BCA Partners Industry to Attract Talent to the Built Environment Sector

The enhanced iBuildSG Scholarship and Sponsorship programme supports training and development of built environment professionals, with scholarships and sponsorships offered in partnership with the industry.

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Connecting People with Plants

The Singapore Botanic Gardens’ Gallop extension will boost the Gardens’ total area to 82 hectares and further the Gardens’ mission of connecting people with plants.

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Creating Unique HDB Towns

Town Design Guides are being developed to strengthen the identity of each town, and to deepen residents’ sense of belonging to their homes.

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Fret Not About Finding Car Parks!

OneService App’s new features provide useful information on car parks islandwide and allow users to pay for parking without the use of coupons.

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Respect Property Agents’ Boundaries

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i Light Singapore — Bicentennial Edition x Community

Themed “Bridges of Time”, the bicentennial edition of i Light Singapore featured a record 33 light art installations by 55 artists from 15 different countries, and reflected on Singapore’s history, growth, and relationships with the world over the last 700 years.

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BCA Partners Industry to Attract Talent to the Built Environment Sector

Mr Chew Xiu Zheng is not your typical undergraduate. The civil engineer-in-training has already made an important contribution to the built environment (BE) by developing an intelligent, self-balancing system for the lifting of Prefabricated Prefinished Volumetric Construction (PPVC) modules with his NUS coursemates and his sponsoring company. This system improves site productivity by reducing the human intervention required to manually balance the modules.

People like Xiu Zheng are at the heart of the industry’s transformation journey. To continue supporting individuals like him, Minister for National Development and Second Minister for Finance Mr Lawrence Wong announced at the inaugural iBuildSG Scholarship and Sponsorship Ceremony that the Government has committed $72 million to support the training and development of BE professionals through the enhancement of the iBuildSG Scholarship and Sponsorship programme.

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Recipients of the full-time Undergraduate, Diploma and ITE awards can now expect structured on-the-job training when they start full-time employment at their sponsoring firms. After completing their bond, they can look forward to a further training grant of $3,000 and a retention incentive of $7,000 if they remain in the BE sector for another year. This enhancement has also been extended to university graduates embarking on postgraduate courses.

Recipients of the Building Specialist Sponsorship award will also see an extension of their training programme from two to three years, enabling them to attend longer courses such as part-time NITEC, higher NITEC, and post-ITE development courses.

What sets these scholarships and sponsorships apart is that they are offered in partnership with the industry: sponsoring firms are involved in the selection of candidates, and award recipients are guaranteed a job with their sponsoring firm upon graduation. There are also multiple entry points for aspiring and existing professionals from the entire value chain of the BE sector, as they can apply for the programme at different stages of their studies and careers.

Minister Wong also announced that the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) will set up a standing iBuildSG Tripartite Committee to deepen tripartite collaboration to develop the industry’s workforce. Talent attraction, retention and building competencies will be key focus areas for the tripartite committee. The tripartite committee will also take an advisory role for the Skills Framework which BCA is developing for the sector. This framework will map out career pathways for identified job roles in the sector, including the current and emerging skills and competencies needed to stay relevant.

BCA will also engage youths and students through the iBuildSG Club by introducing them to the BE sector and encouraging them to take up relevant courses which will enable them to pursue meaningful careers in the sector.
The Singapore Botanic Gardens turns 160 this year! The National Parks Board (NParks) unveiled plans for an 8-hectare extension to the Gardens along Gallop Road during the launch of the Gardens’ 160th anniversary celebrations on 9 January 2019.

Minister for National Development and Second Minister for Finance Mr Lawrence Wong graced the occasion as guest-of-honour, and launched a two-week exhibition about the Gardens’ significant milestones since 1859.

As Singapore’s first UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Singapore Botanic Gardens possesses a rich history encompassing research, conservation, education, and recreation. The Gallop extension will continue the Gardens’ heritage roles in these areas, enabling visitors to learn more about native forest ecology and the importance of conservation while furthering the Gardens’ mission of connecting people with plants. The extension will also act as a buffer against urban development around the native flora and fauna within the Gardens.
With its rolling terrain of open lawns framed by landscapes of native plants and forests, the Gallop extension brings the total area of the Gardens to 82 hectares – the largest in its 160-year history. The extension also features two conservation buildings.

Opening in late 2019, the Gallop extension will include the following features:
HPL Canopy Link, a 200m-long barrier-free bridge which connects the Learning Forest to the Gallop extension, giving visitors the chance to view the Gardens’ native forest tree species up close.

The Mingxin Foundation Rambler’s Ridge, a restored ridgetop habitat, which will recreate a variety of hill-slope and cliff-edge habitats found in the region.

The OCBC Arboretum will contain a 2-hectare collection of 200 to 300 species of dipterocarps, an ecologically critical family of rainforest trees including many valuable timber species threatened by deforestation in Southeast Asia.

Located in the refurbished colonial-era Gallop Road No. 5 (Atbara) bungalow, the Forest Discovery Centre will allow visitors to learn about the ecology of Singapore’s forests through interactive displays.

The Botanical Art Gallery in the refurbished Gallop Road No. 7 (Inverturret) was inspired by the trees found within the Gardens, creating an immersive artistic experience for visitors.

With play elements inspired by trees found within the Gardens, the COMO...
bungalow will display Singapore’s first permanent collection of global botanical art.

Gallop Valley encourages visitors to immerse themselves in the forest, as its meandering streams and softer foliage provide a calm and restorative experience.

Adventure Grove is a new biophilic play area for children to explore and connect with the myriad forms exhibited in nature.

The Gardens’ efforts in research, conservation, education and outreach would not have been possible without support from the community, including donors from various sectors. To acknowledge the important role that the community played in the Gardens’ history, NParks has dedicated Heritage Trees to donors who have contributed to the Gardens’ efforts in conservation and citizen science programmes through the Garden City Fund. Minister Wong presented the Heritage Tree plaques to these donors at the launch event.

Apart from the opening of the Gallop extension, there is much more to look forward to as the Gardens celebrates its 160th anniversary. Expect exciting festivals, concerts, workshops and guided tours all year long (including the Singapore Botanic Gardens Heritage Festival in July), all themed around the discovery and appreciation of flora and fauna over the last 160 years.

Check out [www.nparks.gov.sg/SBG/whats-happening/calendar-of-events](http://www.nparks.gov.sg/SBG/whats-happening/calendar-of-events) for more information on events at the Gardens in 2019, and come join in the fun!
Creating Unique HDB Towns

Every HDB town has its own distinct identity. This is not a coincidence, because HDB has consciously designed each town according to a theme that best reflects its own unique context and history.

However, as towns undergo enhancement, development, and rejuvenation by different government agencies over time, it becomes necessary to align all the agencies' efforts to preserve the various towns' identities and ensure coherent design.

HDB is in the process of creating Town Design Guides in response to this challenge. Each guide outlines the history, planning vision, and design intent of each town at three different scales: town, neighbourhood, and precinct. By translating architectural intents into clear principles, agencies like Town Councils and their design consultants will be better equipped to enhance HDB towns in ways that build on the towns’ own unique identities.

Woodlands, one of the towns identified for renewal under the Remaking Our Heartland (ROH) programme, is the first town to receive its own Town Design Guide. The name “Woodlands” was coined based on the many keranji trees that dotted the coastline in the area during the 1880s. The guide thus naturally adopted a “wooded” theme to commemorate Woodlands’ history.

The “wooded” theme permeates all levels of planning and design for the town, from broad connectivity plans to precinct facilities and street furniture. For example, at the town level, a 1.9km-long community link called WoodsVista Gallery will be built amidst lush greenery, so residents can walk leisurely from Woodlands MRT station to Woodlands Waterfront while enjoying nature around them.
Sub-themes have also been developed for the five areas within Woodlands. These sub-themes are urban, nature, community, wellness, and discovery. The Town Design Guide provides recommendations for the design of facades and rooftops in line with each of these sub-themes. For instance, Woodlands Central, which was assigned the “urban” theme, could employ a colour palette comprising light greys and browns as well as varied and dynamic rooftops.

Town Design Guides for all HDB towns will progressively be published over the next five years. Through these design guides, HDB hopes to strengthen the identity of each town, thus deepening residents’ sense of belonging to their homes.

Fret Not About Finding Car Parks!

Are you having trouble finding car parks, especially when you’re running late? Fret not! The OneService App has the solution for you.

The Municipal Services Office (MSO) is transforming the OneService App into a one-stop community platform to meet residents’ diverse municipal needs. Residents can use the OneService App not just to report feedback on local issues, but also to perform transactions, engage one another and access useful neighbourhood information.
For a start, MSO has added the “Find Parking” and “Start Parking” modules in the OneService App for motorists.

**Find Parking module**

MSO has consolidated car park information such as parking rates, opening hours, car park types for more than 3,000 car parks in the OneService App. Using the “Find Parking” module, you can locate car parks around your destination, and check the availability of parking lots in selected car parks.

And if you’re concerned about not finding the entrance to the car park and ending up driving in circles, the OneService App has a solution for you. Simply select “Get Directions” from the App and the GPS coordinates of the car park entrance will automatically be entered into your phone’s navigation app to display the route to the car park entrance.

**Start Parking module**

Get rid of your parking coupons! You can now pay for parking at HDB and URA coupon car parks using the “Start Parking” module. Simply select your car park when you arrive and pay for parking electronically through the App. Transactions will be processed through Parking.sg. You don’t have to switch to the Parking.sg app to make payment.

Download the OneService App now, and you can find your car park and pay for parking on a single platform.
Respect Property Agents’ Boundaries

Property agents frequently go out of their way to ensure that their clients receive the best service possible. However, that does not mean they are obliged to carry out every demand a client makes. More often than not, property agents could be acceding to clients’ requests out of goodwill.

While property agents are expected to look out for their clients’ best interests, consumers should also be aware of their own responsibilities and respect the limits of their agents’ services.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boundaries of service for property agents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In a rental transaction, a property agent’s responsibilities end <strong>after the property has been handed over</strong> to the tenant...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you choose to handle your property transaction yourself (i.e. without engaging an agent), <strong>you should be familiar with the procedures and regulations involved</strong>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss and agree on the commission rate <strong>before your agent starts work</strong>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pay the agreed commission</strong> to your agent’s agency after the transaction has been completed...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sign the prescribed estate agency agreement</strong> to protect the interests of both parties...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you have queries about matters such as property valuation or legalities, <strong>go to the subject matter experts for advice</strong>...</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Both your agent and you share the responsibility for building a harmonious relationship with each other. So make sure you know where your agent’s limits are, and be a fair and responsible client!

Back to Highlights

**Watching Over Local Vegetable Farms**

Meet Pang Jing Ren, a Senior Executive Manager in the Plant Section of the Agri Establishment Regulation Group in AVA. Jing Ren is part of a surveillance, inspection, and monitoring team that ensures local vegetable farms are producing safe and pest-free crops at an optimal level.
**What exactly do you do at work?**
My teammates and I inspect vegetable farms to ensure compliance with farm licensing conditions, as well as food safety and plant health requirements. We collect samples which are sent to the laboratory for testing, to ensure that the vegetables are safe for consumption and to keep pest infection at bay. We also track important farm data such as productivity figures and pesticide usage.

**Tell us about a memorable project you worked on.**
In 2016, there was a Diamondback Moth (DBM) outbreak in several local vegetable farms. Despite our heavy workload, my team took on the additional role of assisting the affected farmers. We handed out DBM pheromone lure traps to these farmers and collected them on a weekly basis to monitor the effectiveness of the traps. Our hard work paid off. The traps developed by AVA worked well and the pest problems were substantially alleviated.

In addition, I was in a task force that worked closely with a local farm to resolve its pest problems. The task force helped to monitor and facilitate the farm’s pesticide regime via the rotational use of pesticides. Vegetables were also sampled and tested during production to ensure pesticide residue levels were within safe limits. It was an invaluable experience for me to work alongside the farmer and AVA’s senior officers in the task force.

**In what ways do you work with other AVA Groups, public agencies, and AVA’s customers?**
We conduct joint investigations with other public agencies, including the Singapore Land Authority, Ministry of Manpower, and National Environment Agency on various farm issues. For example, we work together to ensure that farms do not use their premises for illegal purposes such as earthworks or workers’ quarters. We also look out for any potential surface run-off discharge that may enter our public drains.

**Share some lesser-known facts about your job.**
When I tell people that AVA inspects vegetable farms, most readily assume that I am referring to traditional outdoor farms. What many do not know is that we are beginning to see more high-tech indoor farms in Singapore, and we conduct inspection and sampling at these farms too!

**What do you find enjoyable or satisfying about your work?**
I find the work I do satisfying because we help to ensure that our locally produced vegetables are safe for consumption. Job satisfaction also comes from the way I contribute to food supply resilience in Singapore. Our assistance and expertise helps farmers to control plant pests, which can adversely impact farm productivity.
The i Light Singapore — Bicentennial Edition connected people and communities on an unprecedented scale to commemorate Singapore’s history and multicultural identity. The Festival, which was launched by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on 28 January 2019, kickstarted Singapore’s Bicentennial commemoration. Here are some highlights from the month-long event that ended on 24 February 2019.

**More light art installations and bridges come alive**

This year, a record 33 light art installations by 55 artists from 15 different countries, including Singapore were on display at i Light Singapore. It was a chance to see our city in a different light from Marina Bay and the Civic District, to the Singapore River and Raffles Terrace at Fort Canning Park. Themed “Bridges of Time”, the bicentennial edition delved into the concept of connectivity to reflect on Singapore’s history, growth, and relationships with the world over the last 700 years.

For the first time, the light art installations illuminated six iconic bridges on the Singapore River and in the Marina Bay area, to inspire hope and optimism as we acknowledge the past, celebrate our present, and look towards the future. In another first at the Festival, an immersive multimedia show at the Singapore River told a poetic story of a universal traveller who sailed through time and space to reach a mythical island in the East.

**Connecting the community with the arts**

One light art installation stood out for having hundreds of people from various communities involved in its creation. Conceptualised by industrial designer Yun, The Rainbow Connection featured 800 upcycled snack containers designed and painted by people from all walks of life, including children and residents of nursing homes.
Twelve art jamming workshops were held over four months with various community partners, including Lions Befrienders, Touch Community Services, and Sunlove Senior Activity Centre. During these workshops, participants created beautiful containers that were then converted into solar light modules for the display.

“Everyone adopts a different style for the container that they design, but very much like a society, though everyone is different, everyone has a part to play. What everyone draws can be very different, but they can come together as a very cohesive piece,” said Yun.
Five distinct programming hubs added splashes of fun and interactive activities to deepen community engagement. More than 20 programmes, including acoustic music acts, movie screenings, and special piano showcases by local talents were put together to enliven the Festival. Among these were arts and cultural performances by students from Republic Polytechnic (RP)’s Create Club.

More than 100 RP students roused the crowds with captivating performances in percussion, martial arts, and hip-hop dance. One of the performers, Chase Pang, said: “I am very honoured to be part of this major event that has so many meaningful purposes.”

i Light Singapore — Bicentennial Edition connected people across generations through shared experiences, delectable food, delightful music and immersive play, while also promoting awareness about sustainability. “We are heartened by the strong support from the local community and talents to co-present this special edition of the Festival, for the public to come explore and enjoy the city, and join us in promoting the sustainability cause,” said Festival Director and URA Director (Place Management) Jason Chen.