

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)896/07-08  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/HG/1

**Panel on Housing**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Monday, 3 December 2007, at 2:30 pm**  
**in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon LEE Wing-tat (Chairman)  
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, GBS, JP  
Hon James TO Kun-sun  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP  
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP  
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP  
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP  
Hon LI Kwok-ying, MH, JP  
Dr Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, JP  
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
- Members absent** : Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP  
Dr Hon YEUNG Sum, JP  
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
- Public officers attending** : Agenda Item III  
Ms Ada FUNG Yin-suen, JP  
Deputy Director (Development & Construction)  
Housing Department

Mr CHAN Nap-ming  
Assistant Director (Development & Procurement)  
Housing Department

Mr LEE Cert-quinn  
Assistant Director (Estate Management) 1  
Housing Department

Mr Ken CHEUNG Kun-sing  
Chief Architect (Development & Standards)  
Housing Department

Agenda Item IV

Mr LAU Kai-hung, JP  
Deputy Director (Estate Management)  
Housing Department

Mr WONG Bay  
Assistant Director (Estate Management) 2  
Housing Department

Mrs Alice LO CHAN May-yee  
Chief Housing Manager/Applications  
Housing Department

**Clerk in attendance** : Ms Connie SZETO  
Chief Council Secretary (1)6

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

Ms Michelle NIEN  
Legislative Assistant (1)9

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Action

- I Information papers issued since last meeting**  
(LC Paper No. CB(1)2160/06-07(01) -- Administration's paper on  
Operation of Quota and Points  
System for Non-elderly  
One-person Applicants of Public  
Rental Housing

LC Paper No. CB(1)202/07-08(01) -- Administration's paper on Land Registry statistics in October 2007 (press release))

Members noted that the above information papers had been issued since the last regular meeting held on 5 November 2007.

## **II Items for discussion at the next meeting**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)340/07-08(01) -- List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(1)340/07-08(02) -- List of follow-up actions)

2. Members agreed to discuss the item on "District and local open spaces adjoining Choi Wan Road public housing development" proposed by the Administration, and the following items proposed by members at the next regular meeting to be held on Monday, 7 January 2008, at 2:30 pm:

- (a) Land supply for public housing development; and
- (b) Proposal to resume the Home Ownership Scheme and the Tenants Purchase Scheme.

## **III Environmentally friendly designs of and green measures implemented in public rental housing estates**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)340/07-08(03) -- Administration's paper on environmentally friendly designs and green measures of public rental housing estates

LC Paper No. CB(1)385/07-08(01) -- Administration's paper on *(tabled at the meeting and subsequently issued via email on 4 December 2007)* environmentally friendly designs of and green measures implemented in public rental housing estates (power-point presentation materials))

3. With the aid of power-point, the Deputy Director (Development & Construction), Housing Department (DD/D&C), gave a presentation on the environmentally friendly building designs and construction technologies incorporated by the Housing Authority (HA) in the planning, design and construction of public rental housing (PRH) estates in the past years. These elements included "Micro-Climate" studies, Air Ventilation Assessments, common W-trap system in drainage facilities, domestic waste management, refuse storage and collection design to promote sorting at source, installation of de-odourizers at

refuse collection points, energy saving designs, the use of renewable energy, green construction techniques and waste management, "Life Cycle Assessment" and "Life Cycle Costing", more environmentally friendly facade, and increased greening in PRH estates. She also provided a briefing on the details of the greening and environmental protection initiatives (the green measures) which were actively promoted by the Housing Department (HD) in existing PRH estates. These measures included Green Delight in Estates, Action Seedling, domestic waste disposal covering the Source Separation of Domestic Waste Programme and waste recovery activities, energy conservation, and the use of Housing Channel. DD/D&C said that the environmentally friendly building designs and the green measures implemented in PRH estates had not only helped create a green environment and promote a healthy way of living, but had also heightened the sense of belonging among tenants towards the estate and the community. She assured members that HA would continue to implement various education and publicity programmes to raise the environmental awareness among staff members, tenants and contractors.

### Discussion

#### *Implementation and monitoring of the environmentally friendly designs and the green measures*

4. While appreciating the efforts of HA in implementing the above initiatives and measures in PRH estates, Miss CHAN Yuen-han opined that HA should expedite the progress in order to achieve early improvement to address the concerns raised by residents, especially the odour problem at refuse collection points in aged estates. In this connection, she urged HA to formulate an implementation programme for carrying out the initiatives and measures in all PRH estates in an orderly and efficient manner, as well as to facilitate monitoring of their progress. In reply, DD/D&C pointed out that HA had been progressively extending the initiatives and measures to existing estates where trial schemes implemented in new estates were found effective. The Assistant Director (Estate Management)1, Housing Department (AD(EM)) supplemented that the implementation of the initiatives and measures was made according to the relevant annual performance targets set by HA. HD was able to meet the targets set for the past two years. Moreover, appropriate indicators were established for evaluating the effectiveness of the initiatives and measures. As to the greening of slopes in existing estates, AD(EM) said that where resources permitted, efforts would be made to green all slopes. On containing the odours at the time of refuse collection, the new de-odourizers installed at the covered refuse collection points in some of the estates had proved effective. To date, HD had already installed 57 sets of de-odourizers in various estates. It would continue to apply advanced technologies to contain the odours taking into account the availability of resources and the operational needs of estates.

5. To facilitate members in reviewing and monitoring the effectiveness and progress of the environmentally friendly measures adopted in PRH estates, Mr WONG Kwok-hing requested the Administration to provide an annual progress

report in this regard for the Panel's information. He and the Chairman also opined that the report should set out the following:

- (a) Details on each of the measures including brief description on the measure, highlights on its implementation and review of its effectiveness over the years, and the target set for the next year, etc; and
- (b) In connection with item (a), the information should be presented in table form. In reporting the progress made in each measure, information in percentage points or in other quantifiable details should be provided. For example, the information should include the percentage of PRH estates with increase in greening area, the quantity of material recovered with the implementation of measures on "refuse storage and collection design to promote sorting at source" and "source separation of domestic waste programme" etc; and their percentage changes over the years.

Admin. In response, DD/D&C said that HA provided a "Sustainability Report" on an annual basis summarizing the implementation and performance of various green initiatives and measures in PRH estates. She agreed to provide the progress report as requested by members starting from the 2007-2008 financial year.

#### *Greening in PRH estates*

6. Miss CHAN Yuen-han was keen to ensure that the measure to increase greening in PRH estates would not be cosmetic but would be implemented in a comprehensive manner to cover areas like rooftops of housing blocks, school premises and shopping centres, leisure facilities, and particularly bare slopes many of which were presently covered with cement. In response, DD/D&C affirmed HA's determination to extend greening to leisure facilities and slopes in PRH estates as far as practicable. In fact, the greening initiative would be implemented in all new housing developments. As to existing developments, greening improvement works would be carried out progressively. In this regard, to ensure and enhance the effectiveness of the greening initiative, HD would set annual greening targets for slopes, rooftops and open spaces.

7. Mr LI Kwok-ying pointed out that the greening of external walls was very common overseas. However, he noted that experience had shown that the roots of plants could adversely affect the appearance of the external walls, and at times, the structural safety of the buildings. In response, DD/D&C explained that instead of directly planting on external walls, prefabricated "vertical green panels" would be used for growing plants and be installed on roofs or facades of buildings, which could prevent the roots of plants from coming into direct contact with the walls. Moreover, landscape architects of HD were also experimenting with different plant species to select those which could grow well and fast on slopes with a view to quickly creating an attractive landscape and reduce the heat island effect, and providing a healthy and comfortable living environment for PRH tenants.

8. Mr Frederick FUNG referred to his experience of visiting "green offices" during an overseas duty trip, where trees were planted everywhere indoors, and rooftops, corridors and even cubicle partitions were decorated with plants. He urged HD to consider implementing similar greening measures in its offices and PRH estates. He opined that HA should consider implementing a pilot scheme in some estates and extending it to all estates, say within ten years, if viability of the scheme could be established. In response, DD/D&C remarked that plants grown in an indoor environment with no direct sunlight might give off carbon dioxide and this would be unhealthy. As such, it was necessary to examine the availability of sunlight in HA's offices before Mr FUNG's suggestion could be taken forward. Notwithstanding, DD/D&C said that HA would endeavour to increase the scope of greening inside HA premises where sunlight could reach. Mr LI Kwok-ying shared the Administration's views, and cautioned that great care needed to be exercised in selecting plant species for growth indoors lest they might breed pests such as mosquitoes and cockroaches as seen in the case of a greened HA market.

*Green construction techniques*

9. Mr WONG Kwok-hing referred to the adoption of component prefabrication techniques in HA's projects with a view to promoting green construction practices, and expressed concern about negative impact on the employment opportunities of local construction workers since such techniques involved the use of pre-cast components mostly produced outside Hong Kong. To address the concern of local construction workers and to better control the quality of building works, Mr WONG called upon HA to consider requiring contractors to make pre-cast components in Hong Kong as far as practicable. In response, DD/D&C explained that as a signatory to the World Trade Organization Agreement on Government Procurement, Hong Kong had to provide open, fair and non-discriminatory treatment of products, services and service providers irrespective of their country of origin. Nonetheless, HA might require certain works to be conducted on-site in Hong Kong where appropriate. For example, the construction of shear walls was mandated to be conducted on-site. The arrangement for building contractors to use prefabricated components produced on-site had been adopted in the redevelopment of the Kwai Chung Flatted Factory Estate. She further explained that component prefabrication techniques would be adopted in HA's projects only where appropriate, and that their use could help promote quality assurance in terms of waterproof quality and durability of building fabric, and could enhance construction site safety by minimizing work-at-height.

10. In this connection, Mr WONG Kwok-hing urged HA to support the Government's pledge of creating more job opportunities for local construction workers. In response, DD/D&C pointed out that HA had already been actively taking forward housing development and maintenance projects to create jobs for local construction workers in keeping with the above policy direction. She believed that the employment situation of local construction workers would be further improved with the implementation of more infrastructure projects in Hong Kong.

11. Referring to the successful practice adopted in countries like Germany and Japan in using recycled materials, such as bricks made from recycled glass and tyres, in building projects, Mr Frederick FUNG called upon HA to learn from these examples. He opined that besides promoting green construction techniques in HA's projects, the practice would also help generate local demand to assist the development of recycling industry in Hong Kong. In response, DD/D&C assured members that HA had already been using paving bricks made from recycled materials. In fact, the requirement to use recycled construction materials where practicable was a standard requirement stipulated in the contracts between HA and contractors. As to the use of more innovative recycled building materials, she said that this would need to be explored in collaboration with the relevant manufacturers and the construction industry.

12. Noting the Administration's plan to make the Building Energy Codes mandatory in 2008, under which buildings were required to meet the energy efficiency requirements on lighting, electricity, air conditioning, lift and escalator installations etc, the Chairman enquired whether the requirements stipulated in the Codes were minimum requirements, and if so, whether HA would seek to do better than the Codes. In consideration of the large number of PRH developments, he was of the view that the implementation of energy saving designs in PRH estates could greatly reduce the heat island effect. In response, DD/D&C confirmed that HA aimed higher than the statutory requirements in the Codes. For example, HA had been conducting studies on energy efficiency measures for lifts. If the results were satisfactory, consideration would be given to adopting these measures in PRH estates.

*Other green practices*

13. Noting the absence of a green procurement policy in the Administration's information paper for the item, the Chairman highlighted the need for HA to formulate such a policy notwithstanding that its adoption was controversial as procurement of green products and services would involve higher cost. He also enquired whether green features would be made a compulsory requirement in HA's contracts for goods and services. In response, DD/D&C explained that the aforesaid policy had not been highlighted in the paper because it was not a new initiative but already a principle adopted by HA in the procurement of goods and services, and a policy followed by HA's contractors for a long time. For example, the office stationery used in HD was made from recycled materials. HA had already required all its contractors to meet by 2008 the requirements of ISO 14001:2004 standard, which addressed various aspects of environmental management. In fact, HA's contractors had been able to meet the ISO requirements progressively since 2002. HA's various service contracts had also incorporated specific requirements on environmental management measures. Where necessary, HA could provide further information on its green procurement measures.

14. In reply to the Chairman on the availability of green audits on the various green measures adopted in PRH estates, DD/D&C confirmed that the Sustainability Reports which were presented to members of HA every year were validated by a third party to ensure the objectivity and impartiality of the relevant assessments.

*Energy conservation*

15. Mr LI Kwok-ying referred to the plan to install solar-powered lamp posts in the landscaped areas of some HA projects to be completed in 2008 and expressed concern that trees in the landscaped areas might block off the much required sunlight to generate solar power. In reply, DD/D&C explained that the trial scheme was conducted on a small scale as HA's initial step in pursuing the use of renewable energy and enhancing public awareness of such need. Whether wind- or solar-powered lighting installation was more effective in conserving energy could only be determined after the completion of the trial scheme. In response to Mr LI, DD/D&C also confirmed that solar-powered lamp posts would not be installed on a large scale before their long-term performance and effectiveness were ascertained.

16. The Chairman appreciated HA's efforts in conserving energy in PRH estates. In particular, he was pleased to note that the trial scheme on energy conservation in Homantin Estate launched by HA in early 2007 had resulted in a saving of about 11% in power consumption for the public areas of the housing blocks concerned. In this regard, he also noticed from the Administration's paper that electricity consumption could be reduced by about 6% in a typical public housing block with energy efficiency designs. As such, given the large number of PRH estates in Hong Kong, he was keen to see that the successful experience in the trial scheme in Homantin would be applied to other PRH estates so as to reduce the overall electricity consumption in Hong Kong.

17. In response, DD/D&C elaborated that owing to the different designs of PRH estates developed at different times, the positive results of the energy conservation trial scheme in Homantin might not be achieved in all estates. Whether the energy conservation measures could result in power conservation and its level of saving would hinge on the individual circumstances of the estates concerned. For example, in aged PRH estates where lightings were already very dim, it might not be appropriate to implement such energy saving measures. On the other hand, power conservation would not be significant in estates built after 2001 because these estates had already adopted electricity saving designs and hence the scope for applying further energy conservation measures was limited. Notwithstanding, the Homantin trial scheme had been extended to the domestic blocks of ten other estates to allow further testing and assessment of the energy saving measures. HA would also consider further extending the scheme to more estates where appropriate if the trial scheme yielded positive results.

18. Mr Frederick FUNG welcomed HA's initiative to pursue the use of solar power in new PRH estates and stressed the need to formulate an implementation timetable for extending the relevant measures to all PRH estates in phases



preferably within ten years. In response, DD/D&C emphasized that as full-scale introduction of solar powered lighting installation in PRH estates would have far-reaching implications, it would be prudent to ascertain the effectiveness and long-term performance of such installation through trial schemes first. Moreover, the subsequent disposal of solar lighting devices also required prudent management. Notwithstanding, HA would, in keeping with the times, increase the use of renewable energy in phases where appropriate.

19. On the use of energy saving lighting devices, Mr Frederick FUNG highlighted lighting installation used in the Mainland which was equipped with sensor to control the on and off functions of the lighting according to population flow, and asked if HA would consider using such lighting in PRH estates. In reply, DD/D&C pointed out that HD had examined the use of the aforesaid devices in PRH estates. However, in consideration of the need to ensure sufficient lighting for residents at all times to avoid inconvenience and address their security concerns, the devices might not be appropriate in PRH estates. Alternatively, HD might examine the use of lighting devices that would go on and off according to the adequacy of natural daylight and escalators that could adjust speed with the presence/absence of users in PRH estates. In this regard, Mr LI Kwok-ying pointed out that as he understood, the use of the lighting devices referred to by Mr FUNG could lead to accidents if the devices failed to go on in a timely manner.

#### *Waste management*

20. Mr LI Kwok-ying enquired whether the collection of domestic recyclable waste in PRH estates was conducted by HD staff or outsourced to recyclers. In reply, AD(EM) explained that all domestic waste collection and handling work in PRH estates had already been contracted out, and HD staff were not involved in such collection. In this regard, he said that a study had been conducted in estates to compare the effectiveness of waste recovery by cleaning contractors and by designated recyclers. Findings of the study indicated that recovery by cleaning contractors was more effective. HA would formulate its long-term policy on waste management in PRH estates with reference to the findings of the study.

21. Referring to the odour problem at the refuse collection point in Yat Tung Estate, the Chairman was concerned about the effectiveness of using nanotechnology to address the problem and enquired about other possible measures to tackle the problem. In response, DD/D&C said that HD had already experimented various de-odourization techniques to contain the odours in Yat Tung Estate. The latest one involving the use of ozone had proven effective. In this connection, she added that according to the understanding of HD, the odour in Yat Tung Estate might come from the sea nearby and might not necessarily be produced at the refuse collection point in the estate. The real cause had yet to be ascertained.

**IV Improvements in facilities and living space in aged public rental housing estates**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)340/07-08(04) -- Administration's paper on improvement of facilities and living space in aged public housing estates

LC Paper No. CB(1)385/07-08(02) -- Administration's paper on improvement of facilities and living space in aged public housing estates (power-point presentation materials))  
(*tabled at the meeting and subsequently issued via email on 5 December 2007*)

Presentation by the Administration

22. With the aid of powerpoint, the Deputy Director (Estate Management), Housing Department (DD(EM)/HD) gave a presentation on HA's measures to improve the facilities and living space in aged public housing estates (PHEs). In gist, he said that HA had brought improvements to estate environment and building quality through a number of maintenance and improvement programmes including Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme (CSIP), Estate Improvement Programme (EIP), Total Maintenance Scheme (TMS), Replumbing Programme, Condensation Drain Pipe Programme, Lift Upgrading Programme, Re-wiring and Electrical Reinforcement, Enhancement of Security System, and Barrier-free Access Improvement Programme. HA also sought to ensure that residents would enjoy comfortable living space through implementing the allocation and transfer policies, such as Overcrowding Relief Transfer Exercise and Living Space Improvement Transfer Scheme.

Discussion

*Installation of lifts in public housing estates*

23. Mr LI Kwok-ying asked on behalf of Mr CHAN Kam-lam about the Lift Upgrading Programme. Noting from the Administration's paper that feasibility studies on the provision of lift towers in some aged PHEs such as Choi Hung Estate, Mr CHAN enquired whether the low blocks of Ping Shek Estate which had a high proportion of elderly residents would be covered under the programme. According to Mr CHAN, the lifts in the high blocks of Ping Shek Estate were not meeting the needs of the residents as the lifts were not accessible to the odd-number floors. This had caused great inconvenience to the elderly and the disabled tenants. Tenants were keen to know the details and timeframe for making improvement to the lifts.

24. DD(EM)/HD said that feasibility study had been conducted for Ping Shek Estate and lifts would be constructed for two low blocks which did not have lift services at present. As regards the high blocks of Ping Shek Estate, the Administration would consider enhancing lift accessibility to each floor having

regard to technical feasibility.

25. Dr Joseph LI was disappointed that plans for installing lifts for aged PHEs without lift services at present had yet to be finalized and expressed concern about the timeframe of the installation works. He urged the Administration to expedite the installation programme for the convenience of the elderly and the needy. In response, DD(EM)/HD reiterated that lifts would be installed for estate blocks currently without lift services subject to confirmation of technical feasibility. He pointed out that constraints, such as presence of underground drainage pipes and public utilities facilities, and the hillside location of blocks, might render installation of lift towers impossible for some estate blocks.

26. In response to Mr WONG Kwok-hing's enquiry about information on the estates which had not been installed with lifts, DD(EM)/HD advised that HA planned to install lifts, subject to technical feasibility, for estates which were aged 40 years or above and would be sustained for at least 15 years according to CSIP results. At Mr WONG's request, the Administration agreed to provide information on the names of estates in which no lifts had been installed for access to some or all floor levels in the housing blocks, the number of floor levels concerned, and the estimated timeframe for implementing the retrofitting works, if any.

*(Post-meeting note: The information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)480/07-08 on 19 December 2007.)*

*Provision of barrier-free access links*

27. Referring to the Barrier-free Access Improvement Programme, Mr LI Kwok-ying asked whether the toilets in flats with disabled tenants would be enlarged to facilitate tenants' access. In response, DD(EM)/HD said that the Administration would consult physiotherapists of disabled residents on the need to modify in-flat facilities to facilitate residents' daily access including the need to enlarge toilets in flats.

28. Given the improved financial position of HA, Miss CHAN Yuen-han urged HA to implement comprehensive maintenance and improvement programmes to meet the needs of tenants in aged PHEs. By way of illustration, in providing barrier-free access links, she pointed out that although escalators had been provided for residents at Tsz Ching Estate in Tze Wan Shan to go uphill, no such pedestrian facilities were provided to facilitate residents to go downhill to areas such as Tsz On Court and Tze Wan Shan Centre. Residents had to walk downhill or take public transport, which would entail additional costs. She suggested that two-way lifts or escalators should be provided to facilitate residents in Tze Wan Shan to go uphill and downhill. As regards Choi Hung Estate, pointing out that the estate was surrounded by roads and there was insufficient pedestrian facilities for tenants, Miss CHAN urged HA to consider enhancing the pedestrian facilities in the vicinity to provide tenants with more convenient access to nearby places, in particular the future Kai Tak Development Area. In this connection, she said that consideration

could be given to increasing the connectivity of Choi Hung Estate by making use of the proposed MTR Shatin-Central Link.

29. DD(EM)/HD said that the Administration had collected the views of local residents and Legislative Council (LegCo) Members on measures to enhance the connectivity of Tsz Wan Shan area and Choi Hung Estate. At present, pedestrian facilities, including escalators and a footbridge across Po Kong Village Road, were provided for residents of Tsz Wan Shan to facilitate their access to Wong Tai Sin MTR Station or Diamond Hill MTR Station. The Administration would further examine measures to enhance the connectivity of estates in Tsz Wan Shan. As regards Choi Hung Estate, DD(EM)/HD said that the Administration was aware of local residents' views to enhance accessibility with a view to making the area more vibrant. HD would discuss with other relevant Government departments in providing more convenient access links for residents of Choi Hung Estate to the surrounding areas.

*Replumbing programme in public housing estates*

30. Referring to HD's policy of replacing all water pipes inside the flats by copper pipes including those concealed under the decoration fittings under the Replumbing Programme, Mr LI Kwok-ying expressed concern that the policy had caused inconvenience to some residents who had to reinstate the decoration fittings affected by the pipe replacement works. He asked whether HD would be flexible in considering residents' request of replacing non-concealed pipes only. In response, DD(EM)/HD said that before carrying out the repair and improvement works, HD would set up a show-flat to demonstrate the results of the works concerned. Tenants could discuss with the estate management offices concerned and request to adjust the scope of the works inside their flats to suit their needs. Suitable modification could be made where justified.

*Provision of metal gates for flats*

31. While welcoming the various improvement and maintenance programmes to improve the living environment of aged PHEs, Mr WONG Kwok-hing pointed out that some metal gates installed for flats in aged PHEs were found in poor conditions and asked whether HD had any plan to replace them. Mr WONG further said that residents living in new estates had strong views about HA's policy of not providing metal gates for flats in new PHEs. He opined that if metal gates were installed for flats, residents would be more willing to open their doors, thus would help enhance air ventilation and communication among residents in the neighbourhood. Referring to media reports that HA would review the concerned policy, Mr WONG asked about the progress in this regard.

32. DD(EM)/HD said that when making the in-flat inspection under TMS, staff of HD would identify maintenance problems and check various facilities inside a flat. If the metal gate was found in poor condition due to normal wear and tear, HD would arrange it to be repaired or replaced. As regards the policy of metal gates provision for new public rental housing (PRH) flats, DD(EM)/HD said that

the policy was endorsed by HA's Building Committee in consideration that the entrance metal gate was not a basic PRH flat facility and developers in the private market had not provided flats' entrance gates. Nonetheless, special arrangements had been made for reception estates under the Comprehensive Redevelopment Programme where metal gates would be provided to the tenants which were affected by redevelopments, or in the case of estate clearance where there would be no reception estate, an ex-gratia allowance would be granted to affected tenants for metal gate installation. Other tenants could install metal gates at their own cost. In light of the public views expressed on the policy and recent discussions on the issue by HA's Subsidised Housing Committee, DD(EM)/HD said that the Building Committee would look into the matter and consider the need for reviewing the policy.

*Scope of the improvement works*

33. Prof Patrick LAU appreciated HA's efforts in improving the living environment of aged PHEs. On the scope of the improvement works, Prof LAU enquired whether HD would consider implementing measures to conserve the use of water in PHEs. He also opined that opportunities should be taken to upgrade the loading of electricity for flats in aged estates to address possible problem of overloading of electricity, as well as to provide more sockets inside the flat to facilitate residents. Moreover, he opined that HA should improve facilities in PHEs to enhance the living standard of residents. For instance, consideration should be given to improve the reception of television in PHEs by enhancing the facilities to enable residents to receive TV signals in addition to the present four free terrestrial television channels.

34. On the suggestion on water conservation in PHEs, DD(EM)/HD said that HD was installing condensation drain pipes on building facades for air-conditioners in phases and was examining the feasibility of using the collected water for watering plants in PHEs. As regards the upgrading programme of electricity loading in PHEs, he advised that with a view to enhancing the loading and safety of electricity supply in PHEs, HD had completed the programme for aged estates. Moreover, in order to address the problems of aging wiring and inadequate sockets in the flats of aged estates, HD had launched an in-flat re-wiring programme, which would include providing additional sockets to address residents' needs. DD(EM)/HD reiterated that for any major renovation and improvement programmes, HD would set up a show-flat to demonstrate the results of the works and to collect the views of the affected residents. He further advised that all PHEs had access to the cable-TV networks and residents could purchase paid-TV service at their own cost.

35. While welcoming HA's initiatives to improve the living environment of aged PHEs through carrying out various maintenance and improvement programmes, Mr Abraham SHEK considered the objectives of the programmes too restrictive. Given HA's improved financial position in recent years, he urged that HA should further expand the scope of the programmes to raise the living standard of tenants and cater for the needs of modern-day life, especially for the elderly

living in aged PHEs. While he noticed that the living environment for the new PHEs had been improved, residents in aged estates had not benefited from maintenance and improvement programmes. In this regard, he suggested that more leisure facilities and open spaces should be provided for residents in aged estates.

36. In response, DD(EM)/HD stressed that the maintenance and improvement programmes mentioned in the paper aimed to improve the living environment and enhancing the living standards of all PHE tenants. For instance, under CSIP, structural investigation had been completed for six aged estates and large scale repair and improvement works would be undertaken in five estates under EIP to sustain the estates for at least 15 years. He assured members that in carrying out EIP works, HD would consult the residents in the estates for providing new and additional facilities to meet their needs. HD would also develop a suitable theme for each estate taking into account estate characteristics. For example, "Health Estate" was the theme for Sai Wan Estate, where the improvement works included the construction of a health track along the hillside. "Barrier-free, green and energetic" were chosen as the theme for Choi Hung Estate, where improvement works included installing additional lifts and providing more landscape facilities and outdoor fitness venues. The purpose was to ensure that residents could enjoy the new facilities in their estates and to make the area more vibrant.

37. With a view to fostering residents' cooperation and support for carrying the various programmes to improve the living environment in PHEs, Mr Abraham SHEK suggested that the Administration should provide more information to residents such as graphic images to show the positive results of the improvement works. Sharing the views, the Chairman suggested holding exhibitions in the relevant estates with colour photographs as well as models depicting the results of the improvement works and the expected enhancement made in the living environment. In response, DD(EM)/HD said that after the completion of the structural investigation works, the Administration would consult the residents through the Estate Management Advisory Committees (EMACs) and other local channels on the facilities required. The improvement plan incorporating residents' views would then be presented with relevant details and pictures, if appropriate, to residents for consultation. Mr SHEK stressed that it was imperative that sufficient information be presented clearly to the residents to facilitate their understanding on the proposed improvement works and to engage them in the consultation process.

38. In this connection, Mr WONG Kwok-hing called on HD to give due consideration to the suggestions from LegCo Members, EMACs and Mutual Aid Committees in strengthening the greening measures and providing more recreational and leisure facilities in old estates to meet the needs of the ageing population.

39. DD(EM)/HD reiterated that ten estates had been included under CSIP and HD would carry out proper maintenance and implement EIP in those estates which could be sustained for at least 15 more years in a cost-effective manner. For those estates not included under CSIP, EMACs concerned could convey their views and

suggestions for improving the estate environment to HD for consideration. EMACs would also make use of the funds allocated to them for undertaking minor improvement works in the estates, such as improving pebble paths and sitting-out areas.

40. Mr WONG Kwok-hing referred to the work of the multi-disciplinary team in implementing EIP in estates and considered that HD should exercise flexibility in providing facilities for aged PHEs in view of the limited resources available to EMACs. In reply, DD(EM)/HD explained that the team comprising housing managers and relevant professionals such as planners and landscape architects was tasked to examine the need for providing additional accesses, landscape facilities, improved recreational and sports facilities and additional facilities for the elderly in the estates in light of the estates' demographic profiles. He stressed that by consolidating the views of residents and different professionals, the maintenance and improvement works would better cater for the needs of residents.

*Environmental friendly building designs and green measures in public housing estates*

41. While expressing support for the Action Seedling Programme, Mrs Selina CHOW was concerned that the Programme was only implemented in 14 public housing projects to be completed in 2008 and 2009 and considered that HA should expedite the progress to provide residents with a greener environment as soon as possible. On the Source Separation of Domestic Waste Programme (SSDWP) implemented in PHEs, Mrs CHOW enquired about the details of the programme and residents' response. Highlighting the importance of public education in gaining residents' support for source separation of domestic waste, she sought elaboration on promotional activities in this regard. She suggested that consideration could be given to organizing activities such as competition to encourage residents' participation in SSDWP.

42. DD(EM)/HD said that HD would endeavour to implement greening measures in PHEs to improve the living environment where possible and would strive to expedite the works. As regards SSDWP, DD(EM)/HD advised that HA had been implementing various education and publicity programmes including competitions to enhance residents' involvement and participation in environmental protection initiatives. He supplemented that SSDWP had been implemented by HA in conjunction with three local green groups since 2005 and relevant facilities were provided at each participating housing block of the programme. According to the plan, 30 additional PRH estates would be included in the programme each year. As at the end of 2007, a total of 90 PRH estates had joined SSDWP. It was expected that the programme would be extended to all PRH estates by 2012. Through participating in SSDWP, PRH tenants had gained better understanding of waste separation and their response towards the Programme had been positive.

43. While expressing support for implementing maintenance and improvement programmes to improve the living environment in aged PHEs, Dr Joseph LEE was concerned whether environmentally friendly building designs and green measures

would be implemented in these estates. In reply, DD(EM)/HD said that the environmentally friendly building designs and green measures implemented in PHEs were set out in the Administration's paper provided for the last discussion item and other relevant papers. He assured members that where practicable, environmentally friendly building measures and green measures would be implemented in PHEs.

*Building a more vibrant PHE environment*

44. Referring to his visits to aged PHEs such as Kwai Shing West Estate, Cheung Ching Estate and Cheung Shan Estate, the Chairman observed that there was a lack of vibrancy in these estates and opined that the phenomenon could be attributable to the growing ageing population, the closure of markets or restaurants leading to reduction in economic activities in the estates and the peripheral areas. He further pointed out that in 2000 the proportion of tenants aged 60 or above in Cheung Shan Estate was 20%, with the progress of time, he believed that the relevant figure would have increased to 25% to 30% now. While expressing support for HA's efforts in improving the living environment of aged PHEs, he considered that this was not adequate to address the problems arising from the ageing population and low vibrancy in aged estates. He expressed concern that the problems would aggravate further in the coming years and urged HA and other relevant Government departments to look into the problems and devise appropriate measures to tackle them. According to him, one possible solution was to attract more young families to live in aged estates in order to increase the vibrancy. His view was shared by Mr WONG Kwok-hing.

45. In response, DD(EM)/HD said that HA had plans to improve the hardware as well as software facilities for aged PHEs. For instance, in support of the Administration's policy of fostering harmonious families, HA had enhanced five public housing allocation policies with a view to attracting young people to live in the same estate or nearby estate of their elderly family members so as to take care of them. Moreover, young families were attracted to live in redeveloped PHEs in Kowloon East, and this had successfully helped rejuvenate the redeveloped estates. He further advised that an average of 15 000 PRH flats, mostly in aged PHEs, would be recovered for allocation each year to the applicants on the Waiting List which currently comprised mostly young families. Allocation of the recovered flats to young families would help achieve a more balanced demographic profile for the aged PHEs. DD(EM)/HD said that the above measures had helped change tenant composition in aged PHEs. He assured members that HA would continue to monitor progress of these measures and explore other possible measures to increase the vitality of aged PHEs.

46. Sharing members' views about the lack of vitality in aged PHEs, Prof Patrick LAU pointed out that old PHEs indeed had a lot of interesting street activities which helped promote communication among residents and strengthen their sense of belonging to the estates. He considered that in pursuing the redevelopment of aged PHEs, rather than demolishing the housing blocks, HA should endeavour to preserve the characteristics of individual estates and pursue a



suitable mix of old and new elements in the redevelopment projects. For instance, consideration could be given to implementing pilot projects where old housing blocks with appropriate improvement and modification could be preserved and housing blocks with modern design would be provided in the same estate. In this regard, as a member of HA's Building Committee, Prof Patrick LAU said that he would reflect members' views for consideration of the Committee.

47. Sharing Prof Patrick LAU's views, the Chairman highlighted that urban rejuvenation and heritage preservation were among the important objectives in pursuing urban renewal. Whilst he appreciated that difficulties would be involved in redeveloping an estate by clearing some housing blocks while retaining others, he called on HA to consider implementing redevelopment projects in a flexible manner in order to help achieve urban renewal at district level. As regards improvement in the demographic profile in PHEs through the allocation of recovered PRH flats to young families, the Chairman was concerned about the slow process in achieving the required results. He reiterated his concern that the problems arising from ageing population and the lack of vibrancy in aged PHEs would aggravate in the coming years. HA should study the impact of increasing ageing population in aged PHEs and formulate appropriate measures to address related problems in a timely manner.

48. In response, DD(EM)/HD stressed HA's commitment in improving the environment of and rejuvenating aged PHEs to increase their vitality through continuous enhancement in both residential and commercial facilities, such as renovating the carparking facilities and markets. On the suggestion of retaining aged PHEs instead of demolishing them, DD(EM)/HD said that this would entail temporary transfer for tenants to make way for large scale estate improvement works which might not be welcomed by tenants due to possible disturbances and inconvenience caused. As regards the redevelopment of aged PHEs, DD(EM)/HD said that HA would strive to incorporate new and diversified elements in such projects with a view to enhancing the living environment for tenants as well as achieving a more balanced demographic profile.

**V Any other business**

49. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:35 pm.