

## **Suzi Lane and Jo Morizzo recall arriving in Hertford to wait out the next Covid 19 lockdown**

Suzi:

We lived in a flat in Croydon in South London, so we were completely the other side of London to Hertford. We made a decision in the first lockdown to move onto a narrowboat. We purchased the boat up in Hallingbury Marina, and we were sort of slowly making our way down, and it was a lot of fun, especially after that lockdown, we were stopping at lots of new places and trying out the local pubs and restaurants, so we stopped at places like Sawbridgeworth, Harlow and Broxbourne.

Jo:

Discovering them by canal is very different to driving there and having a walk round; you're coming in the back door if you like, you're seeing the side of the town that was meant to be seen hundreds of years ago maybe.

*Why did you move to Hertford?*

Suzi:

We were just about to go south into London. But the lock just south of Broxbourne was shutting for a month so we couldn't get to London. It was the period of time with the COVID lockdowns when it was in Tiers, so everywhere around us seemed to be going into Tier Three, and this little stretch of canal was still in Tier Two. So, we made the decision to come up the River Lea rather than down into London, to find somewhere that was suitable for lockdown.

*Had you heard of Hertford before you moved here?*

Suzi:

We hadn't really heard of Hertford. it's the end of the line if you like, as you come through London and up the River Lea, you can either go up the River Stort which stops at Bishops Stortford, or you can go up the River Lea which stops here in Hertford.

*What initially appealed about Hertford?*

Suzi:

For lockdown we wanted somewhere that we could perhaps bring our car to, we wanted to be somewhere where we could have amenities close by, we wanted a town perhaps where you can get a coffee and your shopping, and especially on the canals, access to a water tap and some bins. So Hertford is the luxury for the boating world.

*Was it easy to settle in?*

Suzi:

So, a lot of other boaters had the same idea as us, so obviously Hertford was the place to lock down in. We moored outside some of the houses along Folly Island at first and then once a space became available, we moved down to outside the allotments which was really good. We definitely made some friends for life there as well, so we were locked down with the same sort of ten boats during that time. We know some of the residents in the houses on Folly Island pretty well, we still see some of them, it was good to chat to the same people every day, and I think in lockdown as well everything's heightened isn't it, so you get to know people fairly well, and everyone's at home so you get to see people on their daily walk. And yeah, we made sure we came and got coffees and things and got to know people in the town as best as possible. But everything was shut for the majority of time we were here.

Jo:

Even though everything was shut, and it was a very unique time to be here during lockdown, but it still felt very welcoming.

Suzi:

We had left Hertford just before Christmas, we spent a week in Ware. We knew there was another lockdown coming potentially and we decided actually we really miss it – we better go back.

Jo:

And we actually spent Christmas day on our boat in front of the houses, and it was interesting seeing their Christmas day through their windows and us being in our little cabin. On Christmas day we found out that we were pregnant. That's when immediately we thought "Ok, we can't live on the boat anymore" because boats and babies I don't think mix very well.