

Public views invited for consultation on enhancing recreation and education potential of country parks and special areas in Hong Kong

The Government launched a public consultation on February 16 to seek public views on the proposals for "Enhancing the Recreation and Education Potential of Country Parks and Special Areas in Hong Kong".

A spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said, "About 44 300 hectares of countryside has been conserved as country parks and special areas in Hong Kong. They have not only provided habitats for diverse animals and plants, but also venues for countryside recreation and outdoor education for the public.

"The Government commissioned a consultancy study in January 2017 to explore opportunities to enhance the recreation and education potential of Hong Kong country parks and special areas with a view to broadening and diversifying visitors' experience and meeting the growing demand for countryside recreation while maintaining their conservation functions. To help develop the recommendations of the study, a series of engagement activities, including stakeholders' interviews, public opinion surveys and engagement workshops were conducted in the past two years to gather and generate ideas on the proposals."

After studying the environmental, planning, design and operation considerations, four shortlisted enhancement proposals were reached as follows:

(1) Enhancement of Existing Facilities

The Government proposes to enhance the existing facilities and activities to enrich visitors' experience and cater for people of different ages and physical abilities, including enhancing the existing country park visitor centres as visitor hubs to serve as gateways to country parks and special areas and one-stop service hubs; introducing an advance booking system for popular camp sites to facilitate activity planning and strengthen management; providing more viewing platforms for scenery appreciation, and enhancing physically handicapped and able-bodied sites and facilities.

(2) Open Museums for Historical Relics Appreciation

To enhance conservation of historical relics and maximise the education value of country parks and special areas on local history, the Government proposes to set up open museums on cultural heritage resources within country parks and special areas, with various education activities provided.

(3) Tree Top Adventure

Subject to environmental conditions and matching with nature education

elements, the Government proposes to provide tree-top adventure activities along with a wide variety of associated activities, such as canopy walks and tree climbing for various age groups, to deepen their understanding of nature conservation.

(4) Enhancement of Glamping Sites and Eco-lodges

To diversify the types of overnight facilities provided in country parks, the Government proposes to set up glamping sites and eco-lodges to enrich campers' experience and facilitate campers of different age groups with different needs to connect with nature.

A consultation document, leaflet, website and public forums have been produced and arranged to publicise the proposals and to provide platforms to gather views and opinions. Roving exhibitions and interactive exhibitions will also be held to introduce the proposals to the public. The consultation document and information on the public engagement activities have been uploaded to the dedicated website (www.cp-recreation.hk). Members of the public are invited to share their views by email (myviews@cp-recreation.afcd.gov.hk) on or before May 15.

Labour Department to hold occupational health public talks

The Labour Department (LD) will hold a public talk entitled "Prevention of upper limb disorders" on February 25 (Monday). The talk will briefly introduce the causes and preventive measures of upper limb disorders to enhance employees' awareness of the issues. Demonstrations and practice of workplace exercise will be included.

The LD will hold another talk entitled "Work and diabetes mellitus and hypertension" on February 28 (Thursday). The talk will introduce some health tips for working in hot environments or on irregular schedules or when performing heavy manual work, in order to promote occupational health awareness of employees with diabetes mellitus or hypertension.

Both talks will be given by the LD's occupational health nurse in Cantonese at 3pm in the Lecture Hall of the Hong Kong Space Museum, 10 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui. Admission is free. For enquiries or registration, please call 2852 4040.

EPD convictions in January

Sixty-six convictions were recorded in January 2019 for breaches of legislation enforced by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD).

Three of the convictions were under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance, 28 were under the Noise Control Ordinance, four were under the Product Eco-responsibility Ordinance, 27 were under the Waste Disposal Ordinance, and four were under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance.

The heaviest fine in January was \$25,000, assessed in two convictions against a company which used powered mechanical equipment otherwise than in accordance with permit conditions, and carried out prescribed construction work not in accordance with the conditions of a construction noise permit.

Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rate in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

Red flags hoisted at Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (February 18) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Silverstrand Beach

and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at these beaches.