



## Never too late to find a job you love

Terrie Wood says she hopes that being one of the first people in the country to complete the new trailblazers apprenticeship will show other women that it is never too late to kick-start their careers.

Terrie who is in her forties and works at Community Gateway Association in Preston, has just completed a CIH Level 4 in Housing Practice qualification delivered by Dutton Fisher Associates – with the course one of the first in the country based on new trailblazer apprenticeship standards.

Despite initially being nervous about studying for the course, Terrie said the training has built her confidence and pushed her to a new level at work.

Dutton Fisher specialises in providing a unique approach to professional development and training. The firm designs training that bridges the gap between education and the workplace.

**“At my age, the thought of becoming an apprentice had never crossed my mind,” she said. “I was a single mum trying to juggle my work and personal life. It felt like a bit of a risk.**

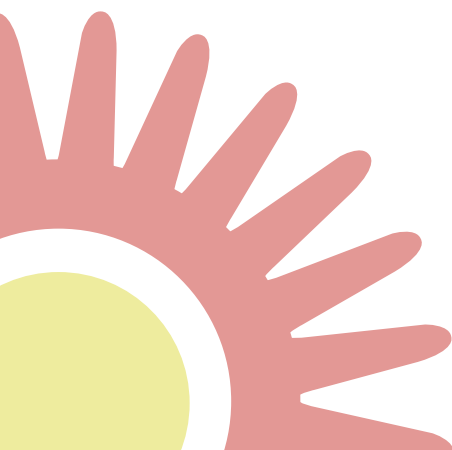
**“Looking back, I’m incredibly glad I said yes to the course. It really made me push myself, and now I am seeing the rewards. I am getting involved in new projects and I am going to meetings that I have never been invited to before.**

**“Age is just a number. I would encourage anyone, no matter how old you are, not to be scared about taking on new challenges at work.”**

Terrie started her career at Bolton Council where she spent 14 years managing a range of different teams. She helped to set up the council's new neighbourhood warden service, where she managed around 50 staff.

After having children, Terrie took a part-time role as a domestic energy assessor, measuring the energy efficiency levels of properties.

**“I did what lots of women do,” she said. “I loved the job with the council, but when I had children I wanted to do a part-time role that meant I could be around at home more. But when the kids got older I felt like I was ready for a new challenge.”**



Terrie started work with Community Gateway in 2009, holding a number of positions before landing her current job as grounds maintenance team leader, managing 15 staff.

After returning to work full-time, Terrie was keen to try to take her career to the next level, and last year was given the chance to be one of the first people to take part in the new trailblazers apprenticeship scheme.

**"I was very nervous, but I knew I wanted to challenge myself, and this felt like a really good opportunity," she said. "I could have carried on as I was, but this was an opportunity to get out of my comfort zone.**

**"I had spent a few years working in social housing, but like lots of people, I'd fallen into the role and I didn't have a deep understanding of the industry. I knew my team and what we did, but I wanted to learn more about what other teams did and how that all fitted together. I also grew up in social housing in Little Hulton in Salford, so it was a good chance to learn about the history of the sector."**

Dutton Fisher's blended learning approach means that a series of interactive training sessions are combined with high levels of support outside of the classroom.

Terrie said the tutors from Dutton Fisher played an important role in helping her through the course, and balancing her studies with her day job.

**"It had been a long time since I'd been in a classroom," she said. "But the sessions were really friendly and engaging. It would sometimes take me a lot longer than others when it came to writing the course work, but there was always someone there to support me."**

Terrie qualified with a distinction from the course, and is already looking to the future.

**"I love coming to work," she added. "The training has really motivated me. I feel like I know my role in the business and what the big challenges are for our sector. Now I can start to progress in new ways. This is my second chance at building a career and I am loving it."**

Dutton Fisher offers a wide range of training and is accredited to deliver Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) programmes, Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) courses, and City & Guilds Approved programmes including Health and Social Care, Customer Care, and Business Administration Training.

Dutton Fisher Associates is the sponsor of Housing People, the social housing training and development forum.

For more information visit:  
[www.housing-people.co.uk](http://www.housing-people.co.uk)

 @Housing\_People



 DuttonFisherAssociatesLtd

We offer a wide range of bespoke training and consultancy services tailored to fit with your organisational requirements and values.


To find out more, contact us:

T: 01943 609541

E: [paul@duttonfisher.com](mailto:paul@duttonfisher.com)

E: [jo@duttonfisher.com](mailto:jo@duttonfisher.com)

[www.duttonfisher.com](http://www.duttonfisher.com)

 @DuttonFisher