

QATAR GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL TO LAUNCH GUIDE ON CREATING A HEALTHY CITY

'Doha: A Rough Guide To Healthy Cities' Highlights Importance Of Living In A Healthy Environment

Doha, Qatar, 12 May 2015: Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), is devising a guide 'Doha: A Rough Guide to Healthy Cities' on the importance of creating a healthy environment for its inhabitants.

Due to be launched later this year, the guide will tackle the issue of the environmental health of urban areas which is becoming increasingly important to the world's population as a majority of people are shifting towards inner cities. The World Health Organisation (WHO) anticipates that by 2025, approximately 80 per cent of global citizens will live in cities.

Qatar is currently witnessing unprecedented urban development, from the establishment of Lusail City and the development of Doha, to the inception of numerous infrastructure projects which have all harnessed the need to incorporate healthy living into their frameworks.

In light of this, experts at the Green Infrastructure Interest Group, a subcommittee of QGBC, has released today an infographic preview of the guide.

QGBC's Green Infrastructure Interest Group works in line with QF's commitment to fostering knowledge about environmental best practices and encouraging sustainable development in Qatar on its way to achieving the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030.

Highlighting the benefits of planning and designing a healthy city, the non-technical infographic provides design and planning professionals, senior school students and advocates of sustainable development, with interesting guidelines on how to create a healthy city. The infographic is available as a digital document on the QGBC website, which can be accessed at www.qatargbc.org/app/media/641.

Engineer Meshal Al Shamari, QGBC Director, said: "QGBC works with a number of institutions to introduce innovative concepts to raise awareness about and respond to Qatar's urban growth. The Green Infrastructure Interest Group has worked closely with Atkins, a founding member of QGBC, to design the first phase of the bigger guide."

He added: “I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to our members, the Green Infrastructure team and Mr Lee Allen, senior urban designer at Atkins, for investing their time and efforts to make this possible. We welcome everyone in Qatar to join QGBC and contribute to the nation’s growing sustainability and green building industry.”

A healthy city uses less energy, has good air quality, facilitates community interaction, supports active lifestyles and is generally a greener, more attractive and fulfilling place to live. These benefits directly contribute to the economy and desirability of Qatar as a place to live, work and visit.

Lee Allen, Senior Urban Designer at Atkins, and a member of the Green Infrastructure Interest Group, said: “Doha is an ideal fit for the application of the ‘healthy city’ concept for a number of reasons. The fact that the development of the city is still in its initial stages allows us to incorporate the principles in the best way possible. There has been some progress in this regard. The Education City Campus, Msheireb Downtown, Lusail City and other selected development projects have considered a lean towards becoming a healthy city.”

Allen added: “The key for QGBC and other stakeholders is to foster education about this in creating a behavioural change in the process, which we hope this specific infographic becomes a good starting point.”

Dr Cynthia Skelhorn, Post-Doctoral Research Specialist at QGBC, said: “A team of sustainability experts and urban planners at the Green Infrastructure Interest Group is working on creating a comprehensive guide to a healthy Doha, which is scheduled for later this year. The guide will explore the key design aspects of Doha’s green infrastructure, including the planning, energy, transport, water, waste and biodiversity in detail.”

The Green Infrastructure Interest Group was established in 2012 to foster development of green infrastructure as a national resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic and social benefits. The Group features leading experts from across Qatar’s economic landscape and takes on various awareness and research projects.

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For more information contact:

Abed Shirzai
abeds@bljworldwide.com
+974 7021 8259

About Qatar Green Building Council

Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC) is a non-profit, membership-driven organisation providing leadership and encouraging collaboration in conducting environmentally sustainable practices for green building design and development in Qatar. QGBC also aims to support the overall health and sustainability of the environment, the people, and economic security in Qatar for generations to come. The council, a member of Qatar Foundation, was formally established in 2009 by a decree signed by H.H. Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser and is helping Qatar on its journey to establish a post-hydrocarbon, knowledge economy and progressive society. Through QGBC, Qatar joins a network of 80 countries that run active national green building councils under the umbrella of the World Green Building Council.

QGBC's members include, representatives from government, real estate developers, investors, facilities managers, consultants, constructors, manufacturers & suppliers, oil & gas, professional firms, financial services, telecom/technology, academia, NGOs & media. QGBC is setting up operations from its HQ, organising awareness events, knowledge seminars, training, forums, and networking sessions with the like-minded. To learn more visit www.qatargbc.org.