

## MESSAGE

In my Housing Policy Objective Booklet last year, I outlined our tasks and initiatives in the face of economic turmoil and worries about the future of the economy generally and of the private residential property market in particular. Since then, a carefully designed programme for land disposal to the private sector, additional loan finance for home buyers, measures to liberalise the operation of the private residential property market, together with a revival in the regional economic situation, have led to stabilisation of the property market and more affordable housing for families in Hong Kong.

Against this encouraging background, I am glad that we have now implemented all the specific initiatives set out in the White Paper on Long Term Housing Strategy published in February 1998. In addition, we have devised arrangements to help non-elderly singletons in need, a group which has not been so favourably treated as others.

While our Long Term Housing Strategy now provides a solid framework for meeting housing needs in the public and private sectors, we continue to review regularly our policies and the way in which we implement them. After careful consideration, we have decided in principle to embark on a partial shift in the means of providing assisted housing from the conventional “bricks and mortar” approach to the provision of additional loan finance. By cutting back a portion of Home Ownership Scheme production, we can provide additional land for sale to the private sector and a rolling programme of loans, which we will monitor carefully. This will provide greater choice for families wishing to buy their own homes, and help us to fine-tune housing supply to meet demand from year to year. We will work out the details of this adjustment with the Housing Authority, and a formal announcement will be made within a few months.

This gradual change in no way alters our commitment to the basic housing policy objectives. We will continue to provide affordable accommodation to people in genuine need, ensure the equitable use of public resources in subsidising the housing programme, and help families to meet their aspirations towards home ownership.

Our approach of combining long term strategic planning with responsiveness to short term problems has enabled us over the past difficult year to remain on target to achieve “Better Housing for All”.



( Dominic S. W. Wong )  
Secretary for Housing

# BETTER HOUSING FOR ALL

Our Policy Objective is to ensure better housing for all, through an adequate supply of affordable housing for ownership or rent.

Our targets this year in pursuing this Policy Objective are –

- To reduce the number of inadequately housed people
- To help all households gain access to affordable housing
- To encourage home ownership in the community

## Progress Made

In 1998, we achieved significant progress in all seven of our Key Result Areas. We completed a survey of household aspirations and used it to update our forecast of housing demand. A revised forecast will be released in the next few months. On the supply side, a Land Disposal Programme for housing was announced in February using a new, more transparent format including an Application List of sites for which developers can express interest. This new system has worked well and has helped to ensure the revival of a healthy and stable private residential property market following the recent economic crisis. We have also revised our programme of flat production for the period up to 2006-2007. We are on target to produce an average of 50 000 flats each year in the public sector and to facilitate the production of about 35 000 flats a year in the private sector. To monitor the production of flats to meet demand in both public and private sectors, the Steering Committee on Land Supply for Housing (HOUSCOM), chaired by the Financial Secretary, has continued to operate successfully.

In terms of housing policy, this year has seen the implementation of all the initiatives in the 1998 White Paper on Long Term Housing Strategy. Notably, we have made significant progress, in consultation with the Elderly Commission, in providing housing for the elderly; and we have drawn up new initiatives to help non-elderly singleton households. In addition, we are reviewing with the Housing Authority (HA) ways to meet the housing requirements of both local and newly arrived families fairly and effectively. Depending on the outcome of the review, we will make additional land available to the HA so that we can remain on target to achieve our pledge to reduce the average waiting time for public rental housing to three years by 2005.

We have followed up on the Chief Executive's pledge in his 1998 Policy Address to examine the possibility of replacing a proportion of subsidised home ownership flat production with the provision of loans. After careful consideration, we have decided in

principle to embark on a gradual programme of reducing Home Ownership Scheme production and correspondingly increasing loan provision by the HA. We will discuss with HA the details of implementation. The new arrangement will enable more eligible families to benefit from housing subsidy and will allow them a wider choice of housing.

To ensure that we continue to receive advice on housing policy from a wide range of experts in the housing field, we have established a Long Term Housing Strategy Advisory Committee to advise the Secretary for Housing on issues affecting our housing targets and initiatives.

## **KEY RESULT AREAS (KRAs)**

To ensure that this Policy Objective can be achieved, we must deliver results in a number of key areas. Specifically, we must –

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# 1

## Assess housing demand regularly and accurately

The Planning Department operates a Working Group on Housing Demand under the direction of the Housing Bureau to assess overall housing demand. After public consultations, the Group has developed a housing demand model which is capable of responding to changes in government policy and the most up-to-date statistics.

The data and assumptions used in the model are regularly updated, and the model itself is continuously refined and re-run to provide regular and accurate assessments of housing demand.

### Progress Made

Our indicator of progress in this area is the regular review of demand assessments. The demand assessments are rolled forward on a ten-year basis. In 1998, we published an assessment of housing demand for the period 1997-1998 to 2006-2007.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative *	Target #	Present Position +
To review our housing production requirements regularly in the light of the latest projections by the housing demand model <i>(Housing Bureau)</i>	To publish annual reports starting from 1999 <i>(1998)</i>	Work is on schedule for the 1999 report on housing demand, covering the period 1999-2000 to 2008-2009. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
To put in place and operate a specialised model for housing demand for the elderly <i>(Planning Department (Plan D))</i>	To develop a model and to produce projections within 1999 <i>(1998)</i>	The model has been developed and projections for the period 1999-2000 to 2008-2009 will be produced on schedule. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>

\* the bracketed information denotes the agency with lead responsibility for the initiative

# the bracketed information denotes the year in which the target was set

+ the bracketed information denotes the status of the target

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To conduct a new survey of housing aspirations, including a sub-survey of elderly households <i>(Plan D)</i>	To complete the survey within 1999 <i>(1998)</i>	The survey will be completed on schedule. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>

## Looking Forward

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

Indicator	1999 Target
Regular review of our demand assessments	Produce regular annual reports

## 2

### Provide a sufficient supply of land for housing, together with supporting infrastructure, and shorten development procedures

A steady and sufficient supply of land for both public and private housing is necessary for meeting housing demand and minimising instability in the property market. The Planning, Environment and Lands Bureau will continue to announce each year a rolling five-year Land Disposal Programme which will provide land for housing development. We will continue to develop strategic growth areas, including new and existing land for housing, and to capitalise on opportunities for additional urban development arising from strategic rail projects. We will also continue to rezone agricultural and industrial land for housing development where appropriate.

Housing-related infrastructure and land development procedures (including statutory procedures for reclamation works, planning and engineering feasibility studies, and tendering for and detailed design of site formation and infrastructure) have been accelerated to reduce development time. Both the Housing Authority and the Housing Society have significantly reduced their standard production lead time by streamlining their flat production processes.

### Progress Made

Our indicator of progress in this area is the amount of land available for flat production. We are continuing to identify new sites and new opportunities for redevelopment or intensification of existing housing areas.

Following a moratorium between June 1998 and March 1999, we resumed land sales in April 1999. Over the five-year period from April 1999 to March 2004, we will provide 205 hectares and 382 hectares of land for public and private housing development respectively. To allow greater flexibility to respond to market demand, we have introduced a new Application System, whereby developers may apply to purchase sites from a Reserve List made available by the Government. The actual production of private housing will depend on the decisions of developers, based on market conditions and commercial considerations.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To redevelop old flatted factory estates for housing <i>(Housing Department (HD))</i>	To complete a study of the implications and options for redevelopment in 1999 <i>(1998)</i>	The Housing Authority endorsed in 1999 the redevelopment of two-flatted factory estates. <i>(Action Completed)</i>
To identify more areas where infrastructure will permit more intensified private housing development <i>(Territory Development Department)</i>	To complete three studies of intensification of development in 1999-2000 <i>(1998)</i>	Studies of Tseung Kwan O, Tung Chung/Tai Ho and Tsuen Wan Bay Reclamation are in progress. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
To identify more areas where infrastructure will permit more intensified public housing development <i>(HD)</i>	To intensify the development density of nine public housing projects by 2002 <i>(1998)</i>	Nine projects have been identified for intensification and their revised flat production has been approved by the Housing Authority. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
To speed up the processing of land transactions and pre-sale consent applications <i>(Lands Department)</i>	To advance the issue of pre-sale consents from 12 months to 15 months before completion of a development by 1998 <i>(1997)</i>	As a result of streamlined procedures, the target of advancing the issue of pre-sale consents from 12 months to 15 months has been met. <i>(Action Completed)</i>
To provide a flexible financial arrangement to accelerate housing-related infrastructure projects, including waterworks, sewage, land formation and schools <i>(Housing Bureau (HB))</i>	To spend \$11 billion to accelerate housing-related infrastructure projects during the period from 1997-1998 to 2001-2002 <i>(1997)</i>	Total expenditure in 1998-1999 was \$2.1 billion and is estimated to be \$2.5 billion in 1999-2000. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>



Initiative	Target	Present Position
To develop strategic growth areas to produce additional land for housing (HB)	To develop sufficient land for 270 000 flats in strategic growth areas between 2006 and 2011 (1997)	Planning and development studies are in progress to accommodate about 280 000 persons by 2011 in the North West and North East New Territories, Hong Kong Island South and Lamma Island. Feasibility studies for the intensification of development in Tseung Kwan O and Tung Chung/ Tai Ho will be completed in 1999-2000. New proposals have been developed for South East Kowloon and Tsuen Wan Bay Further Reclamation.  <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>

## Looking Forward

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

Indicator	1999 Target
Identification of new sites and opportunities for redevelopment or intensification of existing housing areas	Sufficient land to produce an average of 50 000 public housing flats per year and to facilitate the development of 35 000 private housing flats

We will undertake the following initiatives to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
To adopt a new approach to redevelopment in older urban areas to achieve a more rational and efficient use of land <i>(HD)</i>	To complete four studies of the Ngau Tau Kok, Shek Kip Mei, Cheung Sha Wan and Homantin areas by 2000
To facilitate rezoning of agricultural land for housing development, where infrastructure and environmental considerations permit <i>(Planning Department (Plan D))</i>	To complete a review of 110 hectares of agricultural land by 2000
To facilitate rezoning of industrial land for housing development, where infrastructure and environmental considerations permit <i>(Plan D)</i>	To complete a review of all industrial land in Hong Kong by 2000

# 3

## Draw up and maintain a long term flat production programme and put in place an efficient mechanism for monitoring progress and solving problems

We have drawn up and will roll forward annually a 13-year flat production programme.

The production of this programme requires the maintenance of a centralised inventory of housing sites, a clear delineation of responsibility for the delivery of housing projects and an efficient system for solving problems relating to flat production. Accordingly, a computerised inventory of all housing developments has been compiled and is updated and reviewed continuously by the Housing Bureau. A system defining accountability and a mechanism for swift problem solving in respect of individual housing sites has been put in place and is operating effectively.

### Progress Made

Our indicator in this area is the extent to which we meet our flat production programme. We will revise our programme for the period 1999-2000 to 2006-2007.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To assess infrastructure requirements arising from the housing development programme <i>(Works Bureau)</i>	To establish within 1998 a Control List of housing-related infrastructure projects <i>(1998)</i>	A Control List of housing-related infrastructure projects was established in 1998 and will be regularly updated. <i>(Action Completed)</i>
To fast-track more infrastructure to avoid delays to housing production <i>(Housing Bureau (HB))</i>	To fast-track 80 projects to allow housing development to proceed on time during the five-year period up to 2002-2003 <i>(1998)</i>	We have fast-tracked 69 housing-related infrastructure projects for the period up to 1999-2000. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>

## Looking Forward

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

Indicator	1999 Target
Extent to which we meet our flat production programme	In 1999-2000, production of 64 000 public housing flats and 36 000 private flats

We will undertake the following initiative to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
To strengthen the accountability system for monitoring flat production (HB)	In 2000, to appoint Project Directors for housing developments for the final five years of the 13-year flat production programme

# 4

## Create the conditions to enable the private sector to make the fullest possible contribution towards meeting the demand for housing

The private sector has a crucial role to play in meeting the housing needs of the community. Through schemes such as the Private Sector Participation Scheme and mixed development, the private sector can also make a major contribution to the public housing programme.

To ensure the fair and free operation of the private residential property market, and to avoid instability, we will continue to monitor the market closely, adopt a flexible and prudent approach to land disposal and guard against the revival of speculative activities.

### Progress Made

Our indicators of progress in this area are the number of flats produced in or through the private sector and the stability of the private residential property market. After a period of economic difficulty, the market has stabilised. Some 22 300 flats were completed by private developers during the last year. Prices have become more affordable and speculation has subsided.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To entrust the provision of more housing-related infrastructure to the private sector <i>(Housing Bureau (HB))</i>	To entrust four projects to the private sector in 1999-2000 <i>(1998)</i>	We have entrusted two projects and are working on another two projects for entrustment to the private sector in 1999-2000. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>

Initiative	Target	Present Position
<p>To develop “mixed development” schemes (HB)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To embark on two schemes with the private sector on a pilot basis through the Housing Society in 1999-2000</li> <li>● In 1999-2000, to assist the Housing Authority to develop alternative forms of mixed development (1998 and 1997)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The first site for the pilot scheme will be offered for tender in October 1999 and the second site in February 2000. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i></li> <li>● We are considering alternative options with the Housing Authority. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i></li> </ul>
<p>To monitor the property market closely and implement appropriate anti-speculation measures as and when the situation so requires (HB)</p>	<p>An on-going commitment (1997)</p>	<p>Speculative activities have greatly subsided since 1998. The market has stabilised. We will continue to monitor the position. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i></p>
<p>To enhance the protection of home buyers’ interests by introducing legislation to ensure that developers provide accurate information about uncompleted residential flats in sales brochures (HB)</p>	<p>To introduce the legislation in 1997 (1996)</p>	<p>The draft legislation has been revised to take into account submissions received from professional bodies. We will introduce a bill into the Legislative Council in 1999-2000. <i>(Action in Progress: Behind Schedule)</i></p>
<p>To simplify procedures for renewing private tenancies and increase penalties for unlawful eviction and harassment of tenants (HB)</p>	<p>To introduce amendments to the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance in 1997 (1996)</p>	<p>We have amended the draft legislation to include further provisions on tenancy-related matters. We will introduce a bill into the Legislative Council in 1999-2000. <i>(Action in Progress: Behind Schedule)</i></p>

## Looking Forward

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

Indicator	1999 Target
The number of flats produced in or through the private sector and the stability of the private residential property market	To continue to offer land for sale to the private sector to meet demand and to monitor the operation of the property market

We will undertake the following initiatives to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
To strengthen regulation of estate agents to enhance consumer protection (HB)	To bring into effect subsidiary legislation to regulate practices in the trade and to settle commission disputes
To consider the extent to which our subsidised home ownership flat production should be replaced by the provision of additional loans (HB)	To discuss with the Housing Authority a detailed implementation plan to replace a proportion of Home Ownership Scheme flat production by additional loans

# 5

## Implement subsidised housing schemes to enable those in the relevant income groups to buy their own homes

Owning one's home is an aspiration shared by many in the community. It is one of the main factors that fosters social stability and a sense of belonging and helps families to provide for their future financial security.

We will continue to operate a variety of subsidised schemes for eligible low and middle income families. This will be done without neglecting the demand for public rental housing from people in genuine need.

### Progress Made

Our indicator of progress in this area is the number of subsidised home ownership flats, loans and other subsidies provided to eligible low and middle income families. In the past year we have continued to make strenuous efforts to encourage home ownership and to assist low and middle income families to buy their own homes. Our home ownership loan schemes were rationalised following a review conducted early in the year. In total, over 20 000 loans were granted to eligible homebuyers by September 1999. In addition, over 27 000 public rental flats were offered to sitting tenants under the Tenant Purchase Scheme.

It is our intention to achieve an overall home ownership rate of 70% by 2007, and we have conducted a consultancy study to review strategies for achieving this target.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To continue to provide sufficient subsidised home ownership flats to meet assessed demand from low income families <i>(Housing Department (HD))</i>	To build 20 000 flats in 1999-2000 under the Home Ownership Scheme and the Private Sector Participation Scheme <i>(1998)</i>	About 20 000 subsidised home ownership flats will be completed in 1999-2000. <i>(Action Completed)</i>



Initiative	Target	Present Position
To increase the provision of home ownership loans to eligible low income families (HD)	To offer 10 000 loans under the Home Purchase Loan Scheme in 1998-1999 (1998)	Over 10 000 loans were offered in 1998-1999. About 95% had been taken up by September 1999. (Action Completed)
To provide loans to eligible families in the middle income group to allow them a flexible choice of home purchase in the private sector (HD)	To replace progressively the Sandwich Class Housing Scheme with loan assistance (1998)	The Sandwich Class Housing Scheme was suspended in October 1998. Eligible middle income families will continue to be granted loans under the Home Purchase Loan Scheme and Home Starter Loan Scheme. (Action Completed)
To continue to provide loans to genuine first time home buyers in the low and middle income groups (Housing Bureau (HB))	To offer 12 000 loans under the Home Starter Loan Scheme in 1998-1999 (1998)	By September 1999, more than 16 200 Certificates of Eligibility were issued and over 11 000 loan recipients had purchased homes under the Scheme. The Housing Society has invited applications for the new phase in 1999-2000. (Action Completed)
To review the existing subsidised home ownership loan schemes to determine whether improvements can be made to their operation and effectiveness (HB)	To complete the review in 1998-1999 (1998)	Following the review, no further loans will be issued under the Sandwich Class Housing Loan Scheme. The eligibility criteria for the Home Purchase Loan Scheme and the Home Starter Loan Scheme have been rationalised and simplified. (Action Completed)
To help public rental housing tenants to buy their own flats through the Tenant Purchase Scheme (HD)	In the ten-year period starting in 1998, to offer no fewer than 250 000 flats for sale under the scheme (1998)	About 20 000 tenants purchased flats in 1998 under Phase I of the scheme. Phase II, involving 27 000 flats, was launched in March 1999. (Action in Progress: On Schedule)

Initiative	Target	Present Position
<p>To allow families on the Waiting List and eligible residents of Squatter Areas, Cottage Areas and Temporary Housing Areas the choice to buy or rent their flats</p> <p>(HD)</p>	<p>To finalise details of the “Buy or Rent Option” by end-1998</p> <p>(1998)</p>	<p>Over 40 000 families were offered flats under Phase I of the Scheme, launched in June 1999.</p> <p>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</p>
<p>To implement a fast-track programme to produce public rental flats and Home Ownership Scheme flats on sites in or adjacent to existing housing estates</p> <p>(HD)</p>	<p>To identify sites to produce nearly 10 000 public rental flats and Home Ownership Scheme flats by 1999</p> <p>(1998)</p>	<p>By September 1999, 18 projects (8 600 flats) were completed.</p> <p>(Action in Progress: Under Review)</p>
<p>To give better-off tenants priority in the purchase of subsidised home ownership flats in order to encourage them to vacate their public rental flats for use by more needy families</p> <p>(HD)</p>	<p>An on-going commitment</p> <p>(1998)</p>	<p>Over 800 better-off tenants paying additional rent purchased Home Ownership Scheme flats in the past year.</p> <p>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</p>

## Looking Forward

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

Indicator	1999 Target
Number of subsidised home ownership flats, loans and subsidies provided to eligible low and middle income families	Continued progress towards achieving an overall home ownership rate of 70% by 2007

We will undertake the following initiatives to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
To improve operation of the Private Sector Participation Scheme (HD)	To complete a study by the end of 1999 of new measures to enhance the quality of flats under the Private Sector Participation Scheme
To improve the design of Home Ownership Scheme flats so as to meet the expectations of buyers and to reduce wastage caused by the removal of fixtures by buyers (HD)	To explore the “basic shell” concept where only essential fittings to comply with statutory requirements will be provided in Home Ownership Scheme flats

# 6

## Provide public housing at reasonable rents to those who cannot afford any other type of housing

We will continue to meet the housing needs of people who cannot afford to buy a home or rent private accommodation.

We are determined to reduce the waiting time for public rental housing for families in genuine need by increasing the number of public housing flats allocated to such families.

### Progress Made

Our indicator of progress in this area is the waiting time for public rental housing. The waiting time has now been reduced to six years. We will reduce the average waiting time to under five years by 2001, four years by 2003 and three years by 2005.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To increase the supply of public housing flats for families on the Waiting List <i>(Housing Department (HD))</i>	To supply no less than 20 000 public housing flats for families on the Waiting List from 2001 onwards <i>(1998)</i>	The Housing Authority is on target to provide 21 000 public housing flats to Waiting List applicants in 1999-2000. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
To adopt a proactive approach in order to shorten the waiting time for public rental housing <i>(HD)</i>	To give greater priority to families in need and to simplify the system of choice by geographical area starting from 1999 <i>(1998)</i>	In the past year, 2 300 households were provided with public rental flats through Compassionate Rehousing. Since November 1998, the choice of geographical areas has been streamlined from eight to four districts. <i>(Action Completed)</i>
To provide a long term solution to the housing problem of people who are not yet eligible for public rental flats <i>(HD)</i>	To build 15 000 self-contained interim housing units by 2005 <i>(1998)</i>	We have commenced construction of 12 000 interim housing units and have designed another 5 000 units for completion by 2003. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To improve security facilities in public housing estates (HD)	To complete upgrading of security facilities in public housing estates by 2002 (1998)	Upgrading work has begun and will be completed by 2002. (Action in Progress: On Schedule)
To introduce a means test, covering income and assets, for prospective Housing Authority tenants and for adult members of a family where the tenant and spouse are deceased to ensure that public rental housing flats are allocated to families in genuine need (HD)	To introduce the means test by 1998 (1997)	The means test for prospective tenants was introduced in September 1998. The means test for adult members applying for transfer of tenancies was introduced in February 1999. (Action Completed)
To reduce the time taken for reallocation of public flats (HD)	To reduce the vacancy rate of public rental flats to below 2% by 1999 (1997)	The present vacancy rate is 1.7%. (Action Completed)
To respond to requests for repairs and maintenance promptly (HD)	To inspect every public rental flat, irrespective of age, at least once every 18 months (1997)	Since June 1998, every public rental flat has been inspected biennially. (Action Completed)
To maintain progress in redeveloping older public housing blocks under the Housing Authority's Comprehensive Redevelopment Programme (HD)	To redevelop all non-self-contained flats before 2001 and to complete the programme by 2005 (1996)	We cleared 68 blocks including 15 600 non-self-contained flats under the Comprehensive Redevelopment Programme over the past three years. (Action in Progress: On Schedule)

## Looking Forward

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

Indicator	1999 Target
Waiting time for public rental housing	Continued progress towards reducing the average waiting time for public rental housing to three years by 2005

We will undertake the following initiatives to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
To review with the Housing Authority ways to meet the housing requirements of both local and newly arrived families fairly and effectively. Depending on the outcome of the review, to make additional land available to the Housing Authority <i>(Housing Bureau)</i>	To announce the results of the review within 1999
To improve the provision of medical clinics at public housing estates <i>(HD)</i>	To complete a review by the end of 1999 with a view to improving the allocation system for medical clinics in public housing estates in 2000

# 7

## Implement initiatives to address the housing requirements of groups in special need

We attach importance to the housing needs of certain categories of household which require special consideration, either because of their particular circumstances or for historical reasons. Such categories include single person households, the elderly, squatters, bedspace apartment lodgers, residents of Cottage Areas and Temporary Housing Areas, and rooftop dwellers.

### Progress Made

Our indicator of progress in this area is the extent to which we are able to meet the housing requirements of groups in special need. We are on schedule to meet our existing commitments in respect of these groups, including our pledges to give priority to the elderly who apply for public housing, to clear all old-style Temporary Housing Areas by 2000, to offer rehousing to eligible households affected by the clearance of the remaining Cottage Areas by 2001, and to introduce a Senior Citizen Residence Scheme by 2001. We are also taking a more proactive approach to resolve the housing problem of non-elderly singletons. We will shorten their average waiting time for public rental housing to an average of three years by 2005.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To address the housing needs of non-elderly singletons <i>(Housing Bureau (HB))</i>	To complete a review of housing assistance for non-elderly singletons in 1999 <i>(1998)</i>	The review was completed on schedule, with recommendations to address the housing needs of non-elderly singletons. <i>(Action Completed)</i>
To offer public housing, including interim housing, to all eligible persons displaced from bedspace apartments which do not meet the safety standards for licensing <i>(Housing Department (HD)/ Home Affairs Department)</i>	To encourage bedspace apartment lodgers to register on the Waiting List and arrange rehousing for displaced eligible displaced lodgers by 2001 <i>(1998)</i>	In the past year, 1 500 lodgers in bedspace apartments were visited, and about 700 were registered on the Waiting List. 140 eligible bedspace apartment lodgers on the Waiting List were rehoused. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To draw up a programme for clearance of squatter areas affected by new development for a public purpose (HD)	To clear and rehouse 12 000 families by 2002-2003 (1998)	Up to September 1999, 1 500 families have been rehoused. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
To clear all remaining old-style Temporary Housing Areas (THAs), in order to improve the living conditions of those affected and to free land for development (HD)	By 2000, to rehouse all eligible cleartees in public housing, including interim housing (1998)	The remaining 11 old-style THAs will be cleared by 2000. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
To clear the remaining Cottage Areas in order to provide a more satisfactory living environment to resettled households (HD)	To rehouse all eligible Cottage Area residents by 2001 (1998)	Clearance plans have been drawn up for the remaining five Cottage Areas. Rehousing offers will be made to eligible residents by 2001. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
To rehouse eligible households from unauthorised rooftop structures which are cleared to improve fire safety (HD)	An on-going commitment (1998)	All eligible households living in unauthorised rooftop structures cleared to improve fire safety have been rehoused. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
To give higher priority for public housing to households with elderly members (HD)	To expand existing priority schemes and to introduce new priority schemes by 1998 (1998)	Starting from late 1998, we have extended the Families with Elderly Persons Priority Scheme to non-nuclear families; enhanced the success rate of households which apply under the Special Scheme for Families with Elderly Persons; and accorded priority to households with elderly members in their applications for Home Ownership Scheme and Private Sector Participation Scheme flats and Home Purchase Loans. <i>(Action Completed)</i>



Initiative	Target	Present Position
<p>To allocate more public rental flats, with suitable facilities and services, to elderly people (HD)</p>	<p>To reduce the waiting time of all eligible elderly households to two years by 2007 (1998)</p>	<p>We have drawn up a programme to provide 30 000 public rental flats to single elderly persons by 2001-2002. At present, the average waiting time for a single elderly person to be allocated a shared flat is two years, while that for a self contained flat is 3.5 years.  (Action in Progress: On Schedule)</p>
<p>To provide elderly people living in inadequate private sector accommodation with easy access to information on public housing (HB)</p>	<p>To set up additional Housing Information Centres where necessary (1998)</p>	<p>A new Housing Information Centre was opened in Sheung Wan in 1998. Another one will be opened in Shau Kei Wan.  (Action in Progress: On Schedule)</p>
<p>To invite the Hong Kong Housing Society to undertake a Senior Citizen Residence Scheme, on a pilot basis, under which flats will be leased for life to elderly people in the middle income group, to give them access to affordable, purpose-built accommodation with integrated care services (HB)</p>	<p>To complete 500 flats for the Senior Citizen Residence Scheme by 2001 (1998)</p>	<p>Two sites have been allocated to the Housing Society for constructing the flats. Operational details of the scheme are being finalised.  (Action in Progress: On Schedule)</p>
<p>To encourage the private sector to provide affordable flats to single elderly persons (HB/Health and Welfare Bureau)</p>	<p>To develop proposals in consultation with the Elderly Commission in 1999 (1998)</p>	<p>The Elderly Commission has been consulted on a broad framework of proposals. Details of a pilot scheme are being drawn up.  (Action in Progress: On Schedule)</p>

## Looking Forward

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

Indicator	1999 Target
Extent to which we are able to meet the housing requirements of groups in special need	Continued progress towards meeting the targets for specific initiatives set out above

We will undertake the following initiatives to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
To implement the results of a review of housing assistance for non-elderly singletons (HB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To accelerate the allocation of public rental housing to non-elderly singletons in genuine need so as to shorten the average waiting time to five years by 2001, four years by 2003 and three years by 2005</li> <li>● To consider with the Housing Authority and the Housing Society improved provisions of housing to non-elderly singletons under various subsidised home ownership scheme and loan schemes</li> <li>● To launch a pilot scheme to provide loans to eligible non-elderly singletons under the Home Starter Loan Scheme</li> </ul>
To develop a pilot scheme for the provision of elderly housing by private sector developers (HB)	To formulate details of the pilot scheme in consultation with the Elderly Commission
To conduct an overall review of the provision of public housing for the elderly (HD)	To complete the review in 2000