

PRESS RELEASE

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Songpa, Seoul

World's most liveable cities of 2011 are named at UN-backed global awards event

The World's Most Liveable Cities of 2011 have been named at the UN-backed annual International Awards for Liveable Communities (LivCom). The elite group of cities which fulfil the awards' range of key criteria covering environmental best practice, healthy lifestyle of citizens, community involvement as well as arts and cultural heritage, numbers five in all from the smallest, Nieuwpoort (Belgium) with just over 11,000 people to the largest, Nanjing (China) at 6.4million.

Another European town, Pfaffenhofen an der Ilm in Germany was saluted by judges for the quality of its environmental best practice. The Bavarian town of 23,000 people was named most liveable city with a population between 20,000-75,000. Hosted by Songpa, in South Korea, another Korean city, the port of Tongyeong, found favour with judges to win the 75,000-150,000 category. The lakeside city of Joondalup in Western Australia triumphed in the 150,000-400,000 category.

After three intensive days evaluating 77 finalist cities from 26 countries at the largest event so far in the awards scheme's 15-year history, lead judge Rob Small (New Zealand) said the week, whose theme was "think globally, act regionally" had broken new ground.

"There is an increasing emphasis on involving and empowering the community itself and this was a real strength in this year's applications with many truly innovative approaches.

“Yesterday, the world’s population reach the seven billion mark for the first time and this week at the Livcom Awards we have seen for the first time many communities considering the impact of growth and seeking to respond to it and the challenges it presents. They have been focussing in particular on how to sustain social, environmental and economic values and standards.”

He added: “Climate change continues to test communities and increasingly natural disasters such as prolonged droughts, increasingly intense wildfires and increasing frequency of storm events is causing local councils to focus on adaption to climate change and mitigation of its effects. The rising interest in emergency management is evident as is awareness of a need to build better following natural disasters.”

In a reflection of the growing status of the awards, this week’s event attracted around 500 visitors from around the world. Hundreds of visitors poured in to watch the cities compete, to see the global exhibition and also attended a LivCom/UNEP seminar dedicated to local environmental management.

Alan Smith, chief executive and founder of LivCom said: “This event, superbly hosted by Songpa, was a milestone for LivCom which as ever continues to bring together some of the world’s leading experts in local management of the environment. This was our 15th year – the fact that interest and participation in Livcom continues to grow reflects that there is a need for this kind of forum not only to share best practice but to provide a springboard for new ideas. We have long championed the fact that many of the world’s most pressing challenges can be met by working at regional level – the cities here demonstrated that they are actively taking a lead in this – and winning. It’s a far cry from the early LivCom finals where recycling and waste management were the key issues.”

Mayor of Songpa, Park Choon Hee said: “We have been proud to host the Livcom Awards 2011. By inspiring the spirit of “think globally, act regionally” in order to cope with climate change, Songpa is building a cornerstone for sustainable growth in the areas of culture, welfare and environment. The hosting of the Livcom Awards this year, will establish Songpa’s standing as an international eco-friendly community and further bolster the pride of its residents.”

The UN-endorsed LivCom awards annually bring together some of the world's leading innovators in the field.

The finalists are divided into five categories according to their average daytime population. In addition there are winners in categories covering specific projects as well as a £10,000 bursary awarded to one community project each year.

- Ends –

The results 2011

Whole City Awards 2011

Category A: Popn up to 20,000

First: Nieuwpoort, Belgium (Gold)

Second=: Gottarendura, Spain (Bronze)

Second =: Jinhwa, Taiwan (Bronze)

Third : Vornicini, Moldova (Bronze)

Category B: Popn 20,001-75,000

First: Pfaffenhofen an der Ilm, Germany (Gold)

Second: Mandurah, Australia (Silver)

Third: Jihlava, Czech Republic (Silver)

Category C: Popn 75,001-150,000

First: Tongyeong City, South Korea (Gold)

Second: San Carlos, Philippines (Gold)

Third: Namwon, South Korea (Silver)

Category D Popn 150,001-400,000

First: Joondalup, Australia (Gold)

Second: Nansha, Guangzhou, China (Gold)

Third: Kuantan, Malaysia (Silver)

Category E Popn over 400,000

First: Nanjing, China (Gold)

Second: Jeju City, South Korea (Silver)

Third: Gangdong-Gu, South Korea (Silver)

Special Whole City Award: San Carlos, Philippines

Individual Criteria Awards 2011

Enhancement of the Landscape Bilbao, Spain

Environmental Best Practice: Pfaffenhofen, Germany

Healthy Lifestyle: Chrudim, Czech Republic

Arts Culture and Heritage:	Nanjing, China
Community Involvement:	Greater Geraldton, Australia
Strategic Planning:	Mandurah, Australia
Special Award:	San Carlos, Philippines

Project Awards

Socio Economic:

1. Dubai – revitalization of historic Dubai (Gold)
2. Serpentine Jarradale Shire – Planning for the future (Gold)
3. Batangas City – City E Code (Gold)

Built

1. Kaohsiung, Taiwan – the World Games Main Stadium (Gold)
2. Chrudim, Czech Republic – reconstruction of St Joseph Church and Monastery gardens (Gold)
3. Yilan, Taiwan – Lanyang Museum – Window of Yilan (Gold)

Natural

1. Seogwipo City – Jeju Olle Project (Gold)
2. Nieuwpoort, Belgium – King Leopold II Park Renovation (Gold)
3. Nansha District - Guangzhou, Nansha Wetlands (Silver)

Special Project Award: Iloilo City – post LivCom, Advancing the Iloilo River Development Initiatives for Integrated Sustainable Management

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.

The International Awards for Liveable Communities 2011 were held at the Lotte World Hotel, Songpa-Gu, Seoul, South Korea.