

Ban believes people contact is key to electoral success

By MARK FLACK

IN an arena dominated by middle-aged men, Hajnal Ban is a political sensation.

In April 2004 when she was just 26, the young barrister who had only completed her university studies three years earlier, contested Division 4 in the Beaudesert Shire Council elections.

After a campaign where she apparently knocked on almost every door in the area, she won in a landslide - securing more primary votes than her four opponents combined.

Now more than three years on, she is making a move for the country's biggest political stage, contesting the seat of Forde as the National Party candidate at next month's federal election.

However, despite the step up, she remains grounded in her grass-roots ideals.

"I've spent most of my life, growing up, working and living in the electorate and I'm very passionate about the area," she said.

"I was one of those kids (who) always wanted to be a lawyer so I could make a difference, I know



XC
■ People first ... National candidate for Forde Hajnal Ban aims high.

that sounds very cliched but I just wanted to help people," she said.

Ms Ban said she decided to pursue public office shortly after being admitted to the bar when she felt she could do more for the community as part of the legislative arm of government.

She puts her success on the

local level down to a willingness to get out and talk to residents about their own issues - a strategy she hopes will work on the federal stage.

"I was never afraid of door knocking and meeting people. One of the things about being a candidate is that you can't sit on your laurels and expect bits of

paper to sell you," she said.

"People are not interested in glossy political advertising, they are interested in the person, and they are also interested to know that as a candidate you're prepared to get out and work hard."

■ Greens candidate for Forde Andy Grodecki will be profiled next week.