

**CENTRAL POLICY UNIT**  
**HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION**

**A COMPARATIVE COMMUNITY STUDY OF**  
**TIN SHUI WAI AND SHAM SHUI PO**

**THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG**  
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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **1. Introduction**

This research was commissioned by the Central Policy Unit of the HKSAR Government in response to the growing public concerns over the social problems in Tin Shui Wai (hereafter TSW). From 2003 onward, because of several well publicized and serious cases of domestic violence and tragedies that have occurred in TSW, academics and the public began to pay more attention to the district. Of the handful of researches that have already been conducted on TSW, most have concentrated on the social problems and the adequacy of services provision in the district. At the same time, the media and the public have also gradually formed a ‘stereotype’ of TSW as a community besieged with social problems. We learn from these discussions that there are many social problems in TSW but not much beyond that. We believe that a better understanding of the social problems of TSW can be achieved through a comparative perspective. For this purpose, we have selected Sham Shui Po (hereafter SSP) as a comparative case to help us better assess the situation in TSW.

## **2. Research objectives**

This research has two main objectives :

- 2.1 To seek an understanding of the attitudes of TSW residents towards their living conditions and provision of community facilities and social services in TSW by

conducting a face-to-face questionnaire survey. Rigorous research on what the TSW residents think about their own community can provide a more robust picture of residents that complements academic and public discourse about the TSW problem.

2.2 To identify the impact of factors that are unique to TSW, for example, its demographic characteristics and geographical location. We believe that some of the social problems in TSW that we seek to explain in this study are caused by these unique factors and characteristics arising from the planning and development of the TSW new town.

### **3. Methodology**

Using a comparative perspective, this research compared the Tin Shui Wai (TSW) and Sham Shui Po (SSP) communities on two levels:

3.1 The first level is a comparison of the two communities. The reason for choosing SSP as a comparative case is that SSP, like TSW, has a low median monthly household income and a high concentration of new immigrants from Mainland China. The second reason for choosing SSP as a comparative case is a critical difference between TSW and SSP. SSP is located in urban Kowloon while TSW is located in a relatively rural area in the New Territories. A comparison between the two communities thus allows us to assess the impact of geographical location on TSW.

3.2 The second level of comparison is between the old and the new areas within the two districts. There are variations between different areas within the same district. In the case of TSW, for instance, TSW North is considered to suffer from more social problems than TSW South because it is a newly developed community and has a very high concentration of new immigrants from the Mainland. Such variations may also be found between the old and new areas in SSP, for example, between old public estates such as the Lei Cheng Uk Estate and the newly developed estates such as Hoi Lai Estate.

This research used three data collection methods. They are:

3.3 First, a secondary analysis of existing statistical data from the 2001 Population Census and the 2006 Population By-census that are related to the TSW and SSP communities. This enables us to achieve a basic understanding of the socio-demographic similarities and differences between the two communities.

3.4 Second, a questionnaire survey conducted in the two communities. This enables us to carry out systematic analysis based on first-hand information from the two communities.

3.5 Third, in-depth interviews and focus group interviews with the residents of the two communities. Learning from the experiences of local residents allows us to achieve a better and deeper understanding of the situation in the two districts.

3.6 The target population of this research is adults aged between 18 and 60 who are living in public housing estates in the two districts. Senior citizens aged 60 or

above were not included in our sample because their concerns are obviously very different from those of the rest of the population.

3.7 Our sample was drawn from a total of five public housing estates, two located in TSW and three in SSP. In TSW, we chose Tin Heng Estate, a relatively new estate located in TSW North, and Tin Shui Estate, a relatively old estate located in TSW South. In SSP, we chose two old estates, Lai Kok Estate and Lai On Estate, and a new estate, Hoi Lai Estate.

3.8 A random sample of addresses was drawn from the five selected public housing estates. We set a target of completing at least 600 successful cases, 300 from each district. One qualified household member was selected from each address by using the Kish Grid. This member was then interviewed by our trained interviewers.

3.9 The questionnaire is composed of standardized structured questions covering four main areas: 1) Social capital; 2) Economic and living conditions; 3) Community services and the role of the government and 4) Life satisfaction.

3.10 This research was executed and managed by the Public Policy Research Centre, Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The fieldwork for this research was conducted mainly by 20 student interns from the CUHK Sociology Department's Summer Research Internship Programme. The survey started in mid-July 2008 and was completed in mid-November. A total of 653 successful interviews were conducted in this survey and the response rate was 46.7%.

3.11 A total of nine in-depth interviews and two focus group interviews were also conducted. The interviewees were comprised of (1) local community leaders and representatives of service provision organizations, such as District Council members and leaders of local residents' associations; and (2) local residents. Since the subject of this research is low income communities, our interviewees come mainly from low income household.

3.12 TSW interviewees also include, in addition to District Council members and social services providers, three types of local residents: 1) adult women, including some new immigrants from the Mainland; 2) young adults; 3) and adult men. In SSP, we interviewed some low-waged female workers. Although this research entails a comparative study of the two districts, our main focus is on the TSW community so that our interviewees are comprised of more TSW residents than SSP residents.

#### **4. The survey sample**

4.1 Our survey has successfully interviewed 653 public housing residents from five selected public housing estates, 337 of whom are from SSP (215 from Hoi Lai Estate and 122 from Lai Kok – Lai On Estate) and 316 of whom are from TSW (176 from Tin Heng Estate and 140 from Tin Shui Estate). Of the 653 successfully interviewed, 42.7% are male and 57.3% are female. The age distribution of these respondents is as follows: 22.5% are aged 18-30, 22.2% are aged 31-40, 34.8% are aged 41-50 and 20.5% are aged 51-60. In term of highest education level obtained, 1.7% of the sample has “No schooling / Pre-primary”, 19.6% have

obtained “Primary”, 34.5% have obtained “Lower secondary”, 36.2% have obtained “Upper secondary / Sixth form” and 8% have obtained “Post-secondary / Post-graduate” level.

4.2 In terms of employment status, 62.5% of the survey respondents had a paid job while 37.5% did not. Among those who had a paid job, 74.4% worked full-time and 22.4% worked part-time, the rest worked both full-time and part-time. The respondents’ mean and median monthly income from main employment is HK\$9,013.09 and HK\$8,000 respectively. For SSP, the respondents’ mean and median monthly income from main employment is HK\$9,802.39 and HK\$8,300 respectively. For TSW, the respondents’ mean and median monthly income from main employment is HK\$8,091.42 and HK\$8,000 respectively. The monthly income of TSW respondents is thus on average lower than that of SSP respondents. The monthly income of our respondents is lower than the median monthly income from main employment of the whole Hong Kong population in 2006, which was HK\$10,000.

4.3 In our sample, 45.9% of the respondents were born in Hong Kong while 54.1% were not. Among our TSW respondents, 59.2% were not born in Hong Kong, compared with 49.3% in SSP. Among the selected public housing estates, Tin Heng Estate has the highest proportion of respondents who were not born in Hong Kong (72.7%); the second highest was Hoi Lai Estate (56.3%).

4.4 Among those who were not born in Hong Kong, 36.2% have lived in Hong Kong for 20 years or more, 32.8% for 10 up to 20 years, 14.5% for 7 up to 10 years, 6.7% for 5 up to 7 years and 9.9% for less than 5 years. In other words, 16.6% of

## **5. Main findings from the analysis of Population Census data**

The following demographic trends have been identified from the 2001 Population Census and 2006 Population By-census:

5.1 The population of TSW expanded rapidly from 177,813 in 2001 to 268,922 in 2006. This population expansion is concentrated mainly in TSW North.

5.2 Compared to Hong Kong as a whole, Tin Shui Wai has a younger population. The population of SSP, by contrast, is older than that of Hong Kong as a whole, which indicates that SSP is an aging community.

5.3 In 2006, the proportion of the non-Hong Kong born population was higher in TSW North than in SSP and than for Hong Kong as a whole.

5.4 In 2006, the proportion of Persons from the Mainland Having Resided in Hong Kong for Less than 7 Years (PMRs) was higher in TSW (especially in TSW North) than in SSP and than for Hong Kong as a whole.

5.5 In 2006, the proportion of population whose usual language was other Chinese dialects other than Cantonese was higher in TSW North than in SSP and than for Hong Kong as a whole.

5.6 In 2006, the proportion of the SSP and TSW population who had completed upper secondary education or higher level was lower than that for the whole Hong Kong population. The proportion of the SSP and TSW population who had completed post-secondary or higher level was also lower than that for the whole population of Hong Kong. The population of TSW North had a lower level of education than that for TSW South, TSW, SSP and for the whole Hong Kong population.

5.7 In term of age difference with spouse, in 2006, the proportion of now married females who were younger than their spouse by 15 years or more was 14% in TSW North, which was higher than that for SSP and for the whole of Hong Kong. This suggests that “old husband, young wife” is a relatively common phenomena in TSW North.

5.8 Statistics from both 2001 and 2006 census data indicate that the monthly household income of both TSW and SSP was lower than the average for the whole territory. In 2006, the monthly household income of TSW dropped significantly compared to 2001 due to the movement of a large number of low-income families into TSW North. The monthly household income of TSW North was around HK\$10,000, which was similar to that of some old public housing estates in SSP.

5.9 In 2006, the median monthly income from main employment of the working population in TSW and SSP was HK\$8,000-9,999, which was lower than that of the whole territory. The proportion of the population in TSW North whose monthly income from main employment was HK\$15,000 or over was 14.1%, which was lower than that of TSW South (24.8%), SSP (29.3%) and the whole territory (31.9%).

5.10 In 2006, only about 40% of the TSW North population reported that their place of residence five years earlier was in the same address or in the same district council area. This proportion was considerably lower than that for TSW South (84.9%) and SSP (71%), which suggests that the majority of TSW North residents are living in a community that is relatively new to them.

5.11 Compared to SSP, a higher proportion of the student population of TSW attended schools located in the same District Council constituency area of residence.

5.12 The average income level of the population of the SSP District Council was lower than that of the Yuen Long District Council. However, if we consider the relevant figures of TSW North and South independently, we find that the average income level of the TSW North population is very low, similar to that in some old public housing estates in SSP. TSW North also had a higher concentration of new immigrants, a higher proportion of married couples fitting the description “old husband, young wife”, and in general, a lower level of education. Another disadvantage facing the TSW North residents is that many have moved into TSW North from Yuen Long District, or even from other districts, which may have significant impact on the social networks of TSW North residents.

## **6. Main findings from the questionnaire survey**

### **6.1 Living conditions**

6.1.1 Respondents from newly developed areas (i.e. Tin Heng Estate and Hoi Lai

Estate) have in general a higher level of satisfaction with their living conditions than respondents from old areas (i.e. Tin Shui Estate and Lai Kok-Lai On Estate). Among these estates, respondents from Lai Kok-Lai On Estate had the lowest level of satisfaction with their living conditions which suggests a deterioration in the community facilities in the area.

6.1.2 Compared to SSP, TSW respondents are more dissatisfied with the transportation conditions within their own district. Dissatisfaction is the strongest among respondents from Tin Heng Estate.

6.1.3 Respondents from both TSW and SSP are generally very dissatisfied with employment conditions in their own district. However, dissatisfaction is stronger in TSW than in SSP. There is no significant difference between Tin Heng and Tin Shui Estates in this aspect.

6.1.4 TSW respondents are more dissatisfied with unemployment conditions than SSP respondents.

6.1.5 Respondents living in older housing estates are more concerned about the problem of pornography in their own district than are those live in new housing estates. A higher proportion of respondents from Tin Shui Estate and Lai Kok-Lai On Estate believe that the pornography problem is serious in their own district. By contrast, respondents from Tin Heng Estate and Hoi Lai Estate show less concern about this aspect.

6.1.6 Similar to the problem of pornography, those from older housing estates showed

more concern about the drug abuse problem than did those from new housing estates. Nevertheless, it should be noted that although both Tin Heng and Hoi Lai Estates are new estates, respondents from the former estate showed more concern about the drug abuse problem than did those from the latter estate.

6.1.7 Among the estates studied, respondents from Lai Kok-Lai On Estate showed the most concern about the aging problem. The level of concern was similar for respondents from Tin Heng and Tin Shui Estates, while those from Hoi Lai Estate showed the least concern.

6.1.8 Regarding the problem of domestic violence, more TSW respondents (65.1%) than SSP respondents (24.5%) considered it a serious problem within their own district. Among the public housing estates, Tin Heng Estate has the highest proportion of respondents who consider domestic violence a serious social problem.

6.1.9 Tin Heng Estate also has the highest proportion of respondents (81.4%) who consider the youth problem to be a serious social problem, with Lai Kok-Lai On Estate the second highest (78.2%).

## **6.2 Provision of community facilities and services**

6.2.1 Our survey data indicate that the usage of community facilities in both districts is generally very low with the exception of public libraries and swimming pools.

6.2.2 In terms of community services, the usage of clinic and hospital services is the

highest among all community services available in both districts. However, it should be noted that health care services is a serious issue in TSW, with 89.6% of the TSW respondents reporting that there is a shortage of these services in the district, compared to 43.3% of respondents from SSP.

### **6.3 Conditions of community life**

6.3.1 A higher proportion of respondents from old areas believe that the conditions of their community life will be worse in three years time; by contrast, more respondents from newly developed areas believe that the conditions of their community life will be better in three years time.

6.3.2 In response to the statement “the government does not care about the problems we are facing in this district”, the proportion of respondents who answered “strongly agree/ agree” is about 40% in both districts. The corresponding proportion for Lai Kok-Lai On Estate is 50.9%, which is the highest among the selected estates.

6.3.3 In response to the statement “Hong Kong people do not understand my community”, the proportion of respondents who answered “strongly agree/ agree” is higher in TSW (70.1%) than in SSP (48.1%). This indicates that more TSW respondents feel that the Hong Kong society does not understand the situation of their district.

6.3.4 TSW respondents attach less value to their own community than their SSP counterparts, as 55.3% of the former valued their own community with a low

mark compared to 33.6% from SSP. Among the selected estates, Tin Heng Estate has the highest proportion of respondents who give a low mark to their community (59.5%); the corresponding figures are 50% in Tin Shui Estate, 41.3% in Lai Kok-Lai On Estate and 29.2% in Hoi Lai Estate.

#### **6.4 Transportation and employment issues**

6.4.1 TSW respondents with a job at the time of the survey spent on average more money and time on transportation to and from work than SSP respondents.

6.4.2 The proportion of respondents who reported giving up a job due to high transportation fares and long distance to and from work is greater in TSW than in SSP. The corresponding proportion in Tin Heng and Tin Shui Estates is more or less the same.

6.4.3 Respondents with a monthly income of HK\$10,000 or less are more vulnerable in terms of having to give up a job due to high transportation fares and long distance to and from work than those with a monthly income above HK\$10,000.

#### **6.5 Perceptions of individual and familial life**

6.5.1 Respondents were asked whether they are satisfied with their familial life, education level, health, economic conditions and work. In general, respondents from new public housing estates tend to be more satisfied with their familial life and health than respondents from old estates.

- 6.5.2 In terms of satisfaction with economic conditions, by contrast, respondents from old estates tend to be more satisfied than respondents from new estates.
- 6.5.3 In terms of work, respondents from Tin Shui Estate had the highest level of satisfaction among the selected estates.
- 6.5.4 In general, more TSW than SSP respondents believe that their household condition is worse than it was three years earlier. In SSP, the responses from residents of Lai Kok-Lai On Estate are similar to TSW respondents. However, the respondents from Hoi Lai Estate are much more positive than those from the other estates.
- 6.5.5 TSW respondents are more positive than their SSP counterparts about the condition of their household in three years time. Among the selected estates, respondents from Lai Kok-Lai On Estate are the most pessimistic, while respondents from Tin Heng Estate are the most optimistic.
- 6.5.6 Respondents from newly developed areas are more likely to believe that their offspring will have a better life than they do..
- 6.5.7 The proportion of respondents who are satisfied with community life is 52.1% in Lai Kok-Lai On Estate, which is lower than that for the other three estates (57-59%).

## **6.6 Social Networks**

One main focus of this research is to study the different forms of social networks in the two communities. Our findings on this aspect are as follow:

6.6.1 When responding to the question “Is it difficult for you to seek help from other people or organizations when you have trouble or worry about something”, the responses are similar in both TSW and SSP with 46.9% and 48.4% of the respondents find it difficult or very difficult to seek help respectively. However, there are apparently a higher proportion of respondents from Tin Heng Estate and Lai Kok-Lai On Estate who feel that it is difficult or very difficult to seek help, while respondents from Tin Shui Estate were least likely to find it difficult or very difficult..

6.6.2 In response to the question “Is it difficult for you to seek help from other people or organizations when you are suffering from economic difficulties”, a higher proportion of respondents from TSW (67.7%) than from SSP (57.8%) feel that it is difficult or very difficult to seek help.

6.6.3 In response to the question “Is it difficult for you to seek help from other people or organizations when you are unemployed”, the proportion of respondents from TSW who report it is difficult or very difficult is higher than for their SSP counterparts. Respondents from Tin Heng Estate are proportionately the most likely to report it is difficult or very difficult.

6.6.4 Among different types of relationships, those which respondents have with

parents, spouse and children are the closest, follow by the relationship with siblings, relatives, colleagues, and friends. Relationships with neighbors are the weakest.

6.6.5 In the case of Tin Heng Estate, some forms of mutual aid between the respondents and their parents, spouse and colleagues could be observed. However, there is infrequent communication or and joint participation in leisure activities in these relationships.

6.6.6 The social networks of Tin Heng Estate respondents include very few middle class people or those of higher socio-economic status. Compared the two estates located in newly developed areas, the social networks of Tin Heng Estate respondents include fewer middle class people or those of higher socio-economic status than Hoi Lai Estate respondents do. Compared to another low-income area, Lai Kok-Lai On Estate, the social networks of Tin Heng Estate respondents also include fewer middle class people or those of higher socio-economic status. We believe that this is a disadvantage to the Tin Heng Estate respondents in overcoming poverty.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

6.7.1 **Lai Kok-Lai ON** is a relatively old community located at the urban centre. It is an aging community, with the longest history among the selected estates. The main challenge to this community is its aging population and deteriorated community facilities. The problems that the respondents are most concerned with are health, aging, pornography, and drug abuse. Being located at the urban

centre is an advantage for the residents of this area, as more job opportunities are available in SSP. The social networks of the residents of this area are relatively broader in scope, which is another advantage for the residents in terms of access to opportunities to improve their living standards.

6.7.2 **Hoi Lai** is a newly developed area located at the urban centre. Unlike the respondents from TSW, respondents from Hoi Lai Estate do not suffer from high transportation fares and having to travel long distances. Therefore, their life chances are better than those of the TSW respondents, and the impact of income level is less apparent. Being located at the urban centre means that respondents have easy access to most community facilities in the district, including hospitals and other health care facilities. Indeed, the Hoi Lai Estate respondents made fewer complaints about the provision of community facilities. The respondents from this area are disadvantaged because their social network within their own district is relatively weak, as reflected by the difficulties they face when seeking help. However, in terms of bridging social capital, these respondents have the advantage of knowing more people with a higher socio-economic.

6.7.3 **Tin Shui** is a relatively old community located in a remote area in the New Territories. Since they live far away from the metropolitan area, respondents from Tin Shui Estate face the challenge of limited job opportunities and difficulty in accessing community facilities, especially health care facilities. Similar to Lai Kok-Lai On Estate, this relatively old community in TSW is more concerned about aging, pornography and drug abuse problems. However, they have the advantage in bridging social capital and they also have a stronger social network within their own community.

6.7.4 **Tin Heng is a** newly developed area located in a remote area in the New Territories. Among the selected estates in this research, Tin Heng Estate is the most disadvantaged. On the one hand, the residents face the challenge of limited job opportunities and difficulty in accessing community facilities. On the other hand, the transportation problem is more serious in TSW North (Tin Heng) than in TSW South (Tin Shui). Indeed, our survey has revealed that the problems which the Tin Heng Estate respondents are most concerned with are employment, transportation and poverty. In addition, they are concerned about domestic violence and the youth problem. Respondents from Tin Heng Estate are able to develop mutual aid networks and cooperation with their parents, spouse, colleagues and friends; however, there is also a shortage of space and time for communication and leisure activities in these relationships. Nonetheless, these respondents have a positive attitude with respect to the living conditions of their family in the future and they believe that their offspring will have a better life than theirs in the future.

6.7.4.1 In analyzing the situation in TSW North, we find that the length of residence in Hong Kong does have an impact on the social networks of our respondents.

Among those who have lived in Hong Kong for a long time, many have moved into TSW from Yuen Long and Tuen Mun. After moving into TSW, although transportation and employment pose a serious problem, they still manage to maintain their existing social networks as they still have friends and relatives in Hong Kong. However, new immigrants find it difficult to seek help when they have problems because they have not developed their social network in the district. Moreover, these new immigrants feel that there is social discrimination

against them in Hong Kong society; therefore some of them even prefer to strengthen their social networks with friends and relatives in Mainland China rather than develop new social networks in Hong Kong.

6.7.4.2 It is also found that income level impacts on respondents' attitudes towards the social problems in their district. Respondents who have a steady income at a certain level showed less dissatisfaction with social problems. For a skilled laborer, for instance, a monthly income of just above HK\$10,000 is not a lot, but is good enough for maintaining a basic living standard. However, for non-skilled, low-income workers, the geographical location and employment problem in TSW pose a dilemma for them: there is a lack of job opportunities in TSW but their low income level discourages them from seeking work in other districts (such as Mong Kok and Wan Chai) due to the high transportation costs.

6.7.4.3 For those who have a relatively higher income (for example, above HK\$10,000), their basic living problems could generally be solved even if they are new arrivals to Hong Kong. In the case of low-income earners, if they have longer years of residence in Hong Kong, their problems could to some extent be relieved with the support of their established social network. Therefore, the group that suffers the most is those residents who have low-income and are new arrivals to Hong Kong.

6.7.4.4 The cases that need the most attention in TSW North are thus those who are new arrivals to Hong Kong, who have not been able to build up their own social network in the community and who are non-skilled workers unable to find a job in TSW or afford the transportation costs to work in other districts. Some of

them encounter hardship in maintaining their lives as they have to support their family-of-origin as well as their own family; they feel helpless when confronting varied problems in the society. The reason TSW North has become a problem community is due to the fact that its population consists of a large proportion of residents with the type of background as described above.

## **7. Recommendations**

7.1 Many TSW respondents we surveyed have indicated that the absence of a comprehensive hospital in the district is a major problem.

7.2 In the case of the low-income TSW residents, high transportation fares and long traveling distance to work outside TSW has greatly affected their life chances. We suggest the government extend further the current transport subsidy scheme in order to attract low-income earners to work outside TSW.

7.3 Another employment related issue is linked to family responsibilities. For many TSW North young couples (especially women) with young children, childcare responsibilities prevent them from taking up a job. We suggest that the government consider implementing a “vouchers” system in TSW, in order to mobilize local female residents to provide childcare assistance to those women who wish to work. This could not only create a demand for a local community service, but could also enable some women to enter or re-enter the labor market.

7.4 Although TSW respondents have expressed some dissatisfaction with their living

and community conditions, they generally have a positive expectation regarding their children's future. TSW residents would like to see their next generation achieve success in a better environment. Thus, a policy that aims to bring improvement to TSW should put more emphasis on addressing the hopes of TSW residents, so that they could live a more positive life.

7.5 To boost TSW residents' hopes for the future, we offer two recommendations targeting the area's younger generation. The first is to take preventive action. Some social workers have revealed that a youth problem is emerging in the district. Thus, it is important to strengthen youth work to help prevent and control this youth problem before it gets out of hand. The second is to explore ways to better develop the potential of young people in the district. This would allow young people to realize their full potential, and their success in doing so would create hope among their parents; this in turn could help to generate a more positive social atmosphere in the community.

7.6 We believe "empowerment" of low-income earners and new immigrants in the district can be a very effective strategy to improve their situation. By providing opportunities for them to participate in society, it can enhance their sense of efficacy to change their own situation for the better, i.e. instill confidence that they have the ability to bring about improvements in their own lives. Retraining should be seen in this connection as a means of empowerment. On this basis, low-income earners and new immigrants should be given the opportunity to receive systematic training in order to enhance their competitiveness in society. Moreover, through the retraining system, they can develop their local social networks, and at the same time, have a chance to participate in the society and to develop a stronger

sense of belonging to the society.

7.7 Our third recommendation concerns the development of social networks. As a newly developed community, TSW North would benefit greatly from enhanced input of professional knowledge and skills in organizing and mobilizing local resources in order to build up the community networks in the area. Currently social network development in TSW North appears to be the most unfavourable among the four estates studied. Since there are more social problems in this area, we believe that the conditions in the area could be improved through the development and fostering of a community mutual aid network. Moreover, since the proportion of new immigrants from Mainland China in TSW North is sizeable, we believe that a special social worker support team should be set up and designated to serve new immigrants in the area. A designated new immigrant support team is needed because most of the cases that require the greatest attention are the so-called “hidden” cases, which professional social workers are best capable of coping with.