

HA decides to join HS' enhanced Letting Scheme for Subsidised Sale Developments with Premium Unpaid on regular basis

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

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA)'s Subsidised Housing Committee approved today (June 21) for the HA to join the Hong Kong Housing Society (HS)'s enhanced Letting Scheme for Subsidised Sale Developments with Premium Unpaid on a regular basis, allowing eligible owners of the HA's subsidised sale flats (SSFs) to let their flats with premium unpaid to eligible public rental housing (PRH) applicants.

"With the HA joining the HS' enhanced Letting Scheme in July 2019 on a trial basis, the number of eligible SSF estates has expanded from the original 21 estates under the HS to a combined total of around 240 estates under both the HA and the HS. Owners of about 15 000 SSFs under the HS and about 340 000 SSFs under the HA are eligible under the enhanced Letting Scheme," a spokesman for the HA said.

"The enhanced Letting Scheme aims to provide an option for SSF owners who want to make better use of their flats and for families in need of affordable rental housing, so as to facilitate the better use of public housing resources," he said.

As at the end of April 2021, around 500 applications from eligible owners and 360 applications from eligible tenants had been approved, with 64 tenancy agreements signed. Around 440 out of the around 500 successful owner applicants (i.e. around 88 per cent) and 60 out of 64 tenancy agreements reached (i.e. around 94 per cent) came from the HA's SSFs.

"Given that the number of eligible SSFs under the HA makes up more than 95 per cent of the total stock of SSFs under the enhanced Letting Scheme, the continuous participation of the HA will not only be critical for the effective running of the scheme, but also ensure that the HA's SSF owners who want to make better use of their flats may continue to do so, same as their HS's SSF counterparts," the spokesman said.

According to the HS' review report, the majority of the tenants interviewed by the HS said the enhanced Letting Scheme helped improve their living conditions, and that they enjoyed the same or even lower rent than before.

"The HS decided to continue to run the enhanced Letting Scheme after reviewing its effectiveness. Taking into account the HS' review results and

the effectiveness of the HA's participation in the enhanced Letting Scheme, the HA agreed to join the scheme on a regular basis," he explained.

Under the enhanced Letting Scheme, owners of the HS' or the HA's SSFs having owned their flats with premium unpaid for 10 years or more are eligible as owners. For tenants, three categories of applicants are eligible: (i) PRH general applicants who have waited for three years or more; (ii) PRH non-elderly one-person applicants under the Quota and Points System who have waited for six years or more; and (iii) specified non-government organisations (i.e. the Hong Kong Council of Social Service and its Service Operators under the scheme at the moment), which are only allowed to sublet the flats to eligible tenants. For application, please visit the HS' dedicated webpage: lettingscheme.hkhs.com.