



Left Linda and John look fantastic on their big day
Below Rapide Services had a huge job on their hands when it came to renovating John's 19-year-old mobile home

BEFORE

Wedding makeover

When John Savage called on Rapide Services to transform the exterior of his park home, he needed the company to live up to its name in order to impress his bride-to-be...

John Savage contacted Rapide Services in June 2012. John had purchased a home on Millstone Park, near Chester, on the English/Welsh borders, and was considering completely refurbishing it. After visiting Rapide's new website, John contacted Rapide's Denis Stanton who arranged to meet John and his bride-to-be Linda on the park.

Denis recalls the visit. 'My first impression of the home was one of complete surprise,' he said. 'What I hadn't realised from our telephone conversation was that the home was a 19-year-old Bluebird Super Charisma, which was originally manufactured as a holiday home.'

'From the outset it was clear that the home would need a major upgrade to bring it into line with the current legislation for residential park homes.'

Denis also learned from John that his site was quite unusual as the residents are the owners and enjoy an equal share of freehold.

So John had not only bought his home, he also owned the ground on which it stood.

Denis continued, 'I was intrigued by the park and its unusual status. I had certainly never come across the park before and asked John how he found the home. He explained that his brother had lived on the park for many years, dividing his time between the park and a holiday home in Portugal. He then tipped John off about the impending sale of the home.'

Cupid's arrow

But it wasn't just the park and home that piqued Denis's interest. John and Linda also had an intriguing story to tell. The couple had first met three months previously and were intending to marry in September; hence the need for the major refurbishment to the marital abode. John met Linda while visiting an old friend in a Methodist Care and Support Home. On his visits he spotted Linda,

who had worked there for a number of years. Although John knew of Linda, he just couldn't pluck up the courage to ask her out. But despite his shyness, John managed to think up an ingenious way to make contact with her. John decided to leave a note, with his telephone number, on the windscreen wiper of Linda's car. Unfortunately, Linda did not respond straight away. John explained, 'I felt a bit of a fool but after some tense weeks of deliberating about what to do next, Linda finally phoned me.'

The lovelorn pair arranged their first date: a romantic meal. Once out of the starting blocks, their romance quickly took on whirlwind proportions, leading to wedding plans.

Ace up his sleeve

In this department John had another ace up his sleeve. John had quite an unusual part-time job. Most weekends, he would don a

A massive job!

Step-by-step with Rapide Services

When you are presented with a near 20-year-old, ailing holiday caravan and asked to bring it up to 21st century, modern residential park home standards, where do you begin? Denis Stanton, from Rapide Services, explains exactly how his company tackled this epic refurbishment job...



1 To bring the home up to residential standards, the aluminium to the right of the home's chassis was removed.



2 Altering the windows was another huge undertaking that Rapide made look easy. Here, you can see the work in progress.



3 Rapide also had to strengthen and insulate the home. Rapide fits double-wall thickness insulation (50mm x 25mm) as standard.



4 When this was complete, Canoxel Ridgewood D Cladding was installed. This carries a 25-year warranty.



5 Another look at the Canoxel cladding, which was pioneered in Canada and has a textured wood-grain finish.



6 The new roof in progress - new products included white uPVC fascia/barge boards, squareline guttering and downpipes.

chauffeur's cap and drive vintage cars at weddings, helping newlyweds to enjoy their big day. John's working life had helped him into this role as he ran a garage for 20 years so love of old vehicles had always been with him. Unfortunately, a kidney transplant had forced John to take things a little easier. However, with vintage wedding cars at his grasp John was on his way to putting together a special day on 8 September.

Meanwhile, John and his brother had begun plans for transforming the interior of the park home, which included altering the interior to make it open-plan while constructing a new wet room-cum-en suite bathroom, adding new central heating and embarking on a complete interior redecoration.

To Denis, it was obvious from the unusual nature of this refurbishment that the exterior of the home needed transforming too. The structural strength of the home would also need increasing to bring it up to the current residential park home specification.

The other major concern was the lack of

modern insulation. John and Linda had also requested that major change were needed to the window and door apertures.

Exterior overhaul

Having discussed various recommendations and options, Rapide set about the task of turning this holiday home into a bona fide park home fit for newlyweds.

Initially the existing aluminium roof was brought up to current specification by installing a modern lightweight granulated metal tiled roofing system. The original roof was then strengthened by installing pre-fabricated trusses/gable ends which were fixed into timber wall-plates that were screwed onto the existing roof structure.

Reinforced Klobber underlay (with treated tile battens) was then laid over the new roof carcass, the gable ends were cladded with a plastic open V-board and then the granulated lightweight metal roof tiles were installed.

At a later date, the roof would be finished with uPVC fascia boards and white squareline

guttering. Denis said, 'Our attention was then turned to the wall refurbishment. The original aluminium on the outside of the walls was removed. We then carried out our standard double wall thickness installation, which included screwing 50mm x 25mm treated timber on to the top of the original wall structure, which strengthens the walls and doubles its thickness.

'This also enables the window/ door apertures to be altered while creating a further cavity for the Xtratherm PIR insulation boards to be laid on top of the original quilt insulation. This would improve the thermal efficiency of the home by up to 75 per cent, in turn keeping the home cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

'It also reduces external noise levels and eliminates condensation.'

Outside wall finish

Now the structure of the home was ready for its outside wall finish. After discussing this with John and Linda it was agreed that

Rapide Services would use a Canoxel Ridgewood D Cladding, which Rapide has introduced into its portfolio in recent times. Canoxel is manufactured in Canada and has the appearance of a European-style Dutch lap siding. It is produced from wood fibre, resin and wax fused under pressure. The engineered wood is highly resistant to moisture. It has a textured wood grain finish, which is achieved by using five coats of baked paint. It also carries a 25-year manufacturer's warranty and is now being used by most manufacturers of new park homes in the UK.

As the Canoxel was installed, the new uPVC double-glazed odd-leg park home windows and doors were fitted. These specialist windows and doors have been designed and fabricated especially for park

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homes with the outer frame having the odd leg section, which is a standard within the industry, as the home was undergoing a complete refurbishment

John and Linda asked for bespoke alterations to the windows and door apertures in the lounge. The front windows were reduced in size to give more privacy and the original door and window on the right hand side were removed and double doors were installed. Then on the left-hand side a single door was fitted.

Up on the roof

Now the wall installation was complete, the roofline products could be installed. These included white uPVC fascia/barge boards and squareline guttering (including downpipes).

From start to finish, the transformation took seven days with the home looking like it just arrived new from a factory. Now Rapide had completed the refurbishment, John and Linda turned their attention to the interior of the home. To complement the new look, they also installed outside decking. The home was ready for the couple to move in after their very special day.

This year Rapide has launched its new refurbishment website, rapideservices.co.uk. Denis said, 'We have launched the website to give our potential customers a unique pictorial step-by-step guide of every aspect of internal and external refurbishment of park homes from bathrooms to extensions. The website shows photographic examples of a wealth of previous installations which have been captured over the last 30 years and explain how each refurbishment was undertaken.'



This 19-year-old home looks brand new now it's been refurbished

AFTER

John and Linda's home looks stunning now the exterior is complete



Rapide offers a wealth of different refurbishment options such as: tiled roofing systems; extensions; porches; conservatories; uPVC double glazed windows/ doors; skirting; bathrooms; kitchens; internal refurbishment; and various exterior wall refurbishments. The company is also pleased to offer free quotations on a national basis for any refurbishment project. Rapide also offers full site surveys on second-hand homes with an emphasis on a clear, straightforward, easily understood assessment of the home you are considering purchasing. Please visit the website for more information. ❁

Info

RAPIDE SERVICES

To find out more, please see www.rapideservices.co.uk, email: info@rapideservices.co.uk. Alternatively, for a free information pack contact: Rapide Services, Tansmead, Cross Heads, Colwich, Staffordshire, ST18 0UG or call 01889 882275/ 07973 657922.