

park *people*

Warm hearts, warm home!

Andy and Wendy Metcalf moved to Cheveley Park, Grantham, in 2007 and feel like they're on holiday, despite still working!

Andy and Wendy were relatively young – 51 and 49 respectively – when they embarked on their park home journey; a completely new way of life for them.

They hadn't known anything about park homes until Andy started to research options for downsizing at retirement. Intrigued by the idea of a park home they started to investigate various sites and ended up purchasing a park home before their retirement!

YOUNG LOVE

The couple met when Andy was just 17 years old, and Wendy only 15. They have been a very close partnership ever since. Andy and his family lived in Nottingham and surrounding areas. School was enjoyable but he was happy to leave at 16 when he commenced a four-year electrician's apprenticeship. Wendy also lived in Nottinghamshire with her grandparents until the age of 11 when she moved back with her parents.

It was when both their families were living in Colwick that their romance blossomed. As Andy's brother knew Wendy he was able to provide a form of introduction for Andy when he'd spotted Wendy in town one day. Wendy says it was the hot pants she was wearing that did it!

Their relationship was intense from the start; they even planned a baby! This wasn't met with enthusiasm from her father who refused to talk for three months or give parental consent for marriage. Gretna Green was increasingly becoming the only option! Fortunately, her parents came round to the idea and Andy and Wendy married when she was just 16.

STRONGER TOGETHER!

Initially, Andy and Wendy lived with both sets of parents until they rented a very dilapidated old terraced property



ABOVE: Andy and Wendy Metcalf's beautiful park home at Cheveley Park

in Radford. It was a two up, two down with no bathroom and a toilet down the garden! There was also no hot water. The property was located in a slum area of Nottingham but they loved living there for 18 months until a compulsory purchase for demolition was issued!

Times were difficult; they had two little babies during this time (Andrea and Richard) with no washing machine (or disposable nappies). Andy was still serving his apprenticeship; after work he would drive Wendy to her job as a cleaner at the hospital whilst he put the children to bed. These challenges could well have caused a wedge between them but their relationship and bond was strengthened

After training, Andy worked for Boots the chemist at their main factory in Beeston. Employed as a forklift engineer he maintained and repaired electrical

forklifts within a massive complex of warehouses. This was an exciting period as it provided opportunity to delve into electronics and technology which was undergoing radical change.

Andy had a lifelong career in electrical maintenance albeit many jobs. In fact, he generally didn't stay much longer than two years in each given employment but that was because he was always headhunted and was offered a higher salary and better works van!

THE HOUSING LADDER

Andy and Wendy were keen DIY enthusiasts; Wendy with the creative ideas and Andy putting them in to practice! Their skills enabled them to purchase fairly rundown properties, which they were able to 'do up' and acquire equity.

The first property they bought was a