



A FLOATING HOME IN THE HEART OF GLASGOW

Ann and Colin Borthwick decided to buy and live on a boat following two very successful narrow boat holidays.

"We were both retired, with a large grown-up family, so it was "now or never", explains Ann. "The choice was to stay at home and slowly vegetate or to have an adventure whilst we were still physically able."

The couple have most recently moored their boat 'Missee' at Applecross Street, near the centre of Glasgow. They have found that living aboard has many rewards and they're not regretting the move after six winter months afloat. "We love just being on our boat," says Ann. "It is most enjoyable to be so close to water, which has a very calming effect. Even though we are almost in the centre of Glasgow we see a huge variety of wildlife, which gives us so much pleasure. We also love the ability to change location."



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Ann and Colin chose to moor at Applecross Street because it is secure, handy for the city centre and has good facilities. "Everyone at Applecross Street has been friendly and helpful to us," says Ann. "This has been especially useful to us as we are first time boat owners."

The couple took some time deciding who would build "Missee". They read monthly canal boating magazines, which gave them the idea to visit Piper Boats near Stoke on Trent and have a chat. "We liked that their boats are wholly made in Britain," says Ann. "We felt that they knew what they were talking about so we were able to trust them. We named the boat after our 15 year old cairn terrier, which died a couple of months before we started living on our barge."

"We would advise people to try a boating holiday first," Ann says. "Our previous, very positive, experiences were on narrow boats but we find it much more enjoyable on our wide-beam."

"We would also say that living in such close proximity to each other may be, at times, a bit of a drawback," Ann adds. "There is a lack of privacy that takes a little getting used to."

Ann also advises anyone considering living on a canal to also think very carefully about giving up your home. "That was the hardest part for us," she says. She also recommends buying a new boat that is as roomy as possible and is practicable for your needs. "We have found that there is more maintenance required on a boat than in a house - and we bought new!"

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"Be careful with water usage," she says thinking about the practicalities of onboard living. "Remember that the tank needs filling up. Watch what you put down the toilet - it is a real pain if it blocks up."

Before their retirement Colin was a project manager in a mechanical engineering firm and Ann was a social worker. They now have exciting plans for their new life afloat. "We intend to travel round Scotland and then next year set off for the South of France - taking time to explore some of the wider canals in England."



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