

Approved Wan Chai Outline Zoning Plan referred back for amendment

The Town Planning Board announced today (April 3) that the Secretary for Development has referred the approved Wan Chai Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) to the Board for amendment to reflect the latest land use proposals.

The OZP incorporating the respective amendments will be exhibited for public inspection under the provisions of the Town Planning Ordinance.

The Wan Chai OZP was last approved by the Chief Executive in Council in May 2023.

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (April 3) released the latest grading of water quality for 39 gazetted beaches (see Note 1) and one non-gazetted beach (see Note 2).

Thirty-seven beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1) and three as Fair (Grade 2).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Big Wave Bay Beach*	Lido Beach*
Butterfly Beach*	Lo So Shing Beach
Cafeteria New Beach	Lower Cheung Sha Beach
Cafeteria Old Beach	Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach*
Casam Beach*	Middle Bay Beach
Castle Peak Beach	Pui O Beach*
Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach*	Repulse Bay Beach*
Chung Hom Kok Beach	Shek O Beach*
Clear Water Bay First Beach	Silver Mine Bay Beach*
Clear Water Bay Second Beach*	Silverstrand Beach*
Deep Water Bay Beach*	South Bay Beach*
Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach [Non-gazetted beach]	St Stephen's Beach
Golden Beach*	Stanley Main Beach*
Hap Mun Bay Beach*	Tai Po Lung Mei Beach*

Hoi Mei Wan Beach
Hung Shing Yeh Beach*
Kadoorie Beach*
Kiu Tsui Beach
Kwun Yam Beach

Tong Fuk Beach
Trio Beach
Turtle Cove Beach
Upper Cheung Sha Beach

Grade 2 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach*
Approach Beach

Ting Kau Beach*

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, an EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a tropical cyclone or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666. Members of the public can also obtain the latest daily water quality forecast information for all beaches that are open for swimming through the EPD's dedicated webpage on the beach water quality forecast (www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast).

Note 1: Lifesaving services are provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department at 22 gazetted beaches, marked with an asterisk (*) above, from April 1. For details, please refer to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department's Special Announcement (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/beach/index.html).

Note 2: This refers to Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach which has no lifesaving service.

[Grading of beach water quality](#)

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[Continued decline in new HIV cases in 2024 reflects success of prevention and control efforts in Hong Kong \(with photo\)](#)

The Department of Health (DH) today (April 3) summarised the situation of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection and released the findings of a survey on HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among female sex workers (FSWs) in Hong Kong in 2024. The decline in the number of new cases of HIV infection in Hong Kong for the ninth consecutive year and a prevalence rate well below the global average reflected the success of Hong Kong's prevention and control efforts. However, due to the high proportion of late presentation, the DH encouraged the public to undergo HIV antibody testing, and to use condoms regularly and correctly to minimise the risk of HIV infection.

"In the year of 2024, the DH received 365 new HIV cases, including 297 males and 68 females aged between 14 and 89. Among the cases with a reported route of transmission, 312 cases (99 per cent) acquired the infection through sexual contact, including 216 through homosexual or bisexual contact and 96 through heterosexual contact. Almost half of the cases (44 per cent) were reported by public hospitals, clinics, and laboratories, followed by Acquired

Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) service organisations. The cumulative total of locally reported HIV infections since 1984 is 12 403. The prevalence of HIV infection among the general public in Hong Kong remained at 0.1 per cent, well below the global average, demonstrating the effectiveness of AIDS control and prevention in Hong Kong," said the Consultant (Special Preventive Programme) of the Public Health Services Branch of the Centre for Health Protection of the DH, Dr Bonnie Wong.

"A total of 74 new AIDS cases, including 63 males and 11 females, were reported during the same period. Since 1985, a cumulative total of 2 557 confirmed AIDS cases has been reported in Hong Kong. The most common AIDS-defining illness was *Pneumocystis pneumonia*," she added.

Although the number of new HIV infection has declined for nine consecutive years since 2015, the proportion of late presenters among newly reported cases in Hong Kong has been as high as 40 to 50 per cent, with a higher proportion of late presenters among those not belonging to high-risk populations, such as men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs and sex workers.

Late presenters refer to individuals with a very low CD4 cells (one kind of immune cell) count (less than 200 cells/mm³) or those who have already progressed to AIDS at the time of HIV diagnosis. Late presentation indicates that these individuals were not diagnosed and put on treatment in a timely manner at an earlier stage of infection, resulting in a weakened immune system. Late presentation can lead to an increased risk of opportunistic infections and malignancies, leading to a higher mortality rate. In addition, as a result of an unsuppressed viral load, late presenters contribute to an increased risk of HIV transmission in the community.

In addition, the DH has recently completed a community survey related to transmission risk of HIV and STIs, titled "HIV/AIDS Response Indicator Survey 2024 for Female Sex Workers" (HARiS 2024 for FSWs).

"The survey is a public health surveillance programme conducted by the DH to regularly monitor the situation of HIV infection and the related risk behaviours among female sex workers to guide the implementation of the Recommended HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong (2022-2027). The survey revealed that the proportion of respondents who had their last HIV test in the preceding year increased from 37 per cent in a similar survey in 2022 to 55 per cent, reflecting the effectiveness of HIV prevention interventions. Since the Strategies' target of 80 per cent has not been achieved, prevention efforts should continue. The survey also revealed that condom use among respondents was generally satisfactory, with 99 per cent of respondents using condoms when having sex with non-regular clients. However, condom use when having sex with regular clients was less consistent among some respondents, indicating the need to strengthen the condom promotion programme," Dr Wong said.

She reminded members of the public to use condoms consistently and properly to reduce the risk of acquiring HIV and STIs. In addition, vulnerable populations at higher risk of contracting HIV and STIs (including

men who have sex with men, FSWs and their clients and injecting drug users) should undergo HIV and STI testing regularly, at least once a year. People with HIV should seek specialist care and HIV treatment as soon as possible for viral suppression and health restoration. The DH will continue to collaborate with various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to raise awareness and knowledge among FSWs on HIV and STI prevention.

There are community resources available that enable members of the public to undergo [HIV antibody testing](#). Members of the public can reserve a free, anonymous and confidential HIV antibody test by visiting the HIV Testing Service website or calling the AIDS Hotline (2780 2211). They can also order HIV self-test kits (oral fluid-based and blood-based (finger prick) testing kits) on the HIV Testing Service website, and collect the self-test kits at various pick-up locations in Hong Kong.

Dr Wong stressed that HIV infection is a manageable chronic disease. Early HIV treatment with antiretroviral drugs can effectively prevent the progression to AIDS and other complications. Lifelong antiretroviral treatment is indicated for all people with HIV, and the treatment remarkably improves their health and possibility of survival. Moreover, those who achieve sustained viral suppression to an undetectable level with treatment will not transmit the virus through sex, i.e. Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U).

The public may visit the following pages for more information on [HIV/AIDS: the Virtual AIDS Office](#), [the Red Ribbon Centre](#), the [HIV Testing Service website](#) and the [Gay Men HIV Information website](#).



Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, April 3, 2025 is 106.7 (same as yesterday's index).