

Speech by FS at HKHS International Housing Conference 2018 (English only) (with photos/video)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the HKHS International Housing Conference 2018: "Building a Smart and Liveable City for an Ageing Community" today (November 2):

Walter (Chairman of the Hong Kong Housing Society, Mr Walter Chan), Mr Tan (Deputy Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR Mr Tan Tieniu), government colleagues, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

First and foremost, I congratulate the Hong Kong Housing Society on its 70th Anniversary. Also, a very warm welcome to Hong Kong to our friends from the Mainland and overseas.

Back in 1948, when the Hong Kong Housing Society was established, Hong Kong's population was only around 1.8 million. Today, Hong Kong is home to more than 7.4 million people. Throughout Hong Kong's rapid growth and transformation over the past 70 years, the Housing Society has moved with the times, providing innovative solutions to meet the housing needs of our fast-changing community.

Yet, there is still much more to be done. The theme of this year's conference, "Building a Smart and Liveable City for an Ageing Community", reflects both the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. It also echoes the Government's vision for a modern and liveable environment for all.

It is anticipated that Hong Kong's population aged over 65 years old will reach 2.37 million, amounting to 31 per cent of our population, by 2036. That represents a doubling of the number of people in this age group compared to 2016,. In light of Hong Kong's ageing population, we need to be forward-looking in our approach to make Hong Kong a better city for our senior citizens to enjoy a comfortable and fulfilling time in their later years. The Government strives to achieve this objective in different ways.

Housing Policy

The Government first announced the Long Term Housing Strategy (the Strategy) back in December 2014, the first long-term strategic document on housing since 1998. It sets out the Government's vision of helping all households in Hong Kong gain access to adequate and affordable housing – in other words, "housing for all". And of course, elderly is included.

As reaffirmed in the Strategy, the Housing Society has been an important partner of the Government in implementing housing policy and has assumed the very unique role of being a "housing laboratory". As a pioneer in the face of challenges posed by an ageing population, the Housing Society has spared no effort in promoting age-friendly home concepts and providing ageing-in-place support for the elderly.

Over the past seven decades, the Housing Society has rolled out several programmes to meet the housing needs of the elderly from different socio-economic backgrounds. For the lower-income elderly, the Housing Society provides around 1 000 elderly person's flats at concessionary rents in its rental estates. Housing, healthcare and social care support are provided under a three-pronged model in 20 rental estates.

For middle-income elderly, the Housing Society has implemented the Senior Citizen Residences Scheme (SEN) since 2003. This Scheme comprises housing and care services under one roof and is the first of its kind in Hong Kong. It provides elderly residents with holistic care services including medical, professional care and rehabilitation services, as well as catering and recreational facilities. The current projects in Tseung Kwan O and Jordan Valley together with a new project in Hung Hom can provide around 1 000 units for this purpose, but of course we need more.

As for elderly people who are more financially capable and may have higher expectations after retirement, the Housing Society has launched the Tanner Hill project, which is another ground-breaking elderly housing initiative. This non-subsidised senior housing project comprises about 590 independent living units affixed with home care support features and comprehensive healthcare and supporting facilities. The project can serve as a model for the private sector to encourage private developers to provide purpose-built elderly housing in order to meet the needs of the ageing community.

In addition to the Housing Society, the Hong Kong Housing Authority has also introduced a series of policies and measures in favour of our elderly. The Housing Authority aims to provide an age-friendly and barrier-free access environment in housing estate to address the needs of residents of different ages and physical abilities. For example, the Housing Authority has introduced various Harmonious Families Schemes to encourage the younger generation to live together with their parents and to take good care of them.

Elderly people may also need a suitable physical environment to help them carry out basic daily activities safely and independently, including barrier-free access within the estate and well-designed homes and facilities. In view of these special needs, the Housing Authority has since 2002 gradually adopted the concept of "Universal Design" in residential units and common areas of newly built public rental housing estates. For existing public rental housing units, the Housing Authority undertakes works to adapt or modify homes to suit the needs of current or prospective elderly residents, with advice from physiotherapists or medical professionals.

Apart from the on-going efforts of both the Housing Society and the Housing Authority, we see value in introducing more elderly-friendly measures while making better use of our existing housing resources. As announced in the Policy Address, the Government has accepted the Housing Society's recommendation of launching a Flat for Flat Pilot Scheme for Elderly Owners on a trial basis for its subsidised sale flats with premium not yet paid. Under the Pilot Scheme, elderly owners can sell their original flats and then buy a smaller one in the Secondary Market without having to pay premium. This enables eligible elderly owners to move into flats which better suit their needs, for instance, closer to family members. By trading down, they would have more money to spend.

The Policy Address also suggests that the Housing Authority launch a new concessionary initiative allowing elderly tenants to enjoy full rent exemption for the rest of their lives, upon transferring to smaller units. This again aims to provide a rent-free housing option for all-elderly households, to reduce living expenses.

For elderly owners with their own residential property, they can opt for taking out reverse mortgage with the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation. The programme enables the elderly owners to use their residential property and at the same time receive monthly payouts.

Active Ageing Initiatives

The current generation of elderly people is generally healthier, better connected to society, better educated, and more independent in planning and taking care of their needs. Therefore, in addition to providing elderly housing and services, the Government has implemented a wide range of initiatives to suit their needs and lifestyles. For example, the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme, which charges just HK\$2 per trip, encourages elderly to get around and participate in social activities. Under the Scheme, nearly 940 000 trips are made by senior citizens daily.

To foster active-aging and a greater sense of self-worth amongst the elderly, the Elder Academy Scheme was launched back in 2007 to encourage senior citizens to pursue life-long learning in a school setting. The Scheme has since been expanded to cover tertiary institutions for various disciplines. About 140 Elder Academies have so far been set up and more than 10 000 learning places are provided each year.

Building Age-friendly Communities

Under the policy of promoting "ageing in place as the core, institutional care as back-up", the Government strives to provide quality and cost-effective community support and care services for the elderly, including frail elderly persons.

At present, there are 210 subvented elderly centres in Hong Kong providing a series of community support services for the elderly, in particular those with no or only mild impairment, and their carers. The

services include counselling, referral, emotional support, arrangement of social and recreational activities, meal services and training for carers of elderly persons.

On this front, the Housing Society also assists the elderly in the community at large to achieve ageing-in-place through public education, assessment of physical well-being and home environment, and consultation services are also provided by the Elderly Resources Centre. It features a simulated age-friendly living space, displaying age-friendly home design and products. In November 2017, the Housing Society further launched the MIND-Friendly Home Exploration Centre, the first of its kind in Hong Kong. The Centre demonstrates how dementia-friendly housing features can be applied in local flats, so as to help relieve the difficulties faced by the caregivers, while supporting the patients to have an independent and enjoyable lifestyle.

At the same time, community care services are specifically provided for frail elderly persons with moderate or severe impairment. These services include centre-based day care services provided by 76 day care centres or units for the elderly and home-based care services provided by 94 home care services teams.

To ease the financial burden for elderly citizens, the Government launched the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly back in 2013. This flexible "money-following-the-user" approach means that the subsidy is provided directly to the service users in the form of vouchers. In other words, recipients can freely choose the service providers and the service packages that best suit their individual needs. Additional vouchers will be provided in the coming financial year under the second phase of the Pilot Scheme to support ageing in place for elderly persons with moderate or severe impairment.

Nowadays, more elderly people encounter cognitive, mood and psychological problems, while the percentage of elderly people suffering from dementia has been on the rise. Apart from continuously increasing the number of subsidised service places through a multi-pronged approach, we are also implementing a series of measures to enhance dementia care and support at the community level. For instance, the Government will regularise the Dementia Community Support Scheme from February next year onwards. The Scheme provides cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary support services for elderly persons with mild or moderate dementia and their carers through a medical-social collaboration model at the district level. We have also allocated more resources to service units providing community care and support services to enhance provision of dementia care service and related staff training. In addition, we have launched a three-year territory-wide public education campaign to enhance public understanding of dementia, thereby promoting a more inclusive society.

Combining Elderly Services and Innovative Technology

Another important strategy for addressing the challenges of an ageing community is gerontechnology, which amalgamates elderly services with

innovation and technology. To promote gerontechnology as a way of improving the quality of life for the elderly and reduce the pressure on carers, the Government will set up a new \$1 billion Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care. The fund will subsidise eligible elderly people and rehabilitation service units to test and procure or rent technology products.

Last month, I visited the Hong Kong Society for the Blind Jockey Club Yan Hong Building in Yuen Long. It is the first elderly home for visually impaired elderly. The building is equipped with innovative facilities, including a computerised medication system, a management system that uses radio frequency identification technology and features an anti-wandering function and more. It demonstrates how we can improve the quality of life for the elderly through innovation and technology.

When the Government published the Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong last December, one of our missions is to provide better care for the elderly and promote healthy ageing in the community. Besides merging technology into elderly services, we also aim for Smart Mobility and Smart Living. The Government will continue to retrofit barrier-free access facilities. The Hospital Authority has also launched the Smart Hospital Programme to strengthen the interconnection and information exchange of service units and will study the provision of remote medical consultation services.

We also welcome technology collaboration with other cities and institutions. For example, one of such collaboration involves the Tokyo Institute of Technology and the Chinese University of Hong Kong Jockey Club Institute of Ageing. The research collaboration has led to the successful introduction and use of a Socially Assistive Pet Robot in Hong Kong. This robotic pet seal is used in the treatment and care of dementia patients and has since been adopted by Shatin Hospital and some non-governmental organisations in Hong Kong.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have mentioned some of the ways that the Government and other stakeholders are working to build a smart and liveable city for our ageing population. During this conference, we look forward to sharing more insights and learning about experiences of other places in rising to the challenges posed by ageing populations.

Once again, my sincere congratulations to the Housing Society on its 70th Anniversary. I wish you all a very rewarding conference, and our friends from around the world a very enjoyable stay here in Asia's world city.

Thank you.



Illegal worker jailed

A Pakistani illegal worker holding a recognisance form was jailed at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (November 1).

Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators received a referral from the Hong Kong Police Force to further investigate an illegal employment case in August. Enforcement officers arrested a male Pakistani worker, aged 31, who was conveying goods in Kwai Chung. Upon identity checking, he produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. He pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 16 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully

employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase, and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

[Legendary jazz bassist Ron Carter to perform in Hong Kong in December](#)

Hailed as one of the greatest jazz bassists, Ron Carter will collaborate with pianist Donald Vega, guitarist Russell Malone and key local jazz figure Ted Lo, who is a former member of the Ron Carter Quartet, for a performance in December.

The concert by Ron Carter Trio will be staged at 7.30pm on December 1 (Saturday) at the Auditorium of Tsuen Wan Town Hall as one of the programmes in this year's "Jazz Up" series. Audiences can expect sparks to fly at this long-awaited reunion between Carter and Lo.

Ron Carter, now 81, is living jazz history. His musical prowess and achievements have long been recognised and his playing style is considered textbook material – a smooth bassline and a lively but steady bass pizzicato. He is peerless at emphasising chord tones in different intervals, while things like double stops are a "walk in the park".

Carter is among the most original, prolific, and influential jazz bassists, and was verified as the most recorded jazz bassist in history by

Guinness World Records in 2015. From 1963 to 1968, Carter was a member of the classic and acclaimed Miles Davis Quintet. He continues to tour worldwide, playing to sold-out crowds across Europe, Asia, and South America.

Carter was named Outstanding Bassist of the Decade by the Detroit News, Jazz Bassist of the Year by Downbeat magazine and Most Valued Player by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences of the United States. He has earned two Grammy awards, one in 1987 for Best Instrumental Composition for "Call Sheet Blues" from the film "Round Midnight" and another in 1994 for Best Jazz Instrumental Group. In 2014, Carter was made a Commander of Order of Arts and Letters by the French Ministry of Culture.

The concert by Ron Carter Trio is presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. Tickets priced at \$180, \$250, \$350 and \$420 are now available at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7321 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/music/programs_627.html.

[Speech by Commissioner of Police at Force Remembrance Day \(with photos\)](#)

Following is the speech delivered by the Commissioner of Police, Mr Lo Wai-chung, at the Force Remembrance Day today (November 2):

Colleagues and guests, we are here today to honour all members of the Hong Kong Police Force, both regular and auxiliary, who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to the community of Hong Kong. This solemn ceremony is also a fitting tribute to the dedication to duty and fortitude of all members of staff who have served in the Force over the past 174 years.

Since the founding of the Hong Kong Police Force in 1844, members of the Force have been facing different dangers in the course of our duties. Without fear, we have always put the people of Hong Kong first in our determination to ensure the safety and stability of this city. We are deeply grieved by the death of Senior Police Constable Lum Hoi-wan of Traffic Kowloon West in the course of duty in March this year. This tragedy once again reflects police work is filled with dangers and uncertainties. We are gathered here in remembrance today in order to mourn our comrades who have paid the ultimate price to safeguard Hong Kong.

In this ceremony, we are also joined by members of the Hong Kong Police Old Comrades Association, the Royal Hong Kong Police Association and former Force members. Like the many who came before them, they represent the finest traditions of service to the community for which the Force is both famed and

justifiably proud – traditions, which continue today and are passed on from generation to generation and that make the Hong Kong Police Force one of the finest law enforcement agencies in the world.

To all of you present here today, may I ask you to remain standing, and following the "Last Post", join me in observing a two-minute silence in memory of all those who have fallen in the line of duty.



[Inland Revenue \(Amendment\) \(No. 7\) Ordinance 2018 gazetted](#)

The Government published in the Gazette today (November 2) the Inland Revenue (Amendment) (No. 7) Ordinance 2018 to implement the initiative announced in the Chief Executive's 2017 Policy Address of providing enhanced tax deduction for the expenditures incurred by enterprises on research and development (R&D) activities in Hong Kong.

A government spokesman said, "To encourage more enterprises to conduct R&D locally so as to promote technological innovation and economic development as well as to groom local R&D talent, the Amendment Ordinance will provide enhanced tax deduction. This also addresses the calls from the

business community. We aim to encourage more R&D investment from private enterprises, thereby gradually reversing the ratio of public sector expenditure versus private sector expenditure on R&D from government-led to private-led, which is more sustainable."

The Ordinance stipulates that R&D expenditures are now classified into either "Type A expenditures" which qualify for 100 per cent deduction or "Type B expenditures" which qualify for enhanced tax deduction. The enhanced tax deduction for "Type B expenditures" is a two-tier deduction regime. The deduction is 300 per cent for the first \$2 million of the aggregate amount of payments made to "designated local research institutions" for "qualifying R&D activities", and expenditures incurred by the enterprises for in-house qualifying R&D, and 200 per cent for the remaining amount. There is no cap on the amount of enhanced tax deduction. The arrangement is applicable to R&D expenditures incurred by enterprises on April 1, 2018, and thereafter.

In addition, the Ordinance also empowers the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology to designate any university or college located in Hong Kong, or any other institute, association, organisation or corporation that undertakes "qualifying R&D activities" in Hong Kong, as a "designated local research institution" for tax deduction purposes. R&D service providers which provide R&D services in Hong Kong and are competent to provide such services may apply to the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) for designation. The detailed conditions and application procedures for designation will be available on the ITC webpage shortly.