

It's not cheap, but..."

Ashby Woulds, the latest holiday home development from Tom Hartley Parks offers the ultimate in luxury lodge living – pampering par excellence!



1 Hot tubs feature on all the decks **2** The canal will undoubtedly prove popular with fishermen, but it is also a lovely place to relax and enjoy a picnic – and there are some lovely walks along its banks, too **3** Rustic wood edging lends a rural appearance. This is the ornamental pond at the centre of the park **4** All crockery is by Wedgwood, and cutlery is silver-plated by Arthur Price, just two examples of the standards achieved in equipping these lodges **5** An alternative colour scheme in the living area of the three-bedroom VIP model **6** Attractive tiling in the family bathroom of the three-bedroom VIP home

If you need a break from the stresses and strains of a high-pressure job, or a busy and demanding family, what can you do, and where can you go? A luxury hotel, perhaps? That might be a little too formal for total relaxation. Self-catering accommodation might be more flexible, but how easy is it to find somewhere that pampers you and allows you total relaxation in the most luxurious surroundings imaginable?

That's where Ashby Woulds comes in. This brand new 12-month leisure development by Tom Hartley Parks offers all that, and more.

Ashby Woulds Park is in the Derbyshire village of Overseal, not far from Tom Hartley's first

lodge park – Swainswood. He established Swainswood about five years ago as a luxury development of 40 lodges with some for owner-occupation and the others for letting. Lettings are handled by Hoseasons, the specialist agency, and it has told Tom that whereas most holiday parks are showing a growth of about two per cent year on year, Swainswood has seen its rental income grow from an initial 10 per cent to 25.

Very proud

Tom Hartley is very proud of the fact that approximately 2,000 families a year have visited Swainswood since it was established, and many enjoy the experience so much that they

return over and over again.

Encouraged by the success of Swainswood, entrepreneur Tom Hartley embarked on the development of Ashby Woulds

into which he has poured several millions of pounds to create an even more upmarket park site.

He has undoubtedly achieved





that goal because, even before the park's official opening in June, Ashby Woulds had been assessed by VisitEngland, which awarded the park and its accommodation the coveted five-star grade under the Quality in Tourism scheme. Tom Hartley believes that Ashby Woulds is the first lodge development to receive five stars for accommodation.

Currently there are about ten homes sited in the first phase at Ashby Woulds, all from the Omar leisure lodge range and based on its very popular Westfield layout. Two- and three-bedroom versions are offered in both deluxe and VIP grades. The park is not going to be large - Tom Hartley describes it as a 'boutique' development and there will probably be about 30 lodges in total when it's completed. He strongly adheres to the adage that 'quantity never was a substitute for quality'.

Guests will pay up to £2,000 for a week's stay and Tom Hartley is confident that there is a sector of the market that is willing to pay large amounts for the quality and pampering he is offering.

Beautiful countryside

What do guests get for their money? Each lodge is set within its own garden area with shingle paths and rough-hewn timber edging providing a rural feel. Naturally, all the lodges have extensive deck areas and hot tubs where guests can enjoy a relaxing soak while taking in the glorious views all around. On

one side of the park there is a canal, in the middle an attractive pond with a fountain, and on the other side beautiful rolling countryside.

As soon as you enter one of the lodges at Ashby Woulds, you are immediately aware that it is very different from any other you've been in. Your feet give the game away as they sink into, and luxuriate in, the high quality Wilton carpets.

Designer decor and top-end furnishings hallmark every room, while the large open-plan kitchen is kitted out with marble work surfaces and branded electrical appliances and equipment.

Quality of the highest order is Tom Hartley's watchword. He has used the most luxurious London hotels as his template for the kitting out of these lodges, even going to the lengths of finding suppliers so that he can offer the same luxury standards as the hotels do. For example, the cutlery is by Arthur Price in EPNS hallmarked silver and the

worktops are in marble granite. The finish is superb, right down to the way that the marble has been 'cut-in' around the sink.

Range of facilities

There are iPad docks in all rooms so that guests can enjoy their choice of music and the central heating is easily controllable. Lighting in all rooms can be adjusted to suit the needs of the occupants.

When guests retire for the night, after enjoying the complimentary champagne and chocolates provided for them, their beds will be of the same quality as those supplied to the Queen and other members of the royal family.

Bedding, too, is very luxurious including 600-thread Egyptian cotton sheets.

The bathroom and en suite shower room are supplied with enough luxury toiletries for the guests' stay and the towels supplied are incredibly soft, fluffy and absorbent and achieve a standard higher than the London hotels that Tom



researched. The towels in the Ashby Woulds lodges weigh 650 grams per square metre, which is said to be the ultimate weight for a towel. Towelling robes and matching slippers are also provided for all guests.

Tom Hartley says that many holiday parks can now offer their guests an experience comparable to a three-star hotel, but at Ashby Woulds he believes he is 'redefining' park holidays, giving his guests a taste of what's on offer from the truly prestigious five-star end. However, that experience comes at a price with guests paying up to £2,000 for a week in peak season, but shorter breaks at other times of the year will be around £500.

About half of the lodges are sited on the canal-side



Special occasions

According to Tom Hartley, the park's lodges will appeal both to 'special occasion' guests, and to those who are accustomed to receiving the best wherever they stay. 'Arranging prestige accommodation in cities is never a problem,' he said, 'but people who find country house hotels rather stuffy have little alternative when they want to stay in rural surroundings. Here they will have the space and freedom to relax in a superbly high quality environment, and in a part of the country that offers endless leisure opportunities for all interests. The only difference that guests might notice is that our lodges offer rather more living space than a hotel room, and that the views from the windows are green rather than grey!'

And if a dip in the hot tub on the deck doesn't fully relax Ashby Woulds guests, a telephone call will bring a



ABOVE This fish was caught in the canal that flows past Ashby Woulds park



This is the master bedroom in the VIP three-bedroom lodge

qualified therapist to their lodge to provide a private beauty or health treatment.

Leisure opportunities in the area abound and include fishing in the canal which is only a few yards away from some of the lodges. Less than half a mile distant on the private Hartley estate is a 30-acre woodland that has air rifle shooting facilities which are available for lodge owners and visitors.

The famous Belfry Golf Club is just a short ride away as are Alton Towers, Twycross Zoo, Drayton Manor and Derbyshire's magnificent Peak District where there are plenty of opportunities for hikers to indulge their hobby, or for the less energetic to explore the beautiful countryside from the comfort of their cars.

The village of Overseal, where Ashby Woulds is situated, is just three miles from junction 11 of the M42, so access from all parts of the country is easy. The village, and neighbouring Swadlincote, have an excellent selection of shops, restaurants

and public houses, and the delightful market town of Ashby-de-la-Zouch is only four miles distant. The park is also handy for those who may have properties abroad and want to have a base in England - East Midlands Airport is only 15 minutes away and Birmingham Airport about 20 minutes.

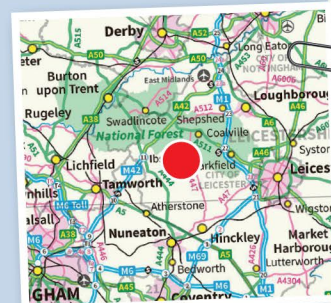
Interestingly, the park is at a point where four English counties meet - Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Leicestershire and Warwickshire - and Ashby Woulds guests can fish in the canal in Derbyshire and enjoy views across Leicestershire from the other side of the park!

Tom is confident that some guests who fall in love with Ashby Woulds might be persuaded to take a more permanent stake in the park. A limited number of lodges will shortly be available to buy, with prices ranging from under £100,000 to £250,000 - and all furnished and equipped to the same high standards as those offered for letting.

INFO POINT

● VISIT THE PARK

More details about Ashby Woulds, and a downloadable brochure describing the park and its facilities, can be found at www.ashbywouldslodges.co.uk. Call: 01283 763 300 or 07831 257 740 for more details or email: info@ashbywouldslodges.co.uk



Global luxury

In addition to owning residential park home estates and luxury leisure lodge parks, Tom Hartley also has a renowned global luxury and performance cars business which is co-owned with sons Tom Junior and Carl. Tom says he and his family pride themselves on customer satisfaction, quality and service, continuously achieving only one standard - the highest.

Tom's wife, Priscilla, and daughters Priscilla Junior and Stephanie, are going to be heavily involved in the Ashby Woulds project. ●