769 ou parler à votre Employé au Logement du Quartier.

Informacje te są dostępne w wersji dźwiękowej, w alfabecie Braille'a lub w językach mniejszości narodowych. Aby zamówić wybraną wersję prosimy zadzwonić na numer 0800 027 7769 lub poprosić o nią pracownika najbliższego biura Wydziału Mieszkaniowego.

Esta informação encontra-se disponível em formato Braille, audio ou nos idiomas da comunidade. Por favor telefone: 0800 027 7769 ou entre em contacto com o seu Responsável de Habitação.

এই তথ্যাবলী ব্রেইল (অঙ্কলিপি), অডিও মাধ্যম অথবা  
বিভিন্ন কমিউনিটি ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়। অনুগ্রহ  
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