

Sanctuary

MODERN GREEN HOMES

ISSUE
56

SUSTAINABLE HOUSE
DAY SPECIAL

DEEP DIVES: Building & design | Retrofitting
Building materials | Climate resilient design

Best and fairest
Australia's eco homes on show



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**An Earthworker-Reclaim heat pump
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Offer open to Australian residents. Details page 80

**JANE HILLIARD**

Building designer
Designful and Homeful
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Works mainly in Tasmania

What was the first design project you were really proud of?

The Binalong Bay Eco Hut, which was the first project where I really got to exercise my values and ethos of 'enoughness'. I was able to pare back the programming and material palette to realise the brief, to the delight of the client. I love Antoine de Saint-Exupery's quote: "Perfection is achieved not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away". I aim to design like this and it's an ongoing investigation.

What is your favourite sustainable building, and why?

A simple timber house by Peter Zumthor. I don't think it has a name and it's hard to find on the internet; I saw it in a book at uni and it's been a constant inspiration. I love its connection to place and its use of local materials. It's just enough, and this is what makes it so enjoyable to me: the unnecessary fully stripped away, and the simple celebrated. I believe that to be truly sustainable we all need to start understanding what our fair share is, as individuals, as communities and as a species.

What's on your drawing board right now?

A handful of small homes for people to live simple, nourishing lives, mainly in southern Tasmania. Some are our pre-designed Homeful homes and some are custom designed. I'm also doing research into where our timber comes from and what impact this has – it's pretty eye-opening – and working to find the best solutions available to use timber responsibly and to reduce the massive negative impact logging is having on our ecosystems.

If you had a magic wand, what one thing would you change for Australian housing?

I would make homes smaller and simpler. I feel this is the first and most important step in creating a more sustainable built environment. If our homes are smaller they cost less, use less material, use less energy to run, we have less space for unnecessary stuff in them and we need to go outside and be connected to our environment more. All good things!

What is your favourite part of the design process?

The briefing process. I enjoy getting to know people, helping them become aware of their values and how they ideally wish to live, finding out what's really important to them and what things they thought they wanted just because someone else has it or they saw it in a magazine! I love getting to the essence of people and their priorities in life, then designing to support this so they can live flourishing lives.

**PAUL BUTTERWORTH**

Architect
Paul Butterworth Architect
www.pbarchitect.com.au
Works in Queensland & northern NSW

What kind of house did you grow up in?

Lots of crappy brick flats – called 'six-packs' in Queensland – and townhouses in Brisbane's outer suburbs; we moved house a lot.

What was the first design project you were really proud of?

I designed a small tourist boat hire facility as a university project in my first year studying architecture. I slightly angled the access ramp towards the pontoon to allow easier boat loading and unloading, so wayward boats wouldn't drift away in the current. It was then that I realised the importance of imaginative user 'role-play' in design. This process revealed a simple, strategic, practical design feature to enable the facility to function better and improve the user's experience – and it wouldn't have cost anything extra.

What is your favourite sustainable building, and why?

Any building that was designed out of existence! Designing buildings or parts of buildings away, i.e. designing only what is necessary and not building what is not, is one of the most sustainable things we can do. Designing 30 per cent less building through scrutinising the requirements of the brief and finding design efficiencies redirects the budget to more qualitative elements, conserves resources and labour, saves carbon (and numerous other emissions), time and many other things both during construction and over the lifespan of the building.

What's on your drawing board right now?

Modest coastal homes and beach shacks for lovely people, mostly on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island). Following the completion of our Honeyworks House in Brisbane, we get a lot of requests for modernist, mid-century flavoured suburban homes.

If you had a magic wand, what one thing would you change for Australian housing?

To take a leaf out of my old boss Jim Gall's book: I would shift the public's desire from a 'quantitative' to a 'qualitative' design economy. I'm thinking particularly about climatically appropriate homes, but ideally this would apply for everything: fashion, appliances, accessories, building materials and so on. We should probably slow down a little bit and think a bit more about what we're doing.

What are your thoughts about the future of sustainability?

I am an optimist deep down, and I have faith in humanity's ability to become sustainable custodians of this planet.