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“Compared to a traditional build, this was a walk in the park” – Mark and Andrew’s Harwyn experience

Mark, a landscape architect. Andrew, the leader of a national not-for-profit. Their jobs could not be more different.

But this Melbourne couple still has plenty in common – like their shared taste for quality and class.

So after considering the laborious process of building a new home workspace from scratch, it’s no surprise they were drawn to Harwyn.

Harwyn’s fixed contracts and reliable processes convinced them to install not one pod, but two.

A dream relocation

Mark and Andrew are Melburnians through and through. But when lockdown hit they promptly flew west – to their holiday home in Trentham.

“We’ve had this place in the country for some time,” Andrew explains. “It was originally just a weekendender, but when COVID came, we thought we’d rather live here.”

In their idyllic Trentham home, the pair relished the leafy surrounds and quiet atmosphere. But as it turns out, living in a holiday home creates some logistical difficulties.

“We had nowhere to work from,” Andrew confesses. “The place is gorgeous, but it wasn’t designed for that purpose. We worked out of the bedrooms for some time – two years, in fact. Eventually, we’d had enough.”

Drastic times, drastic measures

Mark and Andrew technically had separate workspaces. But they were bedrooms – hardly fit for professional purpose.

Nowhere else in the home would work, either. As we all discovered in lockdown, working from the kitchen table is only sustainable for so long.

So the pair decided to take matters into their own hands and build a new space. At least, they intended to, as Andrew explains.

“We started to design an extension to the house. Mark was originally an architect – before becoming a landscape architect – so he designed it himself.

“We thought we’d build a new space from the ground up. But then,” Andrew laughs, “the reality of what that would mean began to sink in.

“Finding and enlisting contractors would’ve been just the start. And then we would have had to give them access to our home for... who knows how long.

“And with the building delays going on at the moment – and the labour shortages – it just looked too uncertain.”

Mark and Andrew’s enthusiasm for building from scratch slowly ebbed away. For a little while, they were back to the drawing board.

But then they thought of another solution. A simpler solution.

Off the beaten track

Mark did some Googling – focusing on the search term: “prefabricated spaces”.

He was looking for a classy, quality space fit for his and Andrew’s particular tastes. And he didn’t have to look far long.

“Mark had a good feeling about Harwyn from the start,” says Andrew. “The pods looked sharp. They were the right size. And we loved their rounded facades.”

Mark and Andrew picked up the phone and spoke to Jason, Harwyn’s CEO.

Jason was technically on holiday – it was January 2022 – but he made time for Mark and Andrew all the same. And as it turned out, Jason told them, a nearby school had a pod installed on its grounds.

Mark and Andrew drove down to take a quick look. And they were sold.

Make that a double

In Mark and Andrew’s minds, working side by side was never an option. So Harwyn appealed to them for another reason: they could each have their own pod.

“We installed identical pods, but we’ve personalised them,” says Andrew. “They sit in the backyard facing opposite directions.

“Mine faces the garden, with a view of the oak trees and the beech trees. Andrew’s looks out over the forest, so we’ve each got these gorgeous views.”

“Jason was very accommodating at every step along the way. We were really pleased about that.”

Quiet and comfortable – just as promised

With their matching pods – complete with personal coffee machines and chairs for their sleepy Cavoodle – Mark and Andrew couldn’t be happier.

“The pods are so comfortable,” Andrew says. “They’re warm, they’re quiet. Even when it was bucketing with rain recently, the sound was still muffled. The chirping of the birds is the only sound we hear.”

Andrew commends Harwyn for delivering on their promises. But it’s the simplicity of the Harwyn process that he returns to, again and again.

“Compared to what we would have gone through with a traditional build, this was a walk in the park,” he reiterates. “Having renovated a couple of houses, I appreciated how well thought-out the process was.

“The fixed delivery date, the fixed contract... I know we made the right choice, especially with the inflation and building delays going on right now.

“For people like us who’d otherwise be renovating, I’d absolutely recommend the pods.”

Looking for a simple alternative to a traditional build? A Harwyn pod might be your golden ticket.

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