

ROUND-UP
OF VIEWSBIRD PARK WORKING WITH
BCA TO IMPROVE ACCESS

I REFER to Mr David Soh Poh Huat's letter, "Wheelchair-friendly tourist sites are necessary" (*my paper*, June 16).

We thank Mr Soh for his feedback. We have spoken to the Building and Construction Authority and are working with it, the carpark operator and other government agencies to make further improvements.

As a world-class tourist destination, Jurong Bird Park is committed to enhancing all visitors' experiences to the park, including those of the wheelchair-bound.

We already have lifts for the disabled installed at every panoramic station and have designated wheelchair spaces at the various bird-show venues.

The park's walk-in aviaries have been designed and built with wheelchair accessibility in mind, with appropriate ramps and walkways.

We assure the public that we are constantly evaluating and making progressive improvements to our park to increase accessibility for all visitors, including for families and the disabled, so that their visits will always be enjoyable and memorable.

MR DAVID HONG
GENERAL MANAGER
JURONG BIRD PARK

SKYPE TO GO AND SKYPEIN
WILL BENEFIT S'POREANS

I REFER to the report, "Telcos seek Skype partnerships" (*my paper*, June 16).

I hope that through partnerships with telcos in Singapore, Skype will be able to implement services like Skype To Go and SkypeIn here, so that people can benefit from cheaper calls.

For Skype To Go, Skype users get a special access number provided by the VoIP provider, which they can call from a landline or a cellphone to make calls abroad.

As for the SkypeIn service, a user buys an online number on which friends, family and business contacts can contact him.

The Internet routes the call, and the owner of an online number can answer calls at no cost, when he is logged into Skype.

The caller pays only for a standard-rate call, as though he is in the same country as that in which the user's online number is located.

These services are already available in places like the United States, Britain and Australia.

As more Singaporeans venture overseas for business, such services will allow them to maintain frequent contact with their families and friends back home.

MR NELSON QUAH

Residents' feedback on LUP vital



BY KWAN JIN YAO

I READ with interest the report, "Residents petition against LUP" (*my paper*, June 18), particularly because there is a general assumption that the Lift Upgrading Programme (LUP) has been **well-received** by flat owners since its inception in 2001.

The LUP is a well-intentioned initiative, designed to complement other upgrading projects for flats.

Under the programme, resi-

dents would be able to enjoy better lift access – through the upgrading of lifts to serve every floor, or the building of new lift shafts for every level – as well as refurbished lift interiors and faster lifts.

However, the LUP came under scrutiny during the 2006 General Election, when some people said the Government was using it as part of a carrot-and-stick plan to garner more votes.

Such concerns were addressed when flats in the opposition-held wards of Hougang and Potong Pasir became eligible for the LUP last year.

But politics is not the only reason why some people have a negative perception of the LUP.

Residents have complained about the inconvenience posed

by the upgrading programme.

While noise and dust pollution are inevitable, the Housing Board should be able to limit such **externalities**.

HDB should consider the criticism of those residents who feel that the upgrading of lifts has compromised their safety.

As highlighted in the report, there are complaints by residents in Tampines Block 145 that their new **lift shafts** block light and affect **ventilation**, and that darkened stairwells may attract seedy people.

By keeping an ear to the ground and taking residents' concerns into account, HDB will be able to implement programmes that are more readily accepted.

◆ *The writer is a full-time*

national serviceman who blogs about current affairs at <http://guanyinmiao.wordpress.com>

HELPDESK 我的字典

Well-received: 受欢迎的 shòu dào huān yíng de

Externalities: 外在性 wài zài xìng

Lift shafts: 电梯井 diàn tī jǐng

Ventilation: 通风 tōng fēng

WRITE TO US AT MY PAPER.

E-mail your opinions to myp@sph.com.sg
Please include your full name, address and a telephone contact number. We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and length.

Merchants pay flexible fees for providing ez-link readers

I REFER to Mr Tan Thiam Huat's letter, "Are ez-link readers at NUS stalls a burden?" (*my paper*, June 16), and thank him for his feedback.

We would like to address his concerns.

A transaction failure at a point-of-sale can be attributed to a variety of factors, including hardware and software malfunction, unfamiliarity in operating the system and mishandling.

To assist our merchants, we provide a 24-hour helpdesk service to offer assistance and technical support.

In general, we receive fewer than one call per week from merchants at the National University of Singapore (NUS). The issues raised through the calls are either resolved by our technical staff over the phone, or through on-site support.

We regret any inconvenience that Mr Tan may have experienced, and will work with the merchants to address his concerns.

Without commenting on individual merchants, we would like to highlight that there has been a 45 per

cent growth in our overall number of transactions recorded.

The number of transactions recorded in NUS has also increased. We appreciate that it takes time for cashless payment modes to be fully adopted in the market.

To encourage usage, we have introduced the EzRewards programme, which rewards customers for paying with their ez-link cards, instead of using cash.

We would like to clarify Mr Tan's understanding that merchants are levied a fixed monthly rental fee.

PaymentLink provides a flexible fee structure, based on a combination of transaction volumes or fixed monthly fees, to merchants.

Cashless payment modes, such as ez-link payment, do help merchants save on costs and time required to handle cash.

Consumers also benefit from this form of payment as they are able to track their spending online via PaymentLink's EzRewards portal.

In addition, it is also a hygienic mode of payment for both merchants and consumers.

PaymentLink's core objective is to work with EZ-Link to grow the adoption and usage of cashless payments, and we strive to work closely with our merchants, who are an important and integral part of the payment ecosystem.

MS LAVERNE SOH
MARCOM MANAGER
PAYMENTLINK

More handrails needed on seatless trains

I REFER to the letter, "Seatless trains useful during peak hours" (*my paper*, June 18).

I agree that seatless carriages provide more standing area, but they lack sufficient handrails. It can be a

rough ride on some sections of particular MRT routes.

It would be good if more handrails are installed in seatless carriages, so that commuters can enjoy a better ride without stumbling into others.

MR TROY PARRY

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