

HA converts under-utilised facilities to provide over 200 public housing flats

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

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) has been exploring ways to utilise public housing resources with the aim of increasing housing supply. As a result of the phasing-out programme for the HS1 Design blocks of Housing for Senior Citizens (HSC) in public rental housing (PRH) estates, ancillary facilities of these blocks become under-utilised in recent years. The HA has successfully converted these facilities into PRH, providing 215 flats so far.

HSC was introduced in the 1990s. The HS1 Design block was the earliest design, making use of internal partitioning of a normal PRH flat into two to four smaller units with shared toilet and kitchen facilities. Provision of 24-hour welfare worker services was also available in the housing blocks. As popularity of this type of HSC has remained low, the HA decided to gradually phase out the units. The HA has so far recovered 4 388 HS1 units and converted them into 1 615 PRH flats.

"As a result of the HS1 Phasing-out Programme and the cessation of welfare worker services, a number of ancillary facilities, such as warden offices, common/activity rooms, quarters for welfare workers and storerooms become under-utilised. We have taken the opportunity to re-examine the usage of these facilities and found them technically feasible for conversion to normal PRH flats," a spokesman for the HA said today (July 3).

Up to March, a total of 215 PRH flats have been yielded through conversion of the under-utilised facilities. The flats are scattered in 33 housing estates, including estates under the Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS). Among them, 37 flats were subsequently purchased by the sitting tenants under the TPS, generating sales revenue of about \$14 million to the HA.

"We will closely monitor the usage of the remaining ancillary facilities in HS1 Design blocks and continue to identify suitable facilities for conversion to PRH to maximise utilisation of housing resources," the spokesman said.