

## ABSTRACT

British administration was established in Hong Kong after the Treaty of Nanking (1842). At that time, Hong Kong was an uninviting prospect area for settlement. Most people living there were farmers and fishermen. The only natural asset was the deep-water harbour. As it could not attract people to stay there, the Government always encouraged the people to return to the mainland China for living. Therefore, the Government did not involve in any housing affairs in those days even though the population was over two million in Hong Kong in 1950.

Unfortunately, a disastrous fire broke out in 1953, the Government, then, had the responsibility to erect sufficient housing blocks to relieve the urgent housing demand from these fire victims. Thereafter, Hong Kong Government committed in the housing affairs. These kind of resettlement housing blocks were further developed with the Low Cost Housing Estate blocks and Housing Authority Estate blocks.

In 1973, all these housing organisations were amalgamated into the Housing Authority and the Housing Department. The Housing Authority is, then, responsible for co-ordinating all aspects of public housing and the Housing Department is its executive arm and it plans, builds and manages the public housing estates including the Home Ownership Scheme flats, Cottage Areas, Temporary Housing Areas and Transit Centres. It also carries out the control duties and development in all squatter areas throughout the territories.

In order to provide better living circumstances for all public housing tenants, the Housing Authority began the Redevelopment Programme in 1983. The primary objective of the programme is to make all public housing flats become self-contained flats. And the final achievement is to provide the same living standard to all public housing tenants.

In 1987, the Housing Authority also decided to accommodate all people in need of public housing flats by the year of 2001 with the provision of the Long-term Housing Strategy.