

Withered Old and Valuable Tree in Mong Kok removed

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (October 30) removed a withered Old and Valuable Tree (OVT) at Sai Yee Street Garden in Mong Kok in order to ensure public safety.

The tree, which was a *Tabebuia donnell-smithii* with the registration number LCSD YTM/110 on the Register of OVTs, was found to have fungal infection in October 2019. The LCSD promptly carried out risk mitigation measures, including crown cleaning and application of fungicide. However, the health condition of the tree declined, as indicated by the sparse crown density and severely withered branches.

The LCSD later conducted a joint on-site tree inspection with the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (GLTMS) and the Tree Review Panel of the Development Bureau in January 2020 and confirmed that the tree had withered. It did not pose imminent danger but had a potential risk of collapse. The department then installed temporary support to prevent the tree from falling and consulted the Yau Tsim Mong District Council about removal of the tree and no objection was received. The GLTMS also informed the Urban Forestry Advisory Panel of the proposal to fell the tree. The tree was therefore removed today for the sake of public safety, and the LCSD will replant a *Tabebuia chrysantha* at the location.

A spokesman for the LCSD said that the department will continue to adopt a prudent approach in inspecting and managing trees under its care. Removal of problematic trees will be undertaken only when no other viable risk mitigation measure is available.