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Garden awards give local 'green thumbs' a chance to shine

Member for Ipswich, Rachel Nolan, today launched the Department of Housing's 2004 Garden Awards in Ipswich.

Speaking at a senior's unit complex in Booval, Ms Nolan, said the awards were a great opportunity for 'green thumbs' from Ipswich to show off their high quality gardens, vegetable patches and pot plants.

Ms Nolan said the annual Awards were free to enter and open to all public housing tenants living in Ipswich.

"This is something everyone can enter and you don't need a big or expensive garden to win," she said.

"Tenants who improve their properties with landscaping and gardens are rewarded and encouraged through the annual Awards.

"The judges are looking for gardens that reflect pride in a home or neighbourhood. They could be a small vegetable plot, a balcony garden, a corner of the backyard devoted to native plants, or a garden created and cared for by children."

Ms Nolan said the Garden Awards attracted over 1,500 entries across Queensland last year and hoped for an increase in the number of nominations in 2004.

"As this is the Year of the Built Environment — a celebration of the places, buildings and surrounds where we live, work and play — we hope to have more entries than ever," she said.

"The Awards are judged across several categories including: small gardens; house gardens; gardens created by children; group gardens; newly-established gardens; native plant gardens; environmentally friendly gardens and practical gardens.

"All entrants in the Garden Awards receive a photograph of their garden, a plant or voucher for garden supplies and a certificate with special prizes for the winners of each category.

"They also allow the Department of Housing the opportunity to thank those tenants who show pride in their communities through their gardens."

Ms Nolan said full details and entry forms would be sent to all Department of Housing tenants in the next few days with final judging to take place between September and October.