

Passionate Pillinger a real Swell guy

■ Angie Tomlinson

Swell Homes managing director Anthony Pillinger is a man of many passions. He owns his own microbrewery and competes in kitesurfing races but since a very young age he was most passionate about building.

"I decided to become a builder when I was 16 years old. My grandfather was a Bondi tram driver and did small renovation jobs for people around Paddington in his spare time," Mr Pillinger said.

"I used to tag along and help him, and by the time I was 18 I started my own maintenance business with grandpa tagging along helping me."

Mr Pillinger went on to study construction, cut his teeth working for a builder who completed 50 extensions a year, before starting his first successful business — Mt Hawthorn Period Extensions.

After a move to Fremantle about 10 years ago, Swell Homes was started to reflect the style of building work in Fremantle and surrounds.



Swell Homes' Anthony Pillinger.
Picture: Gerald Moscarda

"Swell Homes specialises in energy-efficient and waterwise homes," Mr Pillinger said. "We have a black belt in extension work after so many years of producing a wide variety of renovations and extensions, and have moved on to build

many new homes as well."

Swell Homes applies GreenSmart principles to all of its work, taking pride in building efficient homes that are great to look at.

"Making a smart home is logical. Why take the same materials and labour and

produce a home that lacks natural light, doesn't use solar-passive design, doesn't use the benefit of the Fremantle Doctor, and does nothing about minimising water consumption," Mr Pillinger said.

He said hearing back from



clients about their minimal or non-existent use of air-conditioning, low power and water bills, and happy naturally lit living spaces rang his bell.

Swell Homes also loves the challenges of working in Fremantle. "I just love the quirkiness of Freo and the multitude of differing architectural styles here. The place rubs off on you quickly, and you find that you unconsciously throw a 'bit of Freo' into a lot of your jobs."

Swell Homes' market is gradually radiating out from Fremantle, a trend Mr Pillinger expects to continue.

When he's not running Swell Homes, Mr Pillinger is pouring his passion into his microbrewing business Innate Brewers (In8), which is becoming increasingly stocked around Perth's bars and Cellarbrations bottle shops.

He said an equally thirsty pastime was kitesurfing. "I've kited for more than 15 years, and have discovered the joys of yacht racing," he said.

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