

**The Hong Kong Institute of Architects
Second Quarterly General Meeting
17 June 2021**

President's Report

Dear Members,

Thank you for attending the second Quarterly General Meeting (QGM) of The Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA) in 2021.

In my last report at QGM back in March, I have remarked that we are working to enhance communication with, and better support, our Members. We also strive to make HKIA inclusive for our diverse constituents, and to create shared value for all stakeholders.

We do put in efforts to realise our pledges. Over the past months, we have provided platforms to have exchanges with Members on issues related to both the profession and the greater society. We have communicated with policy makers and key stakeholders to ensure the voices of our profession being heard.

One of the platforms we have launched is the *Donald's Chat Room* – a monthly live dialogue at which I would like to informally discuss topics of the day with Members and my invited guests. The first two sessions with the following themes were conducted in April and May respectively:-

- Proposed Bill on Improving Electoral System
- Preservation of Biodiversity at Fanling Golf Course and the Best Use of the Land

Being a vibrant fast-changing city, Hong Kong is always full of hot topics that are relevant to our profession, the built environment, or the well being of the society. I would strive to continue such regular direct dialogue with Members. Hopefully with the pandemic situation subsiding, more Members can join me face-to-face at my Chat Room in future.

HKIA, being an epitome of the community at large, is bound to have diverse views among our Members on various hot topics, with the above two being no exception. I believe that for some issues, even there is no, or yet to have, consensus views of HKIA, we can still serve our Members by offering their diverse yet constructive views to the authorities concerned. The written views or questions left by Members in these two sessions have thus been forwarded, unfiltered, to our Legislative Council representative and Development Bureau respectively.

HKIA Engaged in Policy Making

Nevertheless, I must state clearly that for issues with crucial impact onto our profession or the industry, a united voice, rather than divided views, would provide us the much-needed ammunition for liaison for good. We would work at our best to solicit Members' views, either via forum discussion, survey, or the representation of the many devoted members in our boards and committees, with the aim to reach solidary stance. As on

what issues are to be within this realm, and in what ways to consult Members, I have to plead for your trust in the leadership and judgement of my Council and me under the representative system of the Institute.

Over the past quarter, some major issues that we have been liaising with the authorities, and/or have forwarded our submission, included:-

- Implementation of the spirit of Security of Payment (SOP) Legislation in all new public work contracts
- Review of the minimum entry criteria for Consultants Lists of the Architectural and Associated Consultants Selection Board (AACSB)
- Streamlining of Statutory Approval Process under Buildings Ordinance
- Proposed measures for Mechanism for Encouraging Quality Built Environment through Gross Floor Area Concession -
- Proposed manual for BEAM Plus for Existing Schools
- Proposed Grading of Bishop Hill Underground Service Reservoir
- Lantau Tomorrow Vision

Collaboration with External Partners

We have also continued to create collaborative professional and social network to enhance HKIA's influence in the community

To advance architecture and build coalition, HKIA has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Hong Kong Institute of Construction Managers (HKICM) for three years from March this year. Both parties have been planning on enhanced collaboration events, such as Continuing Professional Development events, sharing sessions on contract administration operation, site visits, etc.

HKIA representatives have also met with key officials from Hong Kong Trade Development Council to explore on further cooperation in promoting Hong Kong's architectural excellence, infrastructure development, real estate-related industry, etc in Mainland and overseas cities.

For the issues over UK academic qualification recognition, besides having built a dialogue with representative of Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) earlier, we have recently met with officials of Department for International Trade under British Consulate-General Hong Kong to further explore various possibilities.

Extending Connection in the Region

Talking about collaboration with our friends and counterparts in the region and worldwide, the most anticipating event in the past quarter must be the **HKIA Belt and Road Forum 2021**. After having postponed for some months due to the global pandemic, we managed to hold the Forum on 16 to 17 April, under the theme of "Retrospect and Prospect of Belt and Road Construction Projects", in the hybrid mode of onsite cum online. Yet, that didn't take away its significance, as evident by the honourable in-person presence of The Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Mrs Carrie LAM, as well as heads and experts from prestigious international, regional, and our nation's architectural professional bodies. In fact, the online prong of participation has helped us extending the forum further and wider —

we had over 2,000 attendants from 13 countries/regions participated onsite and via online simultaneously throughout the two days.

About 40 renowned speakers and panelists from different countries/regions shared their experiences, network, advices and wisdom on leveraging on the opportunities arising from the Belt and Road Initiative. I am sure that these are most useful for HKIA Members who aspire to extend their business, work endeavour, and vision beyond Hong Kong.

Along the same vein, the Institute has been arranging briefings and exchanges with our Mainland counterparts. Online exchange was conducted in April with Shenzhen Exploration and Design Association to explore further cooperation in the Greater Bay Area, especially among Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao, in the design profession.

Furthermore, two online seminars regarding Qianhai development were held in May to brief our Members on the new measures and potential projects in Qianhai.

Promoting Architectural Excellence

Young Architect Award (YAA) 2020

WONG Sau Yin Samuel was selected, among 17 submissions assessed by the Jury, as the winner. The 7-member Jury praised his design proposal for “Revitalization of Bishop Hill Underground Cistern” as “subtle intervention not only respected the nature and the context but poetically recorded the re-discovery of this hidden gem; and it also transformed the Underground Cistern into a communal space for the neighbourhood.”

Our big congratulations to Samuel, and our heartfelt gratitude for the Jurors for their diligent endeavours. We have no doubt that Samuel would benefit from the 3-week overseas architectural study trip the Institute offers to YAA winner, share his insights gained with local architectural peers and apply his knowledge to serve the public.

Union of International Architects (UIA)

I am glad to report that the “UIA WP Architecture for All” website (uiawpafa.hkia.net) hosted by HKIA is bestowed the Gold Award under the Web Accessibility Recognition Scheme (WARS) 2020-2021.

Two Hong Kong projects are also recognised with UIA’s Friendly and Inclusive Spaces Awards:-

- Honourable Mention (New Buildings Category): “A Special School for Children with Mild Intellectual Disability” by Architectural Services Department in collaboration with Thomas Chow Architects Limited
- Winner (Research Category): “Support Ageing through Design” by Architectural Services Department

The 17th Venice Biennale International Architecture Exhibition and Hong Kong Response Event (VB 2021)

The 6-month Venice Exhibition of VB2021 was officially opened on 22 May 2021. The HKIA exhibits are presented in both digital and physical formats, with contents further enhanced with Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality technologies.

In Hong Kong, the curatorial team has continued with a series of webinars. The latest webinar themed “Form Follows Systems” held on 29 March received enthusiastic response with around 130 participants. More webinars are in the pipeline, and preparation for the Hong Kong Response Event later this year is also undergoing.

Architectural Competitions

Through organising, co-organising or promoting architectural design competitions, HKIA aims to provide our Members with the opportunities of showcasing talents, and to enhance the community’s appreciation of architecture excellence. Some on-going competitions HKIA having involved in the past quarter are:

- **Architectural Design Idea Competition for SDG Eco-Village Transitional Housing Project**

It is organised by Professional Green Building Council (PGBC), with HKIA and Hong Kong Construction Association being the co-organisers. A total of 22 valid entry submissions were received. All the 7 shortlisted multi-discipline teams are led by registered architects, though such not being the competition requirement. The Jury has completed the two-round adjudication, and the results will be announced later in June.

- **Design Competition on Green Link, Wong Chuk Hang**

HKIA is one of the co-organisers, together with Invigorating Island South Office (IISO) of Development Bureau (DEVB), and Architectural Services Department. With the Green Link, connecting MTR Wong Chuk Hang Station to Aberdeen Country Park, being the competition site, I am sure it can accommodate various innovative ideas from talented designers. Competition is tentatively scheduled for launch in September this year.

- **Design Competition jointly with EKEO**

HKIA is exploring with Energizing Kowloon East Office (EKEO) of DEVB on another competition for a site in Kwun Tong, hopefully to be launched by end of this year. We will certainly inform Members the details once having confirmed.

Supports for Members

Subsidy Scheme for Fresh Graduates and Assistant Professionals

Government has just launched the scheme for the second year, with application period commencing tomorrow (18 June 2021). Prior to the launch, HKIA and other professional institutes had liaised with DEVB on the criteria and process, taking into account of the experiences and feedbacks obtained for the first-year scheme. It is tentatively planned that the architectural sector would be allocated 250 Graduate subsidy places and 250 Assistant Professional subsidy places – both representing 50% of the total quotas provided to the four sectors of architectural, surveying, town planning and landscape. HKIA will continue to provide DEVB with advice and assistance in the future processing, and serve as the bridge between member corporations and Government in this regard.

In the first year of the scheme, the architectural sector eventually had 268 and 333 subsidy places for Graduates and Assistant Professionals approved respectively, representing 51% and 37% of the overall places approved for the four sectors.

Improve Communication with Members

To enable Members with more convenient access for information and services, and to improve communication, we have been working on better usage of the electronic platforms and technologies. While some of the technical work for enhancement are still undergoing, some “quick wins” have been realised, such as the launch of the revamped CPD online video website, the revised HKIA Weekly. In fact, the proposed adding of an option of electronic communications — the resolution put forward for polling at this QGM — is also one of the endeavours for better serving our Members.

Much more technical works on enhancing HKIA platforms for keeping abreast of the society and technology developments, as well as the needs of our Members, are in the pipeline. We will update Members whenever with deliverables materialised that can bring practical benefits to Members.

Wishes for the Better

With the pandemic seemingly subsiding, different boards and committees of the Institute are already working on more physical activities, such as site visits, round-table exchanges, sports and social activities. Planning for events to commemorate the 65th Anniversary of HKIA later this year is also undergoing.

I call on all Members to get involved not just in the above activities of HKIA, but also in our endeavours to advocate for advancing architectural profession and enhancing built environment for the community at large. Together, we can make lasting change for the better.

Yours sincerely,

Donald CHOI Wun Hing, FHKIA, RA
President

15 June 2021