

Repairs to Kampung Houses

Villagers in Pulau Ubin are issued Temporary Occupation Licenses (TOLs) for the kampung houses and premises they live in or use. One TOL requirement is that villagers are responsible for the upkeep of their houses and premises. However, some villagers have requested NParks' help as the necessary repairs may be too extensive and beyond what they can take on themselves.

Such requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis – villagers will handle minor repairs and aesthetic improvements themselves, while NParks helps to connect villagers with community groups who might be keen to help out. For the premises of elderly villagers who have unfortunately passed on, NParks will make any necessary repairs before issuing new TOLs to these villagers' next of kin who have requested to take over the premises.

The process usually involves safety inspections, architectural drawings and documentation, as well as submissions to relevant authorities. In the process of repair, the original rustic design of each kampung house is maintained, without compromising the safety of the occupants. The repair works could include repairing the roof and floor, strengthening the structural foundations and supports, and replacing rotten or termite-infested timber elements.

House No. 239 is one of the six houses that NParks has repaired



House No. 239 before repairs



After completion in November 2019

House No. 760D is one house which NParks has assisted with essential structural repairs for safe occupancy



Replacement of flooring support



House No. 760D after replacement works

Ubin Tides



Habitat Enhancement Programme in Pulau Ubin

Located close to the Main Village, Pekan Quarry is one of the abandoned quarries on Pulau Ubin which has a large number of roosting Grey Herons (*Ardea cinerea*). The herons used to make nests on trees around the edge of the quarry as well, but as the water level rose over time, they no longer did so.



Soil for plants being laid on the bare floating platform that will be used for a new floating wetland

Installing Floating Wetlands

Habitat enhancement at Pekan Quarry began with a pilot floating wetlands project in 2015. Floating wetlands are buoyant structures on waterbodies that are planted up to provide habitats for wildlife, beautify an area and improve water quality. Once installed, the pilot floating wetlands immediately attracted Grey Herons and other wildlife like Purple Herons (*Ardea purpurea*), kingfishers and otters. They were observed resting or foraging for food on the floating wetlands.

Next Steps

With the success of the pilot project, we have proceeded with the next stage which involves installing a larger number of floating wetland systems and heron nesting platforms. The floating wetland systems will feature plants, as well as nooks and perches for wildlife. We hope to see that biodiversity continues to thrive at Pekan Quarry!



A freshly planted floating wetland with plants that are well-spaced out and features such as logs and gravel for wildlife

Community Liaison Team

Since taking on the role as the central management agency in mid-2016, NParks has been working closely with the Friends of Ubin Network (FUN) to engage Pulau Ubin's villagers and address their concerns. In August 2019, we set up a Community Liaison Team (CLT) dedicated for this purpose. Through active engagement with the villagers, the team gathers feedback and collaborates with grassroots organisations and other agencies on obtaining resources and organising programmes to work on such community issues.



Water Bag Distribution

During the prolonged dry weather from August to September 2019, villagers reported that their wells were drying up. NParks responded quickly by liaising with PUB to supply and distribute bags of water to the villagers for their drinking and cooking purposes.



Health Checks and Counselling

Healthcare for Ubin villagers is a key concern as many villagers are elderly and have chronic diseases such as hypertension, high cholesterol and diabetes. In January 2020, the CLT collaborated with the Singapore Red Cross (SRC) for eight volunteer nurses to conduct basic health checks and counselling for the villagers. NParks will continue to partner SRC for follow-up health checks.

Help in the Time of COVID-19



Distribution of Masks

NParks partnered with Siglap Constituency Office (Siglap CO) to distribute surgical masks to villagers in February 2020. At the same time, NParks also engaged a private geriatrician to provide free health consultations for the villagers and share good hygiene practices with them.

In the same month, NParks also supported stakeholders' efforts to give back to the Ubin community. Private outdoor camp companies FutuReady ASIA and Innotrek, which conduct programmes in Ubin, distributed WeCareKits comprising items such as surgical masks and hand sanitisers to the villagers.

Together with Siglap CO, NParks coordinated another round of distribution of reusable masks and hand sanitisers in April. The team also facilitated applications for the Temporary Relief Fund.

The SRC also donated surgical masks and hand sanitisers for NParks to distribute to villagers, including boatmen and van operators.

Going the Extra Mile

A villager, who was wheelchair-bound after his hospital operation in March 2020, needed assistance with transport back to Ubin on his day of discharge in April. NParks partnered with Accessible Ubin to help transport him from Changi Point Ferry Terminal to his home in Ubin. NParks also arranged for two nurses from the Home Nursing Foundation to visit the villager to follow up on his healthcare needs and provide caregiving training for his wife. Together with Accessible Ubin, NParks continued to facilitate the transport of the villager for his medical appointment and return in May.

During the COVID-19 circuit breaker period, the number of visitors to Ubin dropped drastically. To travel to and from the mainland via bumboat, villagers waited much longer for enough people to fill up a bumboat or paid more to top up the fare. To address this, NParks provided free boat rides from 29 April 2020 every Wednesday and Saturday at 9 am, 1 pm and 5 pm so that villagers could visit the mainland to obtain necessities such as groceries and medication, or have family members bring in their essential items.

