

# Planning Department Annual Report 2007

## OUR PERFORMANCE - Environmental Performance

### Environmental Policy

We are committed to contributing to environmental sustainability and promoting a better environment for the community of Hong Kong through the formulation of planning policies and standards, the preparation and implementation of town plans as well as the promotion of green office practices in the Department. To maintain a high standard of environmental performance, we will:

- take full account of the environmental implications of all planning activities;
- facilitate the achievement of a quality-built environment and the protection of natural environment; and encourage environmentally responsible development;
- enforce the Town Planning Ordinance against unauthorised developments which result in adverse environmental impacts;
- comply with the requirements of relevant environmental protection ordinances;
- promote public awareness on environmental sustainability issues;
- cultivate a clean, tidy, healthy and safe office environment; promote and implement green housekeeping measures; and raise staff awareness of their environmental responsibilities through training and publicity programmes; and
- regularly review the environmental aspects and impacts of our planning activities and office practices; and build up the Department's environmental management system.

### Environmental Management System

The Department applies an Environmental Management System to undertake the planning, implementation and monitoring of the Department's environmental initiatives and programme in an co-ordinated way.

**Planning Department Management Committee (Chaired by Director of Planning)**

- to provide directives on environmental policy of the Department

**Focus on green management of the departmental businesses**

**Environmental Management Committee(Chaired by Assistant Director, i.e. the Green Manager of the Department)**

- to assist in building up the Department's environmental management system by reviewing the environmental policy for approval by the Planning Department Management Committee; and reviewing, implementing and monitoring environmental actions including environmental objectives, targets and programmes
- to monitor and undertake management review on the performance of the Department's environmental actions in the aspects of its business and office operations
- to assess and advise on training requirement on environmental awareness and practices
- to report the environmental performance of the Department
- to oversee the work of the Green Housekeeping Committee of the Department

**Focus on green office management**

**Green Housekeeping Committee(Chaired by Chief Town Planner)**

- to introduce and oversee the implementation of green housekeeping measures of the Department

**Environmental Committees**

- to share experience in green office practices among green executives in the same building and to report green office management matters of offices in the same building and propose green measures to the Green Housekeeping Committee
- to disseminate environmental information of the Green Housekeeping Committee

**Green Housekeeping Measures**

The Planning Department Green Housekeeping Committee continued its efforts in promoting and introducing new green initiatives in the office and enhancing staff's environmental awareness. The Committee organised a Green Drawing Competition between September and November 2006. Funded as a Staff Motivation Scheme activity, the competition was successful in raising staff's awareness in green issues. The prized entries were exhibited at the Department's headquarters.

As in the last four years, a Collect-for-Reuse Programme was organised in October 2006 to promote waste reduction and material reuse practices. Used clothes, toys, houseware, electrical appliances, computer equipment and CDs/VCDs/DVDs were collected from staff and channelled to relevant charity and recycling agents. Staff showed high motivation in working together to help the needy through the green activities.

The green office management of the Department in terms of consumption of paper, envelopes and electricity in 2006 is indicated below:

- There was an increase of 8.1% in paper consumption in 2006 as compared to 2005. This was mainly due to the increase in the number of consultation exercises for planning studies undertaken in the year. The Green Housekeeping Committee will closely monitor paper consumption and remind colleagues to continue to be environmentally conscious and minimise paper usage as far as possible.
- There was an increase of 26.8% in respect of consumption of envelopes as compared to 2005. This was mainly due to the increase in the number of consultation exercises for planning studies undertaken in the year. The Green Housekeeping Committee will closely monitor the envelope requirement for 2007 and remind colleagues to minimise envelope usage as far as possible.
- There was an increase of 18.9% in respect of total electricity consumption as compared to 2005. This was mainly due to the frequent upgrading and more extensive use of IT equipment and applications in the daily operation of the Department. We will continue to closely monitor the energy consumption in the Department and to encourage colleagues to continue practicing green measures.

Other green measures include :

- 62 numbers of office equipment disposed on a trade-in basis;
- 13 401 kg of paper collected for recycling;
- 12 boxes of used clothes, handbags, shoes, toys and domestic electricity appliances collected for reuse by charitable organisations;
- Organising green activities to enhance staff's awareness in environmental protection. Jointly organised with the Planning Department Staff Recreation Club, a green guided-tour to Shui Long Wo / Kei Ling Ha at Sai Kung was held in November 2006. A visit to the Daya Bay Nuclear Plant was also held in December 2006. These activities were well received by the participants.

- Installing lighting sensors in cellular offices, which will automatically switch off the lighting when the offices are not in use.
- Identifying and uploading government/departmental forms onto the Intranet for staff's easy retrieval.



Green guided-tour to Kei Ling Ha

Trip to Daya Bay Nuclear Plant

To upkeep the Department's effort in sustaining staff's consciousness in environmental protection, we nominated a number of staff to attend seminars and training courses on topical issues in 2006. These include:

- Seminar on 'Dialogue with Green Groups'; and
- Seminar on 'Experience Sharing Session on Sustainability Issues'.

In 2006, 132 staff members (17.6% of Department's establishment) attended environmental training courses and seminars. The Green Housekeeping Committee will continue to conduct regular reviews on the Department's training needs in environmental management and to identify training opportunities to promote staff's participation in achieving green environment.

### **Conservation-related zones**

The scarcity of land and increasing development pressure impose threats to our natural environment. Through zoning designation, we help safeguard our natural environment against undesirable development in areas of high conservation value.

As at end 2006, about 8,940 hectares (or 22%) of land in the New Territories fell within the following conservation-related zones on the relevant statutory plans : 'Conservation Area' ('CA'), 'Site of Special Scientific Interests' ('SSSI'), 'Country Park', 'Coastal Protection Area' ('CPA'), and 'Other Specified Uses' annotated 'Wetland Park', 'Comprehensive Development to include Wetland Restoration Area', 'Comprehensive Development and Wetland Enhancement Area' and 'Comprehensive Development and Wetland Protection Area'.

They were covered by the Sham Chung DPA Plan which included 16 and 3 hectares of land zoned for 'CA' and 'CPA' respectively.

### **Enforcement Against Unauthorised Development**

Unauthorised developments (UDs) lead to environmental degradation in the rural areas causing nuisance to local communities and damage to habitats of ecologically sensitive areas. They have also created problems like flooding, air and water pollution, traffic congestion, sometimes even posing a threat to life and property. Planning enforcement and prosecution of unauthorised developments are therefore essential in order to protect the rural environment from further degradation. An announcement of Public Interest has been broadcasted on television and radio to publicise the enforcement provisions of the Town Planning Ordinance. [Appendix 3](#) is a summary of enforcement and prosecution work undertaken by the Planning Department in 2006.



UD site before enforcement action



UD site cleared after taking enforcement action

### **Computer Aided Sustainability Evaluation Tool (CASET)**

A computerised decision support system known as CASET has been developed to assist the Government's evaluation of the sustainability implications of major strategic policies and projects. The outputs of CASET would provide information on the effects of policies or projects across a numbers of sectors for decision makers to consider. CASET has also been employed by the Planning Department as one of the means to conduct sustainability assessment of town plans and major planning studies that may bring about significant or prolonged implications on the economic, social and environmental conditions of Hong Kong. In 2006, a total of 12 sustainability assessments were conducted.