

## **Former AJC hostel turns into new HDB public rental for low-income singles**

**Single rooms and shared facilities aim to give tenants greater privacy while still providing companionship**

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The Housing & Development Board is set to pilot a new public rental for low-income singles in Singapore.

The Single Room Shared Facilities (SRSF) scheme, aims to give occupants privacy without compromising on their need for healthy socialisation.

The new rental type will be piloted at the former Anderson Junior College (AJC) hostel located in Ang Mo Kio.

### **Private single rooms**

The interim site comprises of two 11-storey blocks, with 240 units that will be partitioned to create 480 single rooms.

Each 9 sq m room comes with basic furnishing. This includes a bed frame, wardrobe, fridge, desk and chair.

Minister for National Development Desmond Lee said that for its previous JSS-OR scheme, social service agency would assess applicant disposition and preferences in order to better match tenants.

"Over the years, most social service agencies and we ourselves have seen a few cases end up in disputes and [tenants that] cannot get along. Some of the rental flat members have difficulty sharing with anyone else," Lee stated.

"We have feedback that there're issues that arise when strangers have to live together, and we want to try this typology where you have your own individual space, but also avoid social isolation with shared communal facilities," he said.

### **2 toilets per floor**

With 24 tenants per floor, every floor will have two common toilets, each equipped with three to four showers.

HDB said floors are likely to be separated by gender.

### **Shared dining and kitchen**

HDB added that tenants may also get the chance to mingle in shared dining, kitchen and recreation rooms.

Similar to the rooms and toilets, these spaces have been repurposed, making use of the existing layouts and furnishings from the former AJC hostel.

One kitchenette, which will be equipped with five stoves, is to be shared by all 24 tenants on one level.

Former study rooms will be converted into dining spaces.

HDB indicated that the SRSF prioritised speed and affordability.

"It offers a suitable layout with minimal reconfiguration works and HDB will retain or reuse many of the existing site features, to reduce waste and renovation time."

"We're going to test this pilot out for a year of two and study the interactions between the tenants and see whether this is a pilot that we want to mainstream and replicate and be successful," Lee added.

Harry Tan, a research fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies, said that considering the nature of the facilities and space, this new rental scheme was most likely suitable for "independent" and "physically abled" elderly singles.

Rental prices for each room are said to be similar to that of current JSS-OR, but final rates are yet to be confirmed.

HDB aims to launch the new typology for application in end 2023.