



優質社區 與民共建

Enriching Community
Life on Estates

Effective estate management is about building for the community as well as building communities. By managing and caring for the estates it has built, the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) helps create a sense of home and friendly community for thousands of residents; a place that is neat and green, and where they feel safe, comfortable and convenient.

Quality for better living

Our Total Maintenance Scheme (TMS) has long been known for its proactiveness in initiating in-flat inspections and maintenance services based on a regular cycle. In 2014/15, TMS was rolled out in 24 estates, once again with a special focus on building safety. Supplementing TMS is our Responsive In-flat Maintenance Service (RIMS), which now covers all 214 HA estates and courts. Under RIMS, front-line staff are able to handle maintenance requests from tenants responsively, minimising disturbance and nuisance.

During the year we also continued to run our Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme (CSIP), which checks older estates for structural integrity and makes recommendations either for further sustaining the estates with structural repair works or for clearance consideration. Our Estate Improvement Programme, which applies to older estates given a good structural “bill of health” by CSIP, also continued with its role of improving estate facilities.



Replacing pole holders with modern laundry racks was an initiative to improve the lives of tenants by making facilities more user-friendly.

A number of initiatives were undertaken during the year to improve the facilities for tenants. After carrying out a review of the pole holder arrangement for drying laundry, in February 2014 the Subsidised Housing Committee endorsed a proposal to replace pole holders in all rental flats of public rental housing (PRH) estates and Tenant Purchase Scheme (TPS) estates with modern laundry racks. In all cases, the existing pole holders will be cut away and sealed up. Tenants will have the option to have the new laundry racks installed free of charge if they wish. The programme of installation is expected to take around three years to complete. It will cover some 510 000 flats and is estimated to cost HK\$520 million.

Before the introduction of the Harmony block type in the 1990s, earlier HA flats were generally equipped with see-through type collapsible gates. They are now still being used in a total of 176 300 flats in PRH estates and unsold flats in TPS estates. As the gates impair, they have become less easy to operate and require more frequent maintenance and repair, while spare parts for repairs are not easily available in the market. In the light of this, in November 2014 the Building Committee endorsed a budget of HK\$607 million to replace all remaining old see-through type collapsible gates. The replacement programme will commence in 2015/16 and last for five years.

In 2014/15, the HA launched the second round¹ of its Rewiring Inside Domestic Flats (RDF) Programmes, aimed at upgrading the electrical safety standards and enhancing the electrical provisions for flats in PRH blocks built between 1986 and 1992. Up until the end of March 2015, 1,707 flats had been rewired under the programme.



A well-paved barrier-free walkway at Cheung Sha Wan Estate.

Making PRH barrier-free

Our rolling lift enhancement and replacement initiatives continued over the year. Under our Stage 2 Lift Addition Programme (LAP), we have been adding lifts to connect elevated platforms in external areas, and alongside existing footbridges in PRH estates. During the year we began constructing 13 lifts in eight PRH estates under this initiative. To provide tenants with lift services as soon as possible, LAP has been changed from a multi-year rolling programme to an ongoing annual one. Our Lift Modernisation Programme, meanwhile, saw us inspect, assess and replace 105 old lifts in different estates.

¹ This follows on from the completion of the first 10-year programme, which covered pre-1986 blocks.

The comprehensive barrier-free access improvement programme was completed at the end of June 2014. We had spent HK\$330 million in bringing some 240 existing estates and facilities in line with the Government's barrier-free policy. The improvement programme included upgrading control buttons of lift panels, introducing detection devices for lift doors, adding handrails, illuminated visual indicators and audible signals in lift cars; improving pedestrian walkways, adding handrails and tactile warning strips, among other changes. A small number of the improvement works relating to addition of new lift landing openings under this programme have now been tied in with Lift Modernisation Programme and are due for completion in 2016/17, so as to minimise disruption to our tenants.

Sustainability initiatives

It is important for the HA to be able to gauge the sustainability performance of its PRH blocks in order to formulate an effective long-term maintenance and improvement (M&I) strategy. To do this cost-effectively, we selected 10 PRH estates among which included the majority of the block types of our existing housing stock for enrolment in the Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency's (HKQAA) Sustainable Building Index (SBI). In the first quarter of 2015, each of the PRH blocks in the 10 estates was awarded the HKQAA SBI Verified Mark. The assessments undertaken for this verification gave us a clear overview of the sustainability performance of our existing housing stock, enabling us to plan effectively for a sustainability-driven future.

Following on from its adoption of ISO 26000 for corporate social responsibility for its M&I works in 2012, the HA was awarded in July 2014 the HKQAA Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Advocate Mark in recognition of its contribution to the social well-being of stakeholders and the community.

A safe, clean and healthy environment

To enhance the HA's occupational health and safety performance and to demonstrate our commitment to caring for our staff and stakeholders, we have implemented the OHSAS 18001:2007 Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS) for M&I works for public housing. In July 2014, the HA was awarded the OHSAS 18001 Certificate by the HKQAA. OHSMS enables us to assess occupational health and safety risks in our M&I works more systematically and efficiently, and allocate our resources more cost-effectively. The system also boosts awareness among frontline staff of the risks, statutory requirements, codes of practice, instructions and guidelines associated with their works. The result is an overall enhancement of our occupational health and safety performance, including savings in time lost and costs incurred as a result of occupational injuries.



Workers who carry out inspection and maintenance work being given training on occupational safety and health issues.

We regularly published safety guides for different types of M&I works, and organised training sessions, forums and seminars over the year to enhance safety awareness and safety practices at maintenance sites. We also conducted regular reviews of our occupational health and safety performance as part of our goal of continual improvement.

Fire Safety

Fire safety and prevention measures continued to be of paramount importance this year. Comprehensive fire safety campaigns were carried out at all our estates, keeping tenants' awareness high. In addition, fire safety information was disseminated through regular video broadcasts on the Housing Channel, broadcasts on local radio channels, and by the display of posters and the distribution of souvenirs with fire prevention themes. We also kept residents well informed of the standard fire evacuation procedures, and encouraged them to participate in fire drills through publicity and incentives. Each domestic block across our estates is subject to a fire drill once every two years, in which a real-life fire emergency is simulated.

Collaborations with Estate Management Advisory Committees (EMACs) and with the Fire Services Department (FSD) continued, transmitting the fire safety message even more effectively. In 2014/15, we granted awards to the 18 EMACs that were most effective in their promotion of fire safety awareness at their estates. Also over the year, the FSD's Mobile Publicity Unit and Fire Safety Education Bus visited PRH estates across the territory on around 100 occasions. The FSD also provided proper training for PRH residents looking to be qualified as Fire Safety Ambassadors.



Two of the common misdeeds committed by tenants.

Encouraging good behaviour

The HA's Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement (Marking Scheme) approaches the challenge of maintaining a clean, safe and harmonious living environment at PRH estates by incentivising residents to take personal responsibility for these matters. We do this by allotting points to households that perpetrate any of the 28 "misdeeds" covered in the scheme; relevant points accumulated have a negative impact on households' eligibility for transfer to alternative accommodation, and can even lead to tenancies being terminated in the most serious cases. Over the years, the Marking Scheme has contributed to a significant improvement in the environmental hygiene of PRH estates, and as a result the scheme has been welcomed and well supported by PRH tenants.



Our tenants actively participate in various green activities such as the moon-cake box collection for recycling held at Shun Tin Estate.

Going green

Our ongoing Green Delight in Estates programme ran smoothly across the year, benefiting from collaboration with three green groups. As in previous years, the programme included an estate-wide campaign on a main environmental theme together with in-depth educational and promotional programmes tailored by the green groups for selected estates. To tie in with the Government's waste management policy, this year's main theme was "Reduction of solid waste". Associated promotional activities included an "All About Waste" quiz, fun days, talks, workshops and visits. A waste reduction competition in PRH estates was also launched. Further information about this waste reduction campaign is given in the Feature Story at the end of this chapter.

We are constantly assessing the level of energy usage across our PRH estates and looking for ways to lower it even further. One way we did this during the year was by replacing the existing electromagnetic ballast with energy-saving electronic ballast for light fittings in existing estates. By the end of the year we had completed the replacements in 820 out of 960 blocks, with the remaining 140 blocks to be completed by September 2015. We also continued to monitor the performance of trial installation of lower-energy LED light fittings in one of the domestic blocks at Kai Ching Estate, where intake of tenants commenced in August 2013. The process of evaluation will take a couple of years to complete.

Greenery at 20 PRH estates was enhanced during the year by introducing new varieties of plants to accentuate the landscape quality. In collaboration with EMACs, we also organised 10 tree planting days and 20 greening activities for residents.

There are some 100 000 trees growing in and around PRH estates across Hong Kong. To manage this forest of trees effectively, we maintain a comprehensive tree database in the Geographic Information System that underpins our annual tree risk assessment and management mechanism. Our Estate Tree Ambassador Scheme, which now attracts 650 volunteers, continued to help build a caring culture for trees in our community. We organised three training courses for our ambassadors during the year.

Since certification for the pilot estate, Kwai Shing West Estate, in June 2013, the ISO 50001 Energy Management System (EnMS) has been extended to cover all PRH estates in two phases. Certification for Phase One was granted by the HKQAA in August 2014, and full certification was expected to cover all PRH estates by April 2015.

We achieved full ISO 14001 Environmental Management System certification for our planned M&I works and for property management services for public housing in 2011 and 2013 respectively. The certification covers green management initiatives and operations control in areas of estate management such as routine cleansing, security, landscaping, office administration and planned M&I works. In 2014/15, six more newly completed PRH estates implemented ISO 14001 in the aspect of property management services.

Partnering for better estate management

EMACs are committees that provide a dedicated and representative forum where local estate management staff can communicate with and consult tenants on estate management matters. In the process, they are able to help tenants understand and support their implementation of management policies. Besides contributing valuable input into the daily management of their estates, EMACs enable tenants to become actively involved in supervising and appraising service contractors. Overall, EMACs help strengthen tenants' sense of belonging and their collective responsibility in estate management matters.

A significant portion of the EMAC central reserve funds is allocated for purposes of partnering with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in arranging socially beneficial initiatives, such as community-building activities promoting environmental protection, outreach services for the elderly, initiatives to strengthen neighbourliness and develop support networks in PRH estates, and activities encouraging tenants to cherish our public housing resources. In 2014/15, more than 420 of these partnering functions were held, in the form of seminars, workshops, shows and carnivals. In collaboration with the Department of Health and NGOs, 17 estates took part in a series of annual community health promotion programmes covering regular physical activities and healthy eating for tenants.



An activity to promote the physical health of elderly tenants, held at Wah Fu (II) Estate.



■ The Director of Housing, Mr Stanley Ying, speaks at the annual Site Safety Forum.

Collaborating with contractors

In the face of concerns about Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), in October 2014 we organised a seminar for service contractors on preventing an outbreak of EVD in housing estates. The seminar, presented by representatives from the Department of Health, offered recommendations on infection control methods and on appropriate Personal Protective Equipment for staff members who may be exposed to the risk of EVD.

As usual, we upheld site safety standards in collaboration with the Occupational Safety and Health Council and various contractors associations, and organised the annual Site Safety Forum for Works Contracts and Property Services Contracts in July 2014.

Random surprise checks on services contractors were carried out throughout the year at estates, as a way of preventing any exploitation of non-skilled workers employed by the contractors. We also developed a new system called the Occupational Injury Alert and Warning Triggering System (OIAWTS) to boost the safety performance of our property management services contractors. This system continuously monitors cases of injury occurring under different contractors. A contractor's injury rate over a rolling four-quarter period is used to trigger appropriate alerts and warnings instructing the contractor to take appropriate action for improvement. Currently we are gathering information about the injury rates for 2015 which will form the basis for the full implementation of the system from January 2016.

Joining Hands to Reduce Waste

Sustainability is a key watchword for the HA in its management of around 740 000 PRH units. But the sustainability concept is not something that can simply be imposed upon the PRH population. We have been working to make sustainability a collaborative and community-driven concept that is being embraced by tenants themselves. The success of this community-based approach can be seen in the HA's most recent sustainability drive, under the catchphrase "Let's join hands to reduce waste in our estates". It supplements our existing Source Separation of Domestic Waste Programme, which has helped raised residents' awareness of their own roles in reducing waste in PRH estates.



- The waste reduction campaign's icon of a honeybee holding a "slimmed down" rubbish bin.



- Tenants are encouraged to place their used bottles in our designated recycle bins in estates.

The idea of "joining hands" was a crucial one in making this campaign effective in 2014/15, since it drives home the attitude that waste reduction can only be sustainable if everyone is committed to it. To capture residents' imaginations and encourage local participation, we used a honeybee and a "slimmed-down" rubbish bin as campaign icons. The message of the importance of reducing waste was brought home through a wide range of fun activities, including quizzes, slogan and colouring competitions, workshops, carnivals and waste reduction competitions in PRH.



■ The HA's Subsidised Housing Committee Chairman, Mr Stanley Wong (centre left), and the Director of Housing, Mr Stanley Ying (centre right), officiate at the Appreciation Ceremony for Waste Reduction.

The campaign proved very successful, if the regular decrease in the amount of refuse collected from estates is any indicator. From July to December 2014, an average of around 29 000 tonnes of refuse was collected from PRH estates each month, representing an encouraging drop of some 7.5% from the amount collected in June 2014. We also collected over 0.76 million glass bottles (about 380 tonnes of glass), and over 54 000 mooncake boxes (approximately 16 tonnes) in 2014 alone. As for the collection of New Year citrus plants, a scheme first launched in 2013, the year 2014 saw a record of 5 000 pots collected, of which 4 000 pots were re-pruned, replanted and reused in various PRH estates. The event proved very popular among residents, and will be continued in 2015. To recognise the contributions of estate representatives to the waste reduction initiative, an Appreciation Ceremony was held on 6 February 2015 at which more than 70 prizes were awarded.

Our waste reduction campaign also brought added colour to the 10-day Hong Kong Flower Show 2015. We decorated a garden plot with a Waste Reduction Honey Bee made of various species of blossoms and bushes and, to spread the message of waste reduction at the flower show, we brought our Waste Reduction Honey Bee and Slim Rubbish Bin icons into the show. As a result of collaboration with the Environmental Protection Department (EPD), the EPD's Big Waster icon visited our Waste Reduction Honey Bee and Slim Rubbish Bin at the show, attracting many visitors and helping promote the theme of reducing domestic waste.



■ Cute "honeybees" perform at the Appreciation Ceremony.

Rallying to Sustainability at Existing PRH Estates

“Sustainability” is a key concept embraced by the HA. But what does it mean exactly, and how can we be sure our estates are fulfilling our commitment to sustainable living?

The core idea behind sustainability is being able to meet today’s needs without compromising those of the generations to come. This principle has to be worked out on many levels, economic, environmental and social, and we do this through our holistic Maintenance and Improvement (M&I) strategy. The forward-looking M&I strategy is designed to meet the needs of the community over time by utilising a people-oriented and cost-effective approach, while also reducing our impact on the environment and fostering healthy and pleasant communities.

The M&I strategy for building and estate sustainability is made up of three key programmes: the Total Maintenance Scheme (TMS), the Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme (CSIP) and the Estate Improvement Programme (EIP). From an economic perspective, these programmes find cost-effective ways of sustaining the service lives of our PRH buildings. Our highly proactive and customer-focused TMS, for example, reduces the need to pour enormous resources into our aging estates by tracking down minor issues at the outset and putting them right efficiently. CSIP determines whether those of our estates approaching 40 years of age are structurally safe and economically viable to maintain. If they are, we tailor-design repair solutions that will extend the buildings’ service life for at least another 15 years. By addressing the root causes of structural problems, the programme helps create lasting, sustainable buildings that will continue to serve the community well over many years.

At the same time, all the work carried out under our M&I strategy is environmentally sustainable. For instance, when we need to undertake complex repairs under TMS, we accompany these with enhanced environmental protection and cleansing services, while carefully monitoring the entire project to minimise the risk of pollution and any nuisance to tenants. Further, many of our new initiatives under EIP are specifically designed to raise the environmental sustainability levels of our estates. In recent years, the widely introduced sustainability features under EIP have included extensive planting and greening projects, energy-saving initiatives such as lift modernisation and energy-saving electronic ballast for light fittings, water-saving materials and technologies, and bold new recycling initiatives.



■ Inspection Ambassadors conduct home visits in estates undergoing TMS.



■ The playground at Kwai Shing West Estate was improved under EIP.

Sustainability as a community concept also lies at the heart of our M&I strategy, and can especially be seen in our implementation of EIP at individual estates, where it is very much a collaborative and consultative process. Changes and improvements are inextricably linked with the needs and expectations of the local population, and address issues like the changing demographics of the estate and the specific needs of particular community sectors. For example, under EIP we have been raising levels of accessibility and connectivity by adding lift towers and covered walkways for tenants, adding ramps and handrails for the elderly and other users to create barrier-free access, enhancing our playground facilities for the young, building new function rooms and community gathering areas, and generally serving not only the existing daily needs of tenants, but the needs of tenants for decades to come. The entire programme contributes to sustainability by rejuvenating the community, forging stronger ties in the neighbourhood, generating a sense of belonging, and building commitment to the estate.

Without the wholehearted support of our PRH tenants, “sustainability” would remain a word rather than a lifestyle philosophy. This is why we are also extremely active in fostering, encouraging and facilitating what we call a “community-engaged sustainable living approach”.

To do this, the HA’s key roles are twofold: to drive educational initiatives on the one hand, and to provide activities and schemes enabling our PRH tenants to put their sustainability knowledge into concrete practice on the other. Exploratory initiatives on sustainability topics such as energy saving, recycling, and greening bring our communities together. For example, over the past year we have organised many activities enabling tenants to get actively involved in recycling and waste reduction initiatives, details of which has been covered in the previous feature story in this chapter. Another important community-led sustainability initiative is our Estate Tree Ambassador (ETA) Scheme, under which around 650 ETAs from across Hong Kong have been recruited to drive awareness of and care for estate greening in their local PRH communities. Participating in the ETA Scheme has enhanced their sense of ownership of the gardens and communal planted areas in their estates. We have built on this over the year by introducing new species of plants and trees to add variety, colour and beauty to the environment.

The HA is committed to achieving sustainability through continual improvements in the environmental, social and economic performance of our PRH estates. For tenants, this means better-designed, more accessible, greener living conditions that are improving their lives. For Hong Kong, it means an efficient and cost-effective use of our precious housing resources that will see our existing public housing stock continue to benefit our tenants in a sustainable manner, well into the future.



■ Tenants taking part in farming activities at the Community Farm of Lam Tin Estate.

