

Report of the Working Group on Care for the Elderly 1994

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Table of contents

[Chapter 2](#)

[Annex c](#)

Chapter 2 Housing

Term of Reference

42. The Working Group was required by its Term of Reference (b) to review, inter alia, housing and other medical, welfare and residential care policies and services, having regard to the projected growth of the elderly population in Hong Kong. This Chapter deals with housing matters for elderly people.

Existing Housing Arrangements

43. The rapid expansion of new towns and the redevelopment of old districts in the past decade have significantly changed the housing characteristics of elderly people in Hong Kong. About 43 per cent of elderly people are now living in public and aided rental blocks. The details of the housing characteristics of persons aged 60 and over in 1991 are as follows:

Table 16
Housing Characteristics
(Types of Housing)
of Elderly Population by Age, 1991

Type of Housing	Age Group				Total	
	60-64	65-74	75-84	85 and over		
Housing Authority Rental Blocks	96,456	129,376	52,255	10,789	288,876	(40.3%)
Housing Society Rental Blocks	6,716	8,158	2,719	521	18,114	(2.5%)
Housing Authority Temporary Housing	1,910	12,055	888	184	5,037	(0.7%)
Housing Authority Cotages	409	898	381	87	1,775	(0.2%)
Housing Authority Home Ownership	14,903	18,458	5,875	992	40,158	(5.6%)

Estates						
Institutions	1,706	4,367	4,254	2,240	12,567	(1.8%)
Others	112,452	156,246	66,804	14,000	349,682	(48.8%)
Vessels	309	285	78	20	692	(0.1%)
Total	234,861	320,023	133,254	28,763	716,901	(100.0%)

Special Public Housing Arrangements for the Elderly People

44. The Housing Department provides the following housing assistance to elderly people:

Housing Allocation for Elderly Persons

(a) Single Persons Waiting List

Single persons, irrespective of age, can apply for public housing. Elderly persons aged 60 and over are offered rehousing on a priority basis. They can normally expect rehousing within two years from the time of registration.

(b) Unrelated Elderly Persons Priority Scheme

Two or more related or unrelated persons aged 58 and over who agree to live together can apply for a flat under this scheme. Priority will be given to them. They will normally be offered housing within two years of registration.

(c) Priority Scheme for Families with Elderly Persons

Elderly parents or dependent elderly relatives aged 60 and over living together with younger family members can apply under this scheme. Housing allocation for this type of applications will be advanced by three years, provided that the applicants have been registered on the Waiting List for not less than two years.

(d) Compassionate Rehousing

Elderly persons whose personal circumstances justify immediate assistance can apply for compassionate rehousing through the Social Welfare Department. Although there is an annual quota for the compassionate rehousing category, the Housing Department is prepared to enlarge the quota if necessary.

(e) Compulsory Rehousing

Under existing compulsory rehousing categories, for example, natural disasters and development clearances, single persons aged 50 and over are offered permanent public housing whereas persons aged below 50 are offered places in transit centres or Temporary Housing Areas.

(f) Special Scheme for Families with Elderly Persons in New Towns

Young families can apply with their elderly parents or dependent elderly relatives for two separate flats in the same public housing estate block in the New Towns. Housing allocation for applications under this scheme is advanced by one year.

Facilities for Transfer for Elderly Persons

(g) Enhancement Schemes for Sitting Tenants

(i) Addition of Family Members

Young families in the New Towns can add their elderly parents or relatives from other public housing estates or the private sector to their households and apply for transfer to larger flats in the New Towns. Similarly, elderly parents or

relatives in the New Towns may also add their children or close relatives in urban public rental housing estates to their households and apply for transfer to larger flats in the New Towns.

(ii) External Transfer

Elderly persons in urban estates are allowed to join their children or close relatives in the New Towns and to occupy separate flats if justified, subject to availability of flats. Likewise, young families in urban estates are allowed to transfer to New Town estates to look after their elderly parents or close relatives.

(h) Addition of Elderly Sharers

Elderly persons in shared flats are allowed to choose their own sharers as replacements.

Types of Housing for Elderly Persons

(i) Small flats in public housing

Small flats for elderly households consist of self-contained small flats for 1-person or 2-person elderly households. Smaller units converted from larger flats but with shared kitchen and toilet/shower facilities are also used for this purpose.

(j) Sheltered Housing for Elderly People

Sheltered housing accommodation is provided to elderly persons who are in good health and are able to take care of their daily needs without assistance.

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Housing for the Elderly

45. In his Annual Address to the Legislative Council on 6 October 1993, the Governor announced a series of measures to improve services for elderly persons. The Housing Authority was asked by the Governor to examine what could be done to provide more accommodation specially designed to meet the needs of elderly persons and their families.

46. In the context of the Mid-term Review of the Long Term Housing Strategy, the Housing Authority set up an Ad Hoc Committee on Housing for the Elderly to carry out an overall review of the provision of housing for elderly people. The Ad Hoc Committee proposed ways in which the housing supply for elderly people could be increased, allocation process and estate services could be improved, and publicity on elderly priority housing could be enhanced. The Ad Hoc Committee also considered a number of areas where co-operation with outside bodies including government departments was to be called for if housing and related services were to be provided for elderly people. Examples of these areas include requesting Government to consider committing private developers in future urban renewal projects to rehousing the affected elderly persons through conditions in land grants; forming a joint panel with the Social Welfare Department to assess the needs of elderly applicants on the waiting list and to recommend suitable services for them.

47. The Ad Hoc Committee has completed its report. A copy of the executive summary of the report is at Annex C. As the Ad Hoc Committee on Housing for the Elderly had carried out an overall review of the provision of public housing for elderly people, the Working Group decided not to cover this area in depth in its review.

48. Having considered the findings and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee, the Working Group endorsed the report.

Proposal to Establish a Multi-disciplinary Team to Help Street Sleepers

49. The number of street sleepers in Hong Kong is small in relation to its population and does not constitute a serious problem when compared with the situation in some other cities, such as London and New York.

50. However, street sleepers are a disadvantaged and vulnerable Group in Hong Kong. Homeless elderly people are the

most vulnerable of them all. The problems of elderly street sleepers are usually multi-faceted. They need special assistance to help resolve their problems.

51. According to the last Survey of Street Sleepers conducted by the Social Welfare Department in April 1992, there were 1,131 street sleepers in Hong Kong. They were found mainly in a few urban districts, including Yau Tsim, Sham Shui Po, Mong Kok, Central and Western, Kowloon City and Wan Chai. Over the last ten years, the total number of street sleepers has remained relatively constant.

52. Of the 1,131 street sleepers recorded in 1992, 1,074 were men and 57 were women. Information on the age of 96 street sleepers could not be ascertained. The age-sex distribution of the other 1,035 street sleepers was as follows:

Table 17 - Street Sleepers in Hong Kong, 1992

<u>Age</u>	<u>male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
Under 20	1	---	1	0.1
20-29	13	---	13	1.2
30-39	123	4	127	12.3
40-49	266	5	271	26.2
50-59	293	14	307	29.7
60-69	223	12	235	22.7
70-79	59	6	65	6.3
80 and over	<u>12</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>1.5</u>
Total	990	45	1,035	100

53. According to the survey, the health status and disabilities of the street sleepers were as follows:

**Table 18
- Health Status/Disabilities of Street Sleepers in Hong Kong, 1992**

<u>Health Status/ Disabilities</u>	<u>Number of Street sleepers</u>	<u>%</u>
Blind	10	0.9
Deaf/dumb	11	1.0
Other physical disabilities	3	2.6
Suspected to be mentally ill	170	15.0
Mentally handicapped	4	0.4
Senile dementia	9	0.8
Suspected to be addicted to drugs	283	25.0
III health	126	11.1
Suspected to be alcoholic	89	7.9
Normal health	<u>399</u>	<u>35.3</u>
Total	1,131	100

54. At present, there are three outreaching teams in the Social Welfare Department providing counselling and assistance to street sleepers. Compassionate rehousing to the Housing Authority's public rental housing or

accommodation in hostels and temporary shelters run by non-governmental organizations are offered to street sleepers to relieve their housing problems.

55. There are four major aspects to the problem of street sleepers in Hong Kong:

- (a) Many of the street sleepers are elderly persons with problems such as drug addiction and alcoholism.
- (b) There are considerable difficulties in "rehabilitating" street sleepers or reintegrating them into the community through the normal provision of welfare services. Street sleepers are usually suspicious of Government and the outside world.
- (c) Street sleepers, although few in number, are often alleged to have caused environmental nuisance and problems to the public.
- (d) Some residents have complained that they feel threatened by the presence of street sleepers in their neighbourhood.

56. In order to tackle the problem of street sleepers, a Working Group on Street Sleepers was appointed in September 1991 to conduct an in-depth study of the problem and to review Government policies and legislation concerning street sleepers. The Working Group reported in September 1993.

57. The Working Group on Street Sleepers recommended, inter alia, that a multi-disciplinary team should be set up to help street sleepers with special problems, such as drug addiction, alcoholism and senile dementia. A "person-to-person" approach should be used to help street sleepers to accept rehousing and reintegrate into the society. The normal evaluation criteria based on output and cost-effectiveness should not be rigidly applied in helping street sleepers.

58. As elderly street sleepers are the Group most at risk, **the Working Group recommended that a multi-disciplinary team should be established to provide intensive outreach service to street sleepers, with special emphasis to help rehouse homeless elderly persons and reintegrate them into society.** The proposed team should consist of a social worker (Assistant Social Work Officer), a welfare worker and a nurse (Registered Nurse). The project could be funded by the Lotteries Fund on an experimental basis. The estimated cost of the team is \$0.5 million per annum. A non-governmental organization which has experience in working with street sleepers should be invited to run the project. The non-governmental organization running the pilot project will be given flexibility in dealing with street sleeper cases.

59. As intensive counselling and follow-up actions are required, each team should serve only a small number of cases. The Working Group recommended that the team should only cover one district.

Annex C
Executive Summary of the
Report of the Ad Hoc Committee
on Housing for the Elderly

CONTENTS

[CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION](#)

[CHAPTER II BACKGROUND ISSUES](#)

[CHAPTER III DEMAND ASSESSMENT](#)

[CHAPTER IV RECOMMENDATIONS](#)

[CHAPTER V ACTION PLAN](#)

[CHAPTER VI STAFFING AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS](#)

[CHAPTER VII CONCLUSIONS](#)

[ANNEX I](#)

[ANNEX II](#)

[ANNEX III](#)

[ANNEX IV](#)

[ANNEX V](#)

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

1.BACKGROUND TO THE FORMATION OF THE COMMITTEE

1.1 Governor's Pledge 1993

In his 1993 Policy Address, the Governor announced a series of measures to improve services for the elderly. The Housing Authority (HA) was asked to see what could be done to provide accommodation to meet the needs of the elderly, and to come forward with proposals -

- (a) to clear the backlog of around 4,000 elderly single people on the Waiting List by 1997;
- (b) to give priority to the elderly who applied for public housing from then onwards; and
- (c) to tackle urgently the much larger problem of some 27,000 elderly persons who were not on the Waiting List but living in sub-standard accommodation.

1.2 Overall Review on Elderly Housing

In the context of the Mid-term Review of the Long Term Housing Strategy, HA set up in November 1993 an Ad Hoc Committee on Housing for the Elderly (the Committee) to carry out an overall review of the provision of housing for the elderly. The Governor also appointed, in November 1993, a Working Group on Care for the Elderly led by the Secretary for Health and Welfare to conduct a comprehensive review of services for the elderly. The report of the Ad Hoc Committee will form part of the comprehensive report to be compiled by the Working Group on Care for the Elderly targeted for submission to the Governor in August 1994.

2.TERMS OF REFERENCE

2.1 The Terms of Reference of the Committee are as follows-

- (a) To find out the extent of the housing problem faced by the elderly in the private sector including those displaced by redevelopment and those in bedspace apartments;
- (b) To review the effective demand of elderly applicants on the Waiting List including those living in public housing;
- (c) To explore the feasibility of providing accommodation for the elderly in the urban area in addition to current provision; and
- (d) To consider the types of accommodation to be provided to meet the changing and varying needs of the elderly having regard to the special requirements for these persons in terms of safety, facilities, management, etc.

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Chairman

Hon HUI Yin-fat, OBE, JP

3.2 Members

Hon FUNG Kin-kee

Mr YEUNG Ka-sing

Mr Anthony WONG Luen-kin

Prof Nelson CHOW Wing-sun, MBE, JP

Mr Johnnie CHU Wing-hong

Mrs Victoria KWOK YUEN Wai-yee

Mr Patrick LAU Sau-shing

Mr Angus TSANG Kam-yan

Ms Alice YUK Tak-fun

Mr LIM Yew-guan,

Deputy Director/Housing Management and Works,

Housing Department

Mr William SHIU Wai-chuen,

Principal Assistant Secretary/Housing Policy,

Planning, Environment and Lands Branch

Mr Alfred CHUI Wing-man,

Assistant Director/Elderly and Medical Social

Services, Social Welfare Department

Mr Vincent TANG Chi-leung,

Assistant Secretary (5)1, Home Affairs Branch

3.3 Secretary

Ms Mimi LEE Mei-mei,

Senior Administrative Officer/Housing Management,

Housing Department

3.4 Since the Committee started its work in December 1993 six meetings, four local visits and one overseas visits had

been held.

4. PUBLIC VIEWS

4.1 During the course of its work, the Committee has invited views from District Boards (DBs), more than 150 concerned organizations and local groups. The Chairman has briefed the media on seven occasions, and met concerned organizations five times on major deliberations and progress of the Committee. Members of the Committee have met with 11 concern groups to discuss and solicit views on housing for the elderly. The Committee has also responded to requests for meeting by the Wong Tai Sin and Shamshuipo DBs, as well as the Hong Kong Council of Social Service. As at early June 1994, the Committee recorded over 70 written submissions, press commentaries, letters to editors, calls on radio programmes as well as surveys containing relevant recommendations by concerned local organizations. A summary of the public views collected is given at Annex I.

CHAPTER II : BACKGROUND ISSUES

5. POLICY OBJECTIVE ON PROVISION OF ELDERLY SERVICES

5.1 Government Policy Objective

The Committee notes that the Government policy objective in respect of the provision of services for the elderly stems from the 1979 White Paper "Social Welfare into the 1980's" and was subsequently defined in the 1982 Programme Plan on Services for the Elderly as follows -

"to promote the well-being of the elderly in all aspects of their living by providing services that will enable them to remain members of the community for as long as possible; and, to the extent necessary, to provide residential care suited to the varying needs of the elderly."

5.2 The present policy, as set out in the 1991 White Paper entitled "Social Welfare into the 1990's and Beyond", reaffirms the approach to encourage the care of the elderly by family members within a family context and to strengthen support for caregivers.

5.3 Housing Authority Policy Objective

The Committee notes that in the area of elderly housing, HA has pursued the broad policy objective as outlined in paragraph 5.1 above. The above objective is derived from the premises that -

- (a) an elderly person feels best in his own home an the company of family members;
- (b) family members can provide the best elderly; and
- (c) elderly persons without family ties or support prefer to remain in familiar neighbourhood surroundings.

6. EXISTING PROVISIONS BY HOUSING AUTHORITY

AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

6.1 Provisions by Housing Authority

To realise the above-mentioned policy objective, HA encourages and facilitates families, through various priority schemes in housing allocation, to live with and take care of their elderly members. For single elderly or elderly persons who choose to live away from their families, HA makes available places in warden-assisted sheltered housing where emergency support is provided and recreational activities are organized for residents. Apart from this, to help ensure that there are sufficient community support services to cater for the elderly's needs at various stages, it has also been HA's long-standing arrangement to set aside premises in its rental estates for non-government organizations (NGOs) to run social and welfare facilities for the elderly. To ensure that the policy of care for the elderly within the community is maintained, HA also continually monitors the population profile within public housing estates with a

view to responding to the needs and aspirations of the elderly in a timely manner. Details regarding the existing elderly priority schemes, types of accommodation and estate services for the elderly are at [Annex II](#).

6.2 Provisions by Other Organizations

The Committee also notes that as at the end of March 1994, there were about 34,700 places including self-care, meal and care-and-attention (C&A) places provided by private-operators (50%), NGOs and Social Welfare Department (SWD) (45%), and Housing Society (5~). Details are at [Annex III](#).

7. STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

7.1 The Committee notes that according to the latest population projections by the Census and Statistics Department, there are 814,000 elderly persons (aged 60 and above) in Hong Kong, representing 14 per cent of the total population. The elderly population is expected to grow to 877,000 by 1997 and to over one million or 16 per cent of the population by 2007.

7.2 The Committee notes that as at the fourth quarter of 1993, 43 per cent of the elderly population in Hong Kong were living in public rental housing. Among them, 75 per cent were living with family members. Among the single elderly tenants, most were widowed.

7.3 With regard to the elderly in the private sector (including permanent and private temporary housing such as squatters and rooftop structures), the Committee notes that according to the latest General Household Survey, there are about 30,000 single elderly non-owner-occupier households and 7,000 two-person (2-P) elderly non-owner-occupier households without young family members. Of these elderly households, 27,000 fall below the Waiting List Income Limits and among them, over 80 per cent are one-person (1-P) households.

CHAPTER III : DEMAND ASSESSMENT

8. Overall Effective Demand

8.1 The Committee assesses that over the five year period 1994/95 - 1998/99, the overall demand for flats by single elderly is 25,000, 57 per cent or 14,000 of which are from committed categories such as Comprehensive Redevelopment Programme (CRP), squatter and Temporary Housing Area (THA) clearances and compassionate rehousing. About 43 per cent or 11,000 flats are demanded by elderly living in the private sector, including those on the Waiting List. Details of the assessment are given at [Annex IV](#).

8.2 The Committee notes that the demand from 2-P elderly households in the five year period 1994/95 - 1998/99 is about 17,300, and that owing to the availability of a wider range of flats suitable for 2-P households, and a more flexible approach in allocating flats to these households, there should be less difficulties in meeting this demand.

8.3 The Committee also notes that the above projections have not excluded the elderly whose physical conditions may require them to be transferred from independent living facility to institutions which provide care. In other words, the actual demand for flats by the elderly should be less than that projected here, if some of the elderly, especially those who are very frail, are taken care of by residential care institutions.

9. Demand by Single Elderly

9.1 The Committee believes that there is an urgent need for HA to address the short supply of flats suitable for 1-P households, especially elderly households, in view of their high demand and the generally accepted assumption that these households, being non-owner-occupiers not living with any other family members, are in greater need of immediate care.

CHAPTER IV : RECOMMENDATIONS

10. GENERAL DIRECTION

10.1 Continuum of Service

The Committee considers it essential that in the long-term provision of housing for the elderly, HA should take into account the continuum of service preferably in the same locality, the integration of the elderly in the community, and the coordinated provision of social services.

10.2 Integration with Social and Other Services

The Committee believes that to achieve an integrated approach in rehousing the elderly, there is a need for close co-ordination between HA and the social welfare field in the provision of residential facilities and care services for the elderly whose health will deteriorate over time.

10.3 Additional Land to Increase Supply

The Committee suggests that, while in the long run, HA should acquire more land from the Government for public housing development, in the short run, in view of the immediate problem of housing shortage, a clear message has to be conveyed to the elderly, especially those living in private accommodation in areas where there is no or limited public housing, that rehousing in the same locality is not always possible.

10.4 Information and Publicity

In connection with the above, an information and publicity strategy should be launched to let the elderly know of the assistance available to them in the application for public housing, and community services and facilities available in estates in various areas, including extended urban area and the N.T.

11. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Rehousing Priorities

The Committee proposes that the following categories of elderly should be given priorities in rehousing -

- (a) Elderly persons rendered homeless in cases of emergency; elderly persons recommended for immediate rehousing by SWD on compassionate grounds;
- (b) Elderly persons affected by announced redevelopment, squatter and THA clearance programmes;
- (c) Backlog of about 4,000 single elderly on the Waiting List; and
- (d) Elderly persons coming forward through the Waiting List (including those currently living in sub-standard accommodation in the private sector).

11.2 Continuous Monitoring of Demand

11.2.1 The Committee notes that the demand and supply situation of elderly housing is not static. Nor are the size, needs and socio-economic characteristics of the elderly. To ensure that HA is responding to the needs and aspirations of the elderly at all times, the Committee suggests that the population profile of the elderly in Hong Kong and elderly sitting tenants in public rental housing be regularly monitored to facilitate future planning and provision of services for the elderly.

11.2.2 The Committee also suggests that HA should closely monitor the demand from the elderly living in private housing on a regular basis and respond suitably to such a demand.

11.3 Bedspace Apartment Dwellers

11.3.1 The Committee notes that as at November 1993, there were about 145 bedspace apartments (BAs) offering 5,000 bedspaces for about 3,200 residents, 38 per cent of whom were elderly residents. Following the recent enactment

of the Bedspace Apartments Ordinance, the BA operators are required to upgrade the standard of their apartments in order to fulfil the criteria under a new licensing scheme. As a result of this, about 1,600 or 50 per cent of the current BA residents, some of whom may be elderly residents, are likely to be displaced. The Committee notes that these residents will be rehoused to singleton hostels converted from private flats managed by the City and New Territories Administration in the urban area, to welfare institutions managed by NGOs or to public housing if they can demonstrate genuine needs for immediate assistance as recommended by SWD.

11.3.2 The Committee is of the view that HA should render full assistance to the BA dwellers in terms of rehousing. However, the dwellers should not be given the unrealistic impression that rehousing in the same locality is always possible, especially when there are no public housing flats available in certain areas where most BAs are located, such as Tai Kok Tsui, Mongkok and Wan Chai.

11.4 Street-sleepers

11.4.1 With regard to street-sleepers, the Committee notes that the number ranged from 880 to 1,340 in the past ten years, and among them, about 30 per cent were elderly.

11.4.2 The Committee recognizes that as far as the problem of street-sleepers is concerned, HA plays an assisting role in cleaning-up' operations conducted by District Offices from time to time. Street-sleepers who are found to be in need of immediate assistance will be rehoused to public housing on compassionate grounds on recommendation by SWD, or to transit centres if they are genuinely homeless. Apart from this, HA also rents out welfare premises in housing estates to NGOs for running charitable homes for the homeless, including street-sleepers. The Committee supports that this approach should continue, and that HA should continue to facilitate and co-ordinate with other agencies in providing assistance to street-sleepers.

11.5 Elderly Displaced by Private Redevelopment

11.5.1 The Committee considers that with intensified efforts in urban renewal, an increasing number of elderly tenants living in old private tenement buildings will be displaced by redevelopment projects undertaken by either private developers or public bodies such as the Land Development Corporation.

11.5.2 In respect of rehousing these residents to public housing, the Committee notes that if an applicant can produce relevant documents (such as possession order issued by the Lands Tribunal) to prove that he will shortly be evicted from his place of residence, and provided that his application is due for allocation of flat within the coming six months, priority will be given to process his application. If for some reasons the applicant is regarded by SWD as in need of immediate assistance, allocation of flat will also be made on compassionate grounds. Apart from the above, the Committee believes that it is crucial for HA to provide, at an early stage, information regarding application for public housing to the elderly affected by private redevelopment projects on a proactive basis. The Committee suggests that more work on this front should be taken up by HA's district Housing Information Centres.

11.5.3 The Committee also proposes, among other things, that HA should explore with Government on whether conditions can be imposed on private developers for providing housing or related services for the elderly in cases where a redevelopment project will displace a significant number of elderly population, or the project will take place in an area where there is a high concentration of elderly residents.

11.6 Measures to Increase Supply

11.6.1 The Committee considers that the following measures should be implemented immediately where possible to increase supply-

New Construction

(a) Construction of composite housing blocks for small households including elderly households on selected urban sites, with the first lot of new production coming on stream in 1996/97, and continuous search for suitable urban sites for similar developments;

- (b) Development of superstructures on low-rise estate buildings such as carparks to provide sheltered housing and care homes for the elderly in the same housing blocks, and continuous study with a view to extending similar design concept to other suitable estates;
- (c) Development of non-standard housing blocks on suitable vacant sites adjoining existing estates for elderly households as well as other households comprising members of younger age groups, and detailed consultation with residents in the concerned areas before implementing such development plans;
- (d) Construction of annexes to Harmony blocks to increase supply of small flats including flats for the elderly;
- (e) Refurbishment and reuse of housing blocks redevelopment including programmes for providing flats in convenient urban locations for small households, including elderly households;
- (f) Conversion of suitable under-utilized premises and vacant bays in existing public housing estates into housing or related services for the elderly;
- (g) Construction of sheltered housing as part of the on-going Public Housing Development Programme for prospective tenants;

Land Policy

- (h) Incorporation of conditions in lease modifications, land exchanges and new land grants to require private developers to provide housing and related services for the elderly affected by urban renewal or redevelopment projects in cases where a significant number of elderly residents are displaced by these projects;

Planning

- (i) Review of flat mix in new developments with a view to increasing the provision of small flats for allocation to the needy, especially the elderly;

Management Transfer

- (j) Review of planning standards regarding future sheltered housing and design of such housing with a view to improving and reducing the degree of sharing of common facilities among residents;
- (k) Creation of suitable vacancies in existing estates through transfer exercises as an additional source of supply of small flats in convenient locations; and
- (l) 'Decantation' of the lower floors including ground floors of existing housing block through management transfers in order to make more flats available for allocation to the elderly, and to create space for possible conversion into premises suitable for housing-related services for the elderly.

11.6.2 Having taken into account the above measures, the Committee assesses that the cumulative shortfall of flats suitable for 1-P households in the next five years (1994/95 - 1998/99) is about 2,650. Details are given at [Annex V](#).

11.7 Improvements to Allocation Process

11.7.1 The Committee suggests immediate improvements to the allocation process as follows -

(a) Joint Assessment Panel

Establishment of a joint panel with SWD and where appropriate, the Hospital Authority to assess the needs of and recommend suitable housing and related services to elderly applicants on the Waiting List. The service should also be extended to elderly sitting tenants with special needs in due course;

(b) Elderly Priority Schemes

[i] The Committee suggests to advance the housing allocation for eligible applicant under the existing Families with Elderly Persons Priority Scheme' by one year making the total advancement in allocation three years; and

[ii] The Committee suggests an advancement in housing allocation for eligible applicants under the 'Special Scheme for Families with Elderly' by one year, and advancement in the applications of elderly parents or dependent relatives to the same time as the applications of the younger family should the latter become mature first.

11.7.2 The Committee notes the preference of and practical needs for many elderly persons to be rehoused within the locality where they currently live. The Committee considers that as far as possible, HA should accommodate the locational preferences of the elderly, especially those who are affected by HA's redevelopment programme. However, it is difficult, and sometimes impracticable, to accommodate similar aspirations from the elderly living in private housing, especially where there is inadequate or a lack of public housing flats in certain areas with high concentrations of private elderly tenants.

11.8 Improvements to Existing Services

11.8.1 The Committee proposes the following

(a) Estate Liaison Officers

To consider engaging the expertise of NGOs in providing estate social services for the elderly;

(b) Emergency Alarm System

To look out for opportunities for introducing a more sophisticated communication system connected to a centralised monitoring station, and to consider making the system a standard feature in elderly housing provided by HA in the long run;

(c) Management of Sheltered Housing

To put warden and social services in sheltered housing in professional hands by contracting out such services to NGOs. This will also represent a step towards closer cooperation between housing and social welfare fields; and

(d) Working Group to Review Facilities and Services for the Elderly

To target for a better co-ordination in respect of reviews of services for the elderly by expanding the ambit of the existing Steering Group on Estate Liaison Officers and Emergency Alarm System to cover reviews of sheltered housing design and provision of facilities for the elderly in existing estates.

11.9 Sites for Elderly Housing

11.9.1 Shortage of Land

The Committee considers that both as a short and long-term solution to the shortage of elderly flats, the primary objective should be for HA to negotiate with Government for additional sites, especially well-formed sites or sites in the urban area, for development of elderly housing.

11.9.2 Small Urban Sites

The Committee notes that at present, two small sites in Homantin, and one each in Shek Kip Mei, Kwun Tong and Sai Wan Ho have been considered acceptable for development of housing for small households, including elderly households. The Committee notes that although the production of these sites is limited (current total estimated production is 1,970 flats with 1,630 (83%) for elderly households), these sites will satisfy the expectation of the elderly in their choice of urban location by a relatively short timeframe (1996/97). However, the main constraint is that similar

sites are hard to come by in the urban area and this will render the expansion of similar projects difficult if not impossible.

11.9.3 Vacant Sites Adjoining Existing Estates

The Committee notes that these are sites which have been reserved for community or institutional facilities such as schools at the planning stage and have been left vacant due to subsequent changes in circumstances. Owing to the fact that these sites are already formed and many are located in convenient locations in existing estates, it is believed that given careful design, they offer good potential for development of housing for small households. The Committee also notes the strong reactions of existing residents towards the proposed development on some sites under study, and urges that full-scale public consultation and detailed assessment with regard to the overall building density of the concerned areas should be carried out prior to finalization of detailed plans.

11.9.4 Sites on Low-rise Structures

The Committee notes that Lam Tin Estate has been selected to try out a new design of sheltered housing as part of its phase IV redevelopment programme. The Committee is of the view that HA should continue to study the feasibility of applying similar design to other low-rise structures including shopping centres in estates, provided that the topography is found suitable and the sites offer potential for the elderly housing to integrate with the neighbourhood.

11.9.5 Sites for Annex Blocks

The Committee notes that the first annex block was built in Tai Wo Hau in October 1993, providing about 120 purpose-built 1-P flats for single persons including the elderly. Five more (**two in Yiu Tung**, one each in Pak Tin, Kwai Shing and Hau Tak Estates) providing about 700 flats have been planned for completion later this year. The Committee supports the continuous development of annexes in various locations to provide purpose-built self-contained small flats for the elderly.

11.9.6 Reuse of Blocks for Redevelopment

The Committee notes that one block in Tung Tau Estate has already been set aside from redevelopment, refurbished to an improved standard and its flat mix altered to create about 900 small flats, 800 of which are suitable for single persons including the elderly. The first phase of the refurbishment work was completed in March 1994 and the second phase is targeted for completion in October 1994. The Committee suggests that HA should actively identify housing blocks programmed for redevelopment which can be reserved and reused in a similar way.

11.9.7 Under-utilized Premises and Vacant Bays

The Committee notes that three premises (one vacant bay in Fung Tak Estate and one kindergarten each in Kwai Shing West and Cheung Wah Estates) have initially been identified as having the potential for conversion into elderly housing. The size and total number of housing units to be generated are modest. But conversion works will take very short time (seven to eight months) to complete. The Committee is of the view that efforts should continuously be made along this line with a view to maximising the use of suitable vacant sites in estates.

11.10 Design of Elderly Housing

1.10.1 The Committee suggests the following -

(a) Social Mix

A good social mix among the residents in a housing block should be maintained in order to avoid any over-concentration of elderly residents in one sizeable building;

(b) Provision of Facilities

An increase in the supply of flats with independent kitchen and toilet facilities should be provided for the elderly as and when resources allow. In the context of sheltered housing, improvements to the overall environment, reduction in shared facilities and as far as possible, provision of self-contained facilities, should be considered in response to the elderly's aspirations;

(c) Maximization of Site Potential

Owing to the scarcity of land, the Committee suggests that the potential of the proposed developments of elderly housing (including high-rise and low-rise blocks, as well as sheltered housing) should be fully realised to provide more residential units or space for common facilities;

(d) Integrated Approach in Design

The Committee suggests that in providing housing for the able-bodied elderly, HA should incorporate, wherever possible, premises for residential care facilities and other related services for the frail elderly in the same housing block; and

(e) Design Specifications

The Committee suggests that in the long run, HA should develop a set of guidelines or specifications on design of elderly housing covering domestic flats, common facilities and external works, in order to provide minimum standards and ensure that architectural detailing and building services are supportive to the needs of the elderly.

11.11 Information and Publicity

11.11.1 The Committee considers that there is a need to enhance publicity to the elderly in the private sector on the need-to-know about public application, and to improve information flow to elderly sitting tenants on existing services and ways to improve such services, as shown below -

11.11.2 Enhanced Publicity for Elderly in the Private Sector

(a) General Direction

The Committee sees it important to launch a comprehensive, co-ordinated and proactive approach in disseminating information to the elderly living in private housing;

(b) Elderly Information Desk at Extended Housing

Information Centre

The Committee proposes to extend the Housing Information Centres (HICs) to suitable independent premises in locations with high concentrations of elderly population in private housing, and to set up an Elderly Information Desk at each HIC. The Committee proposes that, in co-operation with other key providers of elderly services, HICs should serve as a focal point for proactive publicity and services for the elderly in the district;

(c) Media for Information and Publicity

The Committee proposes that the existing publicity and information materials on elderly priority housing be re-designed to give more details about each scheme; the nomenclature of each scheme be re-considered to make the scheme more easily comprehensible to the users; and wide publicity on avenues to elderly priority housing be launched through newspapers, including district newspapers and newspapers by NGOs, and through radio programmes and commercials;

(d) Exhibition

The Committee suggests that a roving exhibition be organized in suitable venues to be identified in districts with high

concentrations of elderly people and direct enquiry services be provided to the elderly in need on the spot;

(e) Nomenclature of Sheltered Housing

The Committee considers that the name 'sheltered housing' carries too heavy a connotation on protection and care, and suggests that a new name 'Housing for Senior Citizens' be used in place of 'sheltered housing' in the relevant publicity materials in future; and

(f) Target for Publicity

The Committee also suggests that apart from the elderly in the private sector, the proposed publicity efforts should also be targeted at the non-elderly who may in turn assist their elderly family members in the application for public housing.

11.11.3 Enhanced Information Flow to Elderly Tenants

On information for elderly sitting tenants, the Committee proposes that HA should step up publicity on existing services and ways to improve services through -

- (a) feature articles in newsletter to tenants;
- (b) posters on estate signboards;
- (c) mobile exhibition in redevelopment estates and
- (d) displays in estates on occasions of district functions.

11.2 Other Suggestions to Assist the Elderly

11.12.1 The Committee considers that the provision of a full range of facilities to meet the elderly's needs at different stages of their aging process requires coordination among the key providers of elderly services in different fields. The Committee considers some approaches crucial in ensuring that the elderly will lead a secure old age but these approaches need to be considered by parties outside the Ad Hoc Committee. These approaches are outlined below -

(a) Community Support for Elderly Rehoused to New Environment

The Committee realises that the elderly may find it difficult to survive the trauma of having to adapt to new surroundings upon relocation in old age. It therefore suggests that ways should be found to strengthen the community support services in new estates or new towns to help the elderly re-establish their social network there;

(b) Rent Assistance

The Committee realises that the elderly are the main subscribers of the current Rent Assistance Scheme and some elderly wish that the scheme would provide them with preferential treatment. The Committee proposes that HA's Management and Operations Committee should conduct review of the Rent Assistance Scheme at a time it deems appropriate to examine whether further assistance could be given to the elderly under the scheme;

(c) Rent Subsidy

The Committee considers the question of granting the elderly living in sub-standard accommodation a cash subsidy should be explored in the context of the overall social security system in Hong Kong; and

(d) Role of Private Developers

The Committee believes that more should be done to commit private developers to rehousing or providing residential services for the elderly affected by private redevelopment projects, and that ways should be found to translate this into policy if deemed suitable by Government.

CHAPTER V: ACTION PLAN

12 IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

12.1 The Committee endorses the following tentative timetables for implementing the measures to increase supply, improve services and enhance publicity on elderly housing.

TABLE 1
Tentative Timetable for Measures to Increase Supply

Target Year	Action/ Source of Flats	No. of flats or housing units to be built/ made available
1994/95	a)programmed sheltered housing	770
	b)additional sheltered housing under study	290
	c) programmed new and vacated flats	6,980
	d) vacant bays and under-utilized premises	70
	e) on-going feasibility study and public consultation on vacant sites adjoining estates	-
	f) commence detailed design and construction on some small urban	-
	g) raise with Government the Committee's proposal to impose conditions on elderly Housing in land approvals	-
	h) on-going action : management transfers; adjust flat mix in Harmony blocks to yield additional 1-P flats	-
1995/96	a)programmed sheltered housing	610
	b)additional sheltered housing under study	540
	c)new and vacated flats	4,700
	d)commence construction on some small urban sites	-
	e)on-going detailed design on vacant sites adjoining estates	-
	f)adjust flat mix in Harmony blocks and on-going efforts in management transfers	-
1996/97	a)programmed sheltered housing	720
	b)additional sheltered housing under study	380
	c)new and vacated flats	5,410
	d)flats on small urban sites	1,970

	e)commence construction of flats on vacant sites adjoining estates	-
	f)comment construction of elderly housing on Lam Tin carpark	-
	g)continue to identify urban sites and vacant sites adjoining estates	-
1997/98	a)programmed sheltered housing	600
	b) additional sheltered housing	230
	c)new and vacated flats	4,420
	d) continue to identify urban sites and vacant sites adjoining estates	
	e)flats on vacant sites adjoining estates	3,100
	f) flats on Lam Tin carpark	200
1998/99	a)programmed sheltered housing	710
	b)additional sheltered housing	1,150
	c)new and vacated flats	5,350
	d)continue to search for urban sites and vacant sites adjoining estates	-

12.2 With regard to improvements to services for the elderly, the intention is to launch various initiatives as soon as HA endorses the proposals-

Table 2
Tentative Timetable for
Improvements to Services for the Elderly

Target Date	Action	Remarks
mid-late 94	(a) <u>Elderly Priority Housing</u>	
	improved priority schemes to take immediate effect following HA'S endorsement	
	(b) <u>Joint Assessment Panel</u>	
	form a core team with SWD to work on details of the referral system and operational procedures	
	(C) <u>Contracting out Warden and Social Services of Sheltered Housing to NGOs</u>	
	consult NGOs; collect feedbacks	

	and prepare draft contract details	
	(d) <u>Working Group to Review Services and Facilities for the Elderly</u>	
	Revamp the current Steering Group on the Schemes of Estate Social Service for the Elderly and EAS	
end 94	(a)commence pilot scheme on joint assessment panel	scheme to reviewed in six months
	(b)negotiate with NGOs on details of contract on management of sheltered housing	
	(C)commence background survey (on views of elderly on design and facilities in public housing estates and their need for other services)for the revamped Working Group	
early 95	(a) launch pilot scheme on contracting out warden and social services in two sheltered housing projects to NGOs	scheme to be reviewed in a year's time with a view to determining whether the concept should be extended to other sheltered housing projects run by HA

12.3 With regard to information and publicity, the following timetable is proposed-

TABLE 3
Tentative Timetable for
Information and Publicity Strategy

Target Date	Action	Remarks
mid-late 94	(a)start informing DBs and concern groups of the Ad Hoc Committee's deliberations	
	(b)first articles in district newspapers, elderly newsletters by NGOs and newsletters for public housing tenants	
	(C)set up the first HIC with Elderly Information Desk	Subject to a review of the pilot scheme in a year's time following implementation, similar concept be extended to other regions where there is a concentration of elderly population or old private tenements, such as Shamshuipo and Kwun Tong.

	(d) launch new pamphlets, other information materials and posters	
end 94	(a) start roving exhibition in redevelopment estates	
	(b) start planning for displays in conjunction with district functions	

CHAPTER VI : STAFFING AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Staffing Implications

With regard to the measures to increase supply of flats, as some work will be contracted out, it is not expected that there will be significant increase in staff. The extension of and additions in duties of the Housing Information Centres will require additional manpower at an average of 2.5 Housing Officers, 1 Clerical Officer and 0.5 Office Assistant per centre. On the other hand, if management of sheltered housing is contracted out to NGOs, a reduction of three wardens per centre can be achieved.

13.2 Financial Implications

The overall financial commitment on construction of flats suitable for 1-P households over the five year period 1994/95 - 1998/99 is about \$4 billion.

13.3 The financial implication on the proposed information and publicity strategy in 1994/95 is about \$5.7 million. The expenditure to be incurred in construction and publicity in 1994/95 is about \$620 million. The Committee notes that there are funds within HA to meet the expenditure to be incurred for the initiatives detailed in the report.

CHAPTER VII : CONCLUSIONS

14. MEETING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE

14.1 The Committee is given the mission to find out the extent of the housing problem faced by the elderly in the private sector and to review the effective demand of the elderly. To this end, the Committee has attempted an assessment of demand by the elderly with emphasis on those earning an income below the Waiting List Income Limits in the private sector. The Committee has also taken into account the competing demands from the elderly in various other committed categories, and attempted a stratification of demands as a reference in rehousing the elderly. The Committee sees the need for continuous monitoring of the supply and demand situation, and regular review of strategies to meet the changing needs and aspirations of the elderly.

14.2 The Committee is also given the task to explore the feasibility of providing accommodation in the urban area in addition to current provision. To this end, the Committee has looked into various measures to increase the provision of elderly housing, including the initiatives to build special composite buildings and low-rise structures on urban sites including sites adjoining estates. The Committee is of the view that efforts should continue to be made to explore the feasibility of providing more housing for the elderly, and to acquire more land, especially well formed land in the urban area, from the Government for public housing development.

14.3 The Committee is charged with the responsibility to consider the types of accommodation which suit the elderly's needs. To this end, the Committee considers it essential to maintain a good social mix among the residents in a housing block so as to avoid over-concentration of elderly residents in one building. The Committee considers that in order to facilitate transfer of the elderly from one type of facility to the other, the design of elderly housing should make room for incorporation of other residential care facilities such as care and attention homes, homes for the aged and so on. The Committee also considers it necessary for HA to develop a set of guidelines or specifications on elderly

housing in the long run to ensure that housing provided for the elderly is supportive to their needs.

14.4 The Committee sees the need to integrate housing for the elderly with social and other services, and suggests to improve existing sheltered housing by contracting out the warden and social services there to professional bodies like NGOs. It also sees the need to revamp an existing working group in order to enable it to take on the comprehensive review of all services and facilities relating to the elderly in public housing estates.

15 MEETING THE TARGETS PLEDGED BY THE GOVERNOR IN 1993

15.1 The Committee considers it an urgent task to clear-the backlog of the elderly on the Waiting List, especially the single elderly who have been waiting for many years. The Committee notes that in response to the Governor's pledge last year, HA has been clearing the backlog of single elderly by 1,000 persons a year and it is expected that the target of clearing 4,000 single elderly can be met by 1997. At the same time, the Committee urges that the new demand from single elderly on the Waiting List should also be catered for on a priority basis. The Committee considers it crucial to increase supply of flats and adjust the allocation quota in favour of the elderly while maintaining fair chances of success for applicants in other categories.

15.2 The Governor also pledged, in 1993, to give priority to the elderly in gaining access to public housing. The Committee notes that various preferential schemes are already in place to give elderly applicants of various family sizes priority in flat allocation. The Committee however sees further room for improvement and suggests that even better terms should be given to the applicants under the elderly priority housing schemes. To render specific assistance to elderly applicants of very advanced age, the Committee also suggests that a joint assessment panel with SWD be formed to recommend to elderly persons services that are suitable for and available to them.

15.3 The Committee assesses that there is a substantial number of elderly people who are not on the Waiting List but are currently living in sub-standard accommodation. The Committee considers that there is an urgent need to step up publicity targeting at these elderly on avenues to public housing. The Committee suggests that HA should take proactive steps to reach out to these elderly and assist them in housing application. At the same time, the Committee suggests to include the hidden demand comprising this category of elderly as one of the committed demands and that sufficient flats catering for the needs of these elderly should be provided in the near future.

ANNEX I

Public Views on Housing for the Elderly

A Summary

1. Ways to Increase Supply of Small Flats

Acquisition of Land

1.1 The majority view was that the long term solution to the problem of shortage of small flats was to acquire from the Government more land, especially land in the urban area, for development of housing for the elderly. Some concern groups considered that the Authority should negotiate with the Government, or actively compete with other Government departments for land in areas like the West Kowloon Reclamation for development of public housing. Some suggested that HA should make use of open space such as under-utilized football courts and parks for construction of public housing.

Development on Vacant Sites Adjacent to Existing Estates

1.2 While some views were in support of turning vacant sites adjoining existing public housing estates into elderly housing, some argued that this would infringe upon the current enjoyment of the residents. Some commented that detailed assessments in respect of the density of individual sites should be made prior to development of additional housing. Some expressed that local consultation should be held before any development proposals were firmed up.

Production of Small Flats

1.3 There were suggestions that HA should expand the ratio of rental housing production so as to increase the supply of flats for the elderly. Some commented that the flat mix ratio in new rental blocks should be adjusted by providing more small flats instead of large flats. Others were of the view that the possibility of converting large vacated flats in established estates into small self-contained flats for the elderly should be explored.

1.4 Many views were in support of building more annex blocks as an immediate solution to the problem of supply shortage. Some were in favour of identifying vacant bays or under-utilized premises in existing estates for construction of flats for the elderly. The creation of 'planned vacancies' to cater for the immediate demand had received considerable support. There were also suggestions that plans should be developed to make full use of vacated flats for allocation to the elderly.

2. Demand from Special Categories of Elderly

Elderly Affected by Private Redevelopment

2.1 Many groups strongly advocated that HA should arrange early rehousing for the elderly affected by private redevelopment projects. There were claims that the elderly affected by such projects had more imminent need for rehousing and should be accorded with high priority in the allocation of public rental flats.

Bedspace Apartment Dwellers

2.2 Some argued that in response to Government's commitment to rehouse 50 per cent of the bedspace apartment dwellers expected to be displaced as a result of a new licensing system, HA should play a more active role by according the affected residents with priority in housing allocation, and by classifying these residents as its 'committed' demand.

Recipients of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA)

2.3 Two concern groups expressed that the elderly in receipt of The Comprehensive Social Security Allowance but living in the private sector should be offered a higher priority in housing arrangement. Some expressed that allocation of flats to these people should be immediate or within one year from application.

Elderly Applicants on the Waiting List

2.4 There were views that HA should work out a plan to rehouse the elderly living in sub-standard accommodation in the private sector, and that HA should enhance its publicity targeting at those who had yet to register on the Waiting List. For those who had already registered, the general feedback was that the waiting time was too long, and that it would be desirable to expand the quota of allocation for Waiting List applicants so as to ensure that the elderly could be rehoused quickly. There was also the suggestion that a higher income limit should be set for the elderly, and that for the convenience of elderly applicants, the form and procedures for application should be simplified.

3. Provision of Housing and Related Services for the Elderly

Accommodation for the Elderly

3.1 Most feedbacks collected were along the line that HA should provide self-contained units for the elderly as facilities required sharing would give rise to conflicts among residents. Some groups suggested that HA should consider converting existing sheltered housing units into flats with individual toilet and kitchen facilities. Views were diverse as regard whether sheltered housing was a suitable type of accommodation for the elderly. Some said that with the provision of warden service, sheltered housing provided valuable support for single elderly. Some believed that the provision of sheltered housing should continue as an alternative to 1-P self-contained flats. As for the location of elderly housing, the general view was that it was important to avoid concentrations of the elderly in a few locations in order to avoid security and social problems. Most thought that a good social mix in housing blocks predominantly meant for the elderly was necessary.

Rehousing Arrangements

3.2 There was general support that the location preference of the elderly applying for public housing should be considered in order to enable the elderly to remain in their existing community. In addition, adequate community and social support services should be provided in new estates to enable the elderly to adapt quickly to new environments. On rehousing arrangements for the elderly affected by HA's Comprehensive Redevelopment Programme, some concern groups repeatedly urged that elderly residents should be offered new rental flats instead of flats in old housing blocks, in order to minimize disruption resulting from the need to move within a short period of time. There was also the opinion that two unrelated elderly sharing a flat should be allowed to split upon rehousing to new estates.

Priority Schemes

3.3 The majority view was in support of the objective to encourage young family members to take care of the elderly. Suggestions were received that the elderly at very advanced age should be accorded with higher priority in housing allocation. There were also suggestions that families with elderly dependents should be allocated with bigger flats.

Facilities

3.4 Views were expressed that HA should give thoughts to improving building design and facilities within its flats in order to cater for the special needs of the elderly. Such facilities included lifts, railings along passageways, covered walkways, skid-proofing floor tiles, additional lighting in corridors and so on.

Estate Liaison Officers Scheme and Emergency Alarm System

3.5 Some expressed appreciation for the Estate Liaison Officers Scheme which offered assistance to elderly sitting tenants and helped maintain a mutual care network among the elderly. Certain suggestions also called for expansion of the scheme to cover all estates and the concerned staff to be increased in order to strengthen services. Many views also recognised the merits of providing emergency alarm sets for the elderly living alone and proposed that HA should consider making this a standard provision for all single elderly in existing estates.

Rent Affordability

3.6 Considerable views were concerned about the current rent level of public rental housing and the affordability of elderly tenants. Some expressed that the rents payable by elderly tenants should be reduced or further rent assistance should be granted to elderly sitting tenants. As for the elderly applicants on the Waiting List, there were suggestions that rent subsidy should be offered to assist them to tide over financial hardship when they were awaiting allocation of public rental flats.

Responsibilities of Other Authorities

3.7 There was concern that apart from HA, the Housing Society should be involved in tackling the problem of elderly housing. The responsibility of private developers was also an area of concern and views were in support of imposing conditions requiring private developers to provide elderly housing in their redevelopment projects for receiving the displaced elderly. Suggestion that developers should pay a 'tariff for redevelopment' for use on rehousing the affected elderly had also been raised.

Annex II

Existing Priority Schemes, Types of Accommodation and Estate Services for Elderly Households

1. Elderly Affected by Redevelopment and Clearances

Elderly persons affected by HA's Comprehensive Redevelopment Programme (CRP) and various squatter and Temporary Housing Area (THA) clearance programmes enjoy rehousing benefits such as domestic removal allowance and priority in Home Ownership Scheme flat selection no less than their non-elderly counterparts. Special treatment

however is given to 50 or above affected by squatter clearance programmes. Provided that these residents satisfy the seven-year residence rule, they will be allocated 1-P flats in public housing estates, while their counterparts below 50 years of age will only be flats in rental estates.

2. Elderly Households on the Waiting List

With regard to the elderly on the Waiting List, various preferential treatments are given to households of different sizes, as shown below -

Single Elderly

-Single Persons Waiting List

Opened in January 1985, the Single Persons Waiting List is for single persons who have attained the age of 21 or over. Owing to the limited supply of single person flats, priority has always been given to elderly single persons. If the elderly are willing to accept sheltered housing or flats in extended urban area or the New Territories, including flats with shared toilet and kitchen facilities, they can normally be rehoused within two years from registration. So far, 3,400 single elderly have been rehoused through this avenue.

Two or more elderly

-Elderly Persons Priority Scheme

Two or more related or unrelated elderly who agree to live together may apply under this scheme at the age of 58 or above. Allocation of public housing can normally be made within two years after registration subject to fulfilment of the prevailing eligibility criteria. Since the implementation of the scheme in 1979, about 10,500 allocations have been made. Of the remaining applications, 1,360 have been outstanding for over two years, with most of them having strong preference on the choice of location, particularly in the urban area.

Elderly with Families

-Families with Elderly Persons Priority Scheme

Under this scheme which commenced in 1982, families awaiting rehousing together with their elderly parents or dependent relatives will have their housing allocation advanced by two years, subject to fulfilment of the prevailing eligibility criteria. The family must be a nuclear family with at least one elderly parent or dependent relative aged 60 or over and who, at the time of investigation, is living with or dependent on the applicant's family. Under this scheme, care is provided to the elderly by the family within an extended family setting. Since 1982, over 7,600 families have benefited from the scheme.

-Special Scheme for Families with Elderly Persons

This scheme was introduced in 1990 whereby young families could apply with their elderly parents or dependent relatives for two separate flats in the same block in new towns. So far, 12 applicants have made use of this scheme. The fact that the scheme does not provide for any advancement in waiting time and the choice of location is restricted to new towns may account for the low response rate of this scheme.

3. Elderly Sitting Tenants

To fulfil the objective of encouraging families to take care of their elderly members, the following enhancement schemes for sitting tenants were introduced in 1990 -

(a) Addition

Young families in new towns are encouraged to add elderly parents or relatives from other public housing estates or the private sector, and apply for transfer to larger flats if the overall size of the family so warrants. Similarly, elderly

parents or relatives in new towns may add their children or close relatives living in urban estates and apply for larger flats in new towns. So far, 53 families have benefited from this arrangement.

(b) Transfer

Elderly parents or dependent relatives in urban estates can apply for transfer to estates in new towns nearer to their children or close relatives and take up separate flats within the same block. Similarly, young families in urban estates are allowed to transfer to estates in new towns nearer to their elderly parents or dependent relatives. So far 39 families have benefited from this arrangement.

4. Types of Accommodation for the elderly

HA is providing or helping to provide a variety of accommodation for the elderly, as shown below -

(a) Small Flats in Rental Estates

These consist of purpose-built self-contained flats ranging from 12.04 to 19.8 sq.m. in size targeted for 1 or 2-P households, including elderly households. Flats converted from larger vacant flats in existing estates are also used for allocation to the elderly. These flats are around 8 to 12 sq.m. in size and most are provided with shared kitchen and toilet facilities. Conversion of larger flats into small units was adopted by HD as a stopgap measure in 1991 and 1992 to alleviate the shortage of small flats, and with the increase in purpose-built small flats, the conversion programme had come to a halt in 1993.

(b) Sheltered Housing

Sheltered housing was introduced in November 1987 and the current planning standards are one project (with target provision at 140 places per project) for an estate with 3,000 flats or two projects for an estate with 5,000 flats. Sheltered housing is located at the lower floors of a housing block and is typically provided with warden service and emergency alarm system. Currently there are 15 sheltered housing projects, providing about 2,200 places at an overall vacancy rate of less than six per cent. HA has planned to increase the places of sheltered housing in the near future and improve the design of such housing on an on-going basis.

(c) Premises for Residential Care Facilities Run by NGOs

It has been an established policy for HA to reserve certain ground floor or lower floor premises for use by welfare Organizations. Some such premises are rented to NGOs at concessionary rents for establishing residential care facilities for the elderly such as care and attention homes and homes for the aged.

5. Estates Services and Facilities

The following services and facilities are provided for elderly tenants in rental estates -

(a) Estate Liaison Officers

The Estate Liaison Officers (ELOs) scheme was launched in 1990 with the objective to promote mutual help and foster community care among elderly tenants in estates. The scheme was initially introduced on an experimental basis in Choi Hung and So Uk Estates where there were high concentrations of elderly population. Following HA's Management and Operations Committee's recommendation in April 1992, the scheme was extended to two more estates, namely Tung Tau and Pak Tin Estates in 1993/94 and six more estates in the following year.

(b) Emergency Alarm System

The Emergency Alarm System (EAS) serves to alarm neighbours (and warden in the case of sheltered housing) for offering immediate assistance to the elderly in cases of emergency. The system was first introduced in late 1991 and the beneficiaries were single elderly on SWD's Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) (formerly known as

Public Assistance). By the end of April 1994, a total of 217 alarm sets had been installed in public housing estates. In July 1993, the Oriental Press Charitable Fund Association donated \$750,000 to HA for extension of the system to the elderly who were not receiving CSSA. The donation is expected to benefit an addition of 250 elderly residents.

Annex III
Residential and Related Facilities
Provided by Organizations other than Housing Authority
(position as at 31.3.1994)

Provider	Type of Housing	self-care (a)	capacity meal (b)	C&A (C)
Non-Government Organizations	Care and Attention Home	-	- [Note 1]	5,639
	Home for the Aged	-	7,977 [Note 1]	-
	Hostel	1,226	-	-
Social Welfare Department	Sheltered Housing	557	-	-
	Hostel	69	88	-
Housing Society	Elderly Persons Flat	1,610	-	-
	Dormitory	224 [Note 2]	-	-
Private operators	Profit-making Private Home			17,269
	Total(a+B+C):	say	34,659 34,700	

[Notes: 1. Meal places in C&A homes operated by NGOs are included in meal places in homes for the aged.

2. About 50 per cent of these places are currently occupied by the elderly.]

Annex IV
Overall Effective Demand for Flats
by 1-P Elderly Households
(as at May 1994)

	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	Total
<u>1-P Elderly from</u>						
Comprehensive Redevelopment	2,300	440	1,740	1,560	3,980	10,020

THA clearances	420	330	180	-	-	930
Squatter clearances	480	240	210	220	100	1,250
Compassionate category	400	400	400	400	400	2,000
Waiting List / private sector	5,140	1,410	1,410	1,410	1,410	10,780
Total	8,740	2,820	3,940	3,590	5,890	24,980

Annex V
Projected Overall Supply and Demand
of Flats Suitable for 1-P Households
(as at 31 March 1994)

	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	Total
Supply						
a) Sheltered housing [Note 1]	770	610	720	600	710	3,410
b) Proposed additional housing [Note 2]	290	540	380	230	1,150	2,590
c) New flats	3,460	2,520	3,480	2,280	3,350	15,630
d) Vacated flats	3,520	2,180	1,930	1,600	2,000	11,230
e) Flats on small urban sites	-	-	1,970	-	-	1,970
f) Flats on sites adjoining estates	-	-	-	3,100	-	3,100
g) Elderly flats on low-rise structures	-	-	-	200	-	200
h) Vacant bays and	70	-	-	-	-	70

under-utilized premises						
(I) Total (a to h)	8,740	2,280	3,940	3,590	5,890	24,980
Effective Demand						
I)1-P households aged 60+ [Note 3]	8,740	2,820	3,940	3,590	5,890	24,980
J)1-P households aged below 60 [Note 4]	4,130	3,350	3,760	1,890	2,740	15,870
(II) Total (i+j)	12,870	6,170	7,700	5,480	8,630	40,850
Balance (I)-(II) [Note 5]	-4,760	-320	780	3,070	-1,420	-2,650

[Notes : 1. Sheltered housing included in Public Housing Development Programme.

2. Proposed additional sheltered housing currently under investigation.

3. Demand of 10,780 small flats from elderly on the Waiting List and private sector over the five year period 1994/95 - 1998/99 is included. Planning-wise, about 2,000 new and vacated flats including sheltered housing units are set aside to meet the demand of these elderly every year.

4. Non-elderly 1-P households on the Waiting List are not included. Currently, about 500 small flats are reserved for non-elderly 1-P applicants on the Waiting List and 320 flats in the compassionate quota every year.

5. options will be proposed in HD's regular Small Households Accommodation District Action Plans to increase the supply of small flats to meet shortfalls in individual districts.