

PRESS RELEASE

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UAE City to host International Awards for Liveable Communities Finals 2012

The city of Al Ain, United Arab Emirates, is set to play host the 2012 finals of the International Awards for Liveable Communities (22nd-26th November).

Now in their 16th year, this is the second time that the prestigious LivCom International Awards – which are devoted to championing and rewarding sustainable development, quality of life and environmental best practice in communities – have been held in the UAE.

The event was hosted by Al Ain in 1998, the second year of LivCom.

Dr Matar Mohammed Al Nuaimi, General Manager of Al Ain City Municipality said his city welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the development of best practice, a strong feature of the awards, as well as share its own experiences with a worldwide audience.

He said: “Al Ain City in the United Arab Emirates is so proud to host LivCom 2012, the International Awards for Liveable Communities.

“As the General Manager of Al Ain Municipality, I welcome the Awards, which will add a new level of achievement to Al Ain’s record that includes the City’s winning of a LivCom 2010 Silver Award for the City’s welfare programmes.

“Such Awards and participation by Al Ain City give prominence to the United Arab Emirates in the international forum, reflecting the

goals of the Abu Dhabi Government to become one of the top five governments worldwide. This will also be an opportunity to appreciate the efforts of the persons who are in charge of Al Ain City's governmental and semi-governmental Authorities in general and Al Ain Municipality in particular for their vital and distinguished projects throughout the last years. This is an incentive to reach excellence and will give the City an opportunity to obtain further recognition internationally.”

Al Ain City has won several awards, the last of which was UNESCO's registration of the City as the first Emirati site on the World Heritage List in 2011, in addition to the award of technological intelligence for governmental organizations from the 2011 Hexagon – Intergraph Exhibition.

Dr Matar Mohammed Al Nuaimi added: “To fulfil the vision of Al Ain Municipality in achieving excellence and sustainable development, we have worked on projects including modern infrastructure, sidewalks, playgrounds and sustainable housing communities. Meanwhile, comprehensive municipal services are delivered to the citizens' houses. We also adopt the principle of corporate social responsibility “CSR” and engage the community in our goals in order to improve the services and provide welfare.”

Alan Smith, Chief Executive and Founder of LivCom said: “We are delighted that the awards are to be hosted by Al Ain where we are assured of a very warm welcome. The UAE has emerged as a world leader as it tackles the challenges of development and sustainability – this will be a unique opportunity for communities around the world to share and gain from this experience.”

In 2011, a total of sixty delegations qualified for the final in Songpa, South Korea – the largest ever - after the first round of judging which is held over the summer.

Those qualifying for the finals included cities from Europe, Spain, Belgium, Moldova, Czech Republic, Germany, Lithuania, Italy, Finland, France, Poland and Turkey, from Asia, China, South Korea, Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Jordan and the UAE, from Australasia, Australia, from the Americas, the USA and Brazil, and from Africa, Mozambique and South Africa.

At the awards finals, which have been held every year since 1997, judges evaluate the approach to individual criteria for sustainable

development – enhancement of the landscape, heritage management, environmentally-sensitive practices, community sustainability and planning for the future.

The finals, which see representatives of the various towns and cities make their case to an international jury, last for five days, culminating in an awards ceremony. The closing date for entries to the 2012 finals is 31st May.

The International Awards for Liveable Communities (The LivCom Awards) was launched in 1997 and is endorsed by the United Nations Environment Programme, with which it partners an MoU.

LivCom is non-political, embracing all nations and cultures, and over 50 countries are represented within the Awards. The LivCom Awards are the only forum in which International Best Practice may be observed and developed, and participation in the Awards is an investment in the future of a community.