

HA approves initiatives for efficient use of public housing resources

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority:

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) will implement a trial scheme whereby under-occupation households residing in the HA's public rental housing (PRH) estates, whose family members are all aged 70 or above, are allowed to enjoy full rent exemption upon transfer to other PRH flats of suitable sizes.

To allow for more efficient use of public housing resources, the Policy Address 2018 suggested that the HA consider launching the new initiative. The Subsidised Housing Committee (SHC) of the HA approved the trial scheme at its meeting today (June 21). The HA will allocate 300 PRH flats for the trial scheme on a first-come, first-served basis for a period of one year. Eligible applicants will be given a maximum of three housing offers of either a new or refurbished flat with the provision of Domestic Removal Allowance. The trial scheme will be implemented in the latter half of this year.

The Policy Address 2018 also announced that the Government had accepted the Hong Kong Housing Society (HS)'s recommendation of launching the Flat for Flat Pilot Scheme for Elderly Owners (Pilot Scheme). Under the Pilot Scheme, owners aged 60 or above who have owned their flats under the Flat-for-Sale Scheme of the HS for at least 10 years can sell their original flat and then buy a smaller flat in the Secondary Market without payment of premium.

The SHC at the meeting today approved allowing eligible elderly owners of the HS' Pilot Scheme to purchase subsidised sale flats (SSFs) in the Secondary Market administered by the HA.

Allowing these owners to purchase a smaller SSF in either the Secondary Market of the HA or the HS will provide them with a wider choice and enhance the attractiveness of the Pilot Scheme. This is conducive to meeting the objective of the Pilot Scheme and enables the HS to fully test out the "trade-down" concept.

Under the existing policy, persons who have purchased a flat under any SSF scheme administered by the HA, the HS or the Urban Renewal Authority are barred for life from purchasing another SSF.

The HS plans to launch the Pilot Scheme and invite applications in the second half of 2019.