

Full service resumption of GREEN@COMMUNITY recycling network and GREEN\$ electronic participation incentive scheme

The Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, today (April 21) said that to tie in with the implementation of municipal solid waste charging, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has been continuously expanding its community recycling network GREEN@COMMUNITY to facilitate public participation in clean recycling. In view of the Government's recent announcement on the gradual relaxation of social distancing measures, facilities under GREEN@COMMUNITY have resumed normal operation, and earning of points and redemption of gifts under the GREEN\$ electronic participation incentive scheme (ePIS) have also resumed.

GREEN@COMMUNITY, now under a new "6" brand featuring the word "green", which sounds the same as "six" in Cantonese, comprises Recycling Stations and Recycling Stores, as well as Recycling Spots that operate as mobile recycling points at fixed locations and times across the city. Both the recycling quantity and the number of visitors to the Recycling Stores have seen significant increases since the first batch of 22 Recycling Stores came into operation in the end of 2020. In 2021, around 3 million visitors from a wide range of age groups and social strata brought to the Recycling Stores over 9 000 tonnes of recyclables, more than four times the quantity collected by the previous generation of community recycling centres. In addition, the 11 Recycling Stations, including GREEN@SAI KUNG and GREEN@WAN CHAI that commenced services last October, collected a total of over 5 400 tonnes of recyclables last year and the quantity has been increasing consistently.

Mr Wong said, "The new-generation community recycling facilities are welcomed by the citizens. I am grateful to see that members of the public are developing the habits of enhanced source separation of waste and clean recycling. During the epidemic, the Recycling Stations and Recycling Stores continued to be open for the collection of recyclables while over 100 Recycling Spots maintained a limited scale of services with a self-service mode of operation. As the epidemic gradually subsides, these recycling facilities and the GREEN\$ ePIS have resumed their services fully. Members of the public are welcome to make good use of these facilities to step up clean recycling, and use their GREEN\$ smart cards or the new mobile application launched early this year to earn reward points for gift redemption."

To further help the public participate in clean recycling, the EPD is expanding its recycling network. Eight out of the new batch of 10 Recycling Stores have successively opened and the remaining two will commence their operation soon. The Recycling Store network will thus be expanded to a total of 32 stores. For Recycling Stations, the construction of the 12th one, GREEN@WONG TAI SIN, will commence in mid-2022. Another one, which is under

planning, will be set up at Ap Lei Chau in Southern District as one of the projects under the Invigorating Island South initiative.

The new batch of Recycling Stores provides around 200 employment opportunities in different positions. A number of Recycling Stations are also recruiting some 70 full-time or part-time employees. The Government has allocated resources to support waste reduction and recycling, while creating green job opportunities and supporting green recovery amid the epidemic.

To further enhance the recycling system and the recycling quantity of waste plastics, as well as encourage public participation in waste separation and recycling, the EPD has implemented progressively the Plastic Recycling Pilot Scheme in Eastern District, Kwun Tong and Sha Tin since January 2020 to collect all types of waste plastics from non-commercial and non-industrial sources for proper treatment. Since the end of March this year, the Pilot Scheme has been gradually expanding to nine districts, including the six newly added districts of Tai Po, Sai Kung, Central and Western District, Sham Shui Po, Tsuen Wan and Tuen Mun, to cover over half of the population of Hong Kong. It is expected that the total amount of waste plastics recycled under this service will increase to about 5 000 tonnes per year.

Mr Wong added that the contractors of the Pilot Scheme would maintain close ties with the GREEN@COMMUNITY recycling network, and co-operate with each other to increase publicity and recycling services so as to generate synergy and increase the total amount of waste plastic recycled in the districts. He appealed to the public to actively participate in waste reduction and recycling, with a view to preparing for the implementation of municipal solid waste charging, as well as pursuing a low-carbon transition in waste reduction and decarbonisation to support green recovery, a circular economy and green job opportunities.