



Press Release

Local Action for Future Quality of Life

World Environment Day is only a month away on the 5 June 2004 – is your city or town doing anything to celebrate local environmental activities in between now and the end of June? Events such as an open day in a recycling factory, a green fair for environmentally-friendly products, a public lecture on environmental issues, or a school event, are all Urban Green Days! All over Europe, cities and towns are organising local activities – your local area can be part of this movement by adding their event to the www.urbangreendays.org web site and adding their events online.

Taking inspiration from the four themes of the European Union's thematic strategy on the Urban Environment, Urban Green Days aim to highlight measures to make towns and cities healthy and high quality places to live:

Green Travel focusses on *urban transport issues* – activities such as car-sharing, the walking school bus, cycling and tram or bus use are the alternatives promoted by Urban Green Days. Paris and London have both introduced “cycle-cabs” to replace the usual taxicab in busy areas – reducing emissions, and providing a comfortable service.

Green Homes promotes *sustainable construction* such as energy efficiency at home, insulation, and water/electricity use. Freiburg, Germany, and Sutton, UK, are home to several examples of buildings which incorporate solar energy panels, wood and local materials, plus water recycling and saving measures, making these homes low emission and very efficient.

Green Neighbourhoods is about *sustainable urban design* – such as regeneration of old city centres and revitalising areas by increasing services, transport links, and the quality of building and infrastructures. Pantin, France has put together a “cleaning charter” to bring together businesses and other stakeholders to share the work of cleaning streets, and other shared spaces. Tartu, Estonia, implemented several education programmes to raise awareness of waste.

Green Charts looks at *sustainable management of urban areas* in particular the way the local council reports to people about the work its doing to improve the environment in the local area. Sundsvall, Sweden, have prepared and distributed an Environment and Health Balance Sheet. The balance sheet covers a number of environmental topics including environmental education, water, rural areas, forestry, agriculture, industry and transportation, reports emissions and progress on an annual basis.

These four themes are focus points for Urban Green Days, and help to link all sorts of events together across Europe for local action for future quality of life.

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is co-ordinating the initiative on behalf of the European Commission, Directorate-General Environment.

For more information please contact:

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

European Secretariat

Leopoldring 3

79098 Freiburg / Germany

Phone: +49-761 / 36 89 2-63 Fax: +49-761 / 36 89 2-29

E-Mail: urbangreendays@iclei-europe.org