

Average Waiting Time for Public Rental Housing in 2023 ^{Note 1} — Annual Analysis

(1) Annual Trend

- With the increase in public rental housing (PRH) supply, the average waiting time (AWT) as at end-2023 has reduced by 0.3 years as compared with that in early-2022. On a quarterly basis, as a number of large scale new PRH projects were completed in the New Territories between 2022 and early-2023 (including Queen's Hill Estate in Fanling, Ching Tin Estate and Wo Tin Estate in Tuen Mun, etc which provided a total of about 17 000 flats for general applicants), the demand of some general applicants who had waited for a longer time was absorbed. **The AWT continued to fall before mid-2023, from 6.1 years as at end-March 2022 to 5.3 years as at end-June 2023 gradually.**
- However, owing to the insufficient and uneven land supply in the past, there were only about 13 700 PRH flats allocated to general applicants in 2023, which was 12 700 flats less as compared to 2022. It had taken a longer time for general applicants to have the first flat offer, thus the AWT in the latter half of 2023 rebounded to 5.8 years as at end-December 2023. Looking ahead in the coming ten years, the overall public housing supply will register a clear upward trend, **the current short-term increase in AWT is a necessary stage to go through before the trend takes a clear turn.** The target to cap AWT at the level of six years and reduce the Composite Waiting Time to 4.5 years in 2026-27 will remain unchanged.

Note 1 The average waiting time is calculated as the average of the waiting time of those general applicants who were housed to PRH in the past 12 months. Waiting time basically refers to the time taken between registration for PRH and first flat offer, excluding any frozen period during the application period (e.g. when the applicant has not yet fulfilled the residence requirement; the applicant has requested to put his/her application on hold pending arrival of family members for family reunion; the applicant is imprisoned, etc). The average waiting time is not applicable to non-elderly one-person applicants under the Quota and Points System.

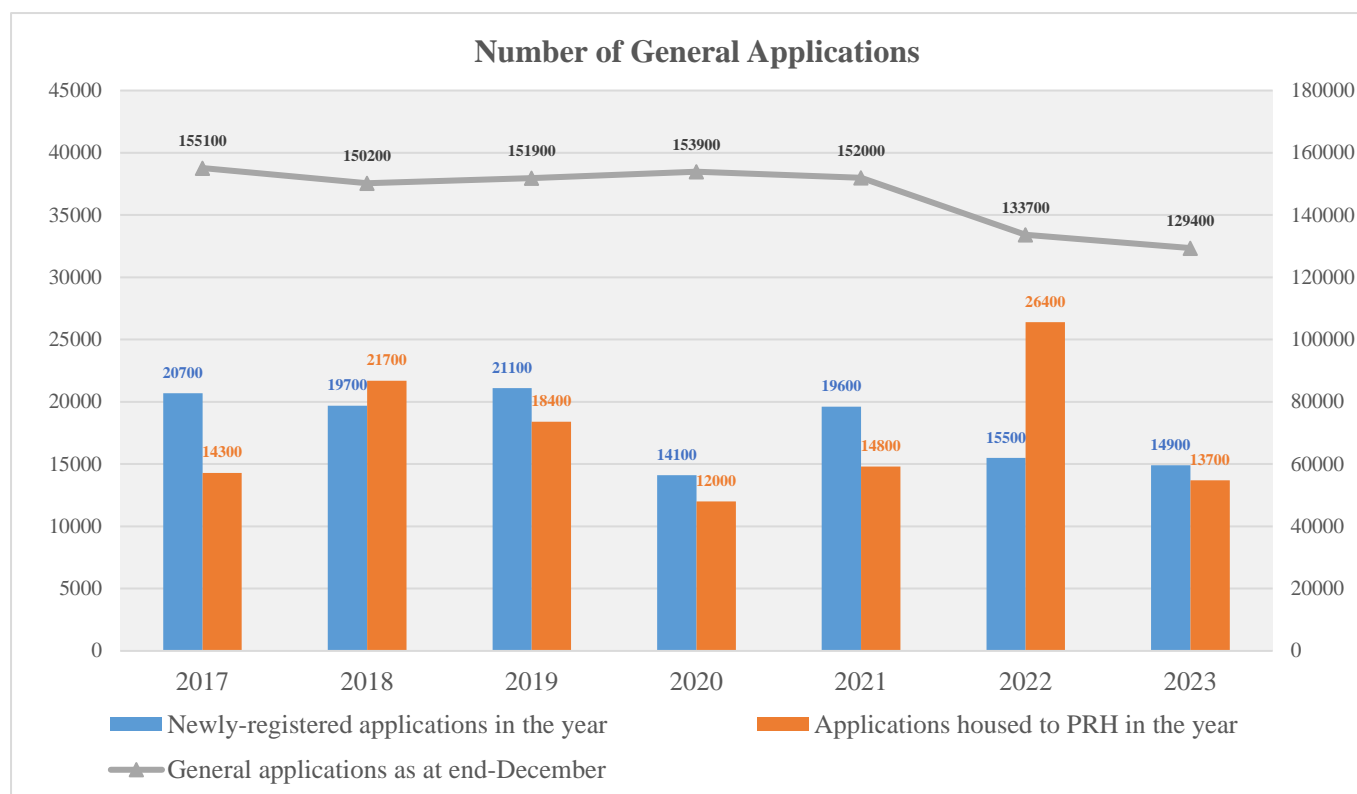
(2) Shorter Waiting Time in the New Territories

- In 2023, over 45% (46%) of the applicants who were housed to flats in the New Territories had waited for five years or below. The proportion was significantly higher than the corresponding proportion housed to flats in Urban district or Extended Urban district (among the applicants who were housed to flats in the Urban district or Extended Urban district, there were only about a quarter (27% and 26% respectively) with a waiting time of five years or below). The figures reflected that **the waiting time of general applicants for flats in the New Territories was shorter.**
- As for general applicants on the waiting list, about a quarter of the applicants opted for flats in the New Territories as at end-2023. Under the situation that there were fewer applicants but more PRH flats supply in the New Territories, the waiting time of general applicants who opted for flats in the New Territories was shorter. Among the general applicants opted for flats in the New Territories, about 84% of them had a waiting time of five years or below, which was higher than those for flats in Urban district and Extended Urban district at 71% and 75% respectively. Taking the applicants who are in the front part of the waiting list as an example, **the waiting time of PRH applicants for flats in the New Territories is generally shorter than those for flats in Urban district or Extended Urban district by a year.**
- In the coming five years, more new PRH flats will continue to be completed in the New Territories. Coupled with the relatively shorter waiting time of applicants who opted for flats in the New Territories, the allocation of flats in the New Territories to applicants will be faster.

(3) Decrease in the Number of General Applications on the Waiting List

- The number of general applications for PRH has reduced from 155 100 in 2017 to 129 400 in 2023, with a drop of about 17%. The major reason for the drop was that the number of applicants housed to PRH has been higher in recent years, and it has absorbed some of the general applications that had waited for a longer time. In 2022 and 2023, there was an average of about 20 000 general applications housed to PRH each

year, which had risen by over 20% from the yearly average of 16 200 in the previous five years (from 2017 to 2021). Also, the number of newly-registered general applications had reduced in 2022 and 2023.



(4) Change of District Choice

- Among the general applicants who were housed to PRH in 2023, about 45% (approximately 6 000) of them had changed their district choice after registration. Some of these applicants switched their district choice, from the New Territories with a shorter waiting time to Urban district or Extended Urban district with a longer waiting time. As a result, their waiting time has been lengthened. When excluding all the general applicants who had changed their district choice and were housed in 2023, the estimated AWT for PRH as at end-December 2023 would be 5.6 years (reduced by 0.2 years from the current level).

(5) Change of Household Circumstances

- Similarly, among the general applicants who were housed to PRH in 2023, more than 50% of them had changed their household circumstances during the waiting period (e.g. addition of family

member(s) by applicants resulting in an increase in household size and change of the waiting list status based on household size). **Their AWT was longer than those applicants who had not changed their household circumstances by about one year**, which was mainly due to the increase in applicants' household size and the waiting time for larger flats was generally longer. When excluding all the general applicants who had changed their household circumstances and were housed in 2023, the estimated AWT for PRH as at end-December 2023 would be 5.0 years (reduced by 0.8 years from the current level).

(6) Reference Figures

- Major reference figures on the number of PRH general applications and AWT as at end-December 2023 are set out in **Tables 1 to 5**.

Table 1
Number of general applications as at end-December each year

	As at end-December 2017	As at end-December 2018	As at end-December 2019	As at end-December 2020	As at end-December 2021	As at end-December 2022	As at end-December 2023
Number of general applications (change over previous year)	155 100	150 200 (-3%)	151 900 (+1%)	153 900 (+1%)	152 000 (-1%)	133 700 (-12%)	129 400 (-3%)

Table 2
Number of newly registered general applications in the year

	From January 2018 to December 2018	From January 2019 to December 2019	From January 2020 to December 2020	From January 2021 to December 2021	From January 2022 to December 2022	From January 2023 to December 2023
Number of newly registered general applications (change over previous year)	19 700	21 100 (+7%)	14 100 (-33%)	19 600 (+38%)	15 500 (-21%)	14 900 (-4%)

Table 3
AWT as at end-December in recent years

	As at end-December 2017	As at end-December 2018	As at end-December 2019	As at end-December 2020	As at end-December 2021	As at end-December 2022	As at end-December 2023
AWT for general applicants	4.7 years	5.5 years	5.4 years	5.7 years	6.0 years	5.5 years	5.8 years
AWT for elderly one-person applicants	2.6 years	2.9 years	3.0 years	3.4 years	4.0 years	3.9 years	4.0 years

Table 4
Distribution of waiting time of general applicants
who were housed to PRH between January 2023 and December 2023

District housed	Waiting Time	Household size					Total
		1-P	2-P	3-P	4-P	5-P+	
Urban	≤3 year	480	150	100	40	30	800
	>3 - ≤ 4 years	110	190	30	50	20	400
	>4 - ≤ 5 years	170	160	60	60	40	480
	>5 - ≤ 6 years	830	130	70	70	30	1 100
	>6 years	80	1 100	950	1 000	290	3 400
	Subtotal	1 700	1 700	1 200	1 300	400	6 200
Extended Urban	≤3 year	390	120	40	20	30	600
	>3 - ≤ 4 years	40	180	20	50	30	300
	>4 - ≤ 5 years	90	160	30	50	30	360
	>5 - ≤ 6 years	460	140	40	70	40	740
	>6 years	60	1 100	580	920	270	2 900
	Subtotal	1 000	1 700	700	1 100	390	4 900
New Territories	≤3 year	250	100	40	20	20	420
	>3 - ≤ 4 years	80	120	40	20	20	270
	>4 - ≤ 5 years	220	130	40	20	30	440
	>5 - ≤ 6 years	90	130	90	40	40	380
	>6 years	10	220	260	350	90	940
	Subtotal	640	700	460	440	200	2 400
Islands	≤3 year	<5	10	10	10	<5	20
	>3 - ≤ 4 years	<5	<5	0	0	0	10
	>4 - ≤ 5 years	10	10	<5	<5	0	20
	>5 - ≤ 6 years	<5	<5	0	<5	0	<5
	>6 years	<5	<5	0	<5	0	10
	Subtotal	10	20	10	10	<5	50
Overall	≤3 year	1 100	380	180	80	90	1 800
	>3 - ≤ 4 years	230	500	80	110	60	980
	>4 - ≤ 5 years	480	460	130	130	90	1 300
	>5 - ≤ 6 years	1 400	400	190	170	110	2 300
	>6 years	150	2 400	1 800	2 300	650	7 300
	Total	3 400	4 100	2 400	2 800	990	13 700

Table 5

Distribution of waiting time of general applicants who had waited for PRH for over three years and without any flat offer as at end-December 2023

District choice ^{Note 2}	Waiting Time	Household size					Total
		1-P	2-P	3-P	4-P	5-P+	
Urban	>3 - ≤ 4 years	1 400	950	220	120	70	2 800
	>4 - ≤ 5 years	1 900	1 400	320	160	80	3 800
	>5 - ≤ 6 years	1 200	950	300	170	70	2 700
	>6 years	70	1 500	1 400	750	130	3 900
	Subtotal	4 600	4 800	2 300	1 200	350	13 200
Extended Urban	>3 - ≤ 4 years	520	3 400	2 200	1 600	350	8 000
	>4 - ≤ 5 years	690	4 000	2 800	2 100	520	10 100
	>5 - ≤ 6 years	220	2 500	2 200	1 600	410	7 000
	>6 years	20	1 800	3 300	2 200	450	7 800
	Subtotal	1 400	11 600	10 500	7 600	1 700	32 800
New Territories	>3 - ≤ 4 years	680	1 400	1 100	810	180	4 100
	>4 - ≤ 5 years	360	1 100	960	1 100	240	3 700
	>5 - ≤ 6 years	70	510	390	920	190	2 100
	>6 years	30	340	210	1 300	120	1 900
	Subtotal	1 100	3 300	2 600	4 000	730	11 900
Islands	>3 - ≤ 4 years	20	<5	0	<5	<5	30
	>4 - ≤ 5 years	10	<5	0	<5	0	20
	>5 - ≤ 6 years	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	10
	>6 years	0	<5	<5	<5	<5	10
	Subtotal	30	10	<5	10	<5	60
Overall	>3 - ≤ 4 years	2 600	5 700	3 500	2 500	600	14 900
	>4 - ≤ 5 years	3 000	6 500	4 000	3 300	850	17 700
	>5 - ≤ 6 years	1 500	3 900	2 900	2 700	670	11 700
	>6 years	120	3 600	5 000	4 200	700	13 600
	Total	7 200	19 700	15 400	12 800	2 800	58 000

Housing Department
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Note 2 Refers to the district choice of applicants as at end-December 2023.