

South China Morning Post

A3: Food comes poor second for those on low wages

About 71,000 poor Hong Kong households do not have enough money to meet even their most basic food needs, and are surviving on less than HK\$15 per meal per person, a study has found.

And poor people who do not have public housing are shelling out much larger chunks of their small incomes on rent than those who do, leaving them particularly short of cash for food.

The study, by the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, which oversees more than 460 community groups, looked at the conditions of people categorised as low-income – that is, earning less than half of the city's median income – but who do not get government benefits.

A household is considered poor if it brings in less than HK\$3,500 for one person, HK\$8,500 for two people, HK\$14,000 for three people, and HK\$17,000 for four.

The study analysed data on 6,880 households, gathered in a survey by the Census and Statistics Department from 2014/15. In that survey, city residents gave information on their income and outgoings, including spending on food.

C1: Affordable homes boost for singles

Hong Kong's first affordable social housing operator has revealed it will introduce a new project for low-income young singles next year to celebrate its fifth year in operation.

Social enterprise Light Be on Monday invited 10 landlords, who have previously remained low profile, to speak about why they were willing to rent their properties to poor families at prices lower than market rates.

The landlords included retirees, entrepreneurs, academics, property developers and business executives, with some buying properties specifically for the enterprise.

“We plan to introduce a different creative social real estate project every year,” company chief executive Ricky Yu Wai-yip said. “This will make up for the [government welfare] system and help those who have fallen through the cracks of the system.”

Yu said the assessment system was likely to be similar to the existing system, where all tenants are referred by social workers.