

Fifth round of Countryside Conservation Funding Scheme approves three projects

The Secretariat of the Countryside Conservation Funding Scheme (CCFS) said today (February 28) that three projects involving a total grant of around \$16 million have been approved in the new round of application. Together with the previous four rounds of application, a total of 30 projects involving a total amount of around \$156 million have been approved.

The CCFS supports local non-profit-making organisations to organise diverse and innovative conservation and revitalisation projects in collaboration with villagers. The CCFS covers a wide spectrum of conservation areas ranging from natural environment/habitats and non-graded built heritage to cultural and historic assets. All CCFS applications are examined and considered by the Advisory Committee on Countryside Conservation chaired by the Secretary for the Environment.

The three approved projects in this round of application cover different sites, namely Sha Lo Tung in Tai Po, Kuk Po in Sha Tau Kok and Tap Mun in Sai Kung. The topics of these projects include the continuous enhancement of the natural conservation and ecological values of the wetland in Sha Lo Tung and the improvement of its ecological environment; the study on restoration of the annex block of a village school in Kuk Po for future community use and upgrading of its peripheral environment through landscape and environmental-friendly facilities; and the study on conservation of historical heritage and ecological values of Tap Mun to promote conservation and sustainable revitalisation of rural countryside.

These projects are expected to enhance ecological conservation and management work, revitalise local villages, increase public appreciation of village culture and traditional customs, and promote eco-tourism. The CCFS will continue to make the best use of public resources to promote the sustainable conservation and revitalisation of the remote countryside in a holistic approach, and create green job opportunities. Details of the three approved projects are available on the CCFS webpage (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/conservation/ccfs/ccfs_approved_projects.html). Information on the next round of application will be announced on the CCFS webpage.

To achieve sustainable conservation and revitalisation in the remote countryside, the CCFS will introduce enhancement measures to extend the scope of the "Formulation of Proposals on Restoration of Built Heritage" project and simplify details required to be covered in the statement of account for approved projects. These measures are expected to encourage different organisations to carry out diverse countryside conservation and revitalisation projects, and increase the flexibility of the funding scheme.

Details are available in the Guide to Application on the CCFS webpage (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/conservation/ccfs/ccfs_application.html).