

News story: New 'Cumbria Exchange' portal is launched

Cumbria Exchange will build on the strong community spirit that exists in the area, by helping businesses and the community find each other for mutual benefit.

It will function as an online matching service, by quickly connecting those who need help, to those who can provide it.

It works on a simple 'offers and needs' basis.

Councillor David Moore, Chair of the Copeland Community Fund said;

This is an exciting collaboration that the community and businesses have been waiting for.

The sense of community spirit in Cumbria is phenomenal, but alone this isn't enough, we needed a place that people can go to understand what help is needed, and what support is available.

Cumbria Exchange is a simple forum that makes this process easier.

We didn't want to wait for a flood or crisis, this is something that can get maximum benefit for the community at all times.

For businesses, it tells them what the community really needs, and for community organisations it give them a place they can go to ask for help, whether that be advice, manpower or equipment.

It will only succeed if people use it, so I would urge community groups and businesses to submit your requests and offers, however big or small.

Community organisations simply submit a 'support wanted' request if they need help, however big or small.

Businesses can post in the 'support offered' area if they have specific skills, expertise or equipment that can be of benefit to the community.

Cumbria Exchange is the result of a group of organisations and community groups identifying a need for a more coordinated approach to creating social and economic impact.

It was developed as collaboration between the Copeland Community Fund, Cumbria Community Foundation, Low Level Waste Repository Ltd, the Nuclear Community Network (Sellafield Ltd and supply chain), Britain's Energy Coast, Business in the Community and United Utilities.

It is a result of numerous community groups and local businesses identifying the need for a more coordinated way of supporting each other.

Anyone can submit a request or offer by going to [Cumbria Exchange](#).

For support please contact by Telephone: 01946 598352 or Email: info@cumbriaexchange.co.uk

Government announces 2018-19 Land Sale Programme

The Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, today (March 1) announced the Government's 2018-19 Land Sale Programme.

"The 2018-19 Land Sale Programme comprises 27 residential sites capable of providing about 15,200 flats, and four commercial/hotel sites which can provide about 531,300 square metres of gross floor area, including area for arts and performance related use and about 1,770 hotel rooms," Mr Wong said.

Among the 27 residential sites included in the 2018-19 Land Sale Programme, 15 are rolled over from the 2017-18 Land Sale Programme, capable of providing about 11,600 flats in total, and the remaining 12 sites have a capacity to provide about 3,600 flats.

Mr Wong also gave an overview of the private housing land supply situation in 2017-18. By the end of this financial year, it is estimated that a total of 11 residential sites will have been sold or put up for sale. These 11 sites have a total capacity to produce about 5,800 flats.

"The aggregate private housing land supply from the sale of government sites, railway property development projects, projects of the Urban Renewal Authority (URA), and private development or redevelopment projects is estimated to have a capacity to produce about 25,500 flats," he said.

Pursuant to the announcement by the Government in December 2017, the housing supply target for the coming 10 years is 460,000 units, of which 40 per cent is private housing. Correspondingly, the 2018-19 target for private housing land supply from various sources is 18,000 flats.

In the next financial year, railway property development projects will continue to contribute to private housing land supply. The property development projects owned by the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) at Yau Tong Ventilation Building, Wong Chuk Hang Station, Ho Man Tin Station and LOHAS Park are estimated to provide a total of some 4,250 flats. Taking into consideration the land supply from projects of the URA and private development or redevelopment, the total potential private housing land supply in the next financial year is estimated to have a capacity to produce about

25,500 flats.

Mr Wong noted that the actual supply of private housing land will depend on a number of factors, including the readiness for sale of government sites upon timely completion of relevant procedures/proceedings, the implementation progress of railway property development projects and projects of the URA, the progress of developers' private development/redevelopment projects and their initiative to conclude lease modifications/land exchange and pursue redevelopments.

For the first quarter of 2018-19, i.e. April to June 2018, the Government will tender one residential site in Yau Tong which has a capacity to produce about 500 flats.

In the same quarter, depending on market conditions and subject to the resolving of technical issues, the MTRCL plans to tender Yau Tong Ventilation Building and Package 3 of Wong Chuk Hang Station projects, capable of providing about 1,700 flats in total. The URA plans to invite tenders for the project at Tung Chau Street/Kweilin Street, Sham Shui Po which is estimated to provide about 210 flats.

The above sources, together with small private development/redevelopment projects, are expected to provide about 2,400 flats in total in the first quarter of 2018-19.

Apart from residential site, the Government will put up for sale in the first quarter of 2018-19 one industrial site in Fanling of approximately 18,300 square metres of gross floor area in response to the market's demand for such land.

Starting from the first quarter of 2018-19, in addition to publishing the name and tender amount of the successful tenderer, and the names of the other tenderers and their parent company (if provided) at the time of the tender award, after all transaction procedures in relation to the successful bid are completed, the Government will further publish the tender amounts of all the other tender submissions on an anonymous basis for reference by the industry and the market.

"The new initiative will provide more market information for reference by different stakeholders while ensuring that the tender process is smoothly completed. It should also serve to address the keen market interest over land tender results," Mr Wong said.

Mr Wong said that the Government is firmly committed to sustaining a steady land supply through a multi-pronged approach to cater for the housing and socio-economic development needs of the community.

"The Government will follow the established practice to announce in advance the quarterly land sale programme to provide transparency and certainty to the market. Depending on the situation, we may also put up additional sites for sale in the course of a quarter in order to flexibly respond to changing market conditions," he added.

The 2018-19 Land Sale Programme can be found on the Lands Department's website (www.landsd.gov.hk).

News story: Call for evidence: Home Office treatment of vulnerable adults.

The ICIBI has started an inspection of how effectively, efficiently and consistently the Home Office's Borders, Immigration and Citizenship System (BICS) treats vulnerable adults when it encounters them.

The evidence gathering process for this inspection has started and the inspectorate's established stakeholders will shortly be asked for their input. However, the Independent Chief Inspector is keen to receive written evidence from anyone with relevant knowledge, expertise or first-hand experience of this subject, and in particular any recent examples of good or poor practice.

The inspection will examine Home Office BICS policies, guidance, training and practice in relation to vulnerable adults encountered at the border and in the UK, including where this involves other agencies. It will focus on face-to-face encounters, but will also consider the extent to which paper-based BICS processes are capable of capturing and responding to evidence of vulnerability.

The inspection will not look at vulnerable adults in immigration detention, as this is the subject of a separate review by Stephen Shaw (with whom the inspectorate is in dialogue). Nor will it look in detail at asylum casework, Potential Victims of Modern Slavery (PVoMS), the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, or the provision of asylum accommodation, as each of these topics has been covered in inspections that have either been published recently or are due to be published in the next few months.

Please email the Chief Inspector:
chiefinspector@icinspector.gsi.gov.uk

or write to:

ICIBI

5th Floor

Globe House

89 Eccleston Square

The deadline for submissions is 23 March 2018.

SCMA to visit Beijing

The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, will accompany the Chief Executive to visit Beijing from March 4 to 7.

Mr Nip will return to Hong Kong on March 7. During his absence, the Under Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Andy Chan, will be the Acting Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs.

Import of poultry meat and products from Province of Groningen in the Netherlands to be suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (March 1) that in view of a notification from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) about an outbreak of highly pathogenic H5N6 avian influenza in the Province of Groningen in the Netherlands, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the province with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that Hong Kong imported about 4 900 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and 1.8 million poultry eggs from the Netherlands last year.

“The CFS has contacted the Dutch authorities over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the OIE on avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation,” the spokesman said.