

A group of people, including a child with a backpack, looking at plants in a conservatory. The scene is filled with lush greenery and a large informational sign is visible in the foreground.

As Singapore embarks on its journey towards a City in a Garden, the community will play a key role in transforming static infrastructure into inspirational living, breathing spaces. We value the ideas, efforts and contributions of the community, and we will continue to engage people from all walks of life in order to enrich our vision and build an enduring home for the next generation.

# Engaging the Community





More than 4,000 suggestions on the City in a Garden vision were received through traditional and social media channels as well as some 40 roadshows island-wide.

### All on board for City in a Garden

"We're going to have parks and gardens in the heartlands. And we'll link them all up to create a City in a Garden." Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said this at the 2011 National Day Rally as he outlined plans to keep Singapore "special and exceptional".

The idea behind the *City in a Garden* vision is to surround homes with greenery and biodiversity so that Singaporeans are able to step out into an island-wide network of exciting parks, nature areas, streetscapes and park connectors. It links the environment, history and heritage with recreation and other shared spaces, binding the community together.

To give Singaporeans a greater say in shaping the landscape for future generations, NParks launched a *public engagement exercise* on 22 August 2011 to introduce the City in a Garden vision and invite all to share their ideas on how it can be achieved. Focus group discussions were also conducted to garner feedback from grassroots organisations, Members of Parliament and other segments of the community on specific projects such as Destination Parks and the Round Island Route.

### Growing the park community

Garden swings and sandcastles ushered in Singapore's inaugural *Parks Festival 2011*, which was launched on 17 September. The nine-day event, held in conjunction with World Parks Day, was packed with activities that attracted a wide spectrum of participants as well as strong support from companies, schools and volunteers.

Highlights of the festival included a forest exploration by night and the opportunity to sleep under the stars, guided walks at parks and nature reserves, brisk-walking, cycling, gardening workshops, a charity concert and an award-winning WaterFire art installation. With the support from McDonald's Singapore and SMRT Corporation Ltd, NParks also introduced a Parks Passport aimed at encouraging members of the public to visit different parks and get their passports "stamped".

Another important community outreach event was *Clean & Green Singapore 2012*. Jointly organised by NParks, National Environment Agency, PUB and the North West Community Development Council, the annual campaign was launched by DPM Teo Chee Hean with the planting of a small-leaved nutmeg tree on 29 October 2011.

*“Residents can gather and form Green Clubs to plant fruit trees or other plants and share their ideas. This synergy will help create more vibrant estate parks and bring communities closer together to foster a kampung spirit.”*

**Jane**

City in a Garden public engagement exercise



01 Through roving exhibitions at various locations island-wide, members of the public were invited to contribute feedback on how the City in a Garden vision can be realised.

02/03 The tree-planting tradition is celebrated annually during the Clean & Green Singapore campaign, where Singapore leaders plant trees in parks and various constituencies. Former Minister Mentor Mr Lee Kuan Yew and Senior Parliamentary Secretary for National Development, Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman were among those who planted trees during Clean & Green Singapore 2012.

04 This public collaboration art installation at Raffles Place Park by Sculpture Society (Singapore) and NParks was one of the many activities organised in conjunction with Parks Festival.

Six **Community in Bloom ambassadors** received awards in recognition of their contributions to the national gardening movement.

In all, about 50 new **Community in Bloom** gardens were created in 2011. Community engagement remained strong with about 430 active gardening groups in both public and private residential estates, educational institutions and organisations.

**Streetscape Gardens** were launched at the Bishan-Toa Payoh and Jurong Group Representative Constituencies to create more opportunities for the community to be involved in caring for greenery along the roads. Under this initiative, roadside ornamental gardens are planted and cared for with the involvement of residents.

To inject greater vibrancy into the parks, NParks has been collaborating with various art groups and artists to enrich its calendar of activities. To mark the opening of two public art gallery venues – Galeri Utama and Galeri Nila – at **The Foothills Fort Canning Park** in September 2011, a series of art exhibitions was organised in partnership with artists like Kenn Wong, Loh Wan Wan, Marcel Heijnen and Choo Meng Foo. In early 2012, two art cafes opened at the park, providing the public with classes in painting, photography and clay modelling.

## Coming together in celebration of trees

A total of 300 tropical trees decked in Christmas lights – this was the spectacle that welcomed visitors to the Singapore Botanic Gardens during the month-long *Trees of the World 2011* celebration in December. The celebrations involved twice the number of trees and attracted the participation of a bigger group of embassies, corporations, schools and community groups compared with the previous year.

Trees also played a central role in connecting donors with beneficiaries from social service organisations through a book launch that took place at the Istana in June 2011. Commissioned by then President SR Nathan, *"Trees of the Istana"* helped raise S\$129,000 for President's Challenge 2011. The book features over 70 of some 150 species of trees found at the Istana, and provides readers with a glimpse of how its grounds have been nurtured into a stately arboretum.

## Strengthening the corporate connection

On the corporate front, Coca-Cola has come on board to support the Active Healthy Green Lifestyle at Park Connectors programme. Their sponsorship of more than \$100,000 will support initiatives to encourage the community to make greater use of the Park Connector Network.

Panasonic Asia Pacific also partnered NParks to support the first mangrove biodiversity monitoring study in the mangrove forest at Pasir Ris Park. The results of the study will provide NParks with valuable information to enable the long-term conservation and management of Singapore's mangrove forests.

The Garden City Fund's Plant-A-Tree programme continued to attract strong corporate support. Since its launch in 2007, more than 11,000 trees have been pledged and planted by 209 organisations and 473 individuals.

## Engaging an international audience

With over 300,000 local and international visitors, 130 orchid experts from 31 countries and more than 75 stunning displays of the world's finest and most spectacular orchids, the *World Orchid Conference* made a successful return to Singapore, 48 years after it was first held here in 1963.

Organised jointly by NParks and the Orchid Society of Southeast Asia, the 20<sup>th</sup> World Orchid Conference (20WOC) – also known as the "Olympics of Orchids" – took place at the Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre from 13 to 20 November 2011. Singapore won the bid to host 20WOC six years ago, and is the only Asian city with the rare privilege of hosting the event for the second time.

Themed "Where New and Old World Orchids Meet", 20WOC provided an important networking platform for the enthusiasts, industry and academia, with an exciting programme line-up that included the World Orchid Show; a conference covering the latest trends, technology, and scientific discoveries in the orchid world; and a marketplace featuring the finest orchid plants and unique orchid-related products from across the world.

In 2011, eight *orchid-naming ceremonies* were also held at the Singapore Botanic Gardens in honour of foreign dignitaries and VIP visitors.





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## Inspiring the next generation

Experiential learning and the environment dovetailed with the development of a series of **enhanced online resource packages** in October 2011. Aimed at engaging and inspiring the younger generation, "Learning Journeys" cover eight parks and nature reserves and now comprise lesson plans for educators and activity worksheets for students aged seven to 16. These are closely aligned with the school syllabus.

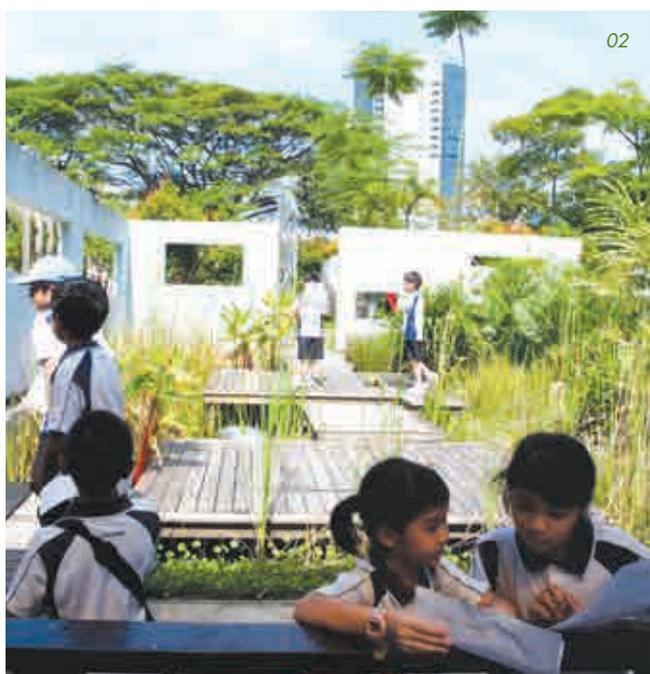
For the third year running, NParks continued to partner Shell and Northlight School in **Nature Nurtures**, an initiative to involve youths in confidence- and skills-building activities and motivate them to contribute to society. As part of the programme, students and volunteers took part in a biodiversity learning trail at Tampines Eco Green on 8 October 2011.

NParks has also embarked on a long-term collaboration with Raffles Institution to introduce cycling and learning along the park connectors. The project was launched along the North Eastern Riverine Loop of the Park Connector Network on 7 October 2011, with the first batch of 30 students and teachers from Raffles Institution cycling from Pasir Ris Park to Punggol Park. To ensure sustainable

- 01 *Trees of the World 2011, a month-long light-up of 300 tropical trees along the entire length of the Singapore Botanic Gardens, enabled individuals, organisations and community groups to come together and dress up trees with Christmas lights. Minister for National Development Mr Khaw Boon Wan launched the event.*
- 02 *Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam, who officially opened the 20<sup>th</sup> World Orchid Conference, was brought around to admire some of the over 50,000 orchids displayed.*
- 03 *The Garden City Fund's Plant-A-Tree programme received strong support from corporations such as ST Engineering, which planted 1,000 trees at Punggol Promenade.*
- 04-06 *Foreign dignitaries including Her Excellency Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand; His Excellency Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations and Mrs Ban Soon-taek; and Her Excellency Dr Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, had orchids named in conjunction with their visits to the Singapore Botanic Gardens.*



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outreach to students, NParks continued to integrate its programmes with schools' curricula and co-curricular activities. Under the Ministry of Education's (MOE) **Programme for Active Learning (PAL)**, some 4,200 Primary 1 and 2 students from 11 schools took part in NParks' Kids for Nature programme this year. This represented a 400 per cent increase in participation – a testimony to the success of the 2010 pilot programme which reached out to 870 students from three schools.

A comprehensive **booklet on NParks' programmes** was introduced in January 2011 to further facilitate take-up of these initiatives. This was well-received by more than 7,000 educators who picked it up at some 30 roadshows, exhibitions and school talks that NParks participated in. NParks also worked closely with MOE to facilitate the inclusion of parks and gardens into the new **Social Studies Resource Guide** for primary schools. The guide accompanies the revamped social studies syllabus which is being rolled out in phases to all primary schools in 2012.

In other student engagement initiatives, a new play telling the **City in a Garden** story was produced and has been making its rounds in primary schools, where it is performed during assembly. Pre-schoolers also joined their older compatriots in the Green Wave, a global campaign by the Convention on Biological Diversity in May 2011 to promote awareness of the importance of biodiversity. In Singapore, the response to **Green Wave 2011** was overwhelming, with 210 schools involved in the planting or watering of trees, compared with 91 the previous year.

- 01 With the revised social studies syllabus, many in the current cohort of more than 215,000 students are expected to visit Singapore's green spots, such as the Jacob Ballas Children's Garden, National Orchid Garden, Dairy Farm Nature Park, the nature reserves, HortPark or Fort Canning Park.
- 02 Under NParks' partnership with MOE's PAL programme, students explored various parks and learnt about nature. In this picture, students went on a scavenger hunt in HortPark to search for and identify items of nature.
- 03 The number of pre-schools taking part in Green Wave 2011 grew from just one in 2010 to 58.

Under NParks' participation in the MOE's Little Green Dots project, 11 kindergartens participated in a pilot where more than 800 pre-schoolers learnt about trees and plants through learning journeys to Dairy Farm Nature Park and Jacob Ballas Children's Garden.

### Networking with netizens

NParks continued to strengthen its online engagement with the public by making use of social media to generate greater exposure for its parks and programmes. The **NParks Facebook Page** ([www.facebook.com/nparksbuzz](http://www.facebook.com/nparksbuzz)) was started in July 2011 to allow people to share their experience in gardening, conservation and lifestyle. Together with its quarterly online newsletter My Green Space and the monthly NParks Buzz, NParks has been able to reach out to the net-savvy generation. These online tools also provided NParks with an additional platform to solicit feedback and gain a deeper understanding of park users' preferences.

NParks' maiden foray into the mobile platform resulted in a beta version of a **location-based application** to show visitors the various points of interest and the

location of amenities in the park. An improved version will be available by end of 2012.

**Five microsites** were created to promote major NParks programmes during the year. Examples included the International Year of Forests page celebrating Singapore's urban forest, and the City in a Garden (CIAG) portal that gathers ideas from netizens on various aspects of the CIAG vision.

NParks has also made available another 10 **Do-It-Yourself walking guides** for download from its website, bringing the total number of guides available online to 44. Complete with maps and photographs, the guides aim to enhance the park experience and raise awareness of trees and the biodiversity present in Singapore.

