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Bid to improve living standards

By MATTHEW LEUNG

A major campaign to improve conditions in poorly managed private buildings has been launched by the Yaumati District Board.

Its members yesterday agreed to set up a working group on multi-storey building management to investigate the problems and put into practice measures to improve the situation.

The objects of the group are to identify poorly managed buildings in the district and accord priorities for action, and to consider and implement effective and worthwhile actions to improve the identified buildings.

It will also consider long-term district machinery in dealing with the management of private multi-storey buildings, and recommend to the district management committee and the district board changes in policy, law and resources.

The group will co-ordinate efforts from the Government and the owner corporations in improving the general standard of private building management.

In Yaumati, there are 1,295 private residential buildings, more than 70 per cent of which were built before 1965.

They account for 61.7 per cent of the district's living units.

Up to August, there were 207 owner corporations — 96 of which were formed with the district office's assistance — and 167 mutual aid committees in the district.

Most of the old buildings suffer from poor management and dilapidation.

Among the working group will be officials from the Building Ordinance Office, the Fire Services Department, the City Services Department, the police, the Labour Department and the Urban Area Development Organisation.

But board members yesterday said they should also be allowed to participate.

The board has already conducted a pilot scheme on private building management at two buildings in the district.

And its findings are encouraging, with the buildings showing an improvement in safety, security and hygiene.

Six buildings have been identified for priority consideration. They are Champagne Court, 3A-8 Waterloo Road, Hoi Fung Mansion, Hai-phong Mansion, Alhambra Building and 30-54 Jordan Road.

The working group will discuss with the management bodies of the buildings ways to improve their environment, and to observe the degree of achievement of various management organisations.

It will also try to motivate self-help action by the owner corporations with authority conferred by the Multi-Storey Buildings (Owners Incorporation) Ordinance and Deed of Mutual Covenant, and enforce law and lease conditions and rectify irregularities outside the legal periphery of owner corporations.

And if conditions so justify, to consider taking over the administration of a building as provided in the Multi-Storey Buildings (Owners Incorporation) Ordinance.