

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)874/03-04  
(These minutes have been  
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/HG/1

**Panel on Housing**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Monday, 5 January 2004, at 2:30 pm**  
**in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon Albert HO Chun-yan (Chairman)  
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan  
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP  
Hon NG Leung-sing, JP  
Hon James TO Kun-sun  
Dr Hon YEUNG Sum  
Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung, BBS  
Hon SZETO Wah  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP  
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP  
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip  
Dr Hon LO Wing-lok, JP  
Hon WONG Sing-chi  
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee  
Hon IP Kwok-him, JP  
Hon LAU Ping-cheung
- Members absent** : Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP  
Hon Howard YOUNG, SBS, JP

**Public officers  
attending**

**: Agenda item IV**

Mr Vincent TONG, JP  
Deputy Director (Construction)  
Housing Department

Mr Daniel LEE  
Assistant Director (Development)  
Housing Department

Ms Theresa YIM  
Chief Architect (Design & Standards)  
Housing Department

Mr LEUNG Sai-chi  
Chief Building Services Engineer  
Housing Department

**Agenda item V**

**Hong Kong Housing Society**

Ms L C WONG  
Executive Director

Mr Daniel LAU  
General Manager (Property & Development)

Mr Benny HUI  
Senior Manager (Property & Development)

**Housing Department**

Mr K C YAU  
Senior Administrative Officer  
(Private Housing)

**Attendance by  
invitation**

**: Agenda item IV**

**Lower Ngau Tau Kok (II) Estate Redevelopment Concern  
Group**

Mr Ray LEE  
Representative

Elderly Flat Concern Group

Ms MOK Siu-Ngor  
Representative

**Clerk in attendance :** Miss Odelia LEUNG  
Chief Council Secretary (1)4

**Staff in attendance :** Ms Sarah YUEN  
Senior Council Secretary (1)6

Ms Christina SHIU  
Legislative Assistant

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Action

**I. Confirmation of minutes**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)461/03-04 -- Minutes of special meeting on  
23 October 2003

LC Paper No. CB(1)668/03-04 -- Minutes of meeting on 1 December  
2003)

The minutes of the meetings held on 23 October and 1 December 2003  
were confirmed.

**II. Information papers issued since last meeting**

2. Members noted the following information papers issued since the last  
regular meeting of the Panel on 1 December 2003 -

(LC Paper No. CB(1)512/03-04 -- Issues on rusting of water  
pipes and discolouration of  
water supply referred to the  
Housing Panel by the  
Complaints Division

LC Paper Nos. CB(1)584/03-04(01)-(06) -- Information about the  
arbitration between  
Housing Authority and Zen  
Pacific relating to Yuen  
Chau Kok Short-Piling  
Case

- LC Paper No. CB(1)649/03-04 -- Paper from the Administration entitled "Transfer of Certain Statutory Functions under Housing Ordinance from Chief Secretary for Administration to Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands"
- LC Paper No. CB(1)673/03-04 -- Paper from the Administration entitled "Hawker Control in Public Housing Estates")

**III. Items for discussion at the next meeting**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)667/03-04(01) -- List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(1)667/03-04(02) -- List of follow-up actions)

3. Members agreed to hold a joint meeting with the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on Monday, 2 February 2004, at 2:30 pm to discuss "Review of the Consent Scheme". The regular meeting of the Panel would be held immediately after the joint meeting at around 3:30 pm. The Chairman proposed and members agreed to discuss arbitration between Housing Authority and Zen Pacific relating to Yuen Chau Kok short-piling case at the next regular meeting.

4. The Chairman reminded members that a special meeting had been scheduled for Thursday, 15 January 2004, at 10:45 am to receive a briefing by the Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands on his policy portfolio relating to housing in the Chief Executive's Policy Address 2004.

**IV. Standard of provisions for new public rental housing units**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)667/03-04(03) -- A joint submission dated 24 December 2003 from the Lower Ngau Tau Kok (II) Estate Redevelopment Concern Group and the Elderly Flat Concern Group

LC Paper No. CB(1)667/03-04(04) -- Information paper provided by the Administration)

5. Mr IP Kwok-him declared interests as a member of the Building Committee (BC) of Housing Authority (HA), which approved the standard of provisions in new public rental housing (PRH) developments in June 2003.

Meeting with deputations

6. Ms MOK Siu-ngor, representative of the Elderly Flat Concern Group, and Mr Ray LEE, representative of the Lower Ngau Tau Kok (II) Estate Redevelopment Concern Group, briefed members on the joint submission of the two concern groups. Ms MOK highlighted tenants' grave concern about the non-provision of metal gates to new domestic public rental housing (PRH) flats and HA's plan to replace 24-hour lighting in PRH estates with intelligent motion-detection lighting control system. Mr LEE added the following points -

- (a) Ten briefings on the new standard of provisions had been held for tenants of Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate. The 200 odd tenants who attended the briefings considered it important that metal gates to PRH flats and 24-hour lighting in public areas in PRH blocks should be provided. A signature campaign in this regard was conducted at which 5 500 signatures were collected to support provision of metal gates;
- (b) The security measures at PRH blocks were not as tight as claimed. Site visits to several new PRH estates had shown that non-tenants including salesmen could easily gain access to PRH blocks to conduct cold calls or disseminate promotional materials;
- (c) There were reported burglary cases in Upper Ngau Tau Kok Estate Phase I which had installed gates of poor quality. A survey also showed that the reason why many PRH tenants removed the metal gates installed by HA was because of their poor quality; and
- (d) The Police and social welfare agencies might need to put in extra resources to tackle problems arising from the non-provision of metal gates. As a result, the new standard might not achieve any savings by the community as a whole.

Meeting with the Administration

7. The Deputy Director of Housing (Construction) (DD of H(C)) briefed members on the Administration's paper. He clarified that HA had no plan to implement intelligent motion-detection lighting control system in public housing estates. As an existing design practice, 24-hour and timer-controlled lighting would continue to be provided for public areas where there was no natural daylight. In fact, the illumination level of lighting in corridors of new PRH estates had increased significantly in line with the standards commonly adopted in private sector developments. In the case of the new Upper Ngau Tau Kok Estate under planning, the illumination level of lighting had been up by 70% compared with that of the Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate.

8. In this connection, Mr IP Kwok-him expressed concern about the communication breakdown which had given rise to the misunderstanding about introduction of intelligent motion-detection lighting. He urged the Administration to find out the reason for such misunderstanding, and improve communication with the public. In response, DD of H(C) pointed out that it was yet to know how the misunderstanding arose. He reported that efforts had already been made to explain to various parties, including tenants of Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate, that HA did not have a plan to introduce intelligent motion-detection lighting.

*Wall finishes at corridors*

9. Mr CHAN Kam-lam enquired about the estimated cost savings in construction and maintenance in using multi-layer acrylic paint in lieu of homogeneous tiles for corridor walls. In reply, DD of H (C) advised that the savings in construction cost would range from \$1 to \$1.5 million for one block, depending on the number of flats. As to the maintenance cost, although regular maintenance would be required if multi-layer acrylic paint was used, the overall cost would be lower after taking into account the initial costs and life cycle costs.

10. In response to Mr CHAN Kam-lam's question on any advantages in the work process if multi-layer acrylic paint was used in place of tiles, DD of H (C) said that the work process would be simpler and shorter because the installation of tiles would necessitate wet trades and require more time. These were not conducive to construction efficiency and better working environments in construction sites. The Chief Architect (Design & Standards), Housing Department (CA(D&S)/HD) confirmed that the work process would be simpler, involving the application of one layer of sealer, the spray of textured coat and two coats of acrylic paint. Installation of tiles, on the other hand, would demand higher skills to achieve quality works. Unsatisfactory workmanship might even pose maintenance problems during the service life of buildings.

11. Mr Fred LI Wah-ming highlighted the many quality and maintenance problems experienced in Ko Chun Court, where multi-layer acrylic paint had been used in lieu of homogeneous tiles. He was concerned that these were generic problems associated with the use of acrylic paint. DD of H (C) said that there should be no such problems. CA(D&S)/HD supplemented that the Ko Chun Court case was an isolated incident owing to poor workmanship. In fact, acrylic paint had been used in Harmony blocks and other public housing blocks for over ten years with satisfactory results. DD of H (C) and CA (D&S)/HD also assured members that the use of multi-layer acrylic paint would not increase fire hazards.

***Installation of flat entrance metal gates***

*- Cost for provision of metal gates*

12. In reply to Mr IP Kwok-him on the cost incurred for installing metal gates for PRH flats, DD of H (C) advised that the cost would be about \$1.5 million for a block of 600 to 700 flats. For an estate consisting five or six blocks, the cost would be around \$10 million

13. In reply to Mr LEE Cheuk-yan on construction cost savings from non-provision of gates, DD of H (C) confirmed that this would be around 1% of the total construction cost of a unit. He however emphasized that the above cost savings should be looked at from a wider perspective because the non-provision of gates was only one of the many initiatives taken to improve the overall cost-effectiveness in the provision of PRH.

14. Mr CHAN Kam-lam pointed out that he was a member of HA's Subsidized Housing Committee and had met with tenants of Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate a few times. Since tenants of the redeveloped Estate were mainly old people, installing metal gates in the new reception estates at their own costs might be a heavy financial burden to them. Moreover, it would also be unfair to the tenants of the Estate since residents of the earlier completed Upper Ngau Tau Kok Estate were provided with metal gates. Given that cost savings from non-provision of metal gates were not substantial, the number of new reception estates was small and tenants of redeveloped estates were mainly aged persons, Mr CHAN proposed that HD should consider providing metal gates to new reception estates. He however did not have strong view on non-provision of metal gates to other new PRH estates.

15. Mr IP Kwok-him explained that he had supported the decision of the BC because it was then considered that with improvements in new building designs and enhanced security measures, it was no longer essential to provide metal gates for ventilation and security purposes. However, in consideration of the grave concerns raised about the impact of the decision on the lifestyles of tenants of to-be-redeveloped estates, he agreed with Mr CHAN Kam-lam that HA should consider providing metal gates to reception estates. He also informed that the subject had been put on the agenda for the following BC meeting on 14 January 2004. He stressed the need to maintain a balance between standard of provisions and resource allocation and opined that the provision of gates should be restricted to reception estates only.

16. Mr Frederick FUNG however queried the basis for restricting the provision of metal gates to reception estates only. In his view, to ensure fairness, if metal gates were found necessary, they should be provided in all estates instead of just reception estates. Moreover, tenants of to-be-redeveloped estates might be

rehoused to estates other than reception estates. There should not be a disparity of treatment.

*- Need for metal gates*

17. The Chairman, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan, Mr Fred LI, Mr YEUNG Yiu-chung, Mr Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, Mr SZETO Wah, Mr Albert CHAN Wai-yip, Mr Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan and Dr YEUNG Sum considered it important to install metal gates for domestic PRH flats. They put forward the following points -

- (a) Metal gates were an additional security measure against burglary and could significantly enhance tenants' sense of security, making them feel comfortable to keep their flat doors open. Such a practice had been playing an important role in fostering neighbourliness and mutual assistance among PRH tenants;
- (b) Due to the unsatisfactory design of PRH flats, there was a genuine need for PRH tenants to open their flat doors to improve ventilation. Without metal gates, tenants would unlikely leave the flat doors open;
- (c) Due to economy of scale, the cost incurred by HA in installing metal gates would be less than by individual tenants. Moreover, it was doubtful whether the Social Welfare Department would, as claimed by the Administration, assist households who had financial difficulties in installing metal gates;
- (d) Members supported the adoption of a "Functional and Cost-effective" approach to the design and construction of PRH but the non-provision of metal gates was not in the right direction. In deciding what facilities should be provided to PRH flats, consideration should not be solely on cost and tenants' views should be taken into account. Metal gates were a necessity and not a luxury to PRH tenants at the present living standard; and
- (e) There should not be a disparity of treatment in public resource allocation. Security measures at HA headquarters and Government offices were strengthened but the minimum security provided by metal gates to PRH tenants was removed.

18. Mr Frederick FUNG said that the subject of the provision of metal gates was discussed by Sham Shui Po District Council (SSPDC) two years ago. SSPDC asked for improvement by installing an additional small metal piece to the opening of metal gates. Unfortunately, the outcome of consideration by HA was blanket non-provision of metal gates.



19. In response to members' views on the need for metal gates, DD of H (C) provided the following response -

- (a) Tenants' concern about security could be adequately addressed by enhanced security measures in PRH. These include reduction in the number of block entrances and exits and provision of ground floor security gates with digital lock, 24-hour security tower guards, closed-circuit television and doorphone systems, flat entrance door with door viewer and security door guard. Moreover, the Crime Prevention Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force (the Bureau) had advised that from the security point of view, tenants should not leave the doors of their flats open and rely only on metal gates. This was because leaving the flat doors open would facilitate strangers to assess the conditions of the flats and see clearly what was going on inside;
- (b) Regarding the concern about ventilation, HA had pioneered the micro-climate studies for some of HA's building projects during their design and planning stages. These studies helped HA to achieve optimum disposition of building blocks and associated open spaces so that individual flats could capture the optimum level of ventilation. There was thus no longer any need to install metal gates in new estates to facilitate tenants to keep the flat doors open to improve ventilation;
- (c) Whether tenants kept their flat doors open should not have significant impact on fostering or otherwise of neighbourliness and mutual assistance among PRH tenants; and
- (d) The new design approach approved by the BC aimed to improve the overall cost-effectiveness in the provision of PRH. Central to the design approach was the optimum and cost-effective delivery of public housing to meet the basic functional needs of tenants in terms of safety, comfort, health and environmental well-being. Fixtures such as metal gates which were not absolutely necessary should be provided by tenants at their own costs to ensure optimal utilization of public resources. Guidelines on installation of metal gates were available for tenants' reference.

20. Commenting on para 19(a) above, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan doubted whether the Bureau had advised against installation of metal gates. He suspected that the Bureau only considered it inappropriate to leave the flat doors open. Mr Frederick FUNG informed that the Bureau representative who attended the relevant SSPDC meetings had in fact said that metal gates could provide additional protection against burglary. In Mr FUNG's view, the enhanced security measures implemented in PRH could hardly provide adequate security because door guards had difficulty in recognizing the large number of tenants in each PRH block.

21. In response, DD of H (C) pointed out that the Bureau had not advised that the provision of metal gates to PRH units was a must. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan remarked that he believed the Bureau would agree metal gates were an additional security protection. Mr Tommy CHEUNG and the Chairman also pointed out that the enhanced security measures in PRH were all provided in private sector developments but metal gates were nevertheless installed.

22. In relation to para 19(d) above, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan suspected that HA was only using the design approach as a pretext to rationalize the decision on the non-provision of metal gates for cost-saving purposes. In Mr Albert CHAN's view, metal gates were absolutely necessary because burglary cases in PRH estates had gone up. The non-provision of metal gates would further worsen the situation because it would be easier to break into PRH flats.

23. In response, DD of H (C) informed that according to the Bureau, from 2001 to 2003, the average figure of burglary in public housing estates was only 0.117% per year and was less than one third of the figure in private domestic developments. Mr Albert CHAN however opined that the comparison was meaningless because households in private domestic developments were better off and hence more attractive to burglars.

24. After discussion, members remained of the view that with the provision of metal gates which would enable PRH tenants to leave the flat doors open, it would be easier for tenants to become aware of what was happening next door and readily help each other. Moreover, given the relatively small cost implications, the Administration should seriously re-consider providing metal gates in PRH estates to address tenants' concerns. In reply to Mr LEE Cheuk-yan on whether the decision on the non-provision of metal gates was final, DD of H (C) reported that the decision had already been approved by BC in June 2003. In fact, most of the rental flats completed thereafter would not be provided with metal gates including Home Ownership Scheme converted flats. However, in view of public concern, the subject would be reconsidered at the following BC meeting. Mr LEE stressed the importance of reviewing the BC's decision. He opined that HA should not just look at cost-effectiveness but due regard to tenants' concerns should be given. HA should also consult PRH applicants because they would be affected by the decision. DD of H (C) undertook to relay the views expressed by members to BC for consideration.

- Motion

25. Mr Fred LI proposed and Mr Frederick FUNG seconded the moving of the following motion -

“本委員會要求房屋委員會繼續為所有日後落成的公屋單位安裝鐵閘。”

(“That this Panel requests that the Housing Authority should continue to install metal gates for all public housing flats to be completed in future.”)

26. The Chairman put the motion to vote. All members then present at the meeting supported the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

*(Post-meeting note: A letter on the motion was issued to the Administration on 6 January 2004.)*

27. To facilitate the BC to consider members' view, the Chairman instructed that the minutes of meeting be sent to the BC before its meeting on 14 January 2004.

*(Post-meeting note: The minutes of meeting was sent to the Administration for onward transmission to the BC on 12 January 2004.)*

**V. Progress of the Hong Kong Housing Society's Senior Citizen Residence Scheme**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)667/03-04(05) -- Information paper provided by the Administration)

28. With the aid of a video show and a power-point presentation, the Senior Manager (Property & Development), Hong Kong Housing Society (SM(P&D)/HKHS) briefed members on the progress of the Senior Citizen Residences Scheme (SEN Scheme) undertaken by the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS).

*(Post-meeting note: The hard copy of the power-point presentation material was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)715/03-04 on 6 January 2004.)*

Present position

29. The Chairman and Mr Frederick FUNG said that when the Panel was briefed on the SEN Scheme in 2001, they had concern about its viability. They were glad to note the satisfactory progress of and good response to the SEN Scheme. They complimented HKHS for the success of the SEN Scheme.

30. Noting that 757 applications had been received but only 194 units had been taken up, the Chairman enquired about the time taken to process the applications under the SEN Scheme. The Executive Director, HKHS (ED/HKHS) explained that of the 757 applications received for the Jolly Place, only 266 households were assessed to be eligible. Applications and flat selection were still continuing. Since Jolly Place could only provide 243 units, HKHS had no plan to launch publicity to invite applications for vacant units for the time being. When the project at Jordan Valley, which would provide 333 units in total, was ready, it

would launch another publicity campaign to invite applications for both projects. As the SEN Scheme was a new housing initiative, it was HKHS's conscious decision to phase out the take-up to allow time for Haven of Hope Christian Service, which had been entrusted with the management of Jolly Place, to tackle any teething problems that might arise. This approach had been proved useful and the operation of Jolly Place was very smooth.

Financial matters

31. Noting that up to 77% of the eligible applicants for Jolly Place had no monthly income, Mr CHAN Kam-lam enquired how many of them required third-party guarantee because the value of their assets before paying the entry contribution was less than \$1 million. In reply, SM(P&D)/HKHS reported that 26% of the eligible applicants required third-party guarantee.

32. In response to the Chairman on any element of subsidy under the SEN Scheme, ED/HKHS said that this would largely hinge on the turnover rate. With reference to overseas experience, it was estimated that it would take thirty to forty years to fully recover the relevant construction costs. The General Manager (Property & Development), HKHS supplemented that there was no subsidy on daily operation and the management fees of Jolly Place were set at levels sufficient to recover the full costs.

33. Mr Frederick FUNG asked whether the management fees would cover housekeeping service and whether domestic helpers of tenants could stay in units under the SEN Scheme. In reply, ED/HKHS confirmed that domestic helpers of tenants could apply to stay as temporary occupiers. They however would not be entitled to the tenancy right and relevant services.

Other matters

34. As to Mr Frederick FUNG's enquiry on the sizes of units in Jolly Place, SM(P&D)/HKHS advised that they were of two different sizes. The saleable area of a one-bedroom unit was around 35 square metres and a studio unit, 25 square metres.

HKHS  
Clerk

35. Mr Frederick FUNG suggested that the Panel arrange a visit to Jolly Place. The Chairman said that the visit might be scheduled after the Chinese New Year. ED/HKHS agreed to make arrangement.

**VI. Any other business**

36. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:15 pm.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
29 January 2004