

DISABILITY FRIENDLY OPTIONS HIT THE PARK

Warburton Holiday Park and YMH working together to increase access



Warburton Holiday Park owners and operators Simon Edwards and David Pratt have welcomed their new 'Wheelchair Accessible Villa' into its new home.

"Accessible holiday accommodation has been part of our long-term park renovation plan," explains David. "As owners, we have had a connection to supporting disability organisations for over 20 years."

"Parks can make accessible accommodation part of their suite of accommodation options without compromising on the standard of finish and feeling of comfort or impact the financial viability of it compared to other villas."

Simon and David engaged Yarrowonga Manufactured Housing (YMH) for the project.

"YMH have significant experience in delivering customised products and solutions for the industry, and have been a fantastic partner in manufacturing all our new cabins and villas. When we approached them with this style of cabin they worked with us to develop a workable floor plan," said Simon.

YMH's National Sales Manager Roger Fuller said that Simon and David came to YMH because of their experience in delivering similar projects.

"YMH always has, and always will, work in this area," said Roger. "We have staff with disabilities, we understand the need, and that's why our designs have always been worked around those models."

"The biggest factor at play when planning to install one of these cabins is the site," says Roger. "You need to have a wider than standard site to provide the space for ramp access at a certain pitch, a car space needs to be at a minimum of four metres wide for wheelchair access, and various other considerations to meet these requirements. We guide our clients through all of these."

"For Warburton Holiday Park, the site they had chosen worked well, and we worked with them to ensure the product went in and the final product is something that they're very happy with!"

According to Roger, demand for this type of accommodation is increasing, with YMH recording a 25 per cent increase in enquiries for accessible park cabins, amenity blocks and camp kitchens.

"Public awareness of disability has increased, demand for accessibility has increased, and that will continue with Dylan Alcott as Australian of the Year," commented Roger. "It's great that we've got clients like Simon and David who are prepared to invest in accessible accommodation, market it, and give people that opportunity to have an equally good a stay as any other guest," he explained.

This latent demand has been evidenced by the park's social media posts receiving an overwhelming level of support for providing inclusive and accessible cabin options as part of the parks upgrade program with their research indicating a very limited supply of accessible accommodation in the Yarra Valley.

"Bookings for this cabin commenced well before it even landed. It's not just wheelchair access that is important. The bathroom and overall villa layout cater for many more people who require additional support or assistance from a carer or family member," said David. "Our expectation is that this new villa will be booked as much, if not more, than our other villas."

To improve the experience for guests, reservations for the new villa can be made by calling park reception. Initially Simon and David plan on only taking bookings from guests who require the accessible features.

"However, if it is not booked 14 days out, then it will be available for all guests. Our understanding is that guests with these additional needs will generally plan further than two weeks in advance when booking accommodation," Simon said.

Handling bookings in this manner is an approach Roger supports.

"We encourage people to call these cabins 'disability friendly' cabins," he explained. "If someone requires additional equipment to help lift people in and out

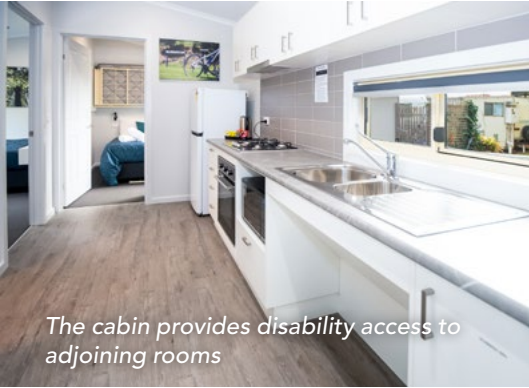
of bed, for example, this isn't provided at this level under the code, so if you call them disability friendly and place an emphasis on contacting the park before booking, it doesn't lead someone to coming to stay and their experience being compromised."

This new addition broadens the offer at Warburton Holiday Park.

"We believe that we can now enable our guests to holiday and create lasting memories with those family members who may require the additional support that the villa can provide," says Simon.



www.warburtonholidaypark.com.au
www.yarrahousing.com.au



The cabin provides disability access to adjoining rooms



Large windows take in the close proximity to the Yarra River



The cabin features disability friendly kitchen facilities