

PRESS RELEASE

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Town and city finalists bidding to be named the most “liveable communities 2013” are announced

Communities from around the world have been named as finalists in the International Awards for Liveable Communities (LivCom), the UN-backed global awards scheme for civic environmental achievement.

A continued growth in local authority focus on sustainability is evident in the wide-ranging group of finalists in the event’s 16 year history.

Representatives from communities from across the globe will travel to the finals in Xiamen, China in November (28th-2nd December) to make their case to be named as leaders in their sector.

Founder and chief executive Alan Smith said: “It is in local government and local communities where despite the world’s economic problems, solutions are being found to improve living standards from healthy lifestyles to enhancement of the landscape – a major benchmark of the awards. These awards are a unique way of recognising the outstanding efforts being made by individuals committed to finding innovative answers to their communities problems.”

A total of 43 towns and cities, 52 Sustainable Projects and six Bursary Award applications have reached the finals after an initial round of judging over the summer.

Finalists this year reflect a wide geographic spread with entries from across the globe.

Previous success stories include a project to “green” Johannesburg with a million trees which won a LivCom Award ahead of South Africa’s World Cup football bid. Last year’s “winners” ranged from the small town of Port Fairy in Australia (popn 3,000) won praise for the quality of its environmental best practice while at the other extreme, Abu Dhabi, UAE (popn 612,000) collected a gold award and received a commendation for its focus alternative green energy and greenhouse gas reduction.

Submissions annually cover a range of key areas such as healthy lifestyles, lifelong learning, local transportation and communication issues, urban planning, environmental engineering, heritage management, community safety and security, economic development, and community sustainability.

Alan Smith added: "LivCom brings experts from local government across the world together and the benefit of doing so is that despite the fact that they come from a range of different cultures and countries, the problems they face are similar. LivCom is about both recognising achievement and sharing best practice. The longer term benefit of this is that since the development of the awards, taking part in LivCom has benefitted and improved the quality of life for people around the world."

ENDS

Note to editors:

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. LivCom Awards are made annually in three categories covering Whole Cities, Sustainable Projects and a Bursary Award.

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. Observers are welcome to attend.

Grand Xi-Chuan Community, Taichung City, Chinese Taipei

Utena City, Lithuania

Wanli District, New Taipei City, Chinese Taipei

Wiener Neustadt, Austria

Category C: Population 75,001 to 150,000

Bruges, Belgium

Daya District, Taichung City, Chinese Taipei

Gushan District, Kaohsiung City, Chinese Taipei

Royal Commission of Yanbu, Saudi Arabia

Sanxia District, New Taipei City, Chinese Taipei

Category D: Population 150,001 to 400,000

Muharraq Town, Bahrain

City of Miami Beach, USA

East District, Tainan City, Chinese Taipei

Hualien County, Chinese Taipei

Tamsui District, New Taipei City, Chinese Taipei

Category E: Population over 400,000

City Government of Pasig, Philippines

Donetsk City Council, Ukraine

Miaoli, Chinese Taipei

New Taipei City Government, Chinese Taipei

Regional Administration of Sardinia, Italy

Seo-gu, Daejeon Metropolitan City, South Korea

Suwon City, South Korea