

[Remand person in custody escapes at hospital](#)

A remand person in custody of Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre escaped at Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) yesterday (November 14).

On November 10, the 27-year-old male remand person in custody was referred and admitted to QEH for treatment and hospitalisation due to physical discomfort. At about 10.57pm yesterday, he suddenly escaped from the handcuffs tied to the bed and ran away. An officer at the scene instantly ordered him to stop, mounted the chase and called for reinforcement. Soon afterwards, the remand person in custody was recaptured by the correctional officer near QEH.

The case has been reported to the Police. The Correctional Services Department has also appointed a board of enquiry to conduct a thorough investigation of the incident.

The person in custody was remanded for the offence of burglary in July 2023.

[Trade consultation on proposed amendments to Buildings Energy Efficiency Ordinance launched](#)

As stated by the Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB), the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) today (November 15) launched a two-month trade consultation on the proposal to amend the Buildings Energy Efficiency Ordinance (Cap. 610) (BEE0) to strengthen the energy efficiency of buildings and promote decarbonisation in Hong Kong. The trade consultation will end on January 15, 2024.

To enhance promotion of energy saving and decarbonisation in buildings, "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address" announced that the Government would consult the trade by end-2023 on the proposal of amending the Buildings Energy Efficiency Ordinance, including extending the scope of regulation to more types of buildings, mandating the disclosure of information related to energy audit reports and shortening the interval of energy audits, with the target of finalising the proposed amendments and commencing the legislative work within 2024.

A spokesperson for the EEB said, "Buildings account for 90 per cent of

Hong Kong's electricity consumption, and over 50 per cent of our carbon emission is attributable to generating electricity for our buildings. Improving the energy efficiency of buildings will reduce the demand for power consumption and generation, which will not only reduce carbon emissions, but also lessen the financial burden on the public for the increased use of clean fuels for electricity generation. Through the legislative amendment, more buildings will enhance their energy efficiency, and further promote energy saving and decarbonisation."

To prepare for the legislative amendments to the BEE0, the EMSD is consulting representatives of the trades concerned, professional bodies and relevant stakeholders. The EMSD also welcomes views from other sectors on the proposal. The consultation document is available for viewing and downloading on the EMSD's website (www.emsd.gov.hk/bee0/en/pee/BEE0_consult_2023_eng.pdf).

Relevant views may be submitted to the EMSD by post (Energy Efficiency Office, Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, 3 Kai Shing Street, Kowloon Bay, Hong Kong), email (bee0-consultation@emsd.gov.hk) or fax (2890 6081).

LCQ8: Youth Hostel Scheme

Following is a question by the Hon Benson Luk and a written reply by the Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs, Miss Alice Mak, in the Legislative Council today (November 15):

Question:

In the 2022 Policy Address, the Chief Executive proposed to expand the Youth Hostel Scheme (YHS) by subsidising non-governmental organisations to rent suitable hotels and guesthouses for use as youth hostels (i.e. the Subsidy Scheme for Using Hotels and Guesthouses as Youth Hostels (Subsidy Scheme)), with the target of providing about 3 000 additional hostel places within five years. However, the data released by the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau show that as at July 20 this year, the number of hostel places provided by the projects approved under the Subsidy Scheme was 478, accounting for less than one sixth of the target number under the Subsidy Scheme. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the latest progress of YHS and the Subsidy Scheme, including but not limited to: (i) the number of hostel places supplied, (ii) the number of hostel places to be supplied under the projects being vetted, (iii) the number of applicants for the projects launched, (iv) the number of successful applicants, (v) the number of tenants already living in the hostels, (vi) the term of residence of hostel tenants, and (vii) the number of tenants who have

surrendered their tenancy (set out in a table);

(2) of the number of organisations with which the authorities are negotiating for the supply of hostel places, as well as the approximate number of hostel places involved;

(3) given that the Government obtained approval from the Finance Committee of this Council at the end of last year for the creation of a new non-recurrent commitment of \$1 billion to implement the Subsidy Scheme, of the remaining amount of such funding at present; and

(4) whether it has plans to assist young people whose youth hostel tenancy will soon expire in bridging over to the existing housing ladder; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

After consulting the Development Bureau and the Housing Bureau, a consolidated reply to the various parts of the question raised by the Hon Benson Luk is provided as follows:

(1) to (3) Youth Hostel Scheme (YHS) is an important youth development initiative. Apart from providing a relatively stable and long-term housing option for young people to meet their aspirations of having their own living space, the young people could also benefit from the various support and training activities provided by the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating the youth hostels. The Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB) has been proactively implementing the YHS through a multi-pronged approach. In addition to fully funding NGOs to construct youth hostels on under-utilised sites, the HYAB obtained the funding approval of \$1 billion from the Finance Committee in late 2022 to launch the Subsidy Scheme for Using Hotels and Guesthouses as Youth Hostels (Subsidy Scheme). Furthermore, the Government has identified a site at Tung Chung East and plans for its launch on a pilot basis under the Land Sale Programme, requiring the developer to construct a number of youth hostel units as designated by the Government in addition to private residential units.

There are currently seven youth hostel projects whose construction costs are fully funded by the Government. The first youth hostel providing 80 hostel places has commenced operation by the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups upon completion in 2020, while the second youth hostel providing 1 680 hostel places, which is the largest youth hostel in Hong Kong, has started operation by the Po Leung Kuk upon completion in March this year. The two completed projects already account for half of the total provision of 3 400 hostel places under all the seven YHS projects at present. Our target is to complete three more projects to further provide about 1 000 additional hostel places within the current-term Government.

Since the launch of the Subsidy Scheme in early 2023, three projects located in the Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories have been

approved, offering about 480 hostel places. Our target is to provide about 3 000 hostel places within five years.

Four out of the five operating youth hostels as mentioned above have commenced operation in or after the second quarter of this year. Most of the NGOs running youth hostels are recruiting youth tenants and making move-in arrangements as planned. In general, the first tenancy of the relevant youth hostels should be for a term of not less than two years, which may be renewed upon expiry but the aggregate tenancy period shall not exceed five years. The latest development and relevant information of the concerned youth hostel projects are at Annex.

NGOs operate the youth hostels on a self-financing basis. NGOs under the Subsidy Scheme use the subsidies from the scheme and the rents collected from the youth tenants as their major sources of income to pay off the rent payable to the hotel or guesthouse owners, their own administrative expenses and other expenditures, etc. Since the full resumption of normal travel with the Mainland and the international community, there has been an increasing demand for hotels and guesthouses by visitors to Hong Kong, as compared to the time during the pandemic. In view of the improving operating environment of the hotels and guesthouses, NGOs have encountered greater challenges when negotiating the terms of collaboration with individual hotels and guesthouses, as compared to the period during the pandemic. However, we note that there are hotels and guesthouses which are still willing to fulfil their social responsibilities and responding to the Government's appeal to support youth development through the tripartite collaboration among the Government, business sector and community, and expressing interest in offering rooms to take part in the Subsidy Scheme. The HYAB will continue to proactively communicate with NGOs and relevant stakeholders for implementing the Subsidy Scheme. We will announce the details of new approved project as soon as possible.

As the software and hardware of each project under the Subsidy Scheme differ and the subsidy amount involves sensitive market information, it is not appropriate to disclose the financial details of individual projects.

(4) Other than providing affordable rental housing to low-income persons with housing needs, the Government has been sparing no efforts in identifying land for housing construction and enriching the housing ladder, including revising the pricing policy of the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) so that HOS price is delinked from private market, making the flats more affordable; launching Starter Homes for Hong Kong Residents (Starter Homes) projects; and regularising Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme and White Form Secondary Market Scheme (WSM), so as to provide more opportunities for the youth to purchase subsidised sale flats (SSFs). In fact, among the buyers of SSFs, youth aged 40 or below has been taking up a significant proportion. For example, almost half of the applicants who successfully purchased first-hand HOS flats are youth aged 40 or below; in addition, three quarters of WSM buyers are aged 40 or below. In terms of Starter Homes, more than 85 per cent of those who have applied for purchasing Starter Homes flats were youth aged 40 or below.

The Chief Executive announced in 2023 Policy Address that the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) would relax the arrangements on mortgage default guarantee for SSFs, including extending the maximum mortgage default guarantee period of the second-hand market from 30 years to 50 years to allow purchasers to have mortgage loans of longer tenor, so that there would be more flats circulating in the market, increasing the home ownership opportunities for young families. Furthermore, to support families with newborns, the HA will introduce "Families with Newborns Flat Selection Priority Scheme" and "Families with Newborns Allocation Priority Scheme", so as to increase the chance for families with newborns to successfully purchase SSFs and expedite the process of their public rental housing applications respectively. These relevant measures will all help address the housing needs of young people.

We are working in full steam to increase public housing supply by enhancing quantity, speed, efficiency and quality. With an increase in SSFs, we can address the home ownership aspirations of more young families.

Special traffic arrangements for race meeting in Happy Valley

Special traffic arrangements will be implemented in Happy Valley today (November 15). The arrangements will come into effect one and a half hours before the start of the first race and will last until the crowds have dispersed after the race meeting.

A. Traffic arrangements before the commencement of the first race

1. Road closure

Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp outside the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) will be closed except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel.

2. Traffic diversions

- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the up-ramp outside HKJC will be re-routed one way northbound;
- Traffic along eastbound Queen's Road East heading for Wan Chai and Happy Valley will be diverted to turn left to Morrison Hill Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic along Queen's Road East cannot turn right to Wong Nai Chung Road except for vehicles heading for Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Queen's Road East will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to

Morrison Hill Road to turn right at the junction of Wong Nai Chung Road and Queen's Road East; and

– Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley or Racecourse will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, southbound Morrison Hill Road, Sports Road and Wong Nai Chung Road.

B. Traffic arrangements before the conclusion of race meeting

1. Road closure

The following roads will be closed from about 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- The up-ramp on Wong Nai Chung Road outside HKJC leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Queen's Road East and the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel;
- Southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Village Road and the Public Stands of HKJC;
- Westbound Leighton Road between Wong Nai Chung Road and Canal Road East; and
- Southbound Morrison Hill Road between Leighton Road and Queen's Road East.

In addition, southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between the up-ramp leading to Aberdeen Tunnel and the Public Stands of HKJC will be closed from about 10 minutes before the start of the last race.

2. Traffic diversions

The following traffic diversions will be implemented from about 35 minutes before the start of the last race:

- Eastbound Queen's Road East at its junction with Morrison Hill Road will be reduced to one-lane traffic heading for northbound Canal Road flyover;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Wan Chai will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, U-turn slip road beneath Canal Road flyover, Canal Road West and Hennessy Road;
- Traffic from Cross Harbour Tunnel heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via the down-ramp leading from southbound Canal Road flyover to Canal Road East, eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road will be diverted to turn left to eastbound Leighton Road;
- Traffic along southbound Morrison Hill Road heading for Happy Valley will be diverted via eastbound Leighton Road and Wong Nai Chung Road; and
- Traffic along westbound Leighton Road will be diverted to Wong Nai Chung Road.

C. Learner drivers prohibition

Learner drivers will be prohibited to turn left from Caroline Hill Road to Leighton Road between one and a half hours before the start of the first race and one hour after the last race. In addition, learner drivers will be

prohibited from accessing the following roads within the above period of time:

- Shan Kwong Road between Yik Yam Street and Wong Nai Chung Road;
- Village Road between its upper and lower junctions with Shan Kwong Road;
- Percival Street between Hennessy Road and Leighton Road;
- Canal Road East; and
- The service road leading from Gloucester Road to Canal Road flyover.

D. Suspension of parking spaces

Parking spaces on southbound Wong Nai Chung Road between Sports Road and Blue Pool Road will be suspended from 11am to 7pm during day racing, from 4.30pm to 11.59pm during evening racing, and from 5pm to 11.59pm during night racing.

Any vehicles found illegally parked within the precincts of the above affected areas will be towed away without prior notice.

Actual implementation of road closure and traffic diversion will be made by the Police at the time depending on traffic conditions in the areas. Motorists should exercise tolerance and patience, and follow the instructions of Police on site.

[SCST to visit Beijing](#)

The Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, will depart for Beijing tomorrow (November 16). He will visit cultural and museum institutions, and meet with relevant officials.

Mr Yeung will return to Hong Kong on November 17. During his absence, the Under Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Raistlin Lau, will be the Acting Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism.