

Planning Department Outreach Programme

Hong Kong is a densely populated city. The question of how to shape our high-density city into a quality living and working environment, to uplift liveability and strike a right balance on land utilisation to meet various needs of society makes town planning a really challenging task. As public participation and support form an integral part of the town planning process, the Planning Department (PlanD) Outreach Programme has been held for years to enhance interest of the public, particularly our younger generations, in the surrounding environment and town planning through various different activities, and encourage active participation in district planning processes.

A programme celebrating 23 years in operation

The Outreach Programme is a key education programme of the PlanD. It has been held for 23 years and was first launched for secondary schools in 1996 and further extended to primary schools and special schools two years ago. Ms CHAU Yin-mai, Lisa, Town Planner of the PlanD, says that the programme is held from the beginning of every new academic year in September to July of the next year. The theme for this year is "Planning for a Better Place to Live and Work". Our colleagues will reach out to 48 primary and secondary schools, special schools and tertiary institutes; seminars, exhibitions and workshops will be held for them to discuss with students various issues including general town planning concepts and practices, planning for new towns, sustainable development, conservation and urban renewal. The objective is to deepen students' understanding of the development and town planning of Hong Kong.

Tailor-made workshops for students

Earlier, Lisa and her colleagues visited Ying Wa Primary School in Sham Shui Po, the first target primary school of this year's Outreach Programme. As a start, our colleagues gave a talk to these target Primary 3 students, to briefly introduce to them some topics on town planning such as land supply proposals, New Development Areas under planning, the concept of a "liveable city" and the application of innovative technologies in planning. They also arranged a tailor-made "sim-city" workshop to let the students design their own version of an ideal community by applying the planning knowledge they had acquired and DIY a model of an all-new environment near their school with environmentally-friendly materials.

Getting to know town planning concepts and put them into practice

Lisa says that the primary students show great enthusiasm in the Outreach Programme. They are able to grasp the town planning concepts and principles and understand the importance of quality urban design to urban spatial planning, as well as land and infrastructure development. Mr LAW Chin Yin, Marchy, a teacher of Ying Wa Primary School, tells us that the students are now learning the topic of Hong Kong's housing structure, which is closely related to town planning work. The workshop provides a chance for the students to create a community for them to live in has made the learning experience more fun. Apart from school visits, colleagues of the PlanD will also hold mobile exhibitions in different districts to provide information on town planning to the public.

Active participation in planning work

PlanD has been working over the years to let the public know about town planning and future development of Hong Kong through various different channels. As the Chief Executive has stated in the latest Policy Address that in respect of the policy direction on land supply, a Government-led approach would be adopted for the planning of land use and infrastructure, the PlanD will press ahead with its work on various fronts to tie in with our intensified planning effort. The Outreach Programme will enhance interest of the public, particularly our younger generations, in town planning; and I look forward to their active participation in the planning process. Let's work together to develop Hong Kong into a better place to live and work.