

PRESS RELEASE

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LivCom 2012 Awards open in “garden city” of Al Ain, United Arab Emirates

The sixteenth UN-backed International Awards for Liveable Communities (LivCom) were declared open tonight (20.00hrs local time) by His Excellency Dr Matar Mohammed Al Nuaimi General Manager of Al Ain, Abu Dhabi, the event’s 2012 host city.

In a welcome to delegates from 63 cities and towns from across the world, Dr Al Nuami said this was a proud moment in the journey for Al Ain, known as the “garden city” of the United Emirates.

He said: “Al Ain is so proud to host LivCom 2012. Hosting the awards will add a new achievement to Al Ain’s record which includes the city winning a Livcom award in 2010, as well as UNESCO’s registration of the city as the first Emirati site on the World Heritage list in 2011.”

He described how delegates would witness for themselves the city’s efforts to achieve excellence in sustainable development.

“We are working on executing distinguished projects including modern infrastructure, sidewalks, playgrounds and sustainable housing communities. Meanwhile comprehensive municipal services are delivered to the citizen’s houses. We engage the community in our goals in order to improve both services and welfare.”

He said the city would provide a showcase for innovation and the unique harmonisation of nature and urbanisation.

Livcom 2012 is taking place at the Rotana Hotel, Al Ain where over the next three days delegates will begin making the case for their towns and cities before a panel of experts in the field of municipal and environmental management.

LivCom founder Alan Smith said the finalists this year reflected a wider geographic spread than ever before with entries from across the five continents.

He added: “We have received a tremendously warm welcome from our host city of Al Ain. LivCom is continuing to reach out to and influence an ever-increasing number of forward-thinking communities from around the world. Like Al Ain, they all share the same goals, to improve the quality of life for their citizens in a way that is sustainable while at the same time harnessing new innovation to safeguard the environment.”

Rob Small, chair of the judging panel, said that in its 16-year history, LivCom had proved a benchmark for changing trends at local authority level.

“We are seeing a definite awareness of the impact of climate change evolving and we are expecting to see an increasing focus on healthy lifestyles especially concerning the issues surrounding caring for an aging population.

“The remarkable thing about LivCom is that despite the apparent boundaries of different countries, cultures and paradigms, the ideas shared here will sow the seed of new and often unexpected solutions.”

The winning cities in the awards scheme for civic environmental achievement will be announced on Monday, November 26th.

The LivCom Award, launched in 1997 and endorsed by the United Nations Environment Programme, is non-political and embraces all nations and cultures from around the world. The awards are made annually in three categories covering whole cities and sustainable projects along with a bursary award.

The cities have been enlisted for the award for their efforts to improve landscape, arts, culture, and heritage, and followed the best environmental practices along with offering the best health and life facilities. Three Arab countries Egypt, Kuwait, and the UAE have made it to the finals.

Other countries with cities invited to the finals included Brazil, Portugal, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Philippines, Mexico, United States, England, Spain, Australia, Germany, Japan, Turkey, Italy, Ireland,

Poland, Peru, Ukraine, South Africa, China, Republic of Moldova, the Czech Republic, South Korea, Singapore, Canada, Russia, Taiwan, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Colombia.

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Note to Editors: Journalists are welcome to attend the LivCom Awards. For accreditation, contact **livcommedia@gmail.com**

About LivCom:

The LivCom Awards were launched internationally in 1997 and are endorsed by the United Nations Environment Programme and the scheme is run as a UK Registered Charity. LivCom Awards are made in three categories covering Whole City, Sustainable Projects and a Bursary Award which sees match funding of £10,000 go to the winning project. A new country has been represented at the LivCom Awards in each of the past eleven years, and now more 50 countries are regularly represented. Political delegates confirm that being exposed to the presentations of cities from other countries and

cultures has provided many policy ideas that could be effectively introduced in their own community.