

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Entries from around world flood in for LivCom 2012 Awards**

Communities large and small have submitted applications to be considered for recognition by the International Awards for Liveable Communities (LivCom) in the global awards scheme recognised by the United Nations and coveted by industry professionals.

This year's awards will see finalists attending four days of intense competition set to take place in the city of Al Ain, United Arab Emirates, (22<sup>nd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> November).

On average communities from around 50 countries pitch for a place at the finals and this year is no exception. Bidding for a place for the first time are towns and cities from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Peru and Portugal.

The deadline for entries for the awards, now in their 16<sup>th</sup> year, is 31 May. Preliminary judging takes place over the summer prior to the announcement of the finalists who will go forward to the finals in October.

Awards are made in several categories according to population size – last year, the award in the smallest category, under 20,000 people, went to the town of Nieuwpoort (Belgium) with a population of just over 11,000.

Following the 2009 LivCom Awards, a new set of criteria was introduced by judges in the hunt for the world's leading communities. These are;

- Enhancement of the natural and built landscapes
- Arts, culture and heritage

- Environmental best practices
- Community participation and empowerment
- Healthy lifestyle
- Strategic planning

Preparing the initial entry document has been described as a free, comprehensive self audit, highlighting not only what a community does well, but also where it needs improvement. LivCom has also been described as 'the most rewarding professional experience of my career'.

Alan Smith, chief executive and founder of the awards scheme said: "The benefits of participation include not only the self audit experience but also the opportunity to contribute to and become aware of International Best Practice and to showcase a community's best practice. The process enhances civic pride, encourages innovation and helps engage members of communities. It also raises the profile of a community internationally and can encourage inward capital investment along with the benefits of joining an international network of communities from over 50 countries.

For full details of the Awards, in 30 languages, or to register, go on-line on [www.livcomawards.com](http://www.livcomawards.com). For further information, ring the LivCom Office on +44 (0) 118 946 1680.

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Note to Editors: Journalists are welcome to attend the LivCom Awards. For accreditation, contact [livcommedia@gmail.com](mailto:livcommedia@gmail.com)

**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 12 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.

To take part in the awards, communities need to register by 31 May 2012 and contribute written submissions by 30 June. Initial judging will take place during the summer before the announcement of this year's finalists.