

Sunday Times

# HOME

July 14-20, 2013 / [perthnow.com.au](http://perthnow.com.au)

## INSIDER

Itemised pricing to  
help you budget

## SHOPFRONT

Functional furniture  
for every room

## STARRING ROLE

*Josh Byrne's new family home rates its sustainable socks off*

**HURRY**  
Limited Time

### To do check list

- ☒ Trip to Bali
- ☒ Shopping Spree
- ☐ DOUBLE my tax return and build my first home



\*Conditions apply

**DON'T WASTE  
YOUR TAX REFUND.  
DOUBLE IT\* WITH  
FIRST ABODE.**

Use your tax refund towards the deposit for your first home with **FIRST ABODE** and we will match it **DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR\***. The dream of owning your own home may be a lot closer than you think!

**CALL FIRST ABODE** today to find out how.



**9202 9313**

[firstabode.com.au](http://firstabode.com.au)  
[sales@firstabode.com.au](mailto:sales@firstabode.com.au)

Part of the RBWA family  
Australian Credit License 42553



# HOUSE THAT JOSH BUILT

*Environmental scientist Josh Byrne is armed with facts and figures after completing an innovative project to prove that energy efficient residential homes can be built on the same timeline and budget as any other typical suburban house*

In a bid to silence sustainability naysayers, environmental scientist, landscape designer and *Gardening Australia* presenter Josh Byrne embarked on an ambitious project seven months ago to shake up the building industry in WA.

The Josh's House project in Hilton was launched because Josh had had enough of hearing the argument that an environmentally sensitive house involved a more expensive and more complicated building process.

Today, his two 10-star-rated homes are complete. The three-bedroom, two-bathroom houses, on a 1160sq m block, were constructed using standard building methods at a cost of \$1200 a sq m.

That figure includes the features employed to achieve the NatHERS 10 stars.

"We should expect more from our homes than what is currently on offer as the norm. Houses should be designed to be more affordable to run over their lifespan," Josh says.

"WA houses are among the largest in the world with the world's lowest occupancy. This is crazy.

"Our homes are about 20 per cent smaller than the average house, and we have achieved this through clever design principles."

Leading by example, Josh is promoting the entire building process through his Josh's

House website. In addition, all the data about the two homes' energy and water consumption will be made available over the next three years so the public and the industry can track the project's efficiency.

"This is all about full disclosure – everything is open so the public and the industry can take it onboard and use it. It's about shifting the industry," says Griff Morris from Solar Dwellings, who designed the homes.

The two homes, built by Highbury Homes, are thermally comfortable all year round without the need for airconditioning or heating; will generate more electricity than what the families use; harvest rainwater and recycle greywater; and share a common garden packed with fruit and vegetables that will slash their grocery bills.

Josh expects each house will save at least \$3500 a year in operating costs.

"We will save approximately \$1600 in energy bills and \$400 in water bills per house," he says. "Grocery savings will be an additional \$1500 per house. These estimates are based on current prices, so the savings are likely to be more over time."

The Water Corporation, a key sponsor of the project, sees the houses as practical examples of how building a resource-efficient family home can be achievable and affordable.

"The houses will use a third of the scheme water of a typical Perth home at full occupancy," says Ben Jarvis, the Water Corporation's manager for water efficiency.

More importantly, Josh's House has enabled the development of guidelines about how to incorporate greywater systems in new homes.

"These guidelines cover all the details for plumbing pre-lay – information that until now has not been available to the building industry," Ben explains.

Highbury Homes managing director Chris Bishop agrees the project has created an opportunity for education and awareness that is unrivalled in the industry.

"We have managed to show with the use of standard construction materials that energy efficiency and year-round comfort can be achieved at very economical prices," he says.

Griff Morris adds: "It is critical that people consider passive-solar design for their homes. Our homes are designed to embrace the outside of a building and to work with it, so in the end we have a home that's operating with the climate and not fighting it."

What's most significant for Josh is that he has created a home for his family that embodies all the things he believes in.

"It gives me great comfort to know that my children will grow up in a home that is healthy to live in and efficient to run," he says.

**ARYLENE WESTLAKE-JENNINGS**

**For the full building and landscaping plans, photos, videos and other information about Josh's House, visit [www.joshshouse.com.au](http://www.joshshouse.com.au). The home will be open to the public on Sustainable House Day on Sunday, September 8.**



PICTURES: JOEL BARBITTA, D-MAX PHOTOGRAPHY

## FAST FACTS

- \* An outdoor kitchen takes cooking heat outside in summer.
- \* Low-e coating to all external glass regulates heat flow, and argon-filled, double-glazed windows minimise winter heat loss. Extensive glazing to the northern side maximises winter solar gain.
- \* Gravel driveways and pathways allow stormwater infiltration.
- \* Each home has its own 3kW solar power system, rainwater tank and greywater system.

*The children's activity areas include an in-ground trampoline and sand pit.*







Josh Byrne with his wife, Kellie Maher, son Ollie, 4, and daughter, Caitlin, 1.



The Josh's House project used reclaimed, recycled or sustainably produced building materials where possible.

2013

# PROJECT BUILDER OF THE YEAR

2013  
bankwest  
HOUSING  
EXCELLENCE  
AWARDS  
WINNER

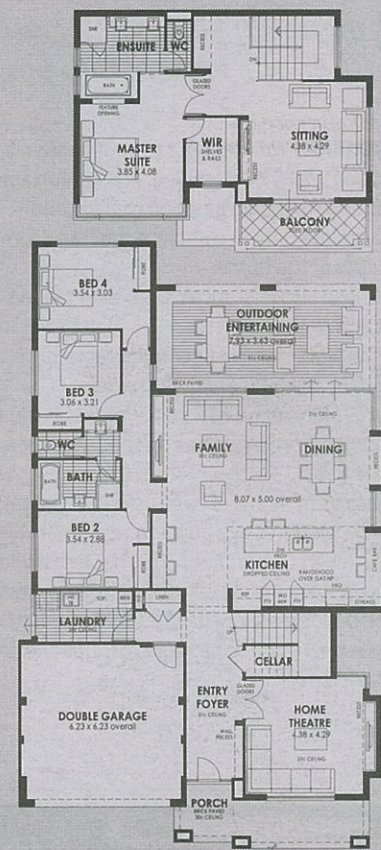


THE LINCOLN KITCHEN



## THE LINCOLN DISPLAY VERSION INCLUDES

- STONE TOPS & OVERHEAD CUPBOARDS TO THE KITCHEN
- 31 C CEILINGS TO FAMILY, DINING, THEATRE & ENTRY
- HUGE ENTERTAINING / BBQ AREA
- DELUXE ENSUITE



VERSION FROM \$388,200 | AS DISPLAYED \$451,400

- New** The Siena . The Vale . Virago St . 0413 468 567
- New** The Astoria . Wandl . Fortis Pass . 9410 0025
- Finalist** The Princeton . Bletchley Park . Trumpet St . 9394 0526
- Winner** The Mondano . Landsdale . Babylon Bend . 9303 2538
- Finalist** The Sentosa . Iluka . Romano Cr . 9305 4250
- Finalist** The Contempo . Alkimos . Hollington Gardens . 0405 490 711
- Finalist** The Bel-Air . Burns Beach . Grand Ocean Entrance . 0424 892 838
- The Lincoln . Jindalee . Jindalee Blvd . 9562 3745

**Display Homes Opening Times**  
Sat, Sun & Public Holidays 1-5 pm  
Mon & Wed 2-5 pm

Office (08) 9242 9322  
donrussellhomes.com.au



**DON RUSSELL  
HOMES**

B/L 7376