

PRESS RELEASE

March 2011

Multi-award winning LivCom city Porirua scores another global first by hosting a “Bio-Blitz”

At the 2010 LivCom Awards, Porirua City in New Zealand was recognised with three Gold standard awards - the only one of the 43 city finalists to do so.

And now, the city's credentials as a global leader have been strengthened further with the announcement that the world's first combined marine and terrestrial survey of plants, animals and insects will take place in Porirua City.

The Mana Land and Sea BioBlitz project is a scientific survey to find as many different plants and animals as possible.

Scientists from a range of organisations and the local community will work to see how many species can be found and identified on and around Mana Island, Whitireia Park and Titahi Bay.

Council Biodiversity & Horticulture Officer Chris Freeman said: "This BioBlitz is a chance for local residents, scientists and volunteers to find more unique species of plants, animals or insects. It's a chance to learn about what's right on our doorstep so we can ensure we look after them into the future."

Any new discoveries will be further identified by specialists before being added to the BioBlitz database.

Endorsed by the United Nations Environment Programme the LivCom awards are the world's only awards recognising excellence in the sustainable development of cities.

Finalists from some of the world's largest, oldest, newest, richest and poorest communities take part each year in the awards to share knowledge, ideas and support for establishing a global network of communities committed to respecting the environment, actively protecting and enhancing it, actively engaging in the future planning of their communities and living healthy lifestyles.

Porirua was singled out by the international panel of judges in 2010 as a world leader in the way the city works as a community to benefit its residents and the environment.

What Porirua Won

At the 2010 LivCom Awards, Porirua City's entry in the **Whole of City Award** achieved gold standard – the equivalent of excellence.

In its category, based on population size, Porirua placed second behind Chrudim, Czech Republic and ahead of Dubuque, USA. All three achieved gold standard – making this category one of the most competitive at the Finals.

Porirua City topped the **Community Participation and Empowerment** criteria in the Whole of City section when judged against all other 43 cities entered regardless of population size, including cities such as Norwich (England), Miami Beach (USA) and Wuxi (China).

"Porirua is a truly inclusive community that gives its citizens a sense that they belong in that place, a place where they are comfortable that they have a voice that can easily be heard." *Judge Yoritaka Tashiro of Japan.*

Hailed as the finest example of a world leading socio economic project, Porirua's [Village Planning Programme](#) beat entries from Canada and Germany to win first place and a gold award in the Socio-Economic Section of the **Environmentally Sustainable Project Award**.

"This programme engages and empowers residents in each sector of the city to develop and implement plans in their own way to reflect the distinct identity of each village. It is a ground-breaking partnership between the city council and the communities it serves." *Project Judge Gus Stahlmann (USA)*.

The 2011 International Awards for Liveable Communities will take place in Songpa, Seoul in October. Communities must register entries by 31st May and submit a written report by 30th June, which is assessed by an independent panel of judges in July. The Judges invite a number of communities to attend the finals of LivCom, where they will be required to make a verbal presentation to the judges, with other delegates observing the presentation, and to answer a series of questions from the judges. There are three sections to the awards – Whole City, Sustainable Projects and a Bursary Award to the value of £10,000.

There is no community registration fee, and a number of delegates from each community may attend the Finals without the payment of any fee.

ENDS