Urban Forestry Advisory Panel (2025-27)
(Notes of the 1st Meeting)

Date and Time: 10 October 2025 (Friday) at 3:00 pm
Venue: Conference Room 3, G/F, Central Government Offices, Tamar

Present

Dr. Kathy T.K. NG	Chairperson	(H/GLTMS, DEVB)
Mr. Paul CHAN	Member	(via video conferencing)
Prof. Wendy CHEN	Member	
Ms. Winnie CHENG	Member	
Prof. CHU Lee-man	Member	(via video conferencing)
Dr. DONG Hui	Member	(via video conferencing)
Prof. HUANG Songyi	Member	
Prof. JIM Chi-yung, JP	Member	
Prof. Derrick LAI	Member	
Mr. Hincent NG	Member	
Dr. SHI Shulin	Member	(via video conferencing)
Mr. Chiky WONG	Member	
Prof. Charles WONG	Member	
Dr. Peter YAU	Member	(via video conferencing)
Mr. YIU Vor	Member	
Dr. Allen ZHANG	Member	
Miss Angie AU YEUNG	Member	(H/TMO, DEVB)
Dr. Samuel LAM	Member	(SCPO(TS), AFCD)
Miss Eva LEE	Member	(CLA, HyD)
Ms.Vince KOK	Member	(SLA/TDC, HD)
Miss Annie FUNG	Member	(CLM(PA), LCSD)
Ms. IP Lai-mui	Secretary	(AS(TM)3, DEVB)
Mr. KUN Chong-meng	Note-taker	(TMO5, DEVB)

Absent with apologies

Prof. Anthony LEUNG	Member

In Attendance

Miss Helen TSANG	H(GLO), DEVB

UFAP Paper No. 01/2025

Dr. Rex SHIH	AS(TM)2, DEVB
Dr. Eric CHAN	SForO/TMG, ArchSD
Ms. PING Tak-wai	SPSM/SD31, ArchSD
Miss Jos CHENG	LM(Arb)2, LCSD
Miss Eva LEE	CLA, HyD
Ms. Vince KOK	SLA/TDC, HD

UFAP Paper No. 02/2025

Miss Angie AU YEUNG	H/TMO, DEVB
Dr. Eric CHAN	SForO/TMG, ArchSD
Ms. PING Tak-wai	SPSM/SD31, ArchSD
Mr. Nigel TONG	LM(T)K, LCSD
Ms. Windy WU	LM(T)HKW, LCSD
Miss Jos CHENG	LM(Arb)2, LCSD

UFAP Paper No. 03/2025

Mr. Augustine LAM	AS(GL)1, DEVB

Action

1. The Chairperson welcomed Members to the first meeting of Urban Forestry Advisory Panel ("UFAP") 2025-2027, in particular Ms. Winnie CHENG, Prof. HUANG Songyi, Prof. JIM Chi-yung, Prof. Derrick LAI, Dr. Peter YAU and Dr. Allen ZHANG, who joined the meeting for the first time.

2. H/TMO briefed Members on the government's structure and organization in managing trees on government land, and highlighting initiatives such as the Study Sponsorship Scheme, Trainee Programme, and Registration Scheme for Tree Management Personnel.

Item 1 : Confirmation of the notes of the last meeting

3. The notes of the last meeting were confirmed without amendment.

Item 2: Management work on *Phauda flammans* (UFAP Paper No. 01/2025)

4. AS(TM)2, DEVB presented the overall conditions and collaborative efforts with tree management departments in controlling the infestation of *Phauda flammans*. The number of infested trees has reduced from the peak 4 400 in 2021 to about 500 in August 2025.

5. SForO/TMG, ArchSD reported that the department's pest control work included hessian mat wrapping, hand removal of the pest, clearance of leaf debris underneath the infested

trees, pesticide application, and use of sticky traps. Challenges included tree locations which were difficult to access on steep slopes (e.g. stonewall trees).

6. LM(Arb)2, LCSD reported that in addition to integrated pest management approach, soil and trunk injections were conducted and were found effective to reduce infestations and defoliation rates.

7. CLA, HyD reported that the use of integrated pest management approach involving hessian wrapping, leaf clearance, soapy water, and pesticide applications.

8. SLA/TDC, HD reported that in public housing estates the sticky band traps, leaf clearance, and pupae handpicking were applied instead of pesticides.

9. Members advised/ recommended:

- strategic control measures specific to different life cycle stages for *Phauda flammans*;
- sticky insect tapes / traps were more effective when compared with hessian mat wrapping for trees with multiple trunks;
- to explore insect barrier adhesive, a method used overseas;
- further research on the control / management of *Phauda flammans*;
- to diversify tree plantings of different species to prevent future outbreaks;
- if pesticide would be used, trunk injection was preferred over soil injection, to avoid taking up pesticides by understorey plants and affecting non-target insects such as butterflies and bees; and
- to consider ecological approaches, such as introducing natural predators for the prevention and control of *Phauda flammans.*

10. H/TMO, DEVB responded to a Member's question that for promoting pest management in private land, talks/webinars/workshops for property companies, villagers, and the public were arranged. Information was also disseminated through platforms like Property Management Services Authority's seminar and DEVB's Greening Website.

Item 3: Report on the Conditions of some Old and Valuable Tree
(UFAP Paper No. 02/2025)

OVT nomination

11. H/TMO, DEVB briefed Members about the Old and Valuable Tree (OVT) nomination guidelines, highlighting criteria including location on government land, size, form, health and environment. All government departments and Members were encouraged to nominate. A recent nomination by the Health Department for a *Ficus microcarpa* at Argyle Street was being assessed for potential inclusion on the OVT list.

OVT No. ArchSD KWT/4.

12. SForO/TMG, ArchSD provided an update on OVT ArchSD KWT/4 (*Ficus altissima*). The tree had been infected by BRRD since 2016. Regular inspections and fungal treatments were conducted. Despite concerns about root decay, recent assessments showed that both the health and structural conditions were stable. However, the loss of soil underneath the roots at the tension side was observed. Ongoing monitoring, including resistograph and LIDAR scans, indicated stability. Future actions may include root mapping, crown reduction pruning, and motion sensor installation. If conditions worsen, tree removal might be considered.

13. The Chairperson emphasized concern about the fall zone and tree stability over health issues, urging detailed movement checks and increased monitoring with canopy size control. Suggestions included cabling for tree support, quantitative methods like mapping for BRRD spread evaluation, systematic Form 2 comparisons, and scientific data management for precise assessments. H/TMO, DEVB supplemented that soil loss indicated movement and advised ArchSD to closely monitor the tree's roots.

14. Members also suggested the following:
- conduct crown reduction to reduce tree weight and associated risk;
- refill soil level;
- use *Trichoderma* / appropriate biological control to manage BRRD; and
- use a monitoring method, such as setting a few survey

points at the tree, to check tree movement.

(Post-meeting note: ArchSD shared the concerns and suggestions recommended by the UFAP, and started appropriate actions immediately. For example, some voids around the tree caused by soil erosion have been filled with soil. WSD, who is carrying out works at the same slope, has agreed to help to install survey points at the tree trunk for monitoring the tree's stability.)

OVT No. LCSD YTM/35

15. LM(T)K, LCSD provided an update on LCSD OVT YTM/35 (*Ficus microcarpa*) located near St. Andrew Church, Tsim Sha Tsui. It was confirmed infected by BRRD in February 2024. Mitigation efforts included compost application, crown pruning, *Trichoderma* treatments, and trunk pesticide injections. The tree's health and structure were fair, with a 60% live crown ratio and improved foliage density compared to the previous year. No cavities were present on the trunk, and minor wounds on the branches showed no significant changes. Mycelial crusts were not observed so far. LCSD was advised to continue monitoring the tree and report if any irregularities were spotted.

OVT No. LCSD CW/53

16. LM(T)HKW, LCSD reported the situation of LCSD OVT CW/53 located at Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens, Central. Despite mitigation efforts, the *Toona sinensis* tree, showed a declining health with significant decay and cavity issues. The risk of tree failure was high and removal would be considered due to public safety concerns.

17. LM(T)HKW, LCSD elaborated that a third party was engaged to conduct a resistograph test, revealing figures similar to LCSD's tomograph results. LCSD explored various support methods like cabling and propping but faced constraints due to site limitations. Signs of fungi and termites were observed near the tree since 2019, with cautious pesticide application and termite traps implemented due to the proximity to an animal cage. Sounding test revealed extensive trunk hollowness, prompting further inspection uncovering a 7.5m depth hollow—potentially an animal den. CLM(PA), LCSD

expressed concern over the tree's condition due to the low level of remaining sound wood. Moreover, setting props was deemed impractical. Given safety as the primary concern, the area has been cordoned off since 18 August 2025.

18. Members suggested the following:

- Provision of a resistograph test result for cross-checking with previous tomograph results;
- Implementing pruning for weight reduction and installing bracing straps along cracked trunk sections to minimize breakage risk; and
- Arranging a site inspection before deciding the next step.

(Post-meeting note:

i. Resistograph and tomograph results had been circulated among Members on 13 October 2025 via email.

ii. Site visit to Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens was conducted on 15 October 2025. Member's observations and recommendations:
   - Setting of bracing straps along trunk part with crack to limit the movement of individual buttresses. Adjustable traps of heavy duty should be used;
   - Placement of additional termite traps near both the concerned tree and adjacent trees;
   - Reducing the weight of the tree by pruning upward-growing branches (about 50%);
   - Installation of cables to nearby big trees (at least two) that appears strong enough to help supporting the weight-reduced; and
   - Situation under close monitoring. LCSD to report if any anomaly or sudden change is observed.

Actions taken and responses by LCSD

- Resistograph test was conducted on 28 November 2025 and the result indicated that the alleged crack was unlikely to be structural crack but minor growth cracks as they are found in the same tree as well as in other *Toona sinensis*, which might be considered as common characteristic of this species;
- Setting of bracing straps: Upon consulting two other specialists, and taking into consideration for the

tree's natural biomechanics, environmental interactions and the trunk's structural integrity, installation of bracing may inadvertently exacerbate stress concentrations, leading to further cracking or structural compromise, ultimately create additional points of failure rather than providing the intended support;

- Additional termite traps at the designated locations adjacent to OVT LCSD CW/53 were installed on 30 October 2025;
- The pruning works to reduce crown load will be arranged in 3 phases. The first pruning work was completed on 11 November 2025. The 2nd and 3rd phases will be arranged in December 2025 and January 2026 respectively; and
- Installation of cables – After considering the long distance, relatively smaller and shorter in size and height of the nearby trees compared with OVT LCSD CW/53, they cannot provide sufficient support to OVT LCSD CW/53.)

OVT No. LCSD YTM/70

19. LM(Arb)2, LCSD reported OVT LCSD YTM/70 fell during Super Typhoon Ragasa on 24 September 2025. Its rescue had been widely reported within the community. Around 80% of the tree roots were broken which has lowered the survival rate of the tree. With the efforts by China State Construction International Holdings Limited volunteers and emergency teams, the fallen tree was lifted on 30 September 2025. Temporary metal bars supported the tree, while a new planter wall and additional soil stabilized its root ball.

20. CLM(PA), LCSD reported that despite most of the tree roots were damaged, short-term measures included root fungicide application, soil testing for pathogen identification, and root hormone application have been conducted. The tree would be closely monitored before deciding the next step. Additionally, after straightening the tree, necessary pruning was conducted to shift the centre of gravity away from the fountain side, with the area cordoned off for public safety.

(Post meeting note: According to the final soil test report, no BRRD or other wood decay fungi were detected.)

21. A Member inquired about whether LCSD had refilled enough soil under the root ball to support the tree and asked if there would be plans to expand the planter in the long run. CLM(PA), LCSD replied that soil had been refilled and subsequent backfilling would be conducted when necessary. The decision on potential enlargement of the planter would be confirmed after monitoring the root and tree recovery in the coming years.

22. The Chairperson and Members commended LCSD and the volunteer team for their efforts and prompt actions in rescuing the tree.

Item 4: Pilot Schemes on Suitability and Sustainability of Roadside Trees (UFAP Paper No. 03/2025)

23. AS(GL)1, DEVB provided an update on the Consultancy Study on Suitability and Sustainability (S&S) of Roadside Trees further to reporting the topic in previous UFAP meetings. The study aimed to develop the criteria and a scoring system for assessing and prioritizing large roadside trees to facilitate systematic planning of improvement measures. The Study may also address concerns from the community for enhancing accessibility for wheelchair users and the elderly. Pilot schemes have been implemented on sites in 2025 to test the improvement measures, gather feedback from the community and draw on experience.

24. A Member enquired about the rating system in the form, particularly regarding amenity value and user knowledge. He also recommended in-situ compensatory replanting for trees.

25. The Chairperson elaborated that each cases were thoroughly examined in a working group with members at directorate level to ensure no trees were removed unnecessarily. Local consultations were conducted for each case, and adjustments to the proposed improvement works were made as necessary. Re-planting would be arranged wherever feasible taking into account 'right plant, right place' principle. Where in-situ replanting was considered not feasible, re-planting would be provided within the same district. An explanatory note has been

included in the assessment form, and training have been provided for the assessors to enhance consistencies.

26. A Member explained that tree management included not only tree planting and maintenance but also systematic replacement which was part and parcel of urban forestry. Such practice has been implemented around the world. He added that compensatory planting in-situ might not be appropriate if the environment was unsuitable. He also recommended adding a criterion for 'suitability for in-situ planting' in the criteria / scoring scheme. He suggested reviewing the items of 'above / underground space' and highlighting hazardous situations such as obstruction to buses.

27. A Member suggested utilizing the system to evaluate current unfavourable trees and proposed early-stage assessment for young trees to manage their growth and functionality efficiently. This approach could prolong tree lifespan, reduce unnecessary replacements, streamline maintenance efforts and ensure public safety.

28. The Chairperson further explained that the GLTMS had issued guidelines for new road projects indicating required / minimum width of roadside planting and matching trees with site, thereby enhancing the long-term sustainability of trees in future government projects.

29. A Member requested to have more detailed information of the Study of the S&S of Roadside Trees.

(Post-meeting note: Supplementary information was provided to Members on 6 November 2025 via email)

30. A Member emphasized community involvement in consultations and proposed conducting on-site consultations prior to commencing the tree removal. He suggested using simple and clear messages on-site to effectively convey key points. The Chairperson explained that thorough public consultation was conducted before implementation of the S&S work. In cases where tree removal is necessary, notices and banners were displayed prominently in the neighbourhood to inform the community.

31. The Chairperson invited a Member to share her study regarding roadside tree planted in Guangzhou – 'Impact of High-Density Urban Street Spaces on Tree Wind Resistance 高密度城市街道空間風環境對樹木抗風性的影響'. The study outlined airflow types leading to tree damage. Results indicated wind's effect on street trees, and the need for wind-resistant species and urban design to reduce risks.

Item 6: Any Other Business

32. The Chairperson thanked Members for their valuable advice. The meeting was adjourned at 19:13 pm. The next meeting was to be confirmed.

Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section
Development Bureau
December 2025