



Flexible home wins industry award

By **Jade Wittmann**

A FEATURE home at The Ponds built on universal design principles has won a prestigious accolade at the Housing Industry Association's Excellence in Housing Awards.

Developer Landcom and Clarendon Homes, which built the house, won first place last Saturday in the special purpose housing category for the Benchmark home in the suburb's eco-living display village.

Landcom sustainability and policy director Steve Driscoll

said the successful partnership had transformed how the public and project housing industry viewed designs with practical and sustainable elements.

He said houses which used universal housing principals would become the norm in growing residential communities like The Ponds.

"Universal housing refers to homes that are practical and flexible," he said.

"They meet the needs of people of different ages and abilities over time. Importantly, they allow occupants to

live in the one dwelling during the entire life cycle."

Clarendon Homes design sustainability specialist Shaila Divakarla said the award recognised the importance of housing to address the needs of a growing ageing population.

"This joint venture with Landcom and other project partners provided a great opportunity for Clarendon to showcase simple but clever design concepts and building practices and make them accessible to the project housing market," she said.

Universal housing features in the Benchmark home include level transition between indoor and outdoor areas that is suitable for wheelchairs and strollers, wider external and internal doors and spacious open-plan living areas.

The living room on the ground floor can be converted into a bedroom, the powder room can be converted to a bathroom and waterproofing and drainage are incorporated into the linen cupboard to allow for conversion into a shower recess.



Universal appeal: The Benchmark house at The Ponds