

# HAPPY HANDS

Building An Endearing Home



HDB Senior Heartland  
Ambassador Mr Chong Teng Kok  
on sharing stories with a smile

Get creative in redesigning  
public spaces through URA's Our  
Favourite Place programme

Find out how AVA and animal  
welfare partners collaborate to  
rehome adoptable animals



It's **Not Just Us**  
Living Here

N. Sivasothi on mobilising communities  
to safeguard our natural heritage.



Mr N. Sivasothi  
Chairperson, Friends of Chestnut Nature Park Community  
Member, Otter Working Group

## PROGRAMME (URA)

### Creative hacks for public spaces

URA's Our Favourite Place programme makes it easy to get involved in redesigning our shared spaces.

Creative hacks to public spaces are emerging, whether these are re-purposing void deck spaces, the patch of grass opposite our homes or a side alley.

And more are doing it, with the help of active groups like Participate in Design and COLOURS, as well as support from URA's Our Favourite Place programme.

#### Co-designing the public space

Founders of Participate in Design, Jan Lim and Mizah Rahman, say involving residents in determining the types of public spaces they want can throw up new ideas. The non-profit group working to empower citizens in co-designing community spaces did something different for Tampines Changkat's Neighbourhood Renewal Programme in 2015 as then Member of Parliament Irene Ng wanted to involve her residents more.

Instead of just surveying residents and checking off key facilities and spaces as part of upgrading the public housing estate, the team got residents to tour their neighbourhood, mapping out existing issues and drawing up proposals themselves. And they came up with a whole host of upgrading ideas, including turning part of their park into a nature playground for kids.

Visit the Participate in Design website ([participateindesign.org](http://participateindesign.org)) to find out more about what they do.



For Tampines Changkat's Neighbourhood Renewal Programme in 2015, residents got involved in co-designing their community spaces.

Images: Participate in Design

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If we had started from the survey, unless you had it written down, 'Park play with nature', that would not have come up because there was no room for things that did not belong to the standard, such as link ways and pavilions ... But because we had a workshop [with the residents], we had room for innovative ideas.

Jan Lim  
Co-founder, Participate in Design

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Images: Participate in Design

Founders of Participate in Design Jan (leftmost in the image on the left) and Mizah (centre in the image on the right) work with residents on community design projects.



Images: Urban Redevelopment Authority

**NTUC Health's SilverCOVE Senior Wellness Centre was designed by COLOURS together with Marsiling Rise seniors, who came up with designs and solutions for what they would like to have in the senior activity centre.**

### Instilling a greater sense of place

Founders of Collectively Ours (COLOURS), Chong Keng Hua and Kang Fong Ing, who are currently assistant professor and adjunct assistant professor respectively at the Singapore University of Technology and Design, see the co-design process as a way for residents to find new meaning in ordinary common spaces around them.



Images: Urban Redevelopment Authority

**Keng Hua (left) and Fong Ing (right) hope to raise the community's sense of ownership for shared spaces through co-design.**

For one of their projects, the team worked with senior residents in Marsiling Rise to design NTUC Health's SilverCOVE Senior Wellness Centre. Although there was no space for a full-scale garden, the residents longed to have a garden in the centre, so the team found a way to transform a 40-centimetres wide window ledge into a unique gardening wall of assorted plants.

### Everyone can play a part

Says Keng Hua, "A lot of times we feel that the responsibility lies with whoever

has the authority. That probably was right in the past because we needed to move very fast and solve a lot of urgent issues. Today, "responsibility" needs to be redefined from having the "power to respond" to the "ability to respond", and every one of us can play a part in designing our spaces."

On top of producing creative hacks for public spaces, community participatory design efforts show that working together builds

communities, helps people realise the complexity of issues, and see from the perspective of others.

Visit the COLOURS website ([col-ours.com](http://col-ours.com)) to find out more about their work.

*This is an abridged version of an article originally published in Going Places Singapore at [goingplacessingapore.sg/project/2016/PublicSpaces.aspx](http://goingplacessingapore.sg/project/2016/PublicSpaces.aspx). For more stories about rediscovering our city, visit [goingplacessingapore.sg](http://goingplacessingapore.sg)*

## Our Favourite Place Programme

The Urban Redevelopment Authority's Our Favourite Place programme supports projects initiated and implemented by the community to enliven public spaces across Singapore to build community interactions and create shared memories. Share with us your ideas on activating public spaces in your neighbourhood and apply for support to implement them at [www.ourfaveplace.sg](http://www.ourfaveplace.sg)