

**RIVERSIDE BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE WITH 'OWN PLACE' PROJECT (Published in North West Housing Today Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012)**

**Riverside** in conjunction with **Fusion 21** and contractor **JJ Kelly** has taken on a handful of apprentices to work on properties for the Own Place project in Liverpool.

Housing association Riverside is a founding member of Fusion 21, a business which strives to create sustainable jobs for local people.



Apprentices Stephen Summers and Lee Moran

Riverside's Own Place scheme brings derelict properties back into use, selling them at a 25% discount. This enables buyers that would otherwise struggle to obtain a mortgage to get on the property ladder.

**Peter Rogers of JJ Kelly** has strong feelings about the benefits of recruiting from Fusion 21.

He said: "Signing up to Fusion 21's Employer Pool allows us to demonstrate our commitment to the adoption of socially responsible recruitment. It helps us to make a difference in the communities where we work, by working with those who are hard to reach and maximise our impact within the local community."

Two of the apprentices working on site are Lee Moran and Stephen Summers.

Lee said: "I was out of work for about six months, so I decided to contact someone who worked with Fusion 21 to see if they could help. They managed to get me an interview at JJ Kelly and I got the apprentice's job."

"It's been a really positive experience for me. I like the building trade because I like working with my hands. I've been learning all sorts in different areas like plastering, painting and brickwork. I especially like the brickwork stuff; it requires a lot of patience."

Stephen added: "I came to be with JJ Kelly because someone at Fusion 21 recommended me to them. I was long term unemployed before that. I'm currently working as a labourer for them and I'm enjoying it. It's just as a trial period for now but I'm hoping, fingers crossed, they'll keep me on at the end of it. I think Fusion are brilliant, especially the person who put me forward for this, I'm really grateful, really happy."

JJ Kelly has plans to keep three of the apprentices on full time if they can secure sufficient work.

Peter said: "These apprentices may be based on any of our contracts. The Riverside work helps to provide the financial resource to secure their employment."