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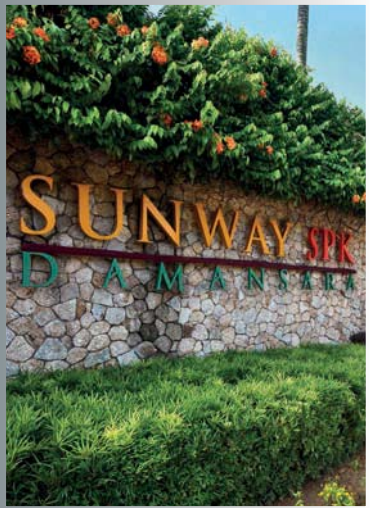
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THEEDGETM MALAYSIA BEST MANAGED & SUSTAINABLE PROPERTY AWARDS 2024

THE WINNERS AT A GLANCE

Editor's Choice Awards 2024



**PETRONAS TWIN
TOWERS**
TIMELESS EXCELLENCE

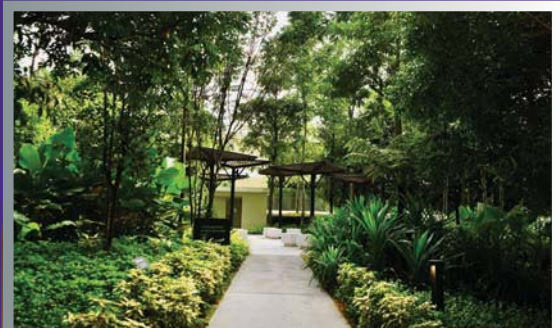
KLCC PARK
EXEMPLARY
COMMUNITY MAGNET

**MENARA UOA
BANGSAR**
STERLING STAKEHOLDERS
PARTNERSHIP

**SUNWAY SPK
DAMANSARA**
EXEMPLARY COMMITMENT
TO EXCELLENCE

**LAKEFRONT HOMES
@ CYBERJAYA**
MALAYSIA'S OUTSTANDING
AFFORDABLE HOMES

The Edge Malaysia-ILAM Sustainable Landscape Awards 2024



TNB PLATINUM BANGSAR
LANDSCAPE DESIGN



KLCC PARK
LANDSCAPE PLANNING



KL EAST PARK (PHASE 1)
LANDSCAPE PLANNING

Below 10 Years

Mixed Development (Entire)



Multiple-owned Strata Residential

Single-owned Office in a Mixed Strata Development



Non-strata Office



Non-strata Retail



Strata Retail



Sustainable Affordable Housing



Specialised



10 Years and Above

Mixed Development (Entire)



Non-strata Residential



Multiple-owned Strata Residential



Non-strata Retail



Specialised



Non-strata Office



Contents

<div><div>The winners at a glance</div><div>PG 2</div></div> <div><div>Note from the awards' chief judge</div><div>Driving value creation and sustainability</div><div>PG 6</div></div> <div><div>Overview</div><div>Honouring the nation's best managed and sustainable properties</div><div>PG 8</div></div> <div><div>Judges' comments</div><div>PG 10</div></div> <div><div>Judging criteria</div><div>PG 15</div></div>	<div><div>PG 18 Siteseeing</div></div> <div><div>PG 20 PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS</div><div>Always in pursuit of excellence</div></div> <div><div>PG 22 KLCC PARK</div><div>The people's park</div></div> <div><div>PG 24 MENARA UOA BANGSAR</div><div>Establishing a precedent</div></div> <div><div>PG 26 SUNWAY SPK DAMANSARA</div><div>Community spirit a vital ingredient</div></div> <div><div>PG 28 THE PARK RESIDENCES 1</div><div>Future planning for the benefit of all</div></div> <div><div>PG 30 UOA BUSINESS PARK TOWER 7</div><div>Satisfied tenants make a difference</div></div> <div><div>PG 32 11 MONT' KIARA</div><div>Working with the right property manager pays off</div></div> <div><div>PG 34 PAVILION SUITES KUALA LUMPUR</div><div>Luxury mindset is key</div></div> <div><div>PG 36 RYAN & MIHO RESIDENCE</div><div>Creating a beautiful oasis through effective management</div></div> <div><div>PG 38 ESSEX GARDENS, SETIA ECO TEMPLER</div><div>Preserving a piece of paradise</div></div> <div><div>PG 40 JADE HILLS</div><div>Nurturing a thriving community</div></div> <div><div>PG 44 LAKEFRONT HOMES @ CYBERJAYA</div><div>Cultivating strong sense of ownership</div></div> <div><div>PG 46 MENARA KWSP</div><div>Collaborative effort in managing all-new HQ</div></div> <div><div>PG 50 THE ASTAKA @ ONE BUKIT SENYUM</div><div>Meeting high expectations</div></div> <div><div>PG 52 TNB PLATINUM BANGSAR</div><div>A different kind of spark</div></div> <div><div>PG 54 RESIDENSI DUTA KIARA</div><div>Striving for long-term upkeep</div></div> <div><div>PG 56 ISLAND HOSPITAL</div><div>Lessons from the past</div></div> <div><div>PG 58 PANORAMA KLCC</div><div>Responsiveness, proactivity key to quality building maintenance</div></div> <div><div>PG 60 SETIA CITY MALL</div><div>Proactive mall management</div></div> <div><div>PG 62 THE PEARL @ KLCC</div><div>Taking its sheen up a notch</div></div> <div><div>PG 64 KL EAST PARK (PHASE 1)</div><div>An urban green treasure trove</div></div> <div><div>PG 66 JESSELTON RESIDENCES AND MALL</div><div>Getting ready for the future</div></div> <div><div>PG 68 URBAN RESIDENCES</div><div>Making the extra effort</div></div> <div><div>PG 70 PARADIGM PJ</div><div>Finding right balance at mixed-use development</div></div> <div><div>PG 72 ATIVO PLAZA</div><div>Working hand in hand to benefit the community</div></div> <div><div>PG 74 SKYMERIDIEN RESIDENCES</div><div>High-rise built for healthy living</div></div> <div><div>PG 76 M CENTURA</div><div>Being intentional from the get-go</div></div> <div><div>PG 78 DESIGN VILLAGE OUTLET MALL</div><div>Implementing innovative solutions from the beginning</div></div> <div><div>PG 80 KL EAST MALL</div><div>Staying relevant in a resilient urban consumer market</div></div> <div><div>PG 82 CRYSTAL PLAZA</div><div>Crystal-clear vision for an old building</div></div> <div><div>PG 84 PJ8</div><div>Placing emphasis on a strong partnership</div></div> <div><div>PG 86 CENDANA KLCC</div><div>Proper financial planning is crucial</div></div> <div><div>PG 88 MENARA AMBANK</div><div>Unfazed by challenges</div></div> <div><div>PG 90 PARC @ TAMAN SUBANG RIA</div><div>A community-driven, sustainable project</div></div> <div><div>Scenes from the gala night</div><div>PG 92</div></div>
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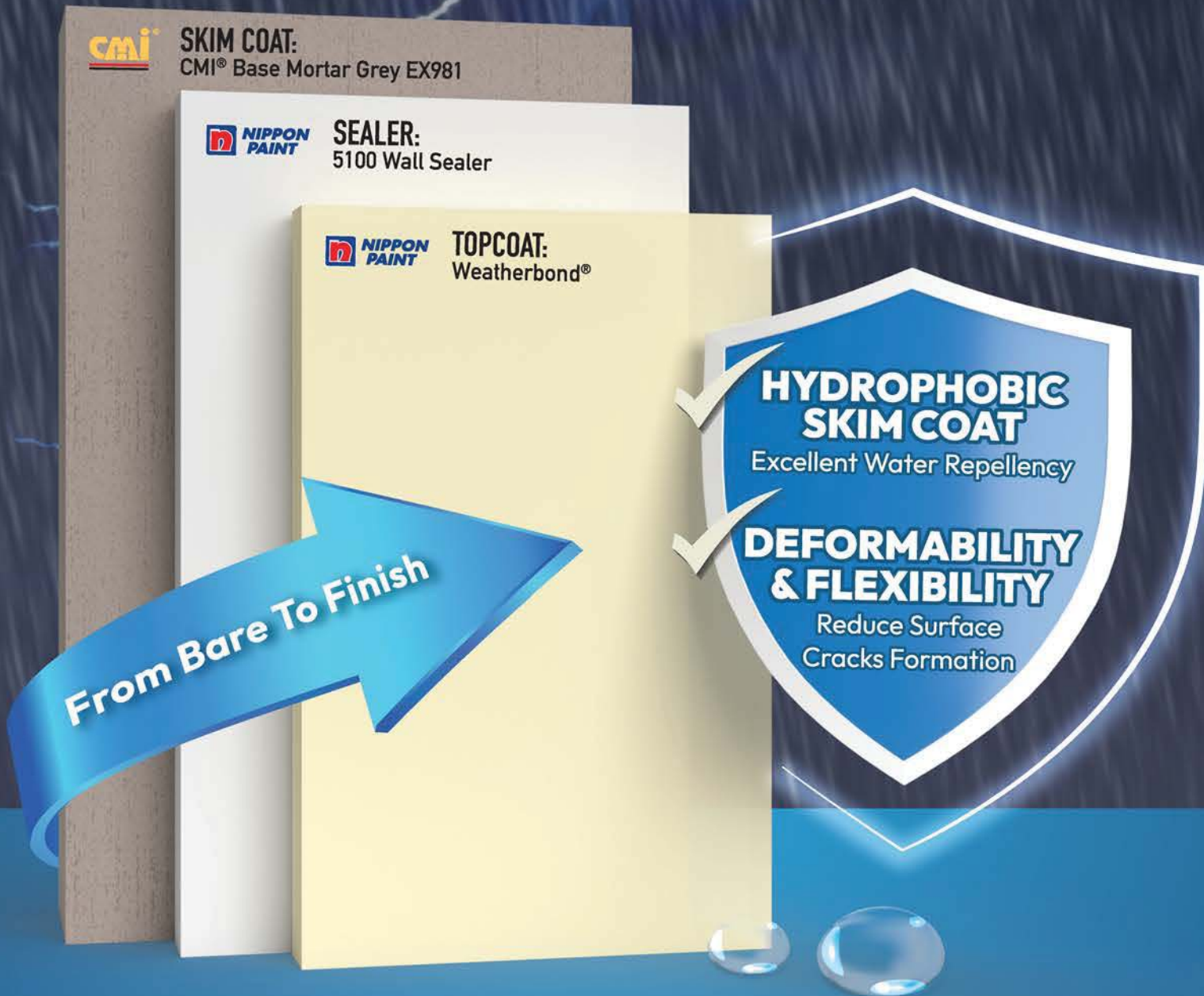
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Note from the awards' chief judge



LOW YEN YEING/THE EDGE

Driving value creation and sustainability

BY AU FOONG YEE
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The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards entered its eighth edition this year, with a record number of submissions received from across Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak.

This year, the number of entries increased substantially from those received in 2017 for the inaugural awards. Without doubt, the awareness and recognition of excellent and sustainable property management practices are growing.

Kudos to all property owners, developers, managers, management corporations (MCs) and joint management bodies (JMBs) who have submitted their buildings to be assessed. The endeavour is a testament to their conviction that real estate must be managed with excellence.

Indeed, property management is the all-important last mile in the real estate ecosystem. It can make or break your investment.

Those who choose to dismiss property management as something frivolous and insignificant are doing themselves a disservice. Taking for granted the function of property management and relegating it to merely chores such as garbage collection speaks of their grave ignorance.

Any property that is not managed with excellence and in a sustainable manner falls short of its value creation potential. It is as simple as that. On the flip side, real estate that boasts best-in-class property management practices enjoys value enhancement potential, be it residential, office, retail, industrial or other commercial property.

The results of *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards are a testament to this. Behind every winner is a property management team practising a quality administrative approach anchored on strict governance. Decision-making would be transparent and legal compliance is a given. There would be financial stewardship besides putting in place preventive and planned management strategies. Safety and security hazards will not be tolerated. The team is prepared for any crisis besides staying innovative. At the same time, a good property manager has to have soft skills, as harmonious living is the heart of any communal living.

Needless to say, a strong and trusted working relationship between the property manager and either the MC or JMB, whichever is applicable, is a given.

No beauty contest

We have been told *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards is tough, with its extensive judging criteria like no other. We tend to agree. Indeed, this is a very serious assessment of the quality of property management in Malaysia. The awards are also unique — these are the first of their kind, not only in Malaysia but also in this part of the world.

The judges are not excited about the sheer aesthetics of the façade or interior of a building. Neither are they on the hunt for the best looking or the most luxurious real estate in sight.

Although the façade of a building does matter, it is not half as important as the condition of the back of house areas — typically those unvisited. The fire control, chiller and pump rooms, where applicable, are on the judges' radar

Property management is the all-important last mile in the real estate ecosystem. It can make or break the value of your investment.” — Au

screens. We also inspect car parks and other tucked-away nooks and corners that tell a tale of a building's upkeep, safety and security proofing.

This year, the judges scrutinised 75 entries (including seven for *The Edge Malaysia*-ILAM Sustainable Landscape Awards 2024), deliberated and then shortlisted 49 of them for site inspections. As each site inspection typically takes two hours or so, a judge would have spent 100 hours or more for the on the ground audit. This excludes the extensive travel to projects located in the Klang Valley, Penang island and mainland, Johor Bahru, Kuching and Kota Kinabalu.

After the site inspections, judges reconvened for a final round of deliberations before deciding on the winners. The results were audited by Deloitte Malaysia.

Urgent review of strata laws needed

The site inspections revealed numerous pain points in effective property management practices. At the top of the list would be the insufficient laws and regulations to deal with issues stemming from strata-titled development management.

This is especially glaring in strata mixed-use developments integrating multiple components like office, retail and residential in a single strata title. Mixed-used developments are becoming very fashionable in Malaysia since they meet changing market demands that emphasise lifestyle, convenience and connectivity.

Unlike a pure residential, office or commercial project, managing a mixed-use development built on a single strata title is another ball game altogether. The challenges are aplenty, including the different service charges applied to the various components of the development. Safety and security considerations also need to be stepped up.

Obviously, the task gets more trying if an integrated development has not been adequately designed and built for effective property management. Hence, it is paramount that such developments must be designed and built with the end in mind.

As the laws and regulations now stand, MCs, JMBs and property managers often find themselves in a quandary when navigating through grey areas that are open to interpretation.

A review of the Strata Management Act 2013 (SMA) is long overdue. The Ministry of Housing and Local Government has been mulling amendments to the SMA for many years now. Why the delay? Consultations with industry stakeholders are believed to have been conducted. Unless there is fresh input, the feedback already gathered would now be lacking given how rapidly the strata development scene is evolving.

Immediate answers are needed to address practical questions such as the equitable and fair contribution to service charges and sinking funds. Clarity of the law is paramount.

On another front, the move towards the issuance of individual strata titles upon vacant possession (VP) of a property is a step in the right direction. However, this also means there will be no more JMBs — which comprise members from the property developer and owners — to jointly manage the common areas of the property ahead of the issuance of the strata title. After all, the JMB period is akin to a transition of sorts for owners to learn the ropes of managing the property.

Without the benefit of the existence and function of a JMB altogether, will the MC be adequately equipped to manage the property? What are the foreseeable issues that could arise? The task gets more perplexing in integrated mixed-use development.



PATRICK GOH/THE EDGE

KLCC Park



PATRICK GOH/THE EDGE

The Park Residences 1

Whatever the case may be, clarity is the way forward to prevent potentially unnecessary and costly litigation.

It's all in the team

The hallmark of an outstandingly managed property lies in a team that prioritises professionalism and integrity and yearns for knowledge and improvement.

It is important for the team to work closely with the MC or JMB. Trust, transparency, strong communication skills and a lot of common sense go a long way to anchor an effective partnership with a common goal. Only then would the best of the property be brought out. There is no room for an ego trip for any party in the team.

Well done, again!

This year, we were delighted to see the participation of two iconic national projects that have proved that the age of real estate is no barrier to excellent property and sustainable management.

The Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards debuted in 2017. That year, Malaysia's iconic Petronas Twin Towers bagged the Gold award in the Non-strata Commercial (10 years and above). The project also won the Editor's Choice award for Iconic Innovation.

This year, the Petronas Twin Towers was back in contention and, once again, successfully scored a Gold in the Non-strata Office (10 years and above) category. It also clinched the Editor's Choice award for Timeless Excellence.

(All gold award winners are eligible to enter for assessment after three years.)

It is heartening to note that this architectural masterpiece continues to be managed in an outstanding manner. The internationally recognised building took seven years to build and received its first occupants in 1997. It is also heartening to note how the building has aged gracefully and beautifully while staying relevant in a crowded skyline.

The famed KLCC Park in the heart of Kuala Lumpur is another notable Gold Award winner this year. In 2018, this lush 50-acre urban sanctuary located right smack in the heart of Kuala Lumpur was awarded Gold in the Specialised category. It also won the Editor's Choice for Exemplary Contribution to the Nation.

This year, KLCC Park was entered for two categories — Specialised Category and *The Edge Malaysia-ILAM Landscape Awards*. It emerged a Gold winner in both categories. On top of that, it won the Editor's Choice for Being an Exemplary Community Magnet. Though signs of its yesteryear's landscape design are showing, these are overshadowed by lush and painstakingly curated greenery planted and maintained in a sustainable manner. Kudos to the team.

Jade Hills, a township in Kajang, Selangor, known for its lush and green landscape, is back on the Gold winners list this year. The sprawling development won Gold in the Non-Strata Residential (10 years and above) category this year. The development won Gold in the same category in 2019. In 2018, it took home the Gold in *The Edge Malaysia-ILAM Landscape Awards*.

Over at Bangsar South in Kuala Lumpur is The Park Residences 1. This project won Silver in the Multiple-Owned

“The site inspections revealed numerous pain points in effective property management practices. At the top of the list would be the insufficient laws and regulations to deal with issues stemming from strata-titled development management.” — Au

Strata Residential (10 Years and Above) category in 2022. This year, the property was resubmitted for assessment. The significant improvements in management of the property earned it a Gold award.

It is heartening to note how more and more real estate owners, on their own or in partnership with property managers, are paying attention to future-proofing their assets. Picking up an award for their efforts is the icing on the cake. Be that as it may, an excellently managed and sustainable property is nothing short of a work-in-progress. It does not stop at clinching an award.

Thank you

The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards would not have been a reality without the support of the industry stakeholders, all of whom are represented on our panel of judges. They are the Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association (Rehda), Malaysian Institute of Property & Facility Managers (MIPFM), Association of Property and Facility Managers in Singapore (APFM), Malaysian REIT Managers Association (MRMA), Building Management Association of Malaysia (BMAM), Anthony Lee Tee of Architect Centre and Chris Tan of Chur Associates.

Our appreciation also goes to our partner for *The Edge Malaysia-ILAM Sustainable Landscape Awards*, the Institute of Landscape Architects Malaysia (ILAM), as well as Deloitte Malaysia, the auditor of the awards.

All judges signed non-disclosure agreements. Those with interest in any of the award submissions abstained from casting their votes accordingly. The awards are free to enter and no fee is required. **E**

Au Foong Yee (afyee@bizedge.com) is an editor emeritus at *The Edge Malaysia*. She conceptualised and is the chief judge of *The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards*.

LOW YEN YEING/THE EDGE



Jade Hills

Overview



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HONOURING THE NATION'S best managed and sustainable properties

BY **CHIN WAI LUN**
city.country@bizedge.com

The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards (BMSPA) are back for the eighth instalment this year. The awards seek to recognise and celebrate real estate that is managed with excellence and sustainability.

The 2024 awards gala dinner was held at One World Hotel in Petaling Jaya on July 15. In his welcome speech, The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat said the awards were judged by a panel of experts from the Malaysian and Singaporean real estate industries, and based on a rigorous set of criteria that include property management practices, cost management, sustainability and overall excellence.

He noted that the record number of submissions this year was a heartening sign of growing awareness and commitment to best-in-class and sustainable property management practices.

"It signifies that more and more industry professionals are recognising the criti-

cal impact of property management on the value of properties and the standard of living for those who inhabit them," he added.

BMSPA 2024 received a record 75 entries from all over the country, compared with 52 last year. Of these, 49 were shortlisted for the awards, 11 more than last year. Eventually, 34 projects received recognition for their outstanding achievements in property management.

This year, there are 10 categories of awards, covering residential, office, mixed development, retail and specialised properties. Each category is divided into two segments to reflect the age of the properties — Below 10 Years and 10 Years and Above.

In addition to the anchor awards, *The Edge Malaysia*-ILAM Sustainable Landscape Awards 2024 and the Editor's Choice Awards 2024 were presented at the event.

Crème de la crème

Having shone at the inaugural awards in 2017, the Petronas Twin Towers was once again in the spotlight, bagging Gold at *The Edge Malaysia* BMSPA in the 10 Years and Above — Non-strata Office category.

Managed by KLCC Urusharta Sdn Bhd, the development was also the recipient of the Editor's Choice award for Timeless Excellence.

In 2017, the towers was awarded Gold in the Non-strata — Commercial category and the Editor's Choice award for Iconic Innovation.

Properties that previously won gold at the BMSPA can resubmit their property for consideration only after three years.

Meanwhile, KLCC Park, also managed by KLCC Urusharta, retained its Gold status this year in the 10 Years and Above — Specialised category and *The Edge Malaysia*-ILAM Sustainable Landscape Awards 2024 under the Landscape Planning category. It also took home the Editor's Choice award for Exemplary Community Magnet.

The park had previously won in 2018 in the same Specialised category and garnered the Editor's Choice award for Exemplary Contribution to the Nation.

Other properties that received the Editor's Choice awards this year were Menara UOA Bangsar (managed by Henry Butcher Malaysia [Mont Kiara] Sdn Bhd, or HBMK) for Sterling Stakeholders Partnership, Sun-

way SPK Damansara (managed by its own residents' association) for Exemplary Commitment to Excellence and Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya (managed by Avaland Bhd) for Malaysia's Outstanding Affordable Homes.

The Editor's Choice winners were also awarded Gold in their respective main categories: Menara UOA Bangsar in the 10 Years and Above — Mixed Development (Entire) category; Sunway SPK Damansara in the 10 Years and Above — Non-strata Residential category; and Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya in the Below 10 Years — Sustainable Affordable Housing category.

Other Gold award winners in the main categories for BMSPA were UOA Business Park Tower 7 (managed by HBMK) in the Below 10 Years — Single-owned Office in a Mixed Strata Development; The Park Residences 1 (managed by Laurelcap Property Management (Sel) Sdn Bhd or Laurelcap) in the 10 Years and Above — Multiple-owned Strata Residential; 11 Mont'Kiara (managed by HBMK) in the 10 Years and Above — Multiple-owned Strata Residential; Pavilion Suites Kuala Lumpur (managed by HBMK) in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Res-

SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

THE EDGE BEST MANAGED & SUSTAINABLE PROPERTY AWARDS 2024

Editor's Choice Awards



Front row, from left: *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan, *The Edge* Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, Menara UOA Bangsar MC secretary Khaw Chay Tee, Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd associate director Jessie Koh and managing director Low Hon Keong, Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya JMB chairman Mohammad Hanif, Avaland Bhd property management general manager Lim Tek Guan, Sunway SPK Damansara residents' association chairman Lee Lai Sim and committee members Elaine Lean Chooi Lin and Sandra Tee Bee Lian, KLCC (Holdings) Sdn Bhd group CEO Datuk Md Shah Mahmood, senior general manager of group strategy & sustainability Mohainee Tahir and senior general manager of group commercial Ikhwan Hamzah Azizan and *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong.

Back row, from left: Sunway SPK Damansara residents' association committee members Au Yong Soon Kok, Yuan Loh Soon, Chang Wai Yen and Tai Tiong Tai

idential; Ryan & Miho Residence (managed by HBMK) in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-Owned Strata Residential; Essex Gardens, Setia Eco Templer (managed by Laurelcap) in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-Owned Strata Residential; Jade Hills (managed by Gamuda Land Services Sdn Bhd) in the 10 Years and Above — Non-strata Residential; Menara KWSP (managed by Knight Frank Property Management Sdn Bhd or KFPM) in the Below 10 Years — Non-strata Office; and The Astaka @ One Bukit Senyum (managed by KFPM) in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential categories.

Silver award winners in the main categories were Residensi Duta Kiara (managed by HBMK) in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential; Island Hospital (managed by Island Hospital Sdn Bhd) in the 10 Years and Above — Specialised; Panorama KLCC (managed by HBMK) in the 10 Years and Above — Multiple-owned Strata Residential; Setia City Mall (managed by Lendlease Malaysia) in the 10 Years and Above — Retail; and The Pearl @ KLCC (managed by HBMK) in the 10 Years and Above — Multiple-owned Strata Residential categories.

Meanwhile, Bronze award winners included Jesselton Residences & Mall (managed by KFPM) in the Below 10 Years — Mixed Development (Entire); Urban Residences (managed by Narra Realty Services Sdn Bhd) in the Below 10 Years — Mixed Development (Entire); Paradigm PJ (managed by HBMK) in the 10 Years and Above — Mixed Development (Entire); Ativo Plaza (managed by TA Global Bhd) in the 10 Years and Above — Mixed Development (Entire); SkyMeridien Residences (managed by Transpacc Property Management Sdn Bhd) in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential; M Centura (managed by Mah Sing Group Bhd) in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential; Design Village Outlet Mall (managed by Design Village) in the Below 10 Years — Retail; KL East Mall (managed by Sime Darby Property Bhd or SDP) in the Below 10 Years — Retail; and Crystal Plaza (managed by Axis Facilities Management Sdn Bhd) in the 10 Years and Above — Non-strata Office categories.

For *The Edge Malaysia*-ILAM Sustainable Landscape Awards 2024, TNB Platinum Bang-

sar and KLCC Park were awarded Gold for Landscape Design and Landscape Planning respectively, while KL East Park (Phase 1) took home Silver for Landscape Planning.

Four developments received Special Mention: PJ8 (managed by KFPM) in the 10 Years and Above — Mixed Development (Entire); Menara AmBank (managed by KFPM) in the 10 Years and Above — Non-strata Office; Cendana (managed by SCM International Property Management Sdn Bhd) in the 10 Years and Above — Multiple-owned Strata Residential; and PARC @ Taman Subang Ria (by Sime Darby Property Bhd) in the Below 10 Years — Specialised categories.

"Over five weeks, the judges conducted site visits to projects in the Klang Valley, Johor Bahru, Penang, Kuching and Kota Kinabalu. It was an extensive and intensive judging process. Each visit takes up around two hours; so, just over 100 hours have been put in by our judges and they were doing it pro bono. Our judges deserve a big hand!" said Ho, explaining the judging process.

"Lastly, I want to extend my congratulations to all the winners for 2024. Your achievement reflects your dedication to excellence and

a commitment to creating a higher standard for property management in Malaysia."

The judges for this year's awards were *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan, Real Estate and Housing Developers' Association (Rehda) Malaysia president Datuk N K Tong, Association of Property and Facility Managers (APFM) president Lim Lan Yuan, Architect Centre Sdn Bhd accredited architect Anthony Lee Tee, Chur Associates founder and managing director Chris Tan, Malaysian REIT Managers Association (MRMA) vice-chairman Tan Choon Siang, Malaysian Institute of Property and Facility Managers (MIPFM) president Ishak Ismail, Building Management Association of Malaysia (BMAM) committee member Richard Chan and Institute of Landscape Architects Malaysia (ILAM) president Nor Atiah Ismail.

This year's sponsors were Nippon Paint Malaysia as the main partner, with support from APFM, Architect Centre, BMAM, EdgeProp Malaysia, ILAM, MRMA and Rehda.

The results were audited by Deloitte Malaysia. **E**

Judges' comments



The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024



Au Foong Yee

Au Foong Yee is an editor emeritus at *The Edge Malaysia* and chief judge of *The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainability Property Awards 2024*.

A property that is shortlisted for site inspection inevitably gets a free audit of its overall upkeep, including the health of its “organs”. The visit typically kicks off with a slide presentation by the property manager, who is sometimes joined by representatives of the management corporation (MC), joint management body (JMB), residents’ association (RA) or owner, whichever is applicable. The active participation of the latter is a positive sign of a desire for quality property management.

This is followed by a question-and-answer session while all relevant certifications are checked for compliance before the judges go on a walkabout. Guided by the award criteria, the judges zero in on areas such as the property manager’s adherence to budget, transparency of accounts, procurement procedures, collection of service charges, cost optimisation initiatives and innovation adoption. Pre-emptive and planned maintenance efforts as well as safety and security measures are also scrutinised.

Judges would point out any shortcomings, if any. Suggestions and solutions are given freely.

Challenges in managing commercial, mixed-use and residential properties differ. In commercial and mixed integrated properties, for instance, we have found that some fire doors remain open when they ought to be shut. Also, some fire doors opened in the wrong direction, which would hinder smooth evacuation in an emergency.

Some fire control rooms were ill-equipped and poorly ventilated. Electrical installations were found to have been placed thoughtlessly in the path of water dripping from the overhead air-conditioning system. This could cause a short circuit.

Some indoor gyms were ventilated only by air-conditioning units. Somehow, there is still a misconception among some that air conditioners are adequate for providing good-quality air. Ultimately, gyms need windows for added ventilation.

In residential buildings, we have seen substandard outdoor lighting installed in a haphazard manner. Meanwhile, in common areas, potted plants and ornamental structures were placed next to balcony railings. This yearning for aesthetics basically creates a potential safety hazard — young children could treat the objects as steps to climb over the railing.

These are but some of the common observations we have pointed out to the respective property managers. Quality property management is all about being preemptive, not reactive. Often, the devil is in the details. And life is precious.



Datuk N K Tong

Datuk N K Tong is the group managing director of Bukit Kiara Properties Sdn Bhd, a niche developer that offers innovative lifestyles. He is the immediate past president of the Real Estate and Housing Developers’ Association (Rehda) Malaysia, an independent non-executive director at Standard Chartered Bank Malaysia and the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB), and a member of the KL City Advisory Board. He has a degree in architecture from the University of Manchester and an MBA in real estate finance from the Wharton School of Business.

Even though this is my third year judging the BMSPA, I continue to be surprised and amazed at the high standards of management and innovation exhibited in the projects that we have visited. What really stands out for the top projects are management corporations and managing agents that are aligned and work closely together to invest for the future.



Anthony Lee Tee

Anthony Lee Tee is an accredited architect, forensic building inspector and trainer at Architect Centre Sdn Bhd. A fellow member of the Malaysian Institute of Architects (PAM), he was honorary secretary in 2023/25 and has chaired the secretariat and finance, professional practice and disciplinary committees. He has more than three decades of experience in the regional construction industry. He is also the group COO at Bina Puri Group of Companies, overseeing the construction businesses operations. He is actively involved in numerous dispute resolution matters including mediation and arbitration, and has acted as a court-appointed expert on building defects.

I was overwhelmed by the record number of entries and site visits spanning the four corners of Malaysia, including Sabah and Sarawak. The standard of submissions has improved by leaps and bounds. Site visits are needed. I feel the standard of submission is not just about the presentation, but also the actual state of the property.

What stood out were submissions from past winners in the hotly contested single-owned commercial and multi-owned strata residential categories (10 years and below) that showcase integration of state-of-the-art facility management and security systems, and balanced collections+opex+capex over the lifespan of these properties. I was impressed with the consistent high standards of some property managers and their dedication to refining their craft, ability to overcome difficult conditions, exemplary staff, leadership and effective working relationships with building owners that raise the bar.

With hundreds of diverse submissions since the awards’ inception in 2017, are we closer to uncovering the “secret” formula for best managed and maintained buildings? To unlock the magic formula, look closely at the past and 2024 winners!



Chris Tan Chur Pim

Chris Tan Chur Pim has been a practising lawyer since 2000. He founded Chur Associates in 2003. He is a regular speaker at corporate, academic and public events in Malaysia and overseas, a guest commentator on Chinese and English radio and TV stations as well as a frequent contributor of articles to local and overseas media publications — both print and online — in English, Chinese and Malay, especially on the topic of real estate.

With the dynamic and evolving nature of the laws and regulations of property management as a backdrop, there is no science in good property management that calls for making the most of the concrete structures to serve the best interests of the most diverse yet sophisticated community that has bought into it. Just like its regulating environment, sustainable property management is an art of constant evolution and adaptation to ever-changing human behaviours.

This edition of this unique awards continues to draw huge interest and record-breaking participation, from first-time entries to past winners. Given the awareness garnered over the years, the playing field is almost level with participants that are befitting of Malaysia, from both sides of the South China Sea. One notable factor is that strata property and strata management are now no longer legal considerations for the peninsula alone but for the whole of Malaysia with negligible differences. This further explains why prop-

erty management is now regulated and has a role in managing stake funds in trusts.

The judging standard is now at an unprecedented peak where mere compliance with regulations can only get you an entry. I am pleased to witness the growth of this awards event since its inception, and I am even overjoyed by the outcome — that the winners are setting new standards with new considerations for the betterment of the entire value chain of real estate in Malaysia.



Ishak Ismail

Ishak Ismail is founder and managing director of IM Global Property Consultants Sdn Bhd, a property consulting firm registered with the Board of Valuers, Appraisers and Estate Agents and Property Managers (Bovaea). He has been in real estate practice since 1991 and was licensed by Bovaea to practise as a registered valuer, estate agent and property manager in 1998.

He is a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and has been a registered chartered surveyor since 2008. In 2015, he was accredited as a certified valuation specialist or business valuer by the International Association of Consultants, Valuators and Analysts. He has also been actively involved in the auction industry since 1992 after obtaining a licence to conduct auctions for Kuala Lumpur, Selangor and Penang.

In recent years, he has been appointed REIT property manager for Damansara REIT Managers Sdn Bhd (Al-Aqar KPI REIT), Pelaburan Hartanah Nasional Bhd and Pelaburan Hartanah Bumiputera.

He is president of the Malaysian Institute of Property and Facility Managers and vice-president of FIABCI Malaysia.

The *Edge Malaysia* Best Managed and Sustainable Property Awards are organised to acknowledge the best property management practices in the country. They are also an industry recognition as well as a benchmark for properties that are managed with excellent sustainability.

Hence, I am very proud and honoured to congratulate all the winners. They have demonstrated commitment to meet the needs of the current and future residents without compromising on the building maintenance budget.

I hope this prestigious award will motivate other companies to be more innovative to not just create ecological features but also create sustainable living environments that enrich people's lives. The winning properties stood out for their exceptional maintenance standards, effective communication with residents and innovative strategies for improving sustainability.

I wish to record my appreciation to the property management teams for their attention to detail and commitment to providing a positive living experience for residents and working environment for the tenants.

Overall, I was impressed by the management practices. Congratulations to all the winners!



Richard Chan

With more than 43 years of experience, Richard Chan is an adviser to the Malaysia Shopping Malls Association, which he helped found in 1984. He is a founding member of the Building Management Association of Malaysia and has been a corporate member of its national committee since 2010. He is also a member of Fiabci Malaysia. In 2018, he was appointed a registered property manager and has been called to serve as a board member (2019 to 2021 and 2021 to the present) with the Board of Valuers, Appraisers, Estate Agents and Property Managers Malaysia (Bovaea).

The awards has grown and will continue to grow. We are seeing more entries, unique concepts, diverse properties and advanced management systems. However, all this means nothing without the human elements to manage it. In my view, all participants are already winners! You have won through your effort, commitment, hard work and perseverance. Being good and efficient is just the baseline. To stand out, you must break barriers, be creative and go beyond the norm.



Tan Choon Siang

Tan Choon Siang is CEO and executive director of CapitaLand Malaysia REIT Management Sdn Bhd, the manager of CapitaLand Malaysia Trust (CLMT). He is also the vice-chairman of the Malaysian REIT Managers Association. Tan was the chief financial officer of Ascendas Property Fund Trustee Pte Ltd, the trustee-manager of Ascendas India Trust. Prior to that, he was the head of corporate finance and treasury at Ascendas-Singbridge Pte Ltd. Between 2006 and 2011, he was an executive director in the Securities Division at Goldman Sachs in Hong Kong and Singapore. He has also had stints in the Investment Banking Division at Deutsche Bank and the Ministry of Finance, Singapore. He holds a Master's Degree in Economics and a Bachelor of Science in Economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Since the launch of *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards in 2017, the increasing number of submissions reflects a growing awareness of sustainable property management in Malaysia. This year's submissions reflect the commitment and effort by the participants in meeting the liveability needs of their stakeholders.

I would like to congratulate not just the winners but all participants for being able to fulfil the stringent criteria set out for this awards. *The Edge Malaysia* must also be commended for its effort in holding the awards year after year to continuously raise the bar on property management and building sustainable properties.

I hope the awards will motivate more private and public sector companies to instil sustainable initiatives in providing quality property management services. Thank you to *The Edge Malaysia* for having me as one of the judges.



Lim Lan Yuan

Lim Lan Yuan is president of the Association of Property and Facility Managers (APFM) as well as a few other allied professional organisations. He chaired a technical committee that introduced standards and technical references for building maintenance and management. He is a tribunal member of the Strata Titles Board in Singapore and the author of the book *A Guide to Management Corporations* as well as several other publications on property and facility management.

This year saw the highest number of submissions for the awards, which have become the benchmark for effective property management in Malaysia. With the increasing building stock and demand for quality management, developers, designers, builders and property managers will need to keep pace with the latest requirements and uphold the rising standards, as well as cope with the higher expectations of residents and occupants. Sustainability, design for maintainability and the application of new technology will be the trends in effective property management going forward.

I wish to congratulate all the winners as well as the participants in the awards! It is a clear sign that developers, architects and property owners have become much more aware of the importance of property management in enhancing the asset value of their developments and properties. Many of them have adopted best practices and incorporated innovation in their management. Having won their first awards, a few of them have returned to compete again, a sign of great confidence in maintaining their standards.

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PROPERTY
AWARDS **2024**

M Centura

Below 10 Years
Multiple-Owned
Strata Residential

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SENTUL, KL CITY

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Judges' comments



The awards judges with The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat (seventh from left) and The Edge Malaysia editor-in-chief Kathy Fong (fifth from left)

The Edge Malaysia-ILAM Sustainable Landscape Awards 2024



Au Foong Yee

Au Foong Yee is editor emerita at *The Edge Malaysia* and chief judge of *The Edge Malaysia-ILAM Sustainable Landscape Awards 2024*.

Aesthetically pleasing landscapes that are designed, curated and maintained sustainably are true gems. More than just eye candy, they are a key contributor to the community's well-being as they provide a green sanctuary for placemaking, exercise, recreation, education and cultural activities.

Post-Covid-19, the significance of sustainable landscapes has moved up several notches. It is now hard to visualise life without greenery. An outstanding sustainable landscape is akin to a living canvas that promotes nature's beauty. In it, the all-important ecological balance and natural habitat are preserved and natural resources prioritised.

However, successful sustainable landscapes do not happen by accident. Their creation and management demands knowledge, skill, innovation, cost planning, close monitoring and passion. While visual impact is important, future-proofing the plants selected for cost reasons is equally if not more important.

The winners of this year's awards have successfully showcased how a successful sustainable landscape can transform and raise the quality of the living environment. More than that, it can potentially be a value creator for the real estate that surrounds it.

One of the takeaways from the winners is that size or scale does not have to matter — functionality does. The look and feel of a sustainable landscape within a condo, for instance, can be expected to differ from that in a sprawling office complex. Yet, the role of the landscape is similar for both developments.

Bodies of water in any landscape are the icing on the cake — provided that they are maintained diligently and in a sustainable manner. Poorly maintained water features are not only an eyesore but a potential health hazard. Of course, safety is always key.

Congratulations to all award winners. Please give yourselves a pat on the back for the outstanding effort.



Nor Atiah Ismail

Nor Atiah Ismail is an associate professor at the Department of Landscape Architecture, the Faculty of Design and Architecture, Universiti Putra Malaysia. She graduated with a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture and Master of Science in Architecture from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia and obtained her PhD in Landscape Architecture from Lincoln University in Canterbury, New Zealand. Her areas of research specialisation are rural and urban cultural heritage landscapes.

She is president of the Institute of Landscape Architects Malaysia (ILAM) (2024–2026). She is a Fellow member of ILAM and the Malaysian delegate of ILAM to the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA), IFLA Asia-Pacific

and the World Congress and ICOMOS-IFLA. She is also honorary secretary of the Malaysian Professional Centre. She is one of the expert panellists for the architecture and landscape heritage committee at the National Heritage Department of Malaysia and Perbadanan Adat Melayu dan Warisan Negeri Selangor. She is actively involved in conserving and preserving cultural heritage monuments and sites.

The winning developments showcase a commendable commitment to sustainable landscaping and management. The thoughtful integration of native plants, efficient irrigation systems and the use of organic fertilisers highlight a dedication to environmental stewardship. Sustainability in landscape design and management not only enhances the aesthetic appeal but also contributes to biodiversity, soil health and water conservation. The careful planning and execution reflect a deep understanding of sustainable practices, making these properties models of eco-friendly landscaping.

While the current efforts are impressive, there are a few areas where further enhancements could be beneficial, which is by incorporating rainwater harvesting. The harvested rainwater systems could further reduce dependence on external water sources and enhance sustainability. Introducing more composting practices and green manure can improve soil fertility and structure, leading to healthier plant growth. Expanding integrated pest management (IPM) practices can minimise chemical pesticide use and promote a balanced ecosystem. Utilising solar-powered garden lighting and equipment can reduce the carbon footprint and operational costs.

Looking forward, the chosen developments have the potential to become a beacon of sustainable landscape development. By continuing to innovate and adopt the latest sustainable practices, the landscape can serve as an educational example for the community and other property owners. Embracing a vision of continuous improvement will not only enhance the environmental benefits but also inspire others to follow suit. Investing in sustainable technologies and practices will pay dividends in ecological health, property value and community well-being.

Judging criteria

The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024

The awards, which are in the eighth year, recognise buildings that show excellence in property management. The call for entries began on Jan 8 and closed on Feb 21.

- Submissions were open to:
- Any strata and non-strata buildings in Malaysia, managed either in-house or by any property manager
 - Properties of any size and type in Malaysia
 - Properties that were fully completed and have received the Certificate of Completion and Compliance or Certificate of Fitness for Occupation
 - Properties that fully complied with statutory requirements (that is, renewed licences, permits, approvals and so on)

Properties that previously won Gold are not entitled to enter for a period of three years from the year of winning.

The anchor awards offered various categories in two divisions based on the age of the property — Below 10 Years and 10 Years and Above.

- The categories were:
- Multiple-owned Strata Residential
 - Multiple-owned Strata Office
 - Non-strata Office
 - Single-owned Office in a Mixed Strata
 - Mixed Development (Entire)
 - Strata Retail and Non-strata Retail
 - Specialised (for industrial, heritage buildings, parks, schools and so on)
 - Repurposed Buildings (recycled or adaptive reused buildings)

The judging panel comprised representatives from *The Edge Malaysia* and industry experts, who made site visits to shortlisted projects before the final decisions were made.

Those with interest in any of the submissions abstained from casting their votes accordingly.

The results were audited by Deloitte Malaysia and the winning projects were announced and honoured at an awards ceremony on July 15.

THE MAIN JUDGING CRITERIA:

- Maintenance**
- Quality of M&E/ building services
 - Cleanliness and upkeep of facilities
 - Special/key features of the building

- Administration**
- Standard operating procedures
 - Transparency of accounts (financial governance, procurement process and so on)
 - Crisis management & preparedness (disease outbreak, fires and national disasters)

- Collections**
- Debtor ageing/billing/ collection ratio
 - Proportion of debtors
 - Collection procedures — notifications, reminders, warnings and so on

- Financial sustainability**
- Adherence to budget (budget vs actual expenditure)
 - Cost optimisation initiatives and innovations such as energy-saving measures, rainwater harvesting, design features or beautification projects and efficient supervision of maintenance work

- Security**
- Use of technology
 - Proactive measures to enhance security

- Community and communication**
- Community-building initiatives
 - Procedures for tenant or occupant liaison such as booking for facilities and dispute resolution

- Development value/yield**
- Comparative growth in value over time
 - Comparative rental yield

The Edge Malaysia Editor’s Choice Awards 2024

Selected by the editors of *The Edge Malaysia*, the Editor’s Choice Awards recognise excellence in a project, building or company that is committed to top-quality property management practices. The award is also accorded to any individual who has demonstrated an outstanding contribution to the promotion of sustainable development in the Malaysian real estate sector.

The Edge Malaysia Responsible Developer: Building Sustainable Development Award 2024

This award recognises property developers who are committed to building developments that are designed and built for best-in-class property management. The winning developer must show commitment to building sustainable* projects moving forward.

- JUDGING CRITERIA**
- Project(s) must be completed with Certificate of Completion and Compliance or Certificate of Fitness for Occupation
 - Details of the sustainable project(s) — architecture, design, construction methods, maintenance cost and effectiveness, crisis management and preparedness
- Vision, commitment and efforts made towards the building of sustainable development(s)
 - Promotion of the following attributes demanded of a sustainable development:
 - . Community living
 - . Communications
 - . Innovations
 - . Respect for nature and environment

The award was based on submissions and the winners were decided by the editors of *The Edge Malaysia*.

The Edge Malaysia-ILAM Sustainable Landscape Awards 2024

These awards benchmark projects or spaces that are designed, built and maintained for sustainability. The winning project or projects can be indoors or outdoors, and be of any size.

- Submissions were open to:
- Entrants who were certified landscape architects under ILAM (corporate, graduate or foreign member)
 - Any property developers
 - Projects that were fully completed for no less than 12 continuous months and are located in Malaysia

- JUDGING CRITERIA**
- Ecological and environmental values
 - Designed and built for cost-effective maintenance
 - Community-oriented planning and design
 - Functionality
 - Aesthetics and creativity
 - Placemaking

For 2024, submissions were divided into two categories.

- LANDSCAPE PLANNING**
- Participating projects tended to be:
- Open to both public and private use
 - Of a substantial size/multiple land-use/mixed-use development
 - Entailed a long implementation period
 - Involved numerous stakeholders

- LANDSCAPE DESIGN**
- Participating projects tended to be:
- For the exclusive use of a certain community
 - Situated within the confines of a development project
 - Single land-use development

The judging panel comprised representatives of *The Edge Malaysia* and the Institute of Landscape Architects Malaysia (ILAM) who, after shortlisting the entries, made physical site visits, following which the final decisions were made. The results were audited by Deloitte Malaysia.

* A sustainable development is one that meets the needs of the present and future without compromising on maintenance of the building



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Siteseeing



1. Getting down to business at Ryan & Miho
2. Rain or shine, the show must go on
3. Inspecting the grounds of Sunway SPK Damansara
4. Pavilion Suites KL MC member answering questions from the judges
5. An afternoon stroll at Essex Gardens
6. Sharing tips on maintaining a community garden
7. A look at a fire control room
8. A visit to Jesselton Residences and Mall in Kota Kinabalu
9. Checking out the pool at Urban Residences in Kuching





10. Admiring the view of KL City Centre
11. Judges sharing a light moment
12. A visit to PARC @ Taman Subang Ria
13. Up on the roof at SkyMeridien Residences
14. Smile for the camera!
15. Enjoying the lush landscape at TNB Platinum
16. An inspection at Island Hospital, Penang
17. Checking out the water fountain at KLCC Park

10



11



12



13



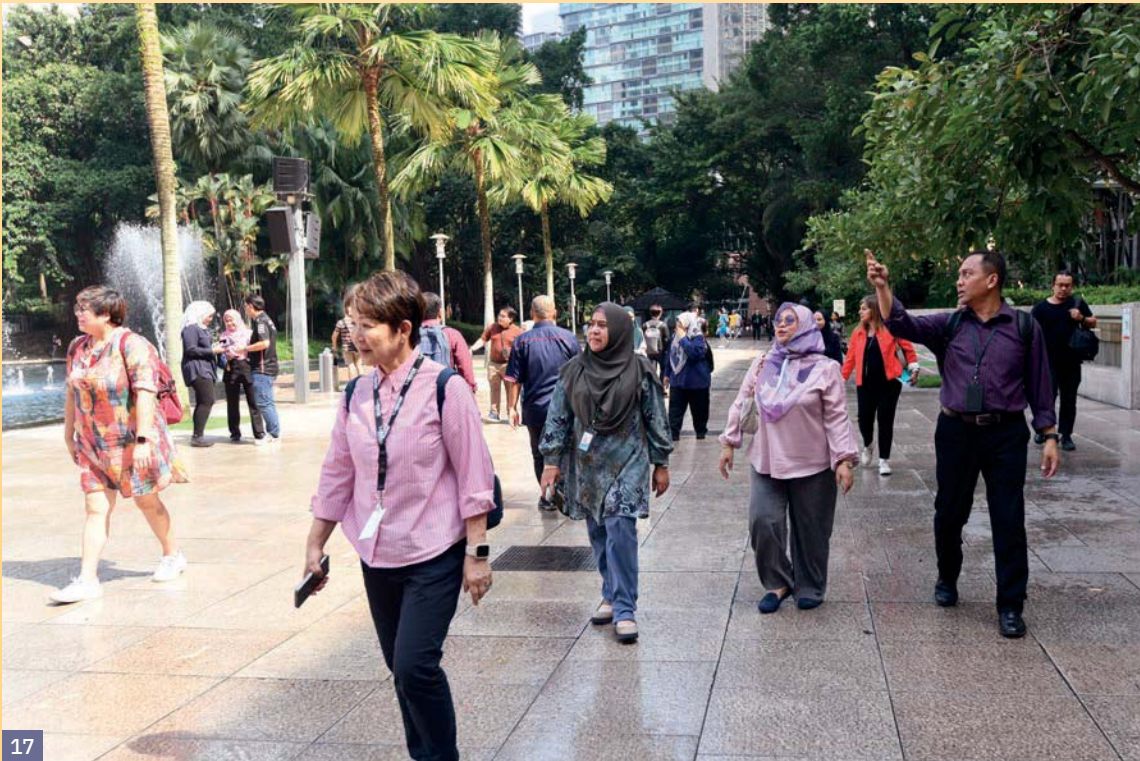
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17

**EDITOR'S
CHOICE**
TIMELESS EXCELLENCE

10 YEARS AND ABOVE
Non-strata Office

GOLD

Petronas Twin Towers

THE EDGE
MALAYSIA
**BEST MANAGED
& SUSTAINABLE PROPERTY
AWARDS 2024**

BY **CHAI YEE HOONG**
city.country@bizedge.com

Twenty-five years after its opening on Aug 31, 1999, the 88-storey Petronas Twin Towers still reign as the tallest twin skyscrapers in the world. Soaring to a height of 452m, the iconic stainless steel and glass edifice and beloved crown jewel of our nation still dazzles as an internationally recognised landmark. Apart from being a well-known tourist attraction, the property is fully occupied and home to offices with a total gross floor area of 5.4 million sq ft.

To ensure that this architectural and engineering masterpiece continues to stand the test of time, maintenance and property management have to be beyond excellent, so it is no surprise that the towers are the recipient of the Editor's Choice award for Timeless Elegance and have been awarded Gold at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024 under the 10 Years and Above — Non-strata Office category.

The property had also previously bagged the Editor's Choice and Gold awards in 2017, the year the awards started.

Maintaining the building to what it is today requires discipline, says KLCC (Holdings) Sdn Bhd group CEO Datuk Md Shah Mahmood. "As all the maintenance programmes — the preventive and scheduled maintenance, predictive maintenance and corrective maintenance — are routine and already in place, the key is having the discipline to ensure that everything continues to work well."

He says that considering the building's maintainability during the design stage also played an instrumental role. "It's important to ensure that a building is maintainable, which is a major component that is sometimes overlooked. In addition, we believe in enhancing the capabilities and skills of our people. In facility management, we expose them to the latest technology and we explore technology."

As testament to its unending pursuit of excellence, Petronas Twin Towers — albeit a decade older than the Green Building Index (GBI), which was launched in 2009 — achieved the GBI Gold rating in 2019.

"Having a building that was over 20 years old attain GBI Gold certification is an achievement in itself," Md Shah notes.

The GBI renewal application for the building is currently in the process.

Petronas Twin Towers are managed by KLCC Urusharta Sdn Bhd — a wholly-owned subsidiary of KLCC Property Holdings Bhd (KLCCP), whose immediate holding company is KLCC (Holdings), the master developer of the KLCC development. KLCCP along with KLCC Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) forms Petroliam Nasional Bhd (Petronas)-controlled KLCCP Stapled Group (KL:KLCC), the largest REIT and only stapled security in the country.

Safety is paramount

Apart from the intricate motifs inspired by traditional songket patterns and hardwood wall panel carvings that line the entrance foyer, what stood out during our visit to Petronas Twin Towers was the robust security framework from the pre-arrival registration to facial recognition and security scanning, much like going through airport security.

"We put a lot of focus in terms of ensuring the highest safety standards," says Md Shah. "We conduct regular, periodic and preventive maintenance as well as inspections of the building as it was designed almost 30 years ago. We even have earthquake monitoring and analyse the structure at specific intervals. We continue to upgrade and enhance the safety standards of the building to ensure the safety of all the tenants here."

In addition, emergency evacuation drills are



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE



One of the main entrances to the twin towers

carried out almost every year.

"And this is unannounced, so that everyone in the building knows how to respond in the event of an emergency evacuation. We work with the authorities, Bomba and police for this," Md Shah adds.

Apart from safety, the team's priority is to ensure minimal downtime, the building's sustainability and that its aesthetic appeal is second to none.

"We do this by applying a multi-phase approach to ensure structural integrity, safety and, of course, the look and feel of the building as an appealing landmark," says Md Shah.

To do all that and more, the team leverages technology in the form of its Integrated Building Command Centre (IBCC), which is an automated, real-time building management system that leverages the power of data and enables centralised monitoring, control and command.

"After obtaining GBI certification in 2019, we implemented the IBCC in 2021. Initially, it was

Md Shah (third from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan and *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat

only a command centre but we eventually made it a control centre. The system is also integrated with the work order system when we have downtime, so the operations and maintenance are more efficient," says Md Shah.

The IBCC helps the team in its management and maintenance of the building by analysing trends from the data collected. "Before this, it was all done manually. But now, it's all in the system so we can track whether there are problems on certain floors, when to change what ... and it's in real time. Also, the system is integrated with other buildings that we manage, such as Menara Petronas 3, and we're currently looking to integrate Menara ExxonMobil into the system. That's the beauty of it," he adds.

The services and subservices that the IBCC monitors and controls include the building's energy management, automation and sensor monitoring systems, CCTVs including those at KLCC Precinct,

PATRICK GOH/THE EDGE



The 88-storey Petronas Twin Towers, which opened in 1999, still reign as the world's tallest twin skyscrapers. The internationally recognised landmark is a tourist attraction and home to offices with a total gross floor area of 5.4 million sq ft.

Quick facts

NAME	Petronas Twin Towers
DEVELOPER	KLCC (Holdings) Sdn Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Office
LAND AREA	5.37 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	1996 (officially opened Aug 31,1999)
STOREYS	88
BUILT-UP	2,195 to 7,986 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	5,499,468 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	3,195,544 sq ft
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	100%
CAR PARK BAYS	4,897
AMENITIES	Suria KLCC Mall, PETROSAINS The Discovery Centre, Dewan Filharmonik Petronas and KLCC Park
FACILITIES	Meeting and conference rooms, executive dining room, Malaysian Petroleum Club, Petroleum Resource Centre, Twin Towers Fitness Centre, skybridge and observation deck
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	Lighting zoning; improving and optimising energy efficiency via maximum demand control by threshold setting through critical equipment prioritisation, recirculating chilled water into the building's chilled water system, optimising space temperature by adjusting the setting point at all AHU equipment, replacing light bulbs to LED for both towers as well as common areas, lift motor room and mechanical floor, motion sensor in meeting rooms, and LED RGBW façade lighting; and sub-metering
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	Measuring and monitoring indoor air pollutants, IAQ monitoring before and during occupancy and thermal comfort system control

PATRICK GOH/THE EDGE



chilled water system, HSSE (health, safety, security and environment), vertical transportation system, external lighting, temperature of the air handling unit or AHU, and fresh air intake.

The system also takes cleaning to the next level as the building — constructed with 899,000 sq ft of stainless steel extrusions and 590,000 sq ft of laminated glass, which keep the heat and UV rays out — requires two whole months to clean. “With GPS technology, we can track the location of the gondolas and monitor wind speed and direction to ensure the safety of the cleaning operations,” Md Shah says.

Innovative initiatives

When lit up, Petronas Twin Towers are a sight to behold indeed. But lighting up both skyscrapers used to be a lot more expensive before the team began searching for ways to reduce energy usage. One of these was by changing conventional external lighting to LED in 2022.

The main reception lobby of Tower 2

PICTURES BY SAM FONG/THE EDGE



The 750-tonne double-decker skybridge, which is 58.4m long and 170m above ground, acts as the connector between the two towers on Level 41 and 42. Interestingly, the bridge is not fully attached to the main building to give allowance for small movements.



Md Shah: Our winning formula is customer centricity and our focus is on the customer experience. We want them to feel comfortable and safe coming into the office.

“Previously, every time we wanted to change the lighting colours, we would have to install a filter — which costs nearly RM100,000 — just for a few days. With LED, we can now have different colours and movements, and at the same time cut our energy bill in half,” says Md Shah.

To date, 1,154 units of the conventional façade lighting have been replaced. The previous external lighting with the floodlight concept had been in use for more than 20 years to illuminate the building façade at night and on special occasions.

Another improvement initiative by the property management team is Workplace for Tomorrow (WFT), whereby the physical workplace environment is reimaged to drive collaboration and teamwork.

“This is to encourage more productivity and collaboration by having a more open office concept with things like standing desks, beanbags and, at the same time, providing smaller meeting spaces for privacy, including nursing rooms and chill out zones. In terms of furniture, we have considered the ergonomics and materials used,” says Md Shah.

“This is a continuous effort, considering the future and sustainability of the building. Whether or not the building is certified, our philosophy is to always look in terms of optimisation and efficiency, which contribute to its sustainability. And

WFT also addresses the social aspect of ESG (environmental, social and governance) by considering work-life balance and mental health. For us, it’s important to have that balance.”

The WFT initiative, which started in 2017, was completed in 2019 with 112 floors refurbished, according to Md Shah.

Winning formula

To ensure they are on the right track, the management team takes customer satisfaction seriously.

“The people’s satisfaction is important so we carry out a tenant survey twice a year and address any complaint. Our winning formula is customer centricity and our focus is on the customer experience. We want them to feel comfortable and safe coming into the office,” says Md Shah.

A building of this age also requires upgrades to stay relevant, he adds. “There are a lot of improvements that need to be done and we are doing that progressively. We don’t want people to think that the building is dated, so it’s important to make sure it stays relevant.”

To identify what needs replacing or changing, Md Shah says that a building life cycle assessment is done.

“For the façade, because there’s a lot of glass. We’re also looking at updating the washrooms and plumbing. We do a lot of tests to ensure things are working well, such as the electrical systems and water leak detection system. We’re also in the midst of upgrading our vertical transportation system, which is very important for a high-rise building. So all these will ensure the building lasts for another 25 to 50 years, and that’s always the goal.”

The twin towers have 29 double-decker high-speed passenger lifts, six heavy-duty service lifts and four executive lifts in total.

Behind a well-managed property is a strong facilities management team. Hence, for Md Shah, identifying potential talents is key. “It’s important to have people with the right competency and capability. As a group, I think the attraction for talent here is growth as we have diverse roles and positions within the group and they will not be stagnant. Once they’re here, it’s more of a career. They can go from facilities management to parking, development, gas district cooling and centralised procurement, so there is room to grow. I think that is our value proposition as an integrated business.”

Beyond steel and glass, the Petronas Twin Towers continue to stand as a steadfast symbol of unity, harmony, stability and rationality — as reflected in the architectural design of each tower floor plate based on the Islamic geometric form made up of two interlocking squares that create the shape of an eight-pointed star — and, of course, the pride of Malaysia.

**EDITOR'S
CHOICE**
EXEMPLARY COMMUNITY
MAGNET

10 YEARS AND ABOVE

Specialised

**THE EDGE MALAYSIA-ILAM SUSTAINABLE
LANDSCAPE AWARDS 2024** — Landscape Planning

GOLD

KLCC Park



The people's park

BY **CHAI YEE HOONG**
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Occupying half of the 100-acre Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC) development, KLCC Park is not only an integral green lung that integrates seamlessly with the office towers — including the world-renowned Petronas Twin Towers, retail complexes, hotels, residential as well as entertainment and recreation components within the precinct — but also serves as a respite from the hustle and bustle of the city for city folks, office-goers and visitors.

Its 1.3km rubberised jogging track is frequented by joggers and fitness enthusiasts, and its two-acre children's playground and pool is a popular spot with families on weekends. In addition to the various water features scattered around the park, one of its main draws is the 10,000 sq m man-made Lake Symphony and water fountain, which lights up the night sky with its light and musical displays daily. The urban park also regularly serves as a venue for festivals, concerts and cultural performances.

"This is a place for people. It's a people's park," says KLCC (Holdings) Sdn Bhd group CEO Datuk Md Shah Mahmood. "Hence, it's important for us to preserve the park as a green lung and ensure that it provides all the immediate benefits to the people and the environment."

KLCC Park is managed by KLCC Urusharta Sdn Bhd, a wholly owned subsidiary of KLCC Property Holdings Bhd (KLCCP), whose immediate holding company is KLCC (Holdings) — the master developer of the KLCC development. KLCCP, along with KLCC

Real Estate Investment Trust (KLCC REIT), forms Petroliaam Nasional Bhd (Petronas)-controlled KLCCP Stapled Group (KL:KLCC), the largest REIT and only stapled security in the country.

While the maintenance of a public space is always a challenge, KLCC Park continues to be a beloved city park thanks to the commitment and team effort of the management team as well as the diverse leadership made up of the 23 common estate lot owners whose lots share a boundary with the park, says Md Shah.

"It's a collaborative effort to ensure that we deliver what we're supposed to deliver, and this is monitored every quarter. I also believe in everybody having the same goal and focusing on the customer experience, so whenever we get a complaint, we take immediate action. It's always a continuous improvement process," he adds.

This year, KLCC Park is the recipient of three awards under *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024 — a Gold award under the 10 Years and Above — Specialised category, the Editor's Choice award for Exemplary Community Magnet, as well as *The Edge Malaysia-ILAM* Sustainable Landscape Awards 2024.

The park had previously won Gold and the Editor's Choice award in 2018.

Merging nature's creations with man-made designs

Opened in 1998, KLCC Park was designed by world-famous Brazilian landscape architect, the late Roberto Burle Marx, with the aim to "leave the world a little more sensitive and a little more educated to the importance of nature".

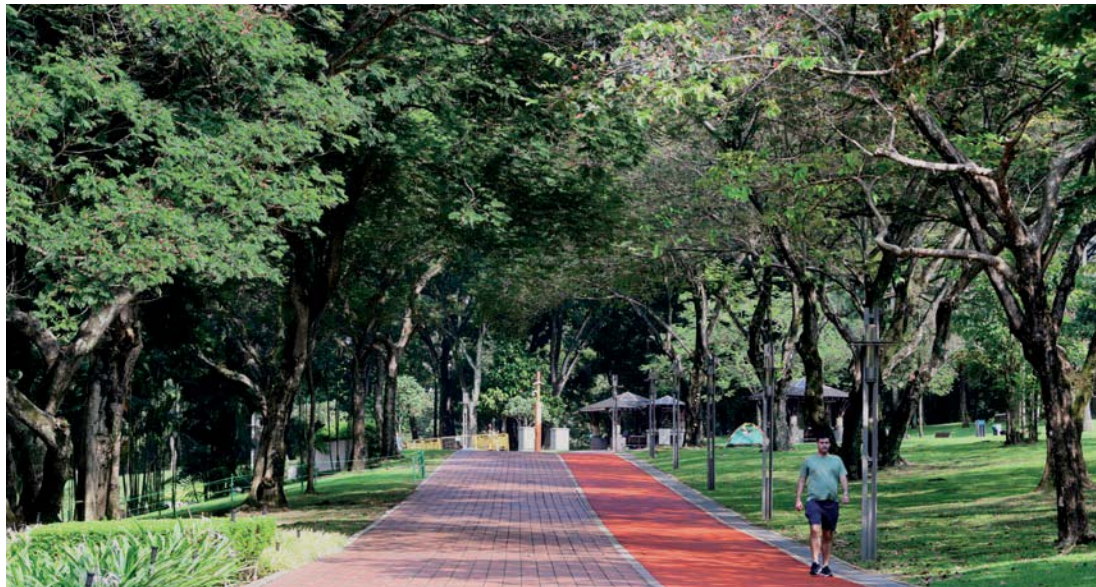
PICTURES BY PATRICK GOH/THE EDGE



The park has various water features scattered around it, including a two-acre children's playground and pool, which is a popular spot with families



One of the main draws of the park is the 10,000 sq m man-made Lake Symphony and water fountain, which lights up the night sky with its light and musical displays daily



The park's 1.3km rubberised jogging track is frequented by joggers and fitness enthusiasts



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE



Just as it integrates with the modern skyscrapers and buildings surrounding it, the park's landscape also merges nature's creations with man-made designs through a combination of trees, shrubs, stones, wood and sculptures.

In addition, the green lung helps mitigate the urban heat island effect in the city centre, serving as a pleasant pathway for pedestrians commuting across the KLCC precinct as well as mitigating stormwater runoff.

The park's botanical collection includes some 1,700 trees and 60,000 shrubs, selected to attract local and migratory birds. It's interesting to note that some of the park's mature trees were transplanted from the old Selangor Turf Club.

Apart from the historical trees, 40% of the park is covered with indigenous trees and shrubs, which

Md Shah and KLCC Urusharta general manager of KLCC precinct properties Suraya Hussein (third and fourth from left) with (from left) The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee and *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong



often require less water, fertiliser, pesticide and maintenance, and serve as food for native butterflies, insects, birds and other animals.

The park also incorporates sustainable designs like the use of clay pavers for pathways and recycled Cengal wood for the hardscapes such as benches, wakafs or gazebos, a police beat base, changing rooms, rain shelters and drinking fountains.

For the maintenance of the trees and shrubs in the park, the team uses organic fertilisers as well as organic mulching to improve soil structure and fertility.

In 2019, the management team appointed a certified arborist to carry out assessments on around 1,700 trees in the park to ensure they were healthy.

“This included carrying out a tree inventory, a detailed risk assessment and an evaluation of the overall health and condition of the trees in the park. So from there, we have identified which tree needs to be replaced and whether major pruning, soil rejuvenation, vertical mulching and fertiliser programmes need to be done. These works have been done in three phases since 2019 with a significant investment of over RM1 million,” says Md Shah.

“And this year we are appointing a second certified arborist to do a follow up on the plant health assessment and we’ll do another one in one to two years,” he adds. “We also have two in-house arborists that have been here since the design/installation stage of the park, so they know the trees very well.”

To ensure the park is well maintained in the future, Md Shah says knowledge transfer is important. “We need to make sure that everything is being cascaded down, so we’re documenting all our policies, guidelines and SOPs (standard operating procedures) and systematising them. I think it’s important to docu-

The 50-acre urban green lung seamlessly integrates with the modern skyscrapers and buildings surrounding it, while mitigating the urban heat island effect in the city centre and serving as a pleasant pathway for pedestrians commuting across the KLCC precinct



Some of the park’s mature trees were transplanted from the old Selangor Turf Club

Quick facts	
NAME	KLCC Park
DEVELOPER	KLCC (Holdings) Sdn Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Public park within a mixed commercial development
LAND AREA	50 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	1996
FACILITIES	Water features include the Lake Symphony Fountain and children’s pool, children’s playground, softscape, wakaf, jogging track, restrooms and sculpture
ENERGY SAVING FEATURES	Digital timer for park lighting and use of Internet of Things (IoT) for system controlling at confined pump room, motors with inverters, variable frequency drive for pumps and LED lights
SECURITY FEATURES	Security guard patrols, 86 concrete planter boxes that serve as a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) feature, CCTV, help-point, police beat base and security control room

ment these things not just for now but for the future. It’s part of our system of improvement.”

As it takes over RM2 million a year to maintain the park, the team leverages cost-effective maintenance methods such as robotic pool cleaning and having an Internet of Things (IoT)-enabled pump room.

“Robotic pool cleaners are energy efficient. And with an IoT pump room, for example, people don’t need to check or start the underground pumps manually, as everything is now automated,” he says.

Some other cost-effective measures include a water irrigation system, artificial turf, soil sensors, a digital timer for the lighting system and energy-saving park lighting.

Safe sanctuary for all

Ensuring the park is safe is a key priority for the management team, says Md Shah. “It’s always a challenge dealing with a public space. For example, we’ll have to assess and control the types of activities that people want to organise so we don’t open the floodgates to things that can affect the safety and security within the park. We have to make sure that whatever activity that is going to be done at the park fits the criteria we have set.”

In addition, the park’s safety and security features have been upgraded. “In fact, our security cameras have an audio alarm so our security can give commands from the ISOC. (Integrated Security Operation Centre) So, for example, if people are at the park after closing hours, the security will warn them via the audio cameras,” he explains.

The park, which receives 5,000 to 15,000 visitors daily and up to 30,000 to 50,000 during events, is equipped with an integrated security surveillance system with 239 CCTVs, 26 emergency help points and 86 concrete planter boxes that serve as a CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design) and auxiliary police.



Md Shah: This is a place for people. It’s a people’s park ... Hence, it’s important for us to preserve the park as a green lung and ensure that it provides all the immediate benefits to the people and the environment.

“The auxiliary police at the park help to ensure that the park is secure 24/7. It is important for us that people are safe and there are no incidents or accidents,” says Md Shah.

The team also works hard to ensure that the park is clean and safe to use every day. “We make sure the children’s pool is cleaned every day and the exercise equipment is up to date and safe; for example, we regularly replace the EPDM (ethylene propylene diene monomer) jogging track, even though it costs millions. Even the toilets, we ensure they are well maintained and cleaned so we don’t get complaints,” he says. “And when there are events, such as big celebrations or concerts that run until midnight, we make sure the park is all clean by morning. I’m proud of how efficiently we’ve been doing this over the years.”

In addition to big events and celebrations, KLCC Park also serves as a venue for cultural and community events including food fairs, fitness classes, traditional music and dance performances, batik painting workshops, art installations and arty inflatable displays, to name a few.

“We always make sure there are activities happening at the park, which we organise together with our precinct partners. For example, we have the Picnic in the Park with Suria KLCC on weekends. We also have Sustainable September where we run ESG activities throughout the month of September, which is getting more popular, and we’ve done things like blood donation drives and bake for charity,” he says.

Meanwhile, an ongoing initiative to increase public participation at the park is QR tree tagging. “We are tagging every single tree [in the park] and also looking at incorporating braille for people to learn more about the trees,” Md Shah says.

“I want to bring in more educational tourism initiatives because I believe we have one of the best parks. We’re looking at inviting schoolchildren to participate because the park is a safe place for them to learn about the trees, how to take care of plants and these sorts of things. And it’s also a safe place for them to run,” he adds. “We’re also thinking of offering guided tours in the future, maybe as part of the hotel packages offered by the hotels around the park.”

Some of the park’s community-oriented and inclusive design includes multipurpose spaces, movable furniture and modular structures that allow flexibility and adaptability to accommodate a variety of activities throughout the year, as well as barrier-free pathways, wheelchair-accessible facilities and inclusive children’s play areas for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

As much as it is an important habitat for flora and fauna, KLCC Park is a vibrant, inclusive and sustainable sanctuary for the community in the heart of the city centre.

**EDITOR'S
CHOICE**STERLING STAKEHOLDERS
PARTNERSHIP**10 YEARS AND ABOVE**
Mixed Development (Entire)**GOLD****Menara UOA Bangsar**

HENRY BUTCHER MALAYSIA (MONT KIARA)

Establishing a precedent

BY **PRIYA DEVAN**
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Menara UOA Bangsar, developed by UOA Group, was one of the first developments in the country to have subsidiary management corporations (sub MCs).

Located in Jalan Bangsar Utama, Kuala Lumpur, it is a mixed-use development comprising two office buildings (39-storey Tower A and 24-storey Tower B) on a three-level retail podium, six-level elevated car park and four-level basement parking.

Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd (HBMK) was appointed the property manager of Menara UOA Bangsar by its management corporation (MC) in December 2017.

Upon taking over, the HBMK team found that it was inefficient to manage the development with a single MC as there were several components that required attention. Therefore, after several meetings, it decided to form two sub MCs to streamline operations.

According to a previous article in *The Edge Malaysia*, a sub MC's responsibilities are similar to those of a joint management body or MC, but is only set up when there is a need for a separate management body due to the stratified development having multiple components and is too large to be managed by a single MC.

A sub MC runs independently in terms of collecting maintenance fees, managing the sinking fund account, enforcing by-laws and maintaining the upkeep of limited common property (LCP). Unlike common property in a single-use stratified project, the LCP is common property that has been designated for the exclusive use of one or more components in a mixed-use stratified development.

Menara UOA Bangsar MC secretary Khaw Chay Tee explains the events that led to the formation of sub MCs. "I think the problem wasn't governance or anything like that. This place was well governed, very strictly run, very open and very transparent. But misunderstandings or differences and disputes arose over what was common property and private property, as well as who should pay for common property and who should pay for private property, so people got very confused.

"There was one owner who felt so strongly about this that he went to court. He took us all the way to the Federal Court and he lost, which was a waste of money because we spent almost half a million ringgit defending this case. I think the most important thing that came out of this is that all issues should be negotiated. People should not simply resort to going to court but should negotiate. What was very good about the developer in this case was that, when we met with them, everything was negotiated. And what we could not agree on, we would allow a third party to settle the matter."

For its exemplary efforts, Menara UOA Bangsar has been named the Gold winner in the 10 Years and Above Mixed Development (Entire) category and has also received the Editor's Choice award for Sterling Stakeholders Partnership at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Forming sub MCs

When it was decided that having two sub MCs would help solve the problems in the maintenance of the development, a general meeting was held in September 2020 to approve the appointment of a land

Menara UOA Bangsar has a 300m connecting walkway to the Bangsar LRT station



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE



Khaw, Koh and HBMK managing director Low Hon Keong (third to fifth from left) with (from left) *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat and *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong

surveyor and a mechanical and electrical (M&E) consultant as well as discuss the cost of engaging a property management consultant. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, things were put on hold for more than a year before a town hall meeting was held in June 2022.

In July 2022, another general meeting was held. According to Khaw, the meeting included a presentation by the appointed surveyor on the demarcation plan and its respective proprietors, the distribution of the maintenance fund and sinking fund accounts, as well as the proposed rate of charges and sinking fund of the sub MCs. Once these were approved, the land surveyor finalised the demarcation plan.

In October 2022, another general meeting was held to lay out the finalised demarcation plan and the constituents of sub MCs, present the voting process and form a special task force to count the votes led by at least one Sub MC member.

The poll results for the comprehensive resolution were out on Dec 13, 2022, leading the resolution to be filed with the Commissioner of Buildings Kuala Lumpur on Dec 19, 2022. The Certificate of Comprehensive Resolution was issued to Menara UOA Bangsar in early April last year.

Following that, the MC submitted the application for sub MCs to the Pejabat Pengarah Tanah dan Galian Wilayah Persekutuan in mid-April

last year. On Aug 2, 2023, the application to establish Menara UOA Bangsar Tower A Subsidiary MC (Tower A sub MC) and Menara UOA Bangsar Tower B Subsidiary MC (Tower B sub MC) was approved.

So now, the MC manages the general common facilities, while Tower A sub MC manages its 426 parcels of office lots and Tower B sub MC manages the whole of Tower B, the retail lots and the car park.

Khaw explains the main benefit of having sub MCs. "Sub MCs come in very handy when [it comes] to defining which areas are LCP and therefore belong to this particular MC ... Those areas that are delineated as limited common property, say for Tower A or Tower B, are very clearly defined now. This will minimise disputes between parties," he says.

"In the case of Tower B, they have very high standards, they have great aspirations. But if this was still one MC, they would have to drag everybody else along with them. And maybe the Tower A owners wouldn't have been able to afford the service charges. Whereas Tower B, in order to achieve what they want, can expend the necessary funds. This is another great benefit of having a sub MC because you then look after yourself. It's up to you how well your building does."

However, there is one downside to the laws surrounding sub MCs, says Khaw. "Only one downside the law has not provided for and I think it will be an area of dispute. Currently, under the law, it says Sub MCs don't have an office."

"There are other sub MC formations where this is still the main point of dispute. But what they don't realise is that the law does not provide for them to have an administrative office, it was not covered by parliament. Our solution to this is to rent out an existing office space here."

On the tenants' acceptance of a new form of management, Menara UOA Bangsar MC chairman Satharuban Sivasubramaniam says, "To be honest until now, some of them still cannot accept it. They need to get used to it because they are used to paying one bill for so long."

"We've had town hall meetings and we regularly try to educate the tenants on how the new management works. We also issued circulars to the owners

● Quick facts	
NAME	Menara UOA Bangsar
DEVELOPER	UOA Group
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Mixed-use
LAND AREA	1.8 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	2009
STOREYS	Tower A - 39 Tower B - 23
UNITS	440
BUILT-UP	Tower A – 948 to 9,020 sq ft Tower B – 5,545 to 17,233 sq ft Retail – 861 to 6,900 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	1,646,242 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	1,506,924 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	Tower A – RM7.50 per share unit Tower B – RM9.97 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	88%
CAR PARK BAYS	1,236
AMENITIES Bangsar LRT station plus nearby bus and taxi services, Mid Valley Megamall, The Gardens and Bangsar Village I and II, Havil International School, SMK Vivekananda, Brickfields Asia College, Global Indian International School Kuala Lumpur, Bangsar Shopping Centre, Village Grocer, AEON BIG Mid Valley Megamall, Cardiac Vascular Sentral Kuala Lumpur (CVSKL) and Pantai Hospital (Bangsar) Kuala Lumpur	
FACILITIES Turnstile access system, 24-hour CCTV surveillance, centralised air-conditioning system for corridors and lobby, fibre optics backbone system for high-speed internet access, surau and direct link bridge to Bangsar LRT station	
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES Rainwater harvesting for toilet flushing – savings of about RM1,000/month; LED building signage – savings of RM4,000/month; rescheduling of operation hours of ventilation fans in basement levels on weekends and public holidays – savings of about RM5,000/month; and variable refrigerant volume system instead of chilled water system for Tower A's main lobby	
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES IAQ is assured in all M&E rooms in the building where ventilation fans are installed. Two units of ventilation fans for each floor for intake and transfer of fresh air to the corridors and offices	



PICTURES BY SAM FONG/THE EDGE

about what was being done and so forth. So now that the sub-MC has been formed, I think the administrative side has to continue to educate them.”

Asset enhancement works

Before the formation of the sub MCs, for a period of about four years, the development had to go through major upgrades and asset enhancement works, says HBMK associate director Jessie Koh.

“Within the three to four years, almost everything was taken care of. I think the aim was that when the sub MCs are finally formed, you can hand over a building that is functioning properly, with everything properly upgraded and running well, so that the sub MCs won’t have to do too much maintenance. Everything has been renewed.

“It’s like handing over a new property to them and sharing the funds that were already in the main MC’s coffers so that everyone gets a fair share. An amount of RM5 million was approved for these asset enhancement initiatives. The sum budgeted was mainly for refurbishing the common toilets, main lobby, corridors and lift lobbies.”

From left: Koh, Khaw, Satharuban, Menara UOA Bangsar MC treasurer Leong Mun Yin, Chan, HBMK accounts director Cheong Hon Sing and Menara UOA Bangsar building manager Wilson Poh

Co-working space provider WORQ is one of the tenants at Menara UOA Bangsar



Other improvements included façade cleaning and repainting, CCTV replacement, installation of the building automation system, water tank replacement, dropper pipe replacement and hand dryer replacement in the bathrooms.

To optimise costs and reduce energy consumption, a few green features were introduced, says Koh. This included a rainwater harvesting system used for watering plants and cleaning the common areas, such as the car park and loading bay; using regenerative drivers of the Hitachi Inverter lift, which uses less energy than other lifts; and the timers for the air conditioners in the lift lobbies.

“We have changed all the lighting to the LED type and with sensors as well. On the Tower B side, all the car parks are now fitted with sensors and timer lighting. We have also replaced the rooftop signage with an LED one. With all these, the total savings is about RM5,000 in electricity bills a month,” she says.

“We are trying to arrange with GSPARX for the Tower B site to be considered for solar panels and green energy. We are now in the process of changing the chillers. We have ordered custom-made chillers that should be able to bring the electricity cost down by quite a margin.”

Menara UOA Bangsar MC committee member Chan Hiew Mun says the Tower B sub MC is planning to do some renovations. “We’re working on upgrading the commercial offices and common areas to a standard where we can increase the rental rates and rental yield as these are very important if we want to drive up the business.”

Prioritising value for the long term

To ensure the development’s value continues to rise, Satharuban says, “Technically, what tenants expect to have is very high standards of maintenance, such as very clean toilets, cold air conditioning and fresh air. So, these are all in demand. We are targeting this kind of high-yielding tenants so that the value of the entire Menara UOA Bangsar will go up.”

Menara UOA Bangsar’s price psf was RM750 at launch. Comparatively, the average price of the development was about RM983 psf as at December 2023.

The average rental rate at Menara UOA Bangsar had consistently increased each quarter from 2021 to 2023, from an average of RM4.10 psf in 2021 to RM4.89 psf in 2023. The average rental yield stood at 6.26% as at 3Q2023.

“Here, we treat this development like it’s our house ... We believe that what makes a property successful is that you must treat it like your own even though you may only have a small share unit,” says Khaw. ■

HENRY BUTCHER MALAYSIA (MONT KIARA)



Renovated foyer and lift lobby at Menara UOA Bangsar



**EDITOR'S
CHOICE**EXEMPLARY COMMITMENT
TO EXCELLENCE**10 YEARS AND ABOVE**
Non-strata Residential**GOLD****Sunway SPK Damansara**

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**BEST MANAGED
& SUSTAINABLE PROPERTY
AWARDS 2024**

Community spirit a vital ingredient

BY **CHIN WAI LUN**
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As the saying goes, together we stand, divided we fall. The residents' association (RA) of Sunway SPK Damansara in Kuala Lumpur has proved to be a force to be reckoned with in its bid to make the development a safe and liveable place for all its residents.

The fact that Sunway SPK Damansara is a non-strata development, meaning there is no statutory obligation for the residents to participate in the management of the development, makes it all the more impressive.

The efforts put in by the residents and members of the RA earned Sunway SPK Damansara a Gold at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024 under the 10 Years and Above — Non-strata Residential category. It was also the recipient of the Editor's Choice award for Exemplary Commitment to Excellence.

Situated adjacent to Desa ParkCity and Bandar Sri Menjalara, the 60-acre Sunway SPK Damansara was jointly developed by SPK Homes Sdn Bhd, the property division of SPK Bhd, and Sunway City Bhd. Completed in 2007, the freehold residential enclave comprises 608 units of 2- and 2½-storey terraced houses.

Unlike a strata project, which compels residents to form a management body, in this instance, both developers and the residents recognised the importance of a voluntary RA to maintain and sustain the development.

"After the handover, the developers were very kind to provide security services, which they are not obligated to for non-stratified properties. This provided an impetus for us to set up the RA immediately," says Sunway SPK Damansara RA secretary Au Yong Soon Kok.

It is the people that differentiate this association from the others, he says. "We take no salary. It's all voluntary and not run by professionals per se. Thankfully, since its inception, we have had a very competent team that supports each other."

Hence, the result is more than the sum of its parts. "We have to take the responsibility to care for the community welfare and well-being. Our approach to managing this estate is based on a culture of tolerance rather than laws," Sunway SPK Damansara RA chairman Lee Lai Sim chimes in.

"Membership is not mandatory. We lack legal [enforcement] when implementing policies and rules. As a non-profit organisation, our only source of income is the voluntary membership fees. It is crucial to manage these funds to balance the budget while maintaining a safe and beautiful residential environment for all."

As at Dec 31, 2023, Sunway SPK Damansara had recorded a 4% increase in total income from membership fees (11.6% higher than the budgeted amount) compared with the previous year. About 96% of the residents are paying members and there is a 2% default rate.

According to Lee, the RA is working closely to reduce the debtor amount via several measures such as making home visits and courtesy calls. "We managed to reduce the amount by 31.3% within three months to RM68,600 as at mid-February 2024," says Lee.

Achieving this is no small feat, thanks to prudent financial management. "The monthly mem-



A linear garden meanders through the neighbourhood, providing greenery and space for residents to socialise

bership fee has stood at RM130 for the past 10 years. Our policy is to have a balanced budget. Charge too much, and we will not be able to get the membership fees. Charge too low, and we cannot cover our expenses. Hence, financial management is important," says Au Yong.

He adds that at the end of every year, the RA presents the following year's budget for the residents' feedback.

The workings of a good residents' association

The RA, despite playing an important role in the management and sustainability of the housing area, faces varied challenges compared to a management corporation (MC) or joint management body (JMB).

"We believe that for a non-strata project, there is a need for an effective and efficient RA to maintain and sustain the community," says Lee.

Overall, he adds, the RA takes its cue from the workings of an MC and considers these values as part of its ethos: being inclusive in the welfare of all residents, having good and effective leadership in managing the community welfare, promoting esprit de corps and neighbourliness among the residents, establishing clear standard operating procedures and systems to ensure continuity and sustainability, ensuring financial sustainability (collection of membership fees), and defining the roles and responsibilities of individual members and collectively as a group.

"With the continuous efforts of maintaining the neighbourhood, the residents are well aware of the importance and benefits of having a safe, clean and harmonious residence. They can see and feel it and thus, drive them to subscribe to the membership. The results speak for themselves," stresses Lee.

When it comes to managing the outliers — the defaulters and those who are not members (about 4% of the resident population) — he says a "soft approach" or a personal touch is used. "We communicate effectively with our residents through



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE



Au Yong and Lee (third and fourth from left) with (from left) The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, City & Country senior editor E Jacqui Chan, The Edge Malaysia editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee and The Edge Malaysia editor-in-chief Kathy Fong

letters, WhatsApp or email. All these are done in a friendly manner when implementing policies and rules. We have been closely monitoring the defaulter rate, monthly. The RA meets up with the defaulter when it reaches the preset threshold," he adds.

When the RFID security tags (for car access) were introduced in 2022, even non-members/non-paying residents could obtain them. "With this, we hope that they can notice the benefits of our efforts and our team spirit. And this is how we attract people [to be members of the RA]," says Au Yong.

Coupled with an upgraded CCTV system and round-the-clock patrolling, Sunway SPK Damansara had a stellar 2023 in terms of security with zero break-ins for the year.

Meanwhile, Lee stresses the importance of coordinating and collaborating with local authorities such as Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) for better management of the public areas. "We are also fortunate to have the support of Member of Parliament for Segambut Hannah Yeoh's office, which assists us in our dealings with DBKL, the

PICTURES BY MOHD IZWAN MOHD NAZAM/THE EDGE



Sunway SPK Damansara is a gated and guarded development



The community garden and recycling centre are among the many community initiatives



The beautifully landscaped gardens at the housing development



The committee members of Sunway SPK Damansara's residents' association, led by its chairman Lee (centre)

Quick facts	
NAME	Sunway SPK Damansara
DEVELOPER	SPK Homes Sdn Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	60 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2007
STOREYS	2 and 2½
UNITS	608
BUILT-UP	2,298 to 2,792 sq ft
MEMBERSHIP FEE	RM130 monthly per unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	99.5%
AMENITIES	
The Waterfront @ Desa ParkCity, Plaza Arkadia, Taman Tasik Menjalara, ParkCity Medical Centre, KPJ Damansara Specialist Hospital and schools	
FACILITIES	
Basketball courts, outdoor gymnasium, playgrounds, linear garden, football field, jogging path, recycling centre, garden waste collection centre and activity centre (with a 30ft by 16ft cabin that can accommodate 30 persons)	
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	
LED lighting and solar heater for every house	

police and Bomba for the neighbourhood’s safety as well as maintenance.”

To ensure minimal hiccups in its operations, the RA has engaged the services of a management company (since 2015) to help in collecting membership fees, managing accounts, ensuring security and providing the necessary customer service to resident members.

Community initiatives

As for green initiatives, the housing estate has switched to LED lights for landscape lighting. “This effort is continued for the management’s office and the guard posts, which helps us reduce electricity consumption. This year, the association is exploring the feasibility of installing solar panels for these two locations,” says Lee.

The plan is currently in the early stages and according to suppliers, it can save about 20% of electricity once installed, he adds.

For daily maintenance of the greenery, the asso-

ciation employs two gardeners, whose daily routine is closely monitored by the committee members.

“With a maintenance work checklist, the team can execute and maintain the *taman* more effectively and efficiently. Besides that, we decorated the neighbourhood with home-grown shrubs and flowers instead of purchasing them from a nursery, allowing us to reduce the maintenance cost,” says Lee.

Meanwhile, the residents have repurposed a 7,000 sq ft vacant land within the neighbourhood (with DBKL’s approval) into a community garden (Kebun Kejiranan). The garden has attracted 80 residents, who are involved in its daily work.

“We organised classes for composting and soil mixing, conducted by the residents themselves. There is also a recycling centre set up just outside the garden gates to encourage recycling,” says Lee.

As a testament to their efforts, the community garden was accorded a five-star rating by DBKL under its Anugerah Kebun Kejiranan awards in 2023.

Continuous efforts

“We recognise the importance of continued commitment and dedication of our members in managing the neighbourhood effectively, efficiently and sustainably. Teamwork is crucial and we hope to eventually be able to achieve 100% membership subscription for Sunway SPK Damansara,” says Lee.

The RA will continue to collaborate closely with the local authorities to further enhance the safety and maintenance of the housing estate. “We also want to introduce more communal activities such as education programmes, health awareness and exercise campaigns that cater for all ages,” he says.

Lee is grateful for the help from members of the community and hopes to recruit more members to the RA committee and have them contribute their expertise.

“I must also express my appreciation to our dedicated and committed voluntary committee members who work tirelessly to ensure the safety and well-being of our community. Lastly, I would like to thank all the resident members for their contributions, including the monthly subscription fee, support and trust in our residents’ association, which have helped shape our *taman* into what it is today,” he says.

As we are taking a tour of the neighbourhood, several residents who drove past sounded their horns and wound down their windows to show a thumbs up, acknowledging the hard work put in by the committee members in managing their neighbourhood. It is clear that the RA’s efforts are greatly appreciated.

10 YEARS AND ABOVE
 Multiple-owned Strata Residential
GOLD

The Park Residences 1



PICTURES BY PATRICK GOH/THE EDGE

The high-rise development consists of two towers. The MC and project management are looking at ways to generate revenue to cope with the higher cost of materials and services.

 BY **WONG KING WAI**
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Future planning for the benefit of all

It isn't every day that you see a 10-year plan for a residential development but that was what was shared by the management corporation (MC) of The Park Residences 1 in Bangsar South during a site visit by the judges for *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

The plan, presented by MC chairman Kwok Khuen Phun along with committee members and property manager Laurelcap Property Management (Sel) Sdn Bhd associate director Kenneth Wong Inn Piau, showed the effort and improvements made by the MC to the development. They were impressive enough for The Park Residences 1 to win Gold in the 10 Years and Above — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category.

The Park Residences 1 is no stranger to the awards, having won Silver in the same category in 2022. Kwok highlights that the resubmission of the development for consideration is to see if they are doing what is right in maintaining the building and its surroundings.

"I think it is not about winning an award, it is about benchmarking your own performance with others in the same category, so you know where you stand with similar properties, to know if you are doing the right thing or not," he says with a smile.

Completed in 2010, The Park Residences 1 sits on 3.42 acres and is made up of two towers — the 24-storey Acacia and the 26-storey Begonia — and features greenery, koi-filled pools within the tower lobbies and an elegant water feature at the entrance.

The building recently had its facade painted for RM1.4 million. While this is a hefty sum, Kwok remarks that if they were to do it today, the cost would have been much higher.

"We did a risk management survey so we don't manage by crisis and plan accordingly. For example, the painting of the building. When we first won Silver, the painting work wasn't even done. At that time, we were considering whether we should repaint or not. In hindsight, it was a good decision that we decided to do the repainting two years ago at a cost of RM1.4 million. If we do it today, it would probably be around RM2 million."

Careful planning and future-proofing the development have been the focus of the MC, the property manager and the residents, who are aligned with the MC's prudent financial planning and preventive maintenance approach.

"When we won Silver in 2022, we had just came out of [the] Covid-19 [pandemic]. Since then, a lot



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

The Park Residences 1 MC treasurer Sharon Chang and Laurelcap Property Management (Sel) Sdn Bhd associate director Kenneth Wong (third and fourth from left) with (from left) The Edge Malaysia editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, The Edge Malaysia editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and City & Country senior editor E Jacqui Chan

of things have changed — the government introduced the minimum wage, ICPT (Imbalance Cost Pass-Through), high inflation rate, materials and repair costs have gone up, and all the machines and parts that we buy have gone up more than 6%," says Wong.

"So over the last two years, we really had to plan our finances well. At the end of the day, what needs to be repaired, has to be repaired, what needs to be upgraded, has to be upgraded. Over the last two years, we plan and we execute [the plan]. We didn't wait, because at the end of the day, if we wait longer, things can get more damaged or worse. So we have to prioritise what needs to be done and we do it.

"The committee has a 10-year plan because funds are not unlimited. In that manner, we are very prudent. We still have to spend, but we spend the funds prudently and systematically."

Creating more revenue

With costs on the rise, the MC and property management have been working closely to figure out how they can increase funds without actually increasing the service charges. Two viable options have been proposed and considered.

The first is monetising the parking bays, which are underutilised on two levels of the development. Kwok and Wong say that communication with the project developer, Sunny Uptown Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of UOA Development Bhd, has resulted in a positive response.

"The reason we decided to commercialise two levels of parking is because we have two extra floors [for visitor parking] from the developer," explains Kwok. "And we have more than enough parking bays, so it is actually a waste that they are underutilised. We have about 100 parking bays when only 20 will do. So we have space, and we are thinking of raising funds. We spoke to the developer and they say it is good for the development because it is revenue generating and it will be good for the community because there is a shortage of parking spaces in the area. So it is a win-win situation."

Another revenue generating idea in discussion is an unmanned mini-mart. Says Wong, "We happen to have a place that was unused. Recently, there was a trend of unmanned minimarts, which are open 24-hours and don't need anyone there. You go in using an access card, take what you need, make a cashless payment, and go. It is very economical for the operator and beneficial to the residents."

Serendipity played a role in this idea, because when the MC and the property management were considering what to do with the space, a vendor approached the management to propose the unmanned mini-mart idea. Other ideas that were considered included a manned grocery store, laundry facilities and vending machines.

However, the unmanned mini-mart seems to make the most sense for the development, according to Kwok and Wong, as there won't be any perishable goods that could lead to odours and rodents. The idea is still being studied for its viability and benefit to both residents and the operator.

More cost saving measures

To help reduce water consumption in the development, there is a rainwater harvesting system that is not only used for irrigation.

"We have a rainwater harvesting system. Our

Quick facts

NAME	The Park Residences 1
DEVELOPER	Sunny Uptown Sdn Bhd (subsidiary of UOA Development Bhd)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	3.42 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	2010
STOREYS	Acacia – 24 Begonia – 26
UNITS	470
BUILT-UP	Acacia – 1,019 sq ft to 4,376 sq ft Begonia – 1,260 sq ft to 3,790 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	54,339 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM18.90 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	96%
CAR PARK BAYS	1,198

AMENITIES	Universiti LRT Station, Kerinchi LRT Station, Federal Highway, The Sphere (F&B), Nexus (F&B, ballroom, meeting rooms and lifestyle shops), Wisma Life Care (specialist medical centre) and Masjid Ar Rahah
FACILITIES	Infinity pool with children’s pool, Jacuzzi sauna, gymnasium, function hall, barbeque area, badminton court, children’s playground, games room and reading room
ENERGY- SAVING FEATURES	Using LED lighting and inverter air-conditioning
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	Exhaust fan at main lobby – ground floor Acacia and Begonia

water features use rainwater; plants are watered using rainwater; and the water for the fish ponds is rainwater with treatment. So we are saving on water consumption,” says Kwok.

The greenery around the development is likened to a resort although modernity is just a stone’s throw away. As a result, careful planning and consideration on how to maintain this is necessary.

“We have such a vast area of greenery, which is a unique feature of The Park Residences 1, where residents will come and walk in the evening, and it is very relaxing,” says Kwok.

He explains that some residents love the greenery and some are known to walk barefoot on the ground for “grounding” purposes while there are others who would rather have some plants removed. However, Kwok points out that they try to strike a balance so that everyone lives harmoniously.

“We have to explain that the things we do here are for the majority of the people,” he says, adding that active communication has resolved many issues and concerns amicably, and this has helped to ensure understanding among the residents that communal living is different from a landed property.

There are plans to use solar power for several devices but full scale solar panels on the roof aren’t possible. “Our building has a very large steel structure on our roof and we don’t have a large flat roof. [On] other buildings, you can add more panels but we have to do it on a smaller scale. So we want to install solar LED lights on the ground floor.”

Another idea is to install solar water pumps. Says Wong, “We have two water features at our lobbies, two fish ponds and another water feature in the centre of the development. Conventional water pumps use a lot of energy. So we are waiting for the solar water pump technology to be more stable and cost effective before we look into it.”

Illumination is an obvious component of any development and can be a huge electricity expense. While parts of the development have been fitted with LED lights, Kwok and Wong reveal that a study is currently underway to see what savings



Facilities at the development, like the swimming pool, provide a welcome respite from working in the city

there will be if the entire development is fitted out with LED.

“We were trying to look at issues pertaining to capital expenditure and energy savings. So we have embarked on an audit of energy usage in the building. This will be outsourced to an external party,” says Kwok.

“So if we change all lights to LED lights for the whole building, how much energy will be saved? If you change to LED lights, the lifespan could be longer, about 20 years. This saves in terms of costs but also reduces energy consumption. But this is something that will be brought up in the AGM for residents to decide if they want to go ahead with the replacement exercise.”

The development has plenty of greenery

Wong (left) and Kwok believe that prudent financial planning is required to ensure the high-rise is well maintained and functioning optimally for all residents



These water features offer a cool welcome at the lobby area of the towers



A well-equipped gym for residents to keep fit

Securing value

For Kwok and Wong, preparation is key to ensuring the development continues to stand proud among its contemporaries.

“If you have the money, you should spend it; use it for the present value of the money rather than the future value of the money because the future value is not going to be the same today. We don’t spend what we don’t have, and what we have, we plan to spend,” says Kwok.

The project’s funds, which have accumulated over the years, are now ready to be utilised as the building assets are beginning to show wear and tear towards the end of their lifespans. As an example, Kwok points out that the lift buttons are obsolete and need to be changed now, as replacing them later will be more expensive in the long term.

An audit of all assets has been done to check their lifespans and to make the necessary preparations or set aside money to replace the asset when it is due.

“We have scheduled maintenance to ensure everything operates well and for a longer period of time. To save costs, minor maintenance work is carried out internally, while larger projects are farmed out,” says Wong.

As the interview draws to a close, both Kwok and Wong say they believe that proactivity and careful planning are necessary for a building to function optimally and to hold its value.

“I think running a building today is totally different compared to 10 years ago. Now, with technology and rising costs, we have to keep ourselves abreast of new technologies, be proactive and, most importantly, think out of the box,” says Wong.

“We [the MC] are future-oriented rather than manage-crisis-in-the-present. So we plan for what we want for the development and we have the budget to do it,” says Kwok.

The close working relationship between MC and the property management team as well as residents looks to hold The Park Residences 1 in good stead for the coming decade.

BELOW 10 YEARS

Single-owned Office in a Mixed Strata Development

GOLD**UOA Business Park Tower 7**

Satisfied tenants make a difference

BY **CHELSEA J LIM**

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Property management goes beyond maintenance. As Kagicorp Sdn Bhd project manager Venus Chai notes, it is important to manage expectations, and the landlord's goal is to make sure the tenants are happy.

"We [the landlord] provide support in terms of the facilities and management. The appointed property managers are then tasked to achieve that," says Chai. Kagicorp is the owner of UOA Business Park Tower 7.

When Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd (HBMK) was appointed the property manager of UOA Business Park Tower 7 in June last year, the onboarding process was not a walk in the park. Due to the lacklustre performance of the previous property managers, the tenants already had a preconceived notion about property managers in general.

But with the help of the owner, HBMK persevered and managed to turn things around in a matter of months.

In recognition of the collaborative efforts of HBMK and Kagicorp, Tower 7 was accorded Gold in the 10 Years and Below — Single-owned Office in a Mixed Strata Development category at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards (BMSPA) 2024.

Tower 7 is a 14-storey building with a net lettable area of 75,905 sq ft that was acquired en bloc by Kagicorp in 2016. It is fully tenanted and some of its key tenants are Jebson & Jessen Malaysia Sdn Bhd, Daythree Business Services Sdn Bhd, Blackmores (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd and Asian Recruit Sdn Bhd.

Tower 7 is part of the 9.37-acre freehold development UOA Business Park in Temasya Industrial Park, Shah Alam. Developed by Everise Project Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of UOA Development Bhd (KL:UOADEV), the project was completed in 2016. The business park consists of 11 office blocks and a 3-storey retail podium. Fronting the busy Federal Highway, it is connected to the Subang Jaya LRT and KTM stations via a pedestrian bridge.

A rough patch

HBMK senior area manager Kathrine Yong recalls that the onboarding and transition period did not go well due to the lack of cooperation from the previous property manager.

"When we took over, the previous property

UOA Business Park
Tower 7 was acquired by
Kagicorp in 2016



HBMK executive director Ronny Yong and Chai (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan and *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

manager was not present during the transition period. Thankfully, the owner was very hands-on and had kept all the documentation properly and shared them with us. We worked very closely with Kagicorp so that we could have a smooth transition during that period."

On top of that, the tenants were uncooperative. "They [tenants] already had a perception in mind: Are you going to last long here? Why should I talk to you? So, we had to figure out how to change that mindset and tell them that we are here for the long term and we are here to support our client to make sure that the transition is done well," she says.

HBMK made gaining the trust of the tenants its mission. "Our job is to act as a bridge between the owner and the tenants. We were appointed the property manager to do the day-to-day job here. The owner can't be here 24/7. If the owner is here all the time, what is our purpose for be-

ing here then?" says Yong.

She says they spent a lot of time getting to know the tenants and communicating with them regularly to establish a relationship. HBMK would also go through all the complaints that were raised in the past two years and cross-check with the tenants to ensure those issues had been resolved.

Some of the issues that HBMK discovered were complaints like water seepage at the window. "For issues like this, we coordinated with DATS Property Management Sdn Bhd [the property manager of UOA Business Park] to get these issues fixed," she says.

Breakthrough

The turning point came when HBMK conducted a fire drill last year.

"Even though they had participated in a fire drill previously, they were [not familiar] with the procedure. This time around, we enforced our



The entrance to Tower 7



Tower 7 (third from right) is part of the 9.37-acre freehold UOA Business Park in Temasya Industrial Park, Shah Alam

standard operating procedures (SOPs), we conducted briefings to tell them what they should do in the event of a fire, [we made sure] they were familiar with the floor warden and knew the [escape route],” says Yong.

“We would actually record the time taken by the tenants to reach the assembly point because we wanted to ensure that in case of a real fire, they can escape in time. We then gave them a report, telling them how they performed in the fire drill.”

Having never experienced such a well-coordinated and detailed fire drill, the perception started to shift and confidence in the new property manager grew.

“Nowadays, the tenants report any issues directly to us. Sometimes, they even let us borrow some of their facilities like their meeting rooms to conduct our meetings,” says Yong.

In fact, when the BMSPA judges visited Tower 7 in April, the presentation was held in one of the meeting rooms of Jebson & Jessen. “It took us three to four months to gain their trust,” she recalls.

Collaborative efforts

With the tenants’ newfound trust in the property manager, how will HBMK and Kaginic Corp sustain the confidence?

“The key is to always work closely with all the parties involved and to understand your tenants better. The tenants have been with us for many years and they have their own set of behaviours. All the background information that we have, we share it with the property manager so it can [do the job better],” says Chai.

“When the property manager understands the way the tenants function and their requirements to operate their business, only then will it [HBMK] know how to handle the problem.”

Yong gives the example of the requirements of one of the tenants, who runs a call centre service. “They work 24/7 and we work the normal 9am to 5pm schedule. How do we ensure the cleanliness of the facility, the security guards [are on standby] and the lift functions well beyond our normal working hours?

“We will check one round to make sure everything is in order. They understand that we cannot be here with them all the time but if they do encounter any issues at night, they can report straight away to our security team, who will report to us or call us directly because our phones are available 24/7 for them to approach us.”

At the end of the day, Kaginic Corp and HBMK



From left: HBMK administrative executive Siti Aminah, building manager Nurul Akma, Chai and Yong

work together to keep the tenants happy by providing not only a good quality and well-maintained property but also a property manager who is reliable and ready to respond whenever needed.

Enhancement works

As Tower 7 is now eight years old, the property manager and owner are now looking at upgrading and enhancing the building. Some of the major plans are refurbishing the marble floor and upgrading the CCTV surveillance cameras with the latest technology.

“We are looking into the marble flooring. The marble flooring has been here since day one. With people moving in and out of the office daily, the tiles will start to pop out bit by bit after a certain age. We will reuse the tiles [as the original tiles are hard to come by] nowadays. So, we will take out the tiles one by one and relay

Quick facts

NAME	UOA Business Park Tower 7
DEVELOPER	Everise Project Sdn Bhd (subsidiary of UOA Development Bhd)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Office
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2016
STOREYS	14
UNITS	15
BUILT-UP	2,555 to 6,045 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	116,000 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	75,905 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	95 sen per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	100%
AMENITIES	KTM and LRT stations, shopping malls and retail shops
FACILITIES	Link bridge connected to KTM and LRT stations, management office and toilets on every floor
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	Motion sensor lighting
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	AHU and FCU

the mortar [under the tiles] to make sure it is smoothed,” says Yong.

The maintenance works will be done without causing much inconvenience for the office workers who come in and out of the office daily. HBMK expects the work to be completed by the fourth quarter of this year.

The CCTV cameras will soon be replaced with more up-to-date technology. “The CCTV cameras too have been here since day one and they are not of high resolution. Our system should be comparable with the current technology in the market,” Yong adds.

As for energy-saving initiatives, HBMK has replaced the lighting in the common corridors with motion-sensor lighting to reduce energy consumption.

With the strong partnership between HBMK and Kaginic Corp, the maintenance and care of Tower 7 is expected to be top-notch for years to come. ■

10 YEARS AND ABOVE
 Multiple-owned Strata Residential
GOLD**11 Mont' Kiara**

11 Mont' Kiara was completed in July 2011 and has five towers



PICTURES BY ZAHID IZZANI/THE EDGE

The residential towers at 11 Mont' Kiara are built around a central water feature

Working with the right property manager pays off

BY **PRIYA DEVAN**
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Supporting unique cylinder-shaped towers, 11 Mont' Kiara is a high-rise residential development by Sunrise Innovations Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of UEM Sunrise Bhd (KL:UEMS) in Mont' Kiara, Kuala Lumpur. The 5.31-acre project completed in July 2011 has five towers comprising a combined 339 units with built-ups ranging from 2,700 to 6,000 sq ft.

According to 11 Mont' Kiara management corporation (MC) chairman Ian Leong Seong Wah, the majority of residents are expatriates. "Now, there are more South Koreans, some Chinese owners and tenants from other countries as well. Generally, they're all quite supportive of each other."

The development has 32 facilities including a dance studio; yoga terrace; basketball, squash and tennis courts; treetop house; gymnasium; swimming pools; Jacuzzi; playground; multi-purpose hall; sky lounge; EV charging station and barbecue pit.

A number of the facilities require proper upkeep, something 11 Mont' Kiara had difficulty achieving with its previous property manager. 11 Mont' Kiara MC committee member Joshua Goh Keng Cheong recalls the challenges his team faced with the maintenance and upkeep of the property then.

Given its unique design, the property would have naturally attracted buyers when it was introduced to the market, says Goh. However, a few years later,

maintenance was not up to the standards of its residents, he adds.

"The previous management company did not have enough support from headquarters and there were many projects that had already been approved at the annual general meeting (AGM) but lacked manpower to execute. In reference to timelines and commitments, we felt that the progress in executing the projects was way below our expectations, hitting probably only 20% or less of the projects planned," he says.

"Then, in reference to operations, there was a lack of engagement with the residents. For example, there was no notice on instances of water rationing

HBMK project manager **Kamen Lee and Leong** (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge **Au Foong Yee**, *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO **Datuk Ho Kay Tat**, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief **Kathy Fong** and *City & Country* senior editor **E Jacqui Chan**



SHAHRIYAH YAHYA/THE EDGE

or restriction of non-smoking areas."

Before Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd (HBMK) was appointed, only two of the 14 projects were completed in eight months. Within six months of the previous AGM held in October 2023, owners were informed that HBMK had identified two projects that were unnecessary, seven had been completed or were in progress, and three were waiting to be carried out.

Goh says, "After HBMK came in, most of the projects kicked off and we saw improvements in less than a year. I think this was possible because the team HBMK deployed here had support from headquarters to expedite the approved projects. I think all this was possible thanks to the teamwork of our MC and HBMK."

Concurring with Goh, HBMK managing director Low Hon Keong says, "In every project, the MC's role is as important as that of the property manager. At 11 Mont' Kiara, the MC takes its role very seriously. When we first came in, we were presented with certain SOPs (standard operating procedures), which is something most places don't normally do. So, this is an additional effort by the MC, where it went beyond what was required."

Showing that teamwork between the MC and property manager is essential in ensuring a property is well maintained, 11 Mont' Kiara was selected as the Gold winner in the 10 Years and Above Multiple-owned Strata Residential category at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Executing projects right off the bat

HBMK associate director Jessie Koh says, "Upon takeover, it was discovered that most of the systems were not functioning properly. We have since initiated efforts to revive some parts of the systems and aimed to restore the entire system by 1Q2024, which we have achieved."

As soon as HBMK came in, its team immediately began reassessing the projects that had been approved during the previous AGM. Following the review, a couple of projects were scrapped while the rest were given the green light, says Low. So far, seven of the 12 projects have been completed while the others are ongoing.

The completed projects include a car park lift lobby upgrade, water tank cleaning, polycarbonate roof replacement, servicing and repair of air conditioning and mechanical ventilation and variable refrigerant volume systems, replacement of directional

signs, gymnasium equipment upgrade, Jacuzzi heat pump replacement at a new location and installation of cabinet for perishables such as food and grocery deliveries.

Ongoing projects include repair works at window ledges such as jet washing, waterproofing and painting; lap pool soffit repair; replacement of timber decking at several common areas; rectification of metal structure for greenwalls, bridges and spiral staircase; rectification works for boomerang roofs and refurbishment of the badminton-cum-basketball court.

In addition to the 12 projects from the previous AGM, HBMK found several other areas that required upgrading.

“When we took over, there was no periodic maintenance or assessment. As the site is adjacent to a slope, we found that no evaluation — which is supposed to be conducted once every five years — had been conducted by a geotechnical engineer either,” Low explains.

HMBK’s new findings included slope inspection by a certified geotech engineer because soil erosion may pose a risk to residents; arborist assessment for trees, leading to the removal of five high-risk trees; genset servicing, which Low says appears to have no past record of servicing before HBMK took over; servicing and repair of air conditioning and mechanical ventilation and variable refrigerant volume systems; water tank cleaning as the last cleaning was done six years ago; and some landscaping enhancement works.

Emphasis on energy and cost savings

Once the crucial parts were addressed, HBMK moved on to its next mission — optimising the property’s operating and maintenance costs. Among the initiatives were repairing the water reticulation system of the development’s vertical gardens.

Koh explains, “This system revitalisation is expected to yield significant water savings and directly impact our water bills, promoting sustainability in the community. After our effort with the MC, the water bills have been reduced significantly from about RM10,000 to about RM5,000 per month.”

Additionally, 11 Mont’ Kiara now has its own composting system in which gardeners compost all organic matter into fertiliser. “To make this possible, the management has allocated an area for the residents to dispose of organic matter such as food scraps. Upon maturity, the gardeners will use it to fertilise the plants in the development.”

To Koh’s comment, 11 Mont’ Kiara MC committee member Yam Saw Wah adds: “We started this initiative not long ago and are seeing a small number of residents participating. We need to educate them on not throwing plastic along with the compost waste, only vegetables and fruits mostly. We are also organising talks for children on ways to embrace green living and reduce carbon footprint. We have a community garden where residents can do gardening. Sometimes, the children even come down to water the plants.”

To water the gardens and plants at 11 Mont’ Kiara, the team leverages the fact that Kuala Lumpur re-

Quick facts

NAME	11 Mont’ Kiara
DEVELOPER	Sunrise Innovations Sdn Bhd (subsidiary of UEM Sunrise Bhd)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	5.31 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2011
STOREYS	Tower A – 40; Tower B – 41; Tower C – 43; Tower D – 41; Tower E – 40
UNITS	339
BUILT-UP	2,700 to 6,000 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	1,790,680.23 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	1,152,533.87 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM3.266 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	98%
CAR PARK BAYS	1,106

AMENITIES
Mont’ Kiara, International School and Taylor’s College Sri Hartamas; 1Mont Kiara, Publika and Solaris Mont’ Kiara; Global Doctor Specialists Center and Kuala Lumpur Hospital; Kuala Lumpur Golf & Country Resort, Laman Perdana, Bukit Kiara Hill Walk, Taman Tugu and Pusat Sains Negara
FACILITIES
Dance studio, yoga terrace, basketball, squash and tennis courts, jungle walk, treetop house, wellness garden, putting green, reflexology path, tai chi zone, gymnasium, wading pool, sauna room, lap pool, Jacuzzi, TV room, table tennis room, resting lounge, games room, reading room, children’s playroom and playground, swing, multipurpose hall, sky lounge, barbecue pit, prayer room, parcel room, car wash, EV charging station and covered car park
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES
Motion sensing lights, rainwater harvesting system, water reticulation system, termination of unused lines and centralisation of internet, temperature timer, lighting timer adjustment and composting
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES
All M&E rooms in 11 Mont’ Kiara have ventilation fans, cleaners have been briefed to open the windows when cleaning the common facilities and Nano diffusers installed in all lift lobbies that disperse aroma of essential oils into the air

ceives an average rainfall of 2,366.2mm per year, allowing them to harvest rainwater, says Koh. The rainwater harvesting system is connected to the development’s water reticulation system on level 3B, she adds. Overall, this practice has contributed to an average monthly saving of RM2,000.

Koh says the team worked on terminating unused lines and centralised the management office’s internet line. She explains that the internet line was underutilised as it was capable of delivering up to 300Mbps, but is only being used at a rate of 100Mbps. Additionally, it came to light that three telephone and internet lines were not in use. The team has now terminated the unused lines and is working on centralising the internet connection. This is expected



(Front, from left) 11 Mont’ Kiara MC secretary Tan Kark Seng, Leong, Low and Koh with (back row, from left) HBMK senior accounts executive Amira Handayani Tamrin, HBMK task force manager Michelle Foong, 11 Mont’ Kiara MC committee member Chew Sung Loke, committee member Yam Saw Wah, Goh, committee member Chu Yun Shing, Lee and HBMK account manager Low Sook Ling

to contribute to monthly savings of about RM159 in phone and internet services.

Timers and motion sensors, including temperature timer for air conditioners, lighting timers and motion-sensing lights, have been installed in the common areas. These features have contributed to monthly savings of about RM3,000 in terms of electricity bills.

Things are looking up

According to Low, the launch price for 11 Mont’ Kiara was RM726 psf, with built-ups ranging from 2,700 to 6,000 sq ft. For comparison, the average price in 2023 was RM847 psf for units of a similar size. The latest rental yield of the development is around 4.36% (RM3.22 psf) in 4Q2023, compared to 4.33% (RM3 psf) a year earlier in 2Q2022.

Yam attributes this growth to adequate maintenance and constant upgrade of the property. “I notice that the moment a tenant moves out, within a month, the unit is already rented out. Although there are so many condos here in Mont’ Kiara, our development is unique in terms of its shape, the views and the facilities.”

Similarly, Low says, “The MC here wants to restore the glory of the place. This is how some of the developments in KLCC and Bangsar operate. It is their philosophy, so I think I’m very glad that the committee has the same philosophy, to elevate the standard of the property and its value at the same time.”

Ultimately, he hopes to create a “back home experience” for the residents of 11 Mont’ Kiara. “I think the element of a back home experience is what we learn from a lot of high-end projects [where one would] have a sense of peace and feel that everything is seamless and [functional].”

As for choosing the right property management company and having an MC to ensure the value of the property appreciates, Leong says, “When we were in the process of appointing the right property management company, we noticed two very important factors that determine the success of the condo. Number one is operations and number two is handling the project.

“Having a very united MC is very important because at the end of the day, I believe we are all after the same thing. We want the condo to have good upkeep and for residents to enjoy living here. Looking ahead, having the right vision and all parties concerned working towards achieving that vision is how 11 Mont’ Kiara will be managed.”



The replacement of timber decking at the swimming pool areas is one of the ongoing projects



Below: One of 11 Mont’ Kiara’s renovated lift lobbies



The first slope inspection was done last year

BELOW 10 YEARS

Multiple-owned Strata Residential

GOLD**Pavilion Suites Kuala Lumpur**

Luxury mindset is key

BY **RACHEAL LEE**
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It is important for property managers of luxury developments to have the “luxury mentality”, according to Pavilion Suites Kuala Lumpur (PSKL) treasurer Datuk Angie Ng. “Residents of luxury condominiums won’t look at the technical things you are doing, they just look at the outcome. For them, the sense of anticipation when going home is important and the property manager needs to deliver that. It is not just about the landscape, it is the feeling and that’s what they need to deliver.”

Located next to the bustling Pavilion Kuala Lumpur, PSKL is considered one of the most expensive condominiums in Kuala Lumpur. Completed in 4Q2018, it has 383 units (ranging in size from 718 to 1,254 sq ft) in a single block. PSKL is almost fully sold, and 73% of unit owners are Malaysian, while the rest are foreigners. The owner-occupier to tenant ratio is 50:50.

The property management of PSKL was handled by its developer Pavilion Group until March 2023, when Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd (HBMK) took over. Recalling the process of selecting the property manager, Ng says a few came for the interview, but HBMK was chosen due to her pleasant experience dealing with them at The Pearl @ KLCC.

“I also own a unit at The Pearl @ KLCC, where HBMK has been the property manager for eight years. The building has been well maintained, and even with all the improvement and upgrading works, there is a surplus that allows us to have waivers on service charges since 2016,” she explains.

“Then, for Pavilion Suites, I wanted a neutral property manager to manage the building. Knowing how well HBMK is managing The Pearl, which is also a luxury condominium, we brought them in because the mindset of managing luxury condominiums is very important.”

She notes that such a mindset allows for services like having concierge staff who can speak at least three languages for easy communication with residents, tight security and so on.

“My business is in China and I have properties there too. The property management there is very advanced ... They use facial recognition, QR codes, licence plate recognition and so on. There is no key or access card.

“I shared my experience in China with HBMK and they try to follow suit where possible, especially on the technology aspect. They also respond promptly to feedback, which is very important,” she stresses.

HBMK managing director Low Hon Keong says that Ng’s knowledge and expectations on property management in luxury properties have helped to elevate the standard of property management in Malaysia, and he thinks resident involvement in maintaining a building is important.

“To catch up to that level, we need to understand the client’s objectives in property management. If we don’t have that kind of sense in managing luxury properties, we won’t understand their needs. The definition of ‘luxury’ is very important. We need to continue to study and improve how to make changes,” he says.

This collaboration between residents and the property manager led to PSKL winning Gold in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category of *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Meeting requirements

Secretary Sharon Cheong notes that PSKL is a luxury condominium where the owners and tenants read like a who’s who and the main challenge is to understand and meet their requirements.

“We are happy with HBMK because they have a lot of experience in managing luxury residential properties. They are proactive and engage very well with residents.

“They also streamline a lot of processes and have regular scheduled maintenance. They will also suggest things for improvement. As this is a luxury property, when the residents pay so much for the service charge, they would expect the building to be in pristine condition. The property manager needs to manage a team of people who have to be approachable and responsive to resident complaints.”

PSKL’s service charge, inclusive of the sinking fund, is RM1.14 psf.

It is a challenge to manage a luxury condominium next to a popular mall in the heart of the city centre. Low says being a property manager for such a building requires an understanding of the big picture.

“It is not just about managing a normal residential condominium, but a building under the Pavilion branding. With the funds collected, you have to manage properly because these owners are looking for someone trustworthy. It is important to maintain the branding and reputation of this building, and we must align with the big picture of the entire development,” he says.

To manage a luxury property well, engaging with the management committee to understand their objective is important.

“For example, why do you outsource the property management service? What are the things that you are not happy with? What are the things that you look forward to? We need to understand the objective,” says Low.

He adds, “I also believe that more developers are beginning to realise that it may not be practical for them to become a property manager in this era because residents are getting smarter. Developers just want to develop and hand over to residents and be what you call a custodian. They can still do property management, but may not be so hands-on. A professional property manager would have the relevant experience and skills.”

To give residents that sense of anticipation when they go home, the first thing is to ensure everyone in the management team knows the residents by name. PSKL has a no short-term stay policy, so with the security guards recognising the residents there, it is easier for the property manager to enforce the policy.

“If we know this resident is coming back at a certain hour, we need to get ready (to greet them) so that they feel the treatment is much more personalised. Everything is very consistent and we are not allowed to make unnecessary changes to staff manning the concierge counter and main door so that residents will see familiar faces,” Low adds.

“In terms of customer service,



Low and MC chairman Datuk Lee Whay Hoong (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards’ chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan





The function room (above) and swimming pool (right) at Pavilion Suites Kuala Lumpur



Quick facts

NAME	Pavilion Suites Kuala Lumpur
DEVELOPER	Urusharta Cemerlang (KL) Sdn Bhd (Pavilion Group)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	1.35 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2018
STOREYS	51
UNITS	383
BUILT-UP	718 to 1,254 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	468,798 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM9.43 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	60%
CAR PARK BAYS	246
AMENITIES	Prince Court Medical Centre and Gleneagles Kuala Lumpur; Lot 10, Fahrenheit88, The Starhill, The Exchange TRX and Pavilion Kuala Lumpur; Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, National Museum and Royal Selangor Visitor Centre
FACILITIES	Gymnasium, heated Jacuzzi, swimming pool, sauna, Turkish hammam, function room and elite lounge
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	Set timers on all lighting and pumps. Lifts, air conditioning in lifts and escalators are turned off from 12am to 7am every day.
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	Air handling unit system



(From left) Lee, Cheong, Kong, HBMK account manager Mohd Hafiz Zulkifly and Low

Indoor Jacuzzi at the development



which is the concierge, you need more manpower compared to a typical condominium because of the different expectations. For example, we have door-to-door delivery service. We had the opportunity to learn from some international brands and that's how we came up with the staff proposal. It is like hotel services, only we go the extra mile because legally, under the Strata Management Act, we are not obligated to do all these things."

Managing a building next to a popular mall means safety remains top priority. HBMK has to ensure that the firefighting equipment and lift systems function at all times. This goes back to planned preventive maintenance by HBMK.

Also, being next to a well-known mall means there will be people loitering or cars parked in front of the building. Building manager Christy Kong says the situation has improved since PSKL has taken a strict approach. Security guards warn intruders off. If that fails, PSKL will ask the Kuala Lumpur City Hall enforcement team to step in.

Customer service for PSKL residents doesn't stop there. When HBMK took over the management of PSKL, it reduced the outstanding amount from defaulters by 45% between March and December 2023 due to proactive collection efforts and a strict recovery procedure.

Low says, "For people who own these properties, it's not about whether they can afford to pay or not — it's whether they want or do not want to pay. They want plenty of customer service, follow-up and engagement with them. They want to feel that they are being served exclusively. This

is based on our experience in managing some other similar developments. As long as we give them the statement and the necessary reports, they will pay their advance. The follow-up action must be there."

At the same time, Cheong notes that the first thing HBMK did upon being appointed property manager was to propose some cost-cutting measures.

"So that is good because they are very careful about the proper allocation of resources. Property maintenance of a building is not cheap and you can't simply use up the money.

"We also reviewed all contractual service providers and made the necessary changes. Nevertheless, we don't compromise on services. This is because there are a number of high-net-worth residents and we cannot compromise their privacy, security and safety, especially in this busy location."

Area manager Lee Siang Ling explains that HBMK is also maximising the efficiency of the service providers. Due to the number of properties HBMK manages in Malaysia, it has the economies of scale in dealing with service providers.

Kong says some energy-saving measures have been implemented, such as scheduling timers for pumps and water features, and shutting down air conditioning in elevators, resulting in a five-figure saving in terms of cost every month.

Cheong reckons that the cost-saving measures are something residents would appreciate because they also do not want to pay increasing service charges.

"HBMK has to upkeep the place. They will see what is required to be done, whether it's scheduled or even anticipated in advance to make sure that there's preventive maintenance rather than fixing the equipment when it is spoiled. Preventive maintenance will ensure stable property value."

Ng notes that an upper-floor unit in PSKL recently changed hands at RM4,100 psf and she believes good property management played a part in the price appreciation.

Low says Malaysians need to shift from the mindset that it is necessary to move house after living in the same place for several years because of the ageing building.

"We must somehow make sure things work as well as they did when the developer first handed over to the residents. That's why the service charge is fixed at a rate where all services need to be maintained. You can reduce the fee but may have to compromise on the level of service and expectations. [The management corporation] is not a bank, we don't keep the money and earn interest. Money must be spent wisely for a well-maintained place."

BELOW 10 YEARS

Multiple-owned Strata Residential

GOLD**Ryan & Miho Residence**BY **RACHEL CHEW**
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To the management corporation (MC) members of Ryan & Miho Residence, clear and effective communication is essential when selecting the property management service provider, especially for a residential project with over 1,000 units. It is vital that the property manager truly understands that breakdowns in communication can lead to misunderstandings that would harm the property's value in the long run.

"Ryan & Miho Residence was marketed as an upscale development and designed to be an oasis home, as indicated by the project's name. Hence, most of the buyers — who are millennials, young professionals and small families — have a certain level of expectation of the facilities as well as the quality of property management services. It explained our frustration when our complaints often went unheard and very little action was taken before Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd (HBMK) took over the building in June 2023," says MC chairman Vincent Loew.

"Ryan" means "oasis" in Turkish while "Miho" is a Japanese name that reflects beauty. The marriage of these two names is a "Beautiful Oasis". It is located in the mature neighbourhood of Section 13 in Petaling Jaya, Selangor.

Completed and handed over in 2021 by OSK Property Holdings Bhd, Ryan & Miho Residence features 1,084 serviced apartment units spread across two 30-storey residential towers that sit on a 2.2-acre podium. Its unique lifestyle facilities include the Turkish Hammam (steam bath from Turkey); Japanese Onsen; Tea Pavilion; and herb and maze garden.

"Due to the pandemic and other reasons, we did not have a JMB (joint management body) before the formation of the MC in January this year, which I believe is one of the many key reasons for the communication breakdown between the residents and the previous management office, and led to many unexpected problems for a new project like this. And worst of all, we did not know how to tackle them. For example, the misuse of our visitor car park and missing parcels," says Loew.

The development has about 200 visitor parking bays on the ground level and these were misused by some residents, especially those with allocated parking on higher levels, leading to insufficient parking space for visitors and creating security concerns.

"There was a case where a visitor was forced to park his car outside of the residential compound on the roadside because the visitor car park was full, and he got a traffic ticket for parking illegally and wanted us to pay the fine for him," MC treasurer Elizabeth Fay recalls. "We all can laugh about it now because it is over but it was really frustrating as an owner when your visitor could not get one single parking lot out of the 200 that we have in total. Now, we have almost zero complaints about the visitor car park — all thanks to the efficient property management and strict enforcement of SOPs (standard operating procedures)."

With proper SOPs in place and effective communication and enforcement, the new management team also addressed another long overdue problem, which was missing and uncollected parcels in the common area, she says.

"Regardless of the condo type, everyone wants the common area of their home to be neat, tidy, clean and safe. We don't want to have to worry about our parcels going missing if we are not able to collect them immediately. Having uncollected parcels sitting in our tastefully furnished lift lobbies and common areas for weeks was truly an eyesore.

"Actually, these are not difficult issues to tackle. All we need is a professional property management team with experience and knowledge, as well as

Creating a beautiful oasis through effective management



Ryan & Miho Residence is located in the heart of Section 13, Petaling Jaya



Yong and Loew (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan

good and structural SOPs and strong enforcement. We have seen the improvement in facility management, as well as communication between the MO (management office) and residents reconnected ever since HBMK came on board, which we deem very important in turning our home into a real beautiful oasis," Elizabeth adds.

The hard work of the dedicated MC members and committed HBMK team was recognised by *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024, with Ryan & Miho Residence being named the Gold winner for the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category.

Effective communication

When HBMK was appointed as the property manager of Ryan & Miho Residence in June last year, the first task of the on-site team was to set up proper communication channels to connect with the residents.

"Effective communication can solve half of the problem in property management, especially for new developments where most of the occupiers are millennials and young professionals. They are mostly very reasonable as long as you convey the messages clearly," says Albee Chin, the on-site building manager.

Owing to its strategic location, the project attracted many foreign students studying at universities and colleges nearby. Chin says, "The project has an occupancy rate of about 85% now, and 20% of them are tenants, of which half are foreigners. It is natural that they are not familiar with Malaysia's strata living and due to the language barrier and communication breakdowns, there was some miscommunication between them and the earlier MO."

To restore better communication with all residents, the team issued notices in at least two languages, increased the number of notice boards and signage in common areas, and fully utilised the online platform and property management app.

"The use of the app has not only improved communication but also the collection rate," says on-site account manager Rosniza Roslan. "The collection rate was once 60% to 70% but now it has improved to 98%. One key reason is that the owners are able to pay the maintenance fees via the app. Last time, the office received more than a hundred bank-in transaction receipts at one time via WhatsApp. It took some time to reconcile these



payments with what we received in the account. There were also times when the office was not able to tally the payment and account.”

The app also solved the problem of facility booking, which used to be done manually in the management office, causing issues like double booking or hoarding of facilities.

“As most of our residents here are millennials and tech-savvy, they quickly adapted to the use of the app. It is heavily used by the residents now as it eases the communication process with the management. They are able to read all the latest notices, check the statements and make payments, book the facilities, register their visitors and submit feedback,” says Kathrine Yong, the senior area manager of HBMK.

Another improvement is the significant reduction of short-stay cases. Yong says, “The project features many unique facilities with two link bridges to commercial complexes nearby. It appeals to short-stay investors. We used to see many short-stay listings of Ryan & Miho Residence everywhere on different rental platforms. With much education work done, strict bylaws imposed and strong enforcement, the number of short-stays has slowly decreased.”

From left: Chin, Loew, Elizabeth, Rosniza, Low and Yong



Japanese garden



Children's playground with sand play

Plan for the future

Ryan & Miho Residence has a healthy collection rate and strong reserve fund, as well as stable income from fixed deposits and rental income from three tenanted shoplots out of six, which provide services for the residents only.

“The strong reserve fund is also due to the fact that we are still a fairly new project, where many major maintenance works haven’t kicked in. Having said that, we need to prepare ourselves now as we have quite a number of lifestyle facilities,” says Loew. “I think it is important to gradually adjust the maintenance fee despite the healthy fund we have now, to build up our war chest for the future. We also need to mentally prepare and educate our residents that it is an unavoidable cost of living in a stratified project that offers many lifestyle facilities. Hopefully, with this, they will take care of the common facilities like they take care of their own units.”

He suggests making small changes (of one to two sen) to the maintenance fee every year, which would prevent residents from being shocked by a sudden large increase five or 10 years down the line, potentially leading to conflict. Currently, the maintenance fee of Ryan & Miho Residence is 40 sen psf, including the sinking fund.

As a three-year-old serviced apartment, Elizabeth shares that all the facilities are functioning well and only require regular maintenance, which is mostly handled by third-party service providers as well as in-house technicians.

“We have done some landscape review and enhancement but it does not cost much. We also recently upgraded the futsal court flooring as it was slippery, but it was at the developer’s cost as it is committed to correcting the design flaw. We are now reviewing new electric vehicle charger service providers to upgrade to a more efficient charging system. We should be able to conclude the deal within this year,” says Elizabeth.

Commenting on the challenges of managing residential projects with unique common facilities with strong characteristics like Ryan & Miho Residence, HBMK managing director Low Hon Keong says, “As stratified property has become the norm in today’s city living, we observe that many homebuyers do not mind paying for lifestyle facilities and services, as long as they get what they pay for.

“Many homebuyers today can see the value that a well-maintained project can bring to their property in the long term. They also understand that this cannot be achieved by the residents themselves. So, regardless of what kind of property and the number of facilities that a project provides, a well-managed property that creates value is always possible, as long as the working relationship between the JMB or MC and property management team is built based on trust and many open discussions for the benefit of the property and occupiers.”

Quick facts	
NAME	Ryan & Miho Residence
DEVELOPER	PJD Central Sdn Bhd (OSK Property Holdings Bhd)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	5.939 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	2021
STOREYS	30
UNITS	1,084
BUILT-UP	678 to 990 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	40 sen per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	85%
CAR PARK BAYS	2,425
AMENITIES	
Shopping malls, schools, colleges and universities, commercial hubs and F&B outlets	
FACILITIES	
Open futsal court, multipurpose hall (badminton court and half basketball court), private dining room, multipurpose lawn, integrated playground, outdoor barbecue area, swimming pool, wading pool, herbs garden, gymnasium, maze garden, steam bath, sauna, tea pavilion, hot bath, jogging path, linear park and reading room	
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	
Rainwater harvesting system, water-efficient fittings supply, efficient waste management system, LED lights in common areas and corridors	
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	
The residential units’ design encourages natural ventilation in response to the local climate. The building blocks were designed to facilitate the highest amount of natural airflow, creating a refreshing breeze.	



Turkish Hammam

BELOW 10 YEARS

Multiple-owned Strata Residential

GOLD**Essex Gardens, Setia Eco Templer**

Preserving a piece of paradise

 BY **RACHEL CHEW**
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As we stroll through Essex Gardens, the first phase of the Setia Eco Templer township in Rawang, Selangor, it is clear that this is a close-knit community. Management corporation (MC) chairman C K Lee and Laurelcap Property Management Sdn Bhd associate director Ho Hon Chiap often stop during our walk to greet and chat with the residents. There is a sense of ease in their interactions, one that is not easy to come by these days.

"I always tell Ho that if everyone smiles upon seeing you, it means you are doing a good job," Lee says. "Indeed, our [the MC's] relationship with the MO (management office) is very close. We are helping, supporting and facilitating each other to work towards the same goal — to make Essex Gardens the top place to stay in this part of the Klang Valley.

Ho says: "All 11 MC committees have been really, really supportive in helping us carry out day-to-day and mid- to long-term management plans for such a unique project here. They are also the most committed MC and most close-knit community that I have ever worked with.

"But having said that, the stress is also there, as the residents really care about the community. Every day, we receive messages and photos from the residents about different things — maybe debris

in the pond or some street light not working. Every one of them is concerned about the community, and they sincerely want this little paradise they call home to stay as it is now and in the future."

Away from the hustle and bustle of city life, the picturesque Setia Eco Templer is a one-of-a-kind landed residential development, as it is adjacent to the majestic Bukit Takun, Templer's Park and Kanching Eco-Forest Park. With nine natural creeks and a river from the forest running through Essex Gardens, it is an oasis for nature lovers.

"The residents of Essex Gardens are nature lovers, which is why we share the same goal of keeping the place as original as possible — hence the high expectations in property management," Lee says.

The 194-acre Setia Eco Templer was developed by S P Setia Bhd (KL:SPSETIA), and built around the natural terrain, hence the low density. Essex Gardens comprises only 234 houses on a 45.32-acre tract, which translates into roughly five houses per acre.

"If we do some mathematics here, there is only one unit for every 8,000 sq ft. The average land size per unit is 3,000 sq ft, so that means that some 25,000 sq ft in an acre is common area. Now, you can imagine the work involved in the upkeep of the place, especially the landscape — as the trees,



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

S P Setia president and CEO Datuk Choong Kai Wai, Lee and Laurelcap Property Management (Sel) Sdn Bhd director Jerry Lee (third to fifth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media* Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan



Lee (left, with Ho): The residents of Essex Gardens are nature lovers, which is why we share the same goal of keeping the place as original as possible

Essex Gardens is a low-density landed development



Quick facts

NAME	Essex Gardens, Setia Eco Templer
DEVELOPER	Setia Eco Templer Sdn Bhd (subsidiary of S P Setia Bhd)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	45.32 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	2019
UNITS	234
BUILT-UP	1,760 to 7,650 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM2.50 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	97%
AMENITIES	International school, commercial area and forest reserve parks
FACILITIES	Children's playground, open gym, campsite, shelter and gazebo
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	Solar panel-powered street lights and bulbs

plants, creeks and river are all natural, even the drain is natural. Most importantly, they represent Essex Gardens. Without these natural features, the project is no longer unique,” Lee says.

Common goal

A community that shares a goal is the key to success for this development. It achieved a 96.85% collection rate in 2023, despite the 11% increase in maintenance fees from RM2.25 per share unit to RM2.50 in October 2023.

“It was the first revision since the project’s VP (vacant possession) in 2019. It was a necessary move because, from 2022 to 2023, our account was in deficit, which caused some maintenance work to be deferred because of budget constraints. With the increase in maintenance fee, major maintenance and upgrading works have been carried out over the past few months, such as repainting works and replacement of the solar bollard lights,” says Lee.

Coming up with a plan and budget for monthly and long-term maintenance work was the first priority when Laurelcap was appointed property manager for Essex Gardens two years ago.

“The project was not in its best condition when we first took over. But we can’t blame the previous MO. It was mainly due to the lockdowns. At that time, there were many restrictions on carrying out maintenance and upkeep work. Do not forget that the common areas of Essex Gardens required extra daily attention, such as tree pruning and trimming, and creek and river cleaning and maintenance,” Ho explains.

The blurred line between wear and tear and defects also contributed to the delay in maintenance work, he adds. “It is a one-of-a-kind project with so many natural elements. There was some debate and discussion on which falls under wear and tear, and which one is a defect that needs to be rectified.”

Lee says the rising cost of property management also contributed to the project’s falling into “bad shape”. “Therefore, raising the maintenance fees is a must and the proposed rate is reasonable. The agenda was quickly approved by the residents because our wish is to get the place back in shape as soon as possible.”

Thanks to the determination of residents and the property management team, Essex Gardens has successfully regained its former prestige. This achievement culminated in its emergence as a Gold winner in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category at *The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainable Awards 2024* (BMSPA 2024).



Art of communication

A key performance index that was given to the property management team by the MC was “be-friend and get close” to all the proprietors, says Lee.

“As a property investor myself, I understand how important a responsible and responsive MO is to property value creation. Listening to the residents, hearing them out, communicating with them, and building good relationships are secrets of efficient property management,” Lee says. “However, we do not encourage the MO to go beyond its boundaries to attend to some unreasonable request. Anything beyond its responsibility, the MC will step in to help. It is also our responsibility as part of the MC, to be the mediator between the MO, resident and developer.”

Lee adds that maintaining a good relationship with the developer is vital for future advisory on the project’s related matters.

“The developer is resourceful. It is the designer and builder of the project and it has the experience and expertise in handling emergencies when something beyond the MC and MO’s capabilities happens. For example, a minor landslide happened in Essex

The residents have direct access to the river from the forest reserve



PICTURES BY ZAHID IZZANI/THE EDGE

Gardens in 2022, when the Klang Valley experienced abnormal rainfall, which caused several flash floods here and there. The developer took the initiative to restore the site at its own cost,” he recalls.

The developer has also agreed to spend RM2.1 million to set up 1.2km of perimeter fencing with CCTV, motion sensors and spotlights between the houses and a public river, whose section that is within the gated community is currently closed to the public.

“The authority has issued a statement [to open up the river]; so, it is something that is happening soon. Once it happens, outsiders will be able to access Essex Gardens freely from upstream.

“Thus, the fencing is important, direct access to a natural running river was one of the biggest selling points of Essex Gardens, which was a problem to solve. As much as we want the place to stay as it is, we cannot oppose the local authority’s decision, as it is true that the river is public and it is not part of the compound, and we are made aware of it. We want the beauty, but security is paramount. And we are very grateful that S P Setia was willing to build it for us at its own cost after some meetings and discussions,” Lee says.

He adds that it is also a result of the good relationship that the MC and residents have maintained with the developer over the years.

Apart from the perimeter fencing, the MC is also looking to upgrade the development’s campsite with new a toilet and washing area, as well as build a futsal court and a floating event space on the two-acre lake.

“We have a playground and open field, but we do not have a futsal area for active residents. We also lack a multipurpose hall or an event space to organise community activities or private parties. Our lake on the south is farther away from the housing area, surrounded by forest, making it an ideal location for an event space. We are thinking of a floating platform on the lake that can hold about 150 people, just nice for a small wedding or community yoga or exercise space,” Lee says.

Asked about the importance of strong community and professional property management, Lee says both parties are crucial in sustaining a development.

“We (MC members and property manager) will not stay in our positions forever. Apart from restoring and maintaining this place to its original shape as much as possible, and continuing to enhance it, our main task is also to refine the SOPs and set a benchmark for management. This will ensure that in the future, no matter who takes over our current role, there will be a clear guideline and expectations to meet. It is also one of the key reasons for us to participate in BMSPA 2024.”



The open field and children's playground



Essex Gardens is adjacent to a forest reserve

10 YEARS AND ABOVE
 Non-strata Residential
GOLD**Jade Hills**

Nurturing a thriving community

 BY **RACHEL CHEW**
 city.country@bizedge.com

Known as a community-centric township with lush green landscapes in Kajang, Selangor, the 338-acre Jade Hills stands as a testament to foresight and meticulous master planning. Gamuda Land, the property arm of Gamuda Bhd (KL:GAMUDA), has made it its goal to redefine community living in the region with this development.

“The journey started during the township’s design stage at headquarters. From there, we foresaw how the residents would use the property and what kind of lifestyle would be created here,” chief operating officer for project operations Wong Siew Lee recalls.

This foresight extends beyond mere township development. Every decision — from the placement of the residential enclaves to the strategic position of commercial hubs and essential infrastructure — was carefully made to ensure relevance and sustainability. This approach has enabled the township to continually evolve into its current state since its launch in 2008.

Today, Jade Hills has become a sought-after address that stands out in Kajang, setting the benchmark for well-managed and self-sustaining community living. This outstanding achievement has been recognised by *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024, where Jade Hills won Gold in the 10 Years and Above — Non-strata Residential category. Notably, this is the second time the development has won Gold in this category, following its first win five years ago in 2019.

“The winning of this award reinforced our belief and vision in township building, especially Jade Hills, which is one of our earliest township developments in the Klang Valley. It underscores our commitment to creating townships that are environmentally friendly, sustainable and community-centric, nurturing vibrant places where people can not only live, work and play, but also grow up and grow in,” says Wong.

The development, which has 70 acres of green spaces, will have 21 precincts and 2,199 homes upon full completion in 2025. Jade Hills offers amenities designed to be the heartbeat of social interaction and recre-



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

Gamuda Land’s club operations and townships director Tang Meng Loon and Wong (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge* Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards’ chief judge Au Foong Yee and *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong



PICTURES BY LOW YEN YEING/THE EDGE

Jade Square is the vibrant commercial hub of Jade Hills

ational bliss, fostering a sense of belonging and community among neighbours, such as the Jade Hills Resort Club, communal parks within the gated and guarded community, Origami Park that welcomes the public and the Jade Square commercial hub, which has become a new social nexus for residents and visitors, enhancing the township’s communal atmosphere and appeal.

“Jade Square is a vibrant commercial area that we launched in 2020 during the Covid period. All the units were quickly filled up with various businesses within a year after the handover. It is a hub designed to cater to the daily needs, as well as enhance the lifestyle, of the residents of Jade Hills and

its surroundings. It is also another place-making element on top of Origami Park,” says Wong.

Sustainable landscape

Gamuda Land believes that the role of the developer extends far beyond erecting buildings. It encompasses a broader responsibility towards building a sustainable community. “Therefore, the placemaking element is very important. And to achieve that, the township has to be infra-ready so that people can get together,” says Wong.

Apart from the public park and commercial hub, Gamuda Land also looked into other infrastructure details to help the



Swimming pool at the clubhouse



In 2022, electric bikes and Segways were introduced to patrol the neighbourhood



Some 25% of the lights at the park in Jade Hills are powered by solar photovoltaic panels

community grow sustainably, such as the pedestrian paths and landscaping.

“Jade Hills offers a vast landscaped area, so from the start, we already had a plan for long-term maintenance and upkeep, which is to let it grow wild,” Wong smiles. “Most of the plants and trees that you see in Jade Hills today are native, so they are much more adaptable to environmental changes and require less attention, because the plan was to let them continue to grow naturally. In fact, they are the original community here. It is also why we do not have a manicured landscape or use carpet grass here.”

Letting the trees grow naturally also

CONTINUES ON PAGE 42

Jade Hills has a vast landscaped area with more than 7,200 trees and 10 species of shrubs and hedges



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A strong sense of ownership

Quick facts

NAME	Jade Hills
DEVELOPER	Jade Homes Sdn Bhd (Gamuda Land)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Township
LAND AREA	338 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2025
UNITS	2,199
MAINTENANCE FEE	Bungalow – RM416.60 Semidee – RM347.17 Link home – RM277.74 Condo – RM2.92 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	73%

AMENITIES
Jade Hills Resort Club, Jade Square, Stadium Kajang MRT station (3.4km), Hospital Kajang (5km), KPJ Kajang Specialist Hospital (5km), AEON Cheras Selatan (10km), Lotus's Kajang and Lotus's @ The Mines (10km), IOI City Mall (10km) and commercial shops in Sg Chua, Kajang town and Bangi, Eaton International School within Jade Hills, Australian International School (13km), Tanarata International School (10km), Nexus International School (14km), The Alice Smith School (21km), University of Nottingham (25km), Universiti Putra Malaysia (11km), Universiti Tenaga Nasional (9km), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (14km), Infrastructure University KL (8km), SMK Yu Hua (5km) and New Era University College (5km)

FACILITIES
Jade Hills Resort Club with facilities such as gym, sauna, steam bath, Olympic-length swimming pool, tennis court, kids' game room, restaurant, shuttle bus to Kajang town and MRT stations

ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES
Solar-powered park lights, solar-powered park gazebo, solar-powered CCTV and electric vehicle security patrolling and drone aerial surveillance

INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES
Over 140 species of flora for biodiversity conservation and 29,850 trees, absorbing about 160,000kg of carbon dioxide

FROM PAGE 40
helps to provide sufficient shade throughout the entire township, promoting it as a walkable area. "It is another kind of 'infra-readiness' to encourage people to walk around the township, so we can reduce the number of covered walkways or shelters in the township, which in turn lowers the wear and tear and maintenance costs in the long run," she says.

In pursuit of sustainable landscaping, Gamuda Land has integrated biodiversity conservation as a core principle of its township development strategy. In a biodiversity audit carried out in 2020, the team identified over 57 species across more than 7,200 trees and 10 species of shrubs and hedges in Jade Hills, effectively absorbing about 211,000kg of carbon dioxide annually.

"From then until 2023, we planted an additional 22,650 trees comprising 142 species. The township now has close to 30,000 trees ... We did another round of biodiversity study [recently] to ensure that there is a thriving flora and fauna community in the region. So if anything is falling off or not right, we will actually be able to detect it through this biodiversity audit. So it's our



PATRICK GOH/THE EDGE

Wong: Property management is a service to ensure their (residents') quality of life in our development, to build the resilience of our township, to enhance the longevity of our township and to continue to create value for our friends

continuous effort as the master developer and property manager," says Wong.

Over the past decade, the team has utilised a closed-loop approach to sustainable landscape management, such as having all the compost produced repurposed as organic fertiliser, while wood chips serve as effective mulch to suppress weeds and maintain the landscape's appearance, significantly reducing the time spent on weed management.

"Through our streamlined composting method, the township relies exclusively on this organic matter, generating up to 100kg of organic fertiliser monthly. More importantly, Jade Hills completely abstains from using chemical fertilisers, resulting in cost savings and promoting safer, more sustainable practices. This commitment to a closed-loop system not only optimises resource utilisation but also underscores our dedication to environmental stewardship and community well-being," she says.



GAMUDA LAND

The township boasts 70 acres of green space



LOW YEN YEING/THE EDGE

The main entrance to Jade Hills

Leveraging technology

As the master developer and township manager of Jade Hills, Gamuda Land has regularly upgraded the hardware and software to better manage the township. For example, the adoption of machinery and technology in carrying out routine maintenance and management works. "In the past, manual sweeping was part of the daily schedule. But with the transition to a mechanised system, sweeping operations have been restructured and are now effectively carried out every other day," says Wong.

The property management team at Jade Hills also leverages technology to reduce the overall security cost without compromising on safety, such as by installing solar panels and digitalising the security system.

Currently, 25% of the light fittings at the park in Jade Hills are powered by solar photovoltaic panels. The incorporation of solar compound lights, bollard lights and floodlights in the park has resulted in savings of about 1,050kW in electricity consumption. The plan is to enable 100% of the park's lighting to be powered by solar soon, according to Wong.

The township is also implementing an integrated AI perimeter CCTV with fence triggering system along with DJI Aerial Security Surveillance, which significantly reduces the reliance on manpower. "As Jade Hills moves towards maturity and stability, we don't have any plans to increase security personnel. In fact, we are looking at reducing it in the future by continuing to leverage new technology and community involvement," she says.

Wong explains that the strong community spirit in Jade Hills makes the township different from others, which she attributes to a sense of ownership.

"Our community is united. They love their home, so they care about the township. One very good example to show the strong sense of community and ownership was that they volunteered to take turns patrolling the community at night when the whole security team was quarantined during the outbreak of Covid-19," she recalls.

The involvement of the community and sense of ownership are growing stronger as the township development is at the tail-end, with the developer expecting to complete the entire project by 2025.

"We have been involving the RA (residents' association) in management and town hall meetings to get them familiarised with the operation systems, as well as being more involved in decision-making for the township.

"We are confident that the management transition will be smooth after the completion of the township next year because we have already established a very transparent procurement process and the SOPs are all in place. The backbone is already there for the residents. All they need to do is continue to practise and there is no need to develop from scratch," Wong notes.

She also highlights that the developer will still be around to provide property management services to the township, even after the completion of the project.

"Once a Gamuda Land friend, forever a Gamuda Land friend," Wong smiles. "We are very clear that the completion of a township or a smaller project is not the end. In fact, it is the beginning because our 'friends' lives just began in our development. And property management is a service to ensure their quality of life in our development, to build the resilience of our township, to enhance the longevity of our township, and to continue to create value for our friends."

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Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya is also the winner for Editor's Choice - Malaysia's Outstanding Affordable Homes

Cultivating strong sense of ownership

BY **RACHEL CHEW**
city.country@bizedge.com

Property management is more than just maintaining facilities and balancing accounts, it also plays a vital role in cultivating a harmonious community by fostering a strong community spirit. It is especially important when it is a large-scale project with thousands of units, just like Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya in Selangor.

Developed over two phases — Selangorku PR1MA Lakefront Homes (Phase 1) and Lakefront Homes (Phase 2) by Avaland Bhd (KL: AVALAND) — the project features a total of 3,243 residential units and 12 retail lots.

Phase 1 was developed under the affordable housing scheme joint venture between the Selangor government and PR1MA Corp Malaysia. It comprises 1,932 units in four buildings of 22 storeys each. With a standard built-up of 850 sq ft, the units were priced from RM280,000 to RM285,000. The project was completed and handed over to buyers in 2020.

Phase 2 was completed two years later. There are 1,311 units of the open-market residences in three blocks of 25 storeys each. The standard intermediate units have built-ups of 1,010 sq ft and were launched at an average selling price of RM450,000.

Nestled between the two phases are 12 retail lots with built-ups of 1,970 sq ft. Each unit is equipped with liquefied petroleum gas piping and exhaust fan ducting, as well as a covered seating area with tables and chairs. The units are occupied by businesses such as a convenience store, a café, restaurants, F&B outlets, a tuition centre, laundrette and barber shop, all to exclusively serve the needs of the residents. This area can only be accessed with a resident's access card.



Nazrizam and joint management body committee member Muhammad Ikhwan Affandi (third and fourth from left) with (from left) The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, City & Country senior editor E Jacqui Chan, The Edge Malaysia editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee and The Edge Malaysia editor-

Near the retail lots is a large multipurpose hall that also houses badminton courts. The hall is one of a few facilities shared by the residents of Phase 1 and Phase 2. Each phase has its own set of common facilities, such as a swimming pool, jogging track, playground, gymnasium, wading pool, futsal court and barbecue pit. Each phase also has a separate main entrance with three-tier 24-hour security guard service and CCTV surveillance.

The development has an occupancy rate of 79%, the majority of which are owner-occupiers. The maintenance fee collection (RM1.45 per share unit) has always been high at above 90% since the vacant possession of the project. The collection rate is currently 97.57%.

"The good collection rate is actually a form of testimonial for us because it shows that the residents are generally happy with the services. That's why they are willing to pay, and pay on time, to

ensure the services continue," says Avaland property management general manager Lim Tek Guan.

The Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya is managed by AVL Property Management Sdn Bhd, the property management arm of Avaland. Led by the on-site building manager Mohd Nazrizam Mohd Zaharudin, the team of 14 has been managing the project since its completion and was reappointed by the residents after the formation of the joint management body (JMB).

"The relationship between the developer, MO (management office) and JMB is very close. The working chemistry is good and we can trust each other because all of us share one goal, which is to make Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya a better place to live," says Lim.

The well-planned Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya was recognised by *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards in 2023, with Phase 1 being named the Silver and only winner in the Below 10 Years — Sustainable Affordable Housing category.

This year, Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya came back stronger, bagging the Gold award in the same category. It also takes home the Editor's Choice award for Malaysia's Outstanding Affordable Homes.

Nurturing the 'baby'

Avaland chief operating officer Aw Sei Cheh attributes the winning of the awards to the property management team's efforts, as well as the strong community spirit at the development.

"At Avaland, we truly believe that property development is not [merely] build and sell. It is a B2C (business-to-consumer) business, hence the quality of service is very important ... That is why we have our in-house property management team to ensure that every 'baby' (project) that we give birth to is well managed and our customers are

Quick facts

NAME	Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya
DEVELOPER	Lakefront Residence Sdn Bhd (subsidiary of Avaland Bhd)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	818,164 sq ft
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	Phase 1 – 2020 Phase 2 – 2022
STOREYS	22 to 25
UNITS	3,255
BUILT-UP	850 to 1,010 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM1.45 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	79%
CAR PARK BAYS	7,996
AMENITIES	Shops, bank, petrol station, school, public facilities and medical centres (Hospital Cyberjaya), Cyberjaya University College of Medical Sciences, University Malaysia of Computer Science and Engineering, Open University Malaysia, Cyber Putra College, ELC International School and SRK Cyberjaya, Dpulze Shopping Centre, Tamarind Square, Gem in Mall, IOI City Mall and The Mines Shopping Mall
FACILITIES	Swimming pool, jogging track, children’s playground, outdoor gymnasium, wading & swimming pool, multipurpose hall, half basketball court, futsal court, BBQ pit, multipurpose room, surau, badminton court, kindergarten and nursery and 24-hour security guard service with CCTV surveillance.
ENERGY SAVING FEATURES	Solar panel, LED lights, photocell sensor, variable speed drive for water pump system and EV charging station

well taken care of even after vacant possession, so that our development and customers can continue to grow and thrive,” he says.

Aw highlights that the role of property developers today is to turn houses into homes and foster a strong community. This, together with good property management, helps it to achieve its target.

“We are deeply committed to transparent communication and active community engagement, considering these the core principles that guide our approach. By prioritising transparent communication and fostering active engagement within the community, we aim to create an inclusive and supportive environment where residents feel



The swimming pool is a popular facility in Phase 2



From left: Lim, Aw and Nazrizam

The 12 shoplots located between Phase 1 and Phase 2 are fully tenanted



heard, valued and connected,” he says.

He adds that some of the key management approaches are responsive feedback mechanisms and collaborative community events.

“We encourage residents to provide feedback and suggestions, as well as voice any grievances through well-established channels. Our management team ensures that these inputs are addressed promptly and satisfactorily.

“Our management team also actively participates in various community events and activities, including social gatherings like the Raya event, recreational programmes such as the futsal competition, and flea markets. These initiatives foster a strong sense of community and help address the diverse needs and interests of residents in the two phases.”

Agreeing with Aw, Lim cites the example of residents often volunteering to take on small upgrading and maintenance projects. In fact, they recently banded together to repaint the badminton courts.

“The sense of ownership is very strong here. Many of our residents sincerely want this to be a better place, so they are more than happy to contribute ideas, time and skills to do all the upgrading projects themselves,” he says.

“As for bigger upgrading projects, such as replacing the futsal court flooring and the swimming pool and deck, which were heavily used by the residents, the headquarters [Avaland] took the initiative to do it for the community at its own cost to show its commitment to the customer.”

Extending the relationship between developer and customers

Last year, Avaland took the initiative to beautify and enhance the facilities of the lake in front of the project. The lake is not part of the development, but a public recreational space that is enjoyed by the residents.

This year, on top of some minor enhancement works such as security upgrades with anti-clone

cards, expanding energy-efficient LED lighting and improving disability-friendly facilities carried out by the JMB, Avaland took the initiative to undertake two major upgrading projects in Phase 1 — the swimming pool and futsal court flooring.

“The issue was raised by the residents and we thought it was a reasonable request. We decided to go ahead at our own cost, even though the DLP (defect liability period) of Phase 1 had passed. The upgrades would make the facilities more durable and sustainable, which in turn would benefit our customers, who have given us their trust. So, why not?” says Aw.

“At Avaland, we never stop finding new ways to do things better. When we find a new way to do something better, or we discover a new design detailing that can make our project more resilient, we want our previous customers to enjoy the outcome too if there is an opportunity.”

For example, with the strong support of its headquarters, Ayala Land in the Philippines, Avaland benefits from real-time data and knowledge when it comes to designing a building structure that is able to withstand natural disasters.

“In Manila, buildings are designed to withstand typhoons and storm water. Such design knowledge, experience and data are very useful for us in Malaysia, especially when flash floods happen almost every year now. It pushes us to move away from the conventional way of designing a project and put in more future-proof and safety features,” says Aw.

He adds that the property management division also contributes valuable data from the feedback collected from the occupiers of the projects.

“The costly part is not R&D (research and development). It is the rectification work. The data will help us avoid design pitfalls from the start, so the project will be able to stand the test of time.

“That is why the relationship between the developer and customer shouldn’t end after vacant possession. It should be extended further [in property management services] because we know the building best and we know how to run it. It is also an assurance to the customer that we will be here to take care of them.”

From a business perspective, the cost of marketing is always lower than the cost of sales, and good service is crucial to the success of a marketing plan, especially in building up customer loyalty, which will help bring in sales at minimal cost, says Aw.

“It is also why we keep the property management division, even though it does not bring a significant revenue contribution to the group. The earnings are just enough to offset the expenses. But it creates intangible value, which is more than enough to justify keeping the division,” he adds.

Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya has achieved a 20% strata title issue and the formation of the management corporation (MC) is well on track, according to Lim.

“To many residents at Lakefront Homes, the cost to do the MoT (Memorandum of Transfer) is not a small amount. But the progress is going very well, and a significant increase from last year. We are now not far from the minimum requirement of 25% to form the MC,” he says.

“As the formation of the MC is on track, we hope the property management team can continue to serve the residents, as we have built a very good relationship with the residents and JMB over the years.”

Aw says that even if the company does not get to serve Lakefront Homes @ Cyberjaya in the future, it would still happily provide advice on the building if needed, just like any other completed project.

“Well-maintained properties attract buyers, satisfy residents, ensure smooth operations, comply with regulations and build a sense of belonging within the community. Most importantly, it enhances overall development success and shows our commitment to our customers,” he adds. **E**

BELOW 10 YEARS
 Non-strata Office
GOLD**Menara KWSP**

Collaborative effort in managing all-new HQ

 BY **CHIN WAI LUN**
 city.country@bizedge.com

Upon entering Menara KWSP at Kwa-sa Damansara, one will be greeted by the naturally lit open spaces of the grand lobby, thanks to the many glass panels adorning the façade of the building. Coupled with a large green wall of low-maintenance moss plants at the main concierge, the new KWSP headquarters is a refreshing and welcoming change from its previous one on Jalan Raja Laut, Kuala Lumpur.

Completed in June 2022, the GreenRE Platinum-certified building is now a key landmark in the upcoming 2,620-acre township of Kwa-sa Damansara — one of the last parcels of prime land in Selangor. It has two 12-storey towers, each with a total net lettable area of 477,158 sq ft on a 5.2-acre plot. It is easily accessible via the Damansara-Shah Alam Elevated Expressway (DASH) and within walking distance of the Kwa-sa Sentral and Kwa-sa Damansara MRT stations.

Built with the aim of maintaining a balance between aesthetics and function, Menara KWSP is set to provide a soothing and welcoming environment for both staff and KWSP members, according to KWSP head of property management Abdul Kharis Shaharudin.

"I liken it to the psychological effect of moving to a new building or home. People expect it to be in superb condition and, thus, the expectation is there. We want to offer a new and lively experience for all occupants of the building," says Abdul Kharis, noting that it is the result of a joint effort between the building owner, Kwa-sa Utama Sdn Bhd (KUSB) and the property manager, Knight Frank Property Management Sdn Bhd (KFPM). KUSB is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Kwa-sa Land Sdn Bhd, which in turn is a wholly-owned subsidiary of KWSP.

According to KUSB project director Mohd Zainim Serju, the smart building concept for Menara KWSP was first mooted in 2016 during its early design stage. "Few buildings had smart features back then. Like Abdul Kharis said, there are expectations for a better and new environment and, so, we have decided to incorporate these features into the new headquarters."

This effort has been instrumental to Menara KWSP's success, hence it is being awarded Gold for the Below 10 Years — Non-strata Office category at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

KFPM managing director Kuruvilla Abraham notes that as it is designed and built with sustainability in mind, Menara KWSP has many green features incorporated from its conception, with the main focus being energy savings.

He says the building uses green concrete for its construction and the façade has low-emissivity glass panels that allow sunlight to enter but also reflect heat.

"On top of that, it has solar panels that contribute about 10% in energy savings monthly. The lights are motion-activated as well. We deployed a high-tech building management system (BMS) and smart building system (SBS) to assist in controlling the air-conditioning and ventilation systems, lighting, booking of facilities, car park management, security and complaints," Kuruvilla says. "The environmentally friendly design of Menara

KWSP follows Malaysian GreenRE requirements. Using low-emitting, sustainable materials and sophisticated energy-saving systems help reduce the building's carbon footprint while enhancing occupants' well-being and productivity."

Citing a further example of green practices, he notes that only green cleaning products made of non-toxic, biodegradable formulations are allowed to be used for cleaning work in the building.

Managing the complexities

Managing a new high-tech, smart building comes with its own set of challenges, stemming largely from the complex systems and technologies integrated into the building's infrastructure, notes Kuruvilla.

"Menara KWSP is incorporated with advanced systems such as BMS, SBS and Internet of Things (IoT) devices. Managing these technologies requires specialised knowledge and expertise to ensure they function optimally and integrate seamlessly with each other," he says, adding that integrating these systems and ensuring their interoperability can be challenging.

"Signal transfer issues between different types of equipment within BMS and SBS sometimes arise, requiring careful planning and coordination to resolve. Thus, Menara KWSP requires regular maintenance and upkeep to ensure the proper functioning of its sophisticated systems. This includes routine inspections, software updates and troubleshooting of technical issues. It's essential to have qualified personnel with the necessary skills to perform these tasks effectively."

As such, KFPM provides its staff with ongoing training and education to keep them abreast of new technologies and best practices that are essential for efficient building management.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 48



The lounge area at the lobby of Menara KWSP

SHAHRILL BASRI/ THE EDGE


 Kuruvilla and KWSP chief financial officer Mohd Hafiz Kassim (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan and *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat


Located at Kwa-sa Damansara, Menara KWSP serves as the institutional investor's new headquarters



Emphasising Person-Centred Care

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Our Achievements



Finalist for the Flagship Medical Tourism Hospital Programme 2023-2025
Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC)



Global Health Asia Pacific Awards 2024

- Standout Jury Award for Hospital of the Year in Asia-Pacific
- Most Sustainable Healthcare Institution of the Year in Asia-Pacific
- Health Screening Provider of the Year in Asia-Pacific
- Value-Based Hospital of the Year in Asia-Pacific
- Smart Hospital of the Year in Asia-Pacific



Australian Council on Healthcare Standards International Centre of Excellence Certification



Australian Council on Healthcare Standards International Accreditation



The Edge Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024



Sustainability & CSR Malaysia Awards 2024



Newsweek/Statista World's Best Hospitals 2024



Newsweek/Statista Best Specialized Hospital Asia Pacific 2023 - Cardiology



Newsweek/Statista Best Specialized Hospital Asia Pacific 2023 - Orthopaedics



Malaysian Society for Quality in Health Accreditation



The Star Export Excellence Awards Business Achiever Award 2023



GlobalHealth Asia-Pacific Awards 2023



GlobalHealth Asia-Pacific Awards 2022



Healthcare Asia Awards 2022



GlobalHealth Asia-Pacific Awards 2021



Healthcare Asia Awards 2020



GlobalHealth Asia-Pacific Awards 2020



The Star Outstanding Business Awards 2016



Frost & Sullivan Award 2017



Asia Corporate Excellence & Sustainability Awards 2018



The Star's Export Excellence Award 2019



Global Brand Award Malaysia Power Brand 2018/2019

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To Comfort Always

Be aware of the challenges

FROM PAGE 46

He points out that it can be a complex issue to strike a balance between energy savings, occupants' comfort and operational needs. "While Menara KWSP offers opportunities for energy optimisation and sustainability through smart technologies, achieving optimal energy efficiency requires careful monitoring and management of energy consumption patterns," he says.

Therefore, he reckons that it is crucial to ensure a positive user experience for occupants of Menara KWSP as this involves not only providing intuitive interfaces for controlling building systems but also addressing any issues or concerns promptly to enhance occupant satisfaction and productivity.

In addition, Menara KWSP is subject to regulatory requirements and standards related to building codes, safety and environmental sustainability to maintain high sustainability points for GreenRE.

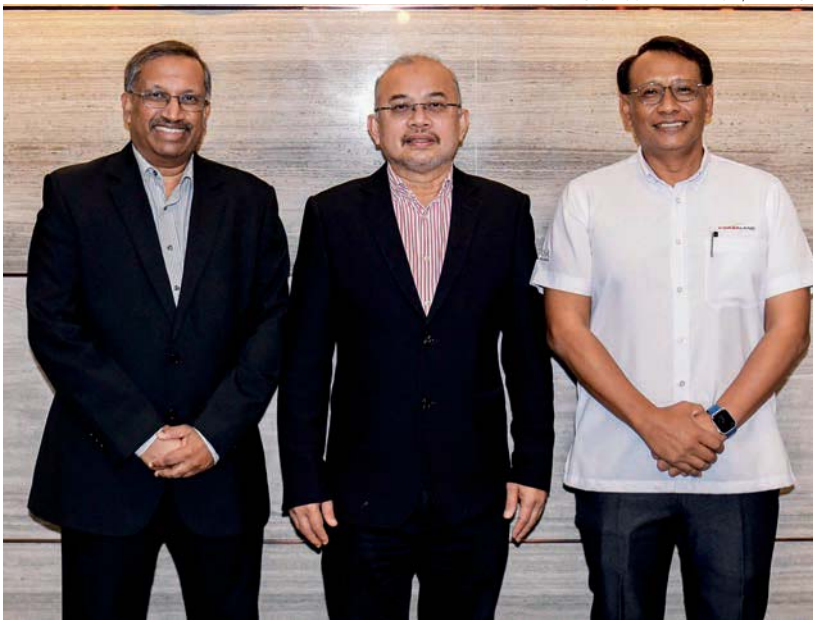
"Staying compliant with these regulations requires diligent monitoring and adherence to applicable laws and guidelines. We are fully aware of all the risks and challenges of managing Menara KWSP," he says, adding that KPFM also leverages its experience in managing high-tech buildings worldwide.

Owing to the scale and complexity of operations, managing Menara KWSP requires meticulous financial management, Kuruvilla notes, adding that KPFM reviews the building expenditure budget at least once a year to ensure the expenses are within budget.

"For Menara KWSP, all expenses involve two layers of approval from KPFM and KUSB to ensure the expenses adhere to the budget and as specified in the service agreement between the owner and appointed vendors," he explains.

KUSB has also empowered KPFM to employ a cloud-based property management software, known as HEVEA iViva, to centralise operations, maintenance and management that can be accessed via desktop or mobile applications.

Kuruvilla notes that not only can the team at Menara KWSP streamline complaint management processes by using the HEVEA iViva platform but they can also track performance metrics, analyse data, solicit feedback and continuously improve the quality of service delivery



(From left): Kuruvilla, Abd Kharis and Mohd Zanaim

to tenants. "This proactive approach ensures that tenant concerns are addressed promptly, leading to higher satisfaction levels and a better overall tenant experience."

The team at Menara KWSP plans to further improve energy savings and sustainability. Kuruvilla says all the equipment involved in the preventive maintenance systems is to be monitored closely to ensure it runs with high efficiency.

The team also aims to promote waste-recycling programmes, install water-saving faucets and implement water-efficient landscaping practices.

Improving indoor air quality

Besides planned and preventive maintenance, Menara KWSP also takes into consideration indoor air quality. Kuruvilla reckons that a proper building ventilation system can prevent harmful air pollutants from circulating and leading to potential health problems.

"Thus, KPFM works closely with the appointed air-conditioning contractor to ensure the air quality is within the specified limits according to the guidelines from the Department of Occupational Safety and Health," he says, adding that the lessons learnt from the pandemic have shown that it is essential for the building owner and KPFM to

further improve indoor air quality.

Meanwhile, the HEVEA iViva application is also integrated with toilet management in the SBS, Kuruvilla says. This allows for the system to closely monitor the carbon dioxide levels in each washroom via a dedicated tablet in each washroom.

Users can conveniently provide feedback on any issues by scanning the QR code displayed on the tablet. KPFM oversees the accurate recording of data and ensures that the settings for each operational system align with specified requirements.

Since October 2023, KPFM has upgraded the air filters in the entire

Quick facts

NAME	Menara KWSP
DEVELOPER	Kwasa Utama Sdn Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Office
LAND AREA	5.2 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2022
STOREYS	12
BUILT-UP	1,695,686 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	Offices – 641,565 sq ft Basement and car park – 576,963 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	477,158 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM1.45 psf per month
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	100%
CAR PARK BAYS	1,898

AMENITIES
Kwasa Damansara and Kwasa Sentral MRT stations, Kota Damansara Community Forest Reserve and Thomson Hospital Kota Damansara

FACILITIES
Smart building systems, integrated 24-hour security system, building access cards and turnstiles, gym, nursery, cafeteria, clinic, banking, cafeteria, surau, EV charging bays, multipurpose hall and co-sharing spaces

ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES
Full glass wall panels to maximise natural lighting, solar PV system, low-emissivity glass, motion-sensor lights and district cooling system

INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES
Efficient MERV 14 filters, CO2 monitoring equipment and indoor plants

development from MERV 13 to MERV 14, according to the guidance note issued by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Human Resources in 2021, where it is advisable to consider air filters of MERV 13 or higher for buildings with centralised air-conditioning systems to minimise airborne virus transmission.

The MERV 14 non-washable filters offer a higher level of particle capture efficiency, particularly for smaller particles. The MERV 14 can capture particles as small as 0.3 microns, including fine dust, bacteria and viruses, according to Kuruvilla.

The property manager constantly monitors the filter conditions and airflow performance to ensure the occupants' comfort is maintained at the desired level. Furthermore, the filters are replaced biannually.

"The filter's design incorporates specialised materials and pleated structures, which play a crucial role in its high-efficiency filtration. Replacement every six months is recommended to ensure optimal performance, maintain air quality and uphold the efficiency of the air-conditioning systems," Kuruvilla says.

To further enhance air quality, about 300 indoor potted plants have been placed throughout the building and a third-party landscaping company has been engaged to maintain these plants thrice weekly. Kuruvilla says these plants absorb pollutants such as volatile organic compounds and carbon dioxide, releasing oxygen and creating a healthier indoor environment. This natural air purification capability fosters a more conducive atmosphere for the occupants of Menara KWSP.

Finally, Kuruvilla notes that by focusing on these planned efforts, Menara KWSP aims to align its operations with the high standards expected of one of Malaysia's most successfully managed buildings. "These initiatives not only contribute to cost savings and operational efficiency but also demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable practices, enhancing the building's reputation as a leader in sustainable building management," he says.



The new HQ's cafeteria



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BELOW 10 YEARS

Multiple-owned Strata Residential

GOLD**The Astaka @ One Bukit Senyum**

Meeting high expectations

BY CHAI YEE HOONG

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Standing as the tallest residential twin towers in Southeast Asia and the tallest building in the country outside of Kuala Lumpur at 1,020ft (72-storey Tower A) and 915ft (67-storey Tower B), The Astaka @ One Bukit Senyum in Johor Bahru is an icon in its own right. Managing an iconic property certainly comes with added expectations.

"There's never been a compromise for us in terms of the level of [management and maintenance] at The Astaka. Security, cleaning and all other services that are required have to be of a high standard," says Knight Frank Property Management Sdn Bhd (KFPM) managing director Kuruvilla Abraham.

The freehold luxury condominium was completed in June 2018 and comprises 435 units, including penthouse duplexes, with built-ups ranging from 2,207 to 12,700 sq ft. The property is part of the larger 11.85-acre integrated One Bukit Senyum development by Astaka Padu Sdn Bhd in Bukit Senyum and located 800m from Johor Bahru's CIQ complex as well as the upcoming Johor Bahru-Singapore Rapid Transit System (RTS).

KFPM was appointed property manager during the developer management period in December 2018. The joint management body (JMB) for the property, which was formed in June 2019, is currently in its third term.

"In addition to having VVIP residents, we also have quite a few international buyers, including Singaporeans, so expectations are on a different level. I'm glad to say that we've sustained the standard [of the property] from day one," says Kuruvilla. "If you walk into The Astaka today, it looks as new as it was day one and that's down to the team and how they've been able to manage it to that level."

And because property management is not static, KFPM constantly looks to raise the standards, he adds. "We are constantly looking at how we can improve further and how we can enhance the whole community living at the property."

The Astaka @ One Bukit Senyum is a Gold recipient at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024 under the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category.

Accountability takes the lead

Knight Frank works hard to ensure seamless building operations at The Astaka. "Our main goal is to ensure there are minimum to zero disruptions in terms of essential services such as water supply, electricity and lifts," says KFPM senior manager Nagashanthini Sukalingam.

"As you know, this is a very tall building, so we really strive not to have any major breakdown of lifts, the fire-fighting system and CCTVs...our main KPI is to ensure all the systems are functioning. And even if there is a breakdown period, we ensure these things are rectified within 24 to 48 hours."

To achieve its goals, scheduled preventive maintenance plays an important role, says Nagashanthini. "We don't just depend on the site team to carry out all this because it's quite a big job, so we are supported by our internal HQ at Knight Frank, who are subject matter experts and specialise in things such as M&E, engineering and safety and security. They will inspect the building annually and help the site team make sure compliance and

The Astaka @ One Bukit Senyum is a freehold luxury condominium comprising 435 units with built-ups ranging from 2,207 to 12,700 sq ft



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE



Kuruvilla and The Astaka JMB chairman Shanmugapathy Kathitasapathy (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan

good practices are in place. The building manager receives an audit report at the end of every year and we evaluate what has been resolved and outstanding."

Additionally, technology is key to KFPM's management of The Astaka. "In 2021, we introduced iKFPM, an internally developed system that belongs to Knight Frank, so residents are able to upload their feedback, which automatically generates a work order for the property management team, who are then given a KPI to resolve the issue. We are quite transparent as the reports are shared with the joint management committee every month so they can see the complaints raised and what

issues have been resolved or are still pending," she says, adding that only the owners can close the complaints they had raised.

In fact, the work order system has an escalation process in place. "That's another thing that we take pride in. Let's say a deadline given for a particular complaint is three days. If by the third day the issue is not closed, it is then escalated directly to our directors. So we see the involvement of senior management, even if it's the smallest complaint," Nagashanthini explains.

KFPM has also implemented a no-cash policy for an efficient collection process. "We implemented that policy when we took over The Astaka, so payments are done online and receipts are generated automatically on the iKFPM system, which also helps reduce extra manpower and assists the joint management committee in keeping the number of staff at an optimum level."

The Astaka has maintained a healthy collection rate at 87%. Its occupancy rate is at 49%, but it goes up to about 70% on weekends as many of the owners keep their units exclusively as weekend homes, according to KFPM director Nageswaran Muniandy.

Expanding initiatives

One of the initiatives KFPM introduced at The Astaka was the shuttle service. "Being in a key location in Johor Bahru and having many residents, especially from Singapore, who sometimes take the train, bus or Grab from the CIQ, we saw the need for a shuttle service. After discussing it

with the joint management committee, they were more than happy for us to incorporate this as an added service, with a third-party vendor,” says Nagashanthini.

Introduced last year, the shuttle service is available four times daily, except on Wednesdays, to key locations such as Komtar JBCC, the CIQ, KSL City Mall and Mid Valley Southkey, including scheduled pick-ups. “This initiative is widely appreciated by the residents and each trip is almost full,” she adds.

To commensurate with the type of property The Astaka is, the vehicles provided for the shuttle service are not your typical van or bus but rather dedicated six-seaters complete with leather seats, says Kuruvilla. “Everything we provide is in line with luxury living standards.”

While the initiative started out as a trial run to gauge the response, KFPM is now looking to expand the services. “Initially, we thought of doing it on a trial basis to see how it works out, but the response was very good, so we are now looking at the second phase, where apart from doing the existing routes, we are planning to offer something like a private charter, where residents can book a vehicle to send them to a location and get picked up by the same one,” he says.

The property manager also has plans to expand its services to include door-to-door pickups from the neighbouring country. “We can arrange to pick up a resident in Singapore, bring him to The Astaka and send him back. But this is work in progress as we need the approval of the transport ministries on both sides.”

Another initiative that KFPM implemented at The Astaka was to open an alternative access route to Jalan Tebrau due to the heavy traffic approaching the immigration office on public holidays and weekends. “We have opened up an alternate route that connects to the basement car park and created a second entrance, which is only open during peak season, so residents won’t get stuck in the heavy traffic,” says Nagashanthini.

Meanwhile, KFPM is looking at making electric vehicle (EV) charging stations available to the residents by year end. “There’s a need for it because owners are actually requesting to install their own. But due to Bomba’s strict guidelines, we’re looking at allocating two of the visitor park bays as common charging stations. We’re going for zero capex because it won’t be fair to residents who do not have an EV, so it’ll be a pay per use system and the profit can be shared between the provider and the JMB,” she says.

Effective management

Having successfully managed The Astaka without any increase in service charges since vacant possession is another thing KFPM takes pride in. “The property has extensive facilities, so there’s a lot of maintenance to be done. Most residential developments, more often than not, need to increase their service charges after the defect liability period because warranties expire, comprehensive contracts are no longer comprehensive and so on,” says Nagashanthini.

“We were able to maintain the existing service charge because we do a lot of cost optimisation like having in-house technicians carry out the day-to-day maintenance of things such as the automated waste collection system, as well as having transparent tender processes.”

The property manager has also successfully kept the exclusivity of the property by curtailing short-term rentals, says KFPM senior building manager Manimaran Raman. “A lot of the residents here are VIPs, so we made a lot of effort to go through booking platforms to identify units listed as short-term rentals. At the last AGM, we got approval from the owners to ensure that Airbnb and short-term rentals are not allowed at the property, and this was inserted in the additional by-law of The Astaka, with additional approvals to deactivate access cards of the units if they were



SAM FONG/THE EDGE

found to have been misused and impose penalties. At the moment, we are not aware of any short-term rental happening at the property.”

As property management will always have its challenges, having a good team is important, says Kuruvilla. “Property management is not all about the property manager, but the collaboration. For us, it is with the developer and the JMB and eventually the management corporation (MC). We have to be a good working team. So I would say that one of the successes of The Astaka is the great working relationship between Knight Frank, Astaka Padu and now the JMB, and hopefully the MC as well soon.

“It has been a great journey even though it has not always been smooth sailing. But the great thing is we work together to resolve things and The Astaka is where it is today, a well-managed and sustainable property.”

From left: The Astaka JMB treasurer Ang Siew Peng, Manimaran, Kuruvilla, JMB chairman Shanmugapathy Kathitasapathy, Nageswaran and Nagashanthini

The Astaka's cigar lounge, swimming pool area and one of the lift lobbies



Quick facts

NAME	The Astaka @ One Bukit Senyum
DEVELOPER	Astaka Padu Sdn Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	2.42 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2018
STOREYS	Tower A - 71 Tower B - 66
UNITS	435
BUILT-UP	2,207 to 12,700 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	1,429,996.26 sq ft (excluding car parks)
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM4.00 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	49%
CAR PARK BAYS	967

AMENITIES
Sultan Iskandar Customs, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) Complex, Eastern Dispersal Link, Berjaya Waterfront Ferry Terminal, Komtar JBCC, Kota Raya and City Square shopping complexes, Sekolah Menengah Dato Jaafar, Foon Yew High School, Wisma Maria Specialist Centre, Columbia Asia Specialist Centre, KPJ Specialist Centre, Hospital Sultanah Aminah, Trove Hotel, Double Tree By Hilton, Capri by Fraser, Berjaya Waterfront Hotel, Grand Paragon Hotel and Holiday Inn Johor Bahru City Centre

FACILITIES
Level 6 and 6A – Gymnasium, spa, business hub, surau, squash court, games area, changing rooms, sauna and steam rooms, function hall, barbecue pits, wading pool, swimming pool, jacuzzi, meditation area, reflexology garden, recreation garden, reading room and dancing/aerobic room

Level 66 of Tower A and Level 58 of Tower B – Sky lounges with facilities such as games room, entertainment room, dining area, live kitchen, cigar lounge, discussion rooms and themed outdoor Zen and tropical gardens

ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES
Green Building Index-certified building, energy saving LED lights (strip lights, T5, T8 and down lights) and monitoring energy usage via building automation system

INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES
Confined spaces such as the gym, dancing room and business hub are designed to allow natural ventilation; contractual periodic maintenance of ACMV (air-conditioning and mechanical ventilation) system; and air-sanitising devices in all passenger lifts

PICTURES BY ASTAKA PADU



**THE EDGE MALAYSIA-ILAM SUSTAINABLE
 LANDSCAPE AWARD 2024 — Landscape Design**
GOLD
TNB Platinum Bangsar

A different kind of spark

 BY **CHIN WAI LUN**
 city.country@bizedge.com

“Where we are standing now used to be a car park — a lifeless concrete desert,” says Tenaga Nasional Bhd chief global business solutions officer Datuk Ahmad Hushairi Ibrahim. He is referring to the former brownfield site adjacent to Tenaga’s original and iconic headquarters built in the 1960s, now known as Bangunan Warisan TNB.

“Bangsar had more greenery in the early days. Over time, there was a boom in development, turning the area into a concrete jungle. Then, the [Tenaga employees’] quarters deteriorated due to age. Hence, we felt the need to rejuvenate the area and that was how the concept for the new headquarters, TNB Platinum, came about,” he explains as we stroll through the lush landscape.

“We wanted to design and build something that would last for a long time. So, the design of the building and the landscaping were done in a sustainable and responsible manner.”

Completed in 2022, the Green Building Index (GBI) Platinum-certified TNB Platinum sits atop a 13.6-acre site, transforming the area and bringing a much-needed “green jolt” to the Bangsar suburb.

The arboretum forest, with more than 1,380 forest plants, envelopes about 51% of the development. The trees and undergrowth form a multi-layer canopy that can be controlled via the monitoring of plant coverage, moisture and nutrient levels. Among the foliage lie four office buildings that progressively step down from a peak of 19 storeys to the two-storey Leo Moggie Convention Centre, named in honour of former Tenaga chairman Tan Sri Leo Moggie.

“The cascading design is one of our special features. It keeps the density low and allows the office buildings to blend with the environment and surroundings,” says Ahmad Hushairi, adding that the TNB Platinum is designed to be a sprawling campus, a concept that is benchmarked against other green and sustainable corporate campuses worldwide.

And rejuvenate the area, it did. TNB Platinum is recognised as a Gold winner under the Landscape Design category at *The Edge Malaysia-ILAM Sustainable Landscape Awards 2024*, a feature of *The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024*.

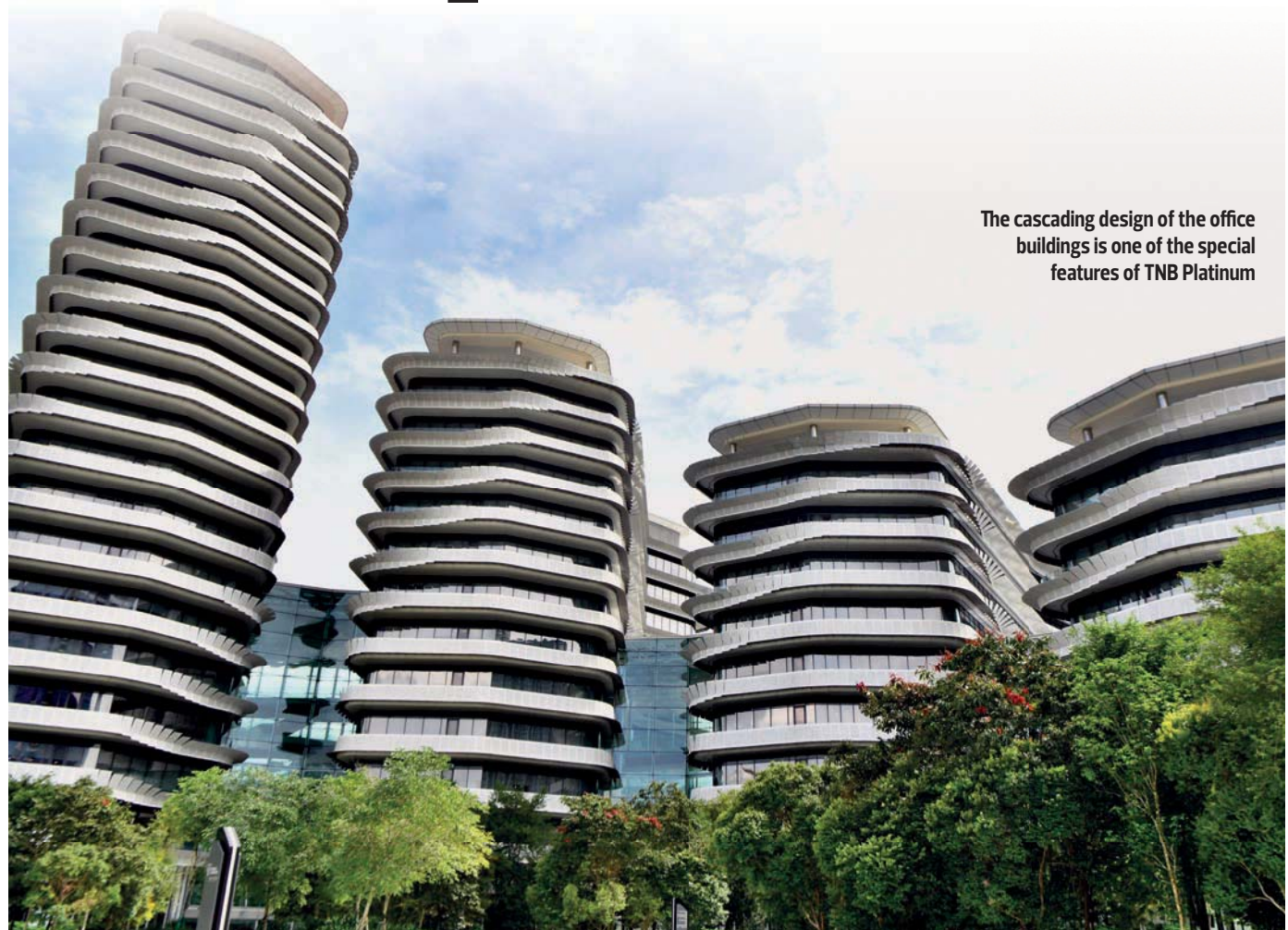
Meanwhile, at the heart of the development lies the aptly named Spark Plaza, which connects all the buildings and serves as the forecourt as well as a place to gather and interact amid the verdant landscape. The plaza also connects to the food court in the basement via a spiral staircase that is surrounded by greenery. The other ancillary buildings — that of Tenaga’s charity arm Persatuan Wanita Tenaga Nasional Bhd (Pelitawanis), a childcare centre and an interactive plaza — complete the development.

The inspiration behind this landscape was creating a “green” spark that serves as a genesis or trigger for a responsive and sustainable office design, says Ahmad Hushairi. This is achieved by having green spaces that interweave around the development.

“The landscaping and green design features are cohesively infused into the development of TNB Platinum, proving TNB’s seriousness and aspirations towards environment, sustainability and governance (ESG), as well as its connection and our commitment to the energy transition agenda,” says Ahmad Hushairi.

A thriving forest canopy

According to Praxcis Design Sdn Bhd, the landscape architect hired by Tenaga, the extensive planting



The cascading design of the office buildings is one of the special features of TNB Platinum



TNB CEO Datuk Megat Jalaluddin Megat Hassan and Yap (third and fourth from left) with (from left) The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards’ chief judge Au Foong Yee and *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong



The plants act as a ‘green refrigerant’, reducing urban heat

frames in the buildings allow the prevailing winds to cool the structures, reducing air-conditioning costs by about 20% and benefiting the surrounding neighbourhood. “Lush green areas are known to lower surface temperatures by up to 7 degrees Celsius. By allocating some 50% of the site with green soft landscaping, it acts as a heat exchange mechanism, allowing the winds to reduce the ambient temperature as they pass through the buildings,” says Praxcis Design director Yap Nga Tuan.

“Careful planning is required as we select the suitable tree species known for its broad canopies to create an enclosure but remain open enough to allow some sunlight to penetrate. They offer a respite from the heat, providing a space to unwind and relax. The lush plants not only enhance the aesthetics and provide shade, but also act as a refrigerant to reduce the ambient air temperature,” says Yap.

The landscape employs the use of light-coloured pavements that can reduce the overall heat island effect. “Heat is reflected, and this helps create a cooler microclimate by up to 20% compared with dark-coloured pavements,” she notes.

“We even labelled the plant species for educational purposes,” Ahmad Hushairi chimes in, pointing to the signs at the base of each plant. The development houses a range of tropical plants, from one of the tallest tropical tree species — the *Koompassia excelsa* (tualang tree) — to shrubs such as the ubiquitous pandan plant. “We consider the rainforest as our nature, our national treasure,” he adds.

Yap points out that some of the tree species were selected based on their bird-attracting characteristics. “When birds come in, they act as a biological pest control. We don’t need to resort to the use of pesticides or any chemical interventions,” she says.

That itself led to cost savings in terms of maintenance, she adds. “We mimicked the natural rainforest setting by selecting native trees and undergrowth. This reduces the need for more irrigation and maintenance, contributing to the lowering of cost and increasing sustainability.”

PICTURES BY SAM FONG/THE EDGE



The community garden (left). The development houses more than 1,380 species of forest plants.

Meanwhile, TNB has also taken note of the recent spate of incidents involving bad weather and falling trees in the country. “I would attribute this to climate change. It is something we want to re-look as it is not common to see large trees falling like that. We will plan for strategies to manage and care for the trees – a thorough review. Even the rise in temperatures can affect our tree species,” notes Ahmad Hushairi.

“We look at this as an opportunity rather than a problem. This is because it provides a way to increase the competency of our team in terms of better managing the property.”

On top of that, TNB Platinum utilises rainwater harvesting, greywater recycling and a condensate water recovery system to minimise water usage. Automatic water irrigation systems also increase irrigation efficiency.

“This is pivotal to ensuring the landscape receives the requisite water volume, thus mitigating water wastage,” Yap explains.

Hence, with all the meticulous planning and selection, the overall cost of maintaining the landscape is kept at a manageable RM18,000 per month, which translates into about RM0.03 psf per month for the entire 13.6-acre site.

To complement the foliage below, the grass-covered roofs reduce the amount of heat that is absorbed by the usual concrete roofs, which translates into a reduction in ambient temperature for the floors below. In addition, photovoltaic panels convert solar radiation into energy, enhancing sustainability as well as acting as shade for the roof slabs.

An inviting workplace

The result is a vibrant and inviting environment. After all, a workplace does not have to be solely utilitarian. The office inhabitants are greeted by a seamless transition from the workplace to the natural realm of the outdoors. This biophilic design concept fosters a harmonious relationship between the environment and the office space, improving the well-being of the employees.

“[The landscaping of] TNB Platinum is a response to the client’s aspirations of sustainable development, from the lush landscapes to the green roofs, they act in sync to reduce urban heat and create an opportunity to have a unique public space in the heart of Bangsar. It is also according to Tenaga’s desire to create a workplace of the future, one that is timeless and yet considerate of the surrounding environment,” says Yap.

“We wanted to transform TNB Platinum into a workplace that our staff would love to be in. It’s a unique environment that gets rid of the Monday blues. People look forward to being in the office,” says Ahmad Hushairi.

For instance, he shares that employees are con-



Ahmad Hushairi and Yap

tributing to the community garden within the site. The garden is adorned with arches and netting to provide some shelter from harsh weather while serving as climbing poles for vines and creepers. “It has over 10 species of fruits, vegetables and herbs that the employees are free to take and exchange,” says Ahmad Hushairi.

“TNB Platinum epitomises a commitment to the overall well-being of its employees, not just in design but also in shaping workplace culture and future workplace development, a crucial foundation to achieve Tenaga’s sustainability pathway goal of net zero emissions by 2050,” says Yap.

“We hope that by getting recognition for this project and [by] winning the award, the general public and developers will be able to realise the importance of sustainability in design and its positive contributions to the environment and for future generations.”

Ahmad Hushairi says Tenaga would like to explore the concept of introducing more greenery in the interior of the development. “We have observed several overseas projects that adopt mid-sized trees but we have to study the feasibility of doing so here in terms of maintenance. We would have to get the right species of plants that do not shed as much and are suitable for indoor planting. Overall, the thoughtful integration of sustainable landscaping principles aligns with our vision for TNB Platinum, emphasising the importance of not just architectural excellence but also environmental responsibility.”

MOHD IZWAN MOHD NAZAM/THE EDGE



Over 50% of the site is covered in greenery



Employees are greeted by a seamless transition between the workplace and the outdoors

BELOW 10 YEARS

Multiple-owned Strata Residential

SILVER**Residensi Duta Kiara**
 BY **PRIYA DEVAN**
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A distinctive condominium development in the Klang Valley, Residensi Duta Kiara, formerly known as Agile Mont Kiara, offers a range of spacious and resort-like homes in a 10-acre freehold parcel.

Developed by Agile PJD Development Sdn Bhd, the development consists of 11 blocks (Towers A to K) ranging from eight to 44 storeys. The entire development has 813 units with built-ups ranging from 1,215 to 5,090 sq ft. Residensi Duta Kiara was completed in November 2019 and the keys were handed over to the owners in 2020.

Residensi Duta Kiara Management Corp (MC) appointed Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd (HBMK) as the property manager in May last year. HBMK senior property manager Cyanne Lim shares what had to be done as soon as HBMK took over. [With the previous property manager], certain things were not done to the standards of the management corporation (MC), so they decided to appoint us. Upon taking over, we found that some housekeeping of the documents and systems had to be done; so, we spent the first few months on a lot of editing and recording.”

Now that everything is in place, Lim says her team can focus on maintaining the property well for years to come.

For approaching matters in a swift manner and constantly playing its role as a middle person between the developer and residents, Residensi Duta Kiara is the Silver winner in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category of *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Improvement initiatives

Upon cleaning up the property’s documentation and recordings, Lim says, the team got straight to work, carrying out major upgrading and enhancement projects, including replacement of timber decks at the swimming pools; installation of glass canopies in the swimming pools’ pergolas, ceiling fans in the common areas, motion sensors in the mailbox room and racks in the parcel room; as well as enhancing the waterproofing, drainage and aesthetics in the car wash bay.

As for landscaping, new plants were placed along the multipurpose hall and roundabout area and a plant propagation system was introduced.

Apart from that, HBMK director Ho Kim Heung says, several green initiatives were also implemented to ensure the development could save energy and costs.

“A rainwater harvesting tank was brought in to reduce the consumption of water and reduce our water bill. This system not only supports eco-friendly landscaping but also plays a crucial role in sustainable water management, reducing the impact on the environment.”

He adds that Residensi Duta Kiara prioritises organic waste decomposition as part of its eco-friendly initiatives. “The community actively composts organic waste generated from garden trimmings. This composting process not only diverts waste from landfills but also produces nutrient-rich compost that is used in community gardens.”

Ho says electric vehicle (EV) chargers were installed in car park bays. “These strategically placed charging stations cater to eco-conscious individuals, facilitating the seamless adoption of electric vehicles in our community.

“By embracing EV technology, we contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions and promote cleaner, more sustainable transportation options. Residents are not only provided with a practical solution for their daily commute but they also become integral contributors to a greener and more environmentally responsible future.”



Striving for long-term upkeep



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

HBMK senior manager Shirleen Wong and Lim (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards’ chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan

Solvable challenges

According to Lim, about 40% of the residents at Residensi Duta Kiara are Chinese nationals; the rest are locals and other nationals. Given that the development has a rather large international population, Lim says one of the main challenges her team faces is communication.

“So, when we have events, make announcements or post notices, we try to provide two languages, English and Mandarin, for smoother communication. We also try our best to educate the residents on Malaysia’s Strata Management Act because different countries have different strata living practices.

“We are always explaining to the owners about the practices in Malaysia and try to make them understand our procedures. We usually guide them so they know the next action they need to take.”

Concurring with Lim, Residensi Duta Kiara MC treasurer Jane Chen, who is a Chinese national, says, “Because there are many Chinese owners, we also use communication platforms that they are familiar with, for example, WeChat, Douyin and LINE. We have this intention to give all the residents more platforms so that they can use any one of them to communicate with the management office.”

Within the management team, Lim says, communication is via WhatsApp. “Six main WhatsApp groups have been established to facilitate communication between the HBMK management team and the management committee, as well as between the HBMK management team and service providers.

“This comprehensive communication strategy ensures seamless coordination, allowing the management team and service providers to be on standby 24/7. This proactive approach enables them to address both daily operational demands and emergency cases promptly, contributing to the overall efficiency and success of the development.”

Besides communicating with residents, Ho says, his team is also currently communicating with the developer to work on the defects that were identified during the defect liability period, which ended in July last year.

“We are still coordinating with the developer to rectify the defects. They’re coming back to us. They are doing certain work in the car park area

PICTURES BY SHAHRILL BASRI/ THE EDGE



Residensi Duta Kiara comprises four high-rise, two mid-rise and five low-rise towers

Quick facts	
NAME	Residensi Duta Kiara
DEVELOPER	Agile PJD Development Sdn Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	10 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2019
STOREYS	Royale (low-rise) – 8 Elite (mid-rise) – 18 Premium (high-rise) – 44
UNITS	813
BUILT-UP	1,215 to 5,090 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	2,540,895 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM4.224 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	71%
CAR PARK BAYS	1,919
AMENITIES	
Garden International School, (2.7km), Mont Kiara Internation School (1.5km), French International School (2.7 km), Trinity London College (2.5km) and Publika (800m)	
FACILITIES	
Swimming pool, children’s pool, fitness corner, foot reflexology, jogging track, children playground, indoor playground, cabana, sky gym, plunge pool, aqua gym, fun pool, steam room, sky lounge, viewing deck, BBQ pits, reading room, games room and sky suites	
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	
Motion sensor at mailbox room, harvesting water tank, plant propagation initiative and organic waste decomposition and EV chargers	
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	
Ventilation fan at car park levels, newly installed ceiling and wall fan at basement lift lobby	



Improvements made by HBMK included the replacement of timber decks by the swimming pool and installation of glass canopies in the pergolas



The multipurpose hall-cum-reading room

and doing some additional layering to the surface of the basketball court. The MC is doing everything they can to accelerate the defect rectification process with our help,” he explains.

Long-term care needed

Long-term maintenance and upkeep for a residential property like Residensi Duta Kiara typically involves several key components to ensure that the property remains in good condition and provides a safe and pleasant living environment, says Lim. Common elements of a long-term maintenance and upkeep plan include routine inspections of common areas, facilities and equipment to identify and address issues early; and regular checks of fire alarms, extinguishers, emergency exits and other safety equipment. The team also practises preventive maintenance of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems; conducts routine checks and maintenance of plumbing systems to prevent leaks and water damage; and regularly inspects and maintains electrical systems to prevent outages and hazard events. In addition, repairs and replacements are conducted from time to time and minor repairs of leaks, broken tiles or faulty lighting are promptly carried out. Major repairs include roof replacement, structural repairs or elevator maintenance. Budgeting and financial planning are also important, Lim notes. “We expect to establish and maintain reserve funds for unexpected repairs and major maintenance projects as well as develop



From left: Lim, Chen, Residensi Duta Kiara building manager Stella Hor and Ho

an annual maintenance budget to cover routine expenses and planned projects.” To ensure long-term financial stability, she adds, regular reviews and adjustment of maintenance fees are needed. “The management conducts annual reviews of the maintenance fees to ensure they are aligned with inflation and the increasing cost of property upkeep. We also do efficient budget management whereby a detailed and transparent budgeting process ensures funds are allocated efficiently across all necessary maintenance and improvement projects. “The sinking fund is also carefully managed and invested to ensure growth and availability of funds when significant repairs or replacements are needed. We also encourage residents to participate in financial planning meetings and provide regular updates on the development’s financial health to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility.” She adds that cost optimisation initiatives such

as using LED lights and the introduction of the rainwater harvesting system also help the team prepare for long-term financial sustainability. Ho adds, “The use of energy-efficient LED lights is a proactive measure to reduce operational expenses and promote environmental responsibility at Residensi Duta Kiara. We have placed them in specific areas like mailboxes and staircases, and light sensors enable adaptive lighting adjustments, further enhancing energy efficiency. “Extending our commitment to sustainable practices, we have introduced a timer system in the garden landscaping and lift lobby. This innovation allows controlled activation and deactivation of LED garden lights during specific periods, aligning with sunset and sunrise.” Positive outlook According to Ho, over the last three years, Residensi Duta Kiara has experienced significant fluctuations in psf value each quarter. The lowest — RM904 — was seen in the fourth quarter of 2023; the highest was RM946 achieved in the second quarter of 2023. The average psf at Residensi Duta Kiara in 2023 was RM922.75. Rental rates, on the other hand, have risen. In 2022, the rates were RM800 to RM900 psf, but in 2023, they had gone up to RM900 to RM1,000 psf. Ho adds that the highest recorded rental yield in 2023 was 5.38% in the fourth quarter. In contrast, the lowest rental yield was 3.82% in the third quarter of 2022. “These figures provide insights into the varying performance of rental yields over the specific periods. “These trends suggest varying investment dynamics. Looking ahead, ongoing fluctuations in the property market may impact Residensi Duta Kiara’s value. However, the diverse offerings, variety of unit sizes and strategic focus on sustainable amenities position the property favourably for future value appreciation.”

10 YEARS AND ABOVE
Specialised

SILVER

Island Hospital

Lessons from the past

BY PRIYA DEVAN
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From the intersection of Peel Highway, Jalan Pierce and Jalan Dunn, one can spot both the old and new parts of Island Hospital, known as Macalister Wing and Peel Wing respectively. Located in George Town, Penang, Island Hospital is a private medical facility that has been operating for almost three decades and is well known for orthopaedics, general surgery, oncology, gastroenterology as well as cardiac sciences. Its main clientele are medical tourists.

The wings are the first and second phases of the Island Medical City master plan spanning 1.8 million sq ft in gross floor area (GFA). Upcoming projects under the master plan include a third wing (GFA: 365,736 sq ft), a medical suite tower (GFA: 526,028 sq ft) and a hotel plus assisted living facility (GFA: 304,920 sq ft).

The Macalister Wing was established in 1996 with a five-storey building. According to chief of staff Lim Kooi Ling, in 2011 the owners and management wanted to improve the care of the increasing number of patients.

To address this, two additional levels of wards were added to the structure, alongside an attached annex building comprising eight storeys and a five-storey carpark. Today, Macalister Wing boasts 295 beds and has a GFA of 300,311 sq ft.

Lim says, “We were very small when we first started, with 11 doctors and a workforce of less than 100 people. Fast forward 10 years to 2006, by then we had routinely seen 50,000 medical tourists a year. And 10 years after that, we saw 100,000 patients a year.”

From there, continuous growth was all Island Hospital witnessed. Due to the influx of health travellers over the years, the hospital needed to be expanded.

Completed in 2022, the 12-storey Peel Wing



(Seated, from left) Island Hospital Sdn Bhd senior business development manager Tan Kheng Wei, chief operating officer Goh Kok Yeong, chief of staff Lim Kooi Ling and head of project and operations David Maniam with members of the management team

had 305 beds, complemented by clinics, wards, operating theatres and other facilities. To connect both wings, a 120m underpass walkway 7m below road level was built. Last year, Island Hospital received close to 200,000 health travellers, Lim says. She expects the number to increase over the years, adding that this was why the hospital needed to be upgraded and expanded.

Setting an example of stellar upkeep of a medical facility, Island Hospital is the Silver winner in the 10 Years and Above — Specialised category in The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Taking matters into their own hands

Lim says commercial buildings, especially healthcare facilities, are usually managed by outsourced independent facilities management companies, and that was the case for Island Hospital until the management decided to take the path less travelled.

“We found that this method of management was not practical and the condition of upkeep of the initial Macalister Wing

was not up to the quality and standard that the management wanted, even though it was being managed by a leading facility management company in the healthcare industry.

“The staff deployed to Island Hospital were prioritising cost-cutting over [giving] quality service, which led to unsatisfactory service. Therefore, the outsourced facility management method had to go and a bold decision was taken by the management to carry out the facility maintenance management in-house for Macalister Wing, and followed through to Peel Wing,” she says.

To ensure that the in-house facility management team would be able to operate effectively, Lim says, the higher-ups employed a professional with more than 30 years of experience in the field of construction, maintenance of properties and project management. The rest of the team were professionals in their fields.

“For an in-house maintenance management to be successful, the professionals and the team members need to be committed to

Quick facts	
NAME	Island Hospital
DEVELOPER	Island Hospital Sdn Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Hospital
LAND AREA	8 acres
TENURE	Macalister Wing – Freehold Peel Wing – Leasehold
COMPLETION	Macalister Wing – 1996 Peel Wing – 2022
STOREYS	Macalister Wing – 7 Peel Wing – 12
GROSS FLOOR AREA	Macalister Wing – 300,311 sq ft Peel Wing – 384,240 sq ft
CAR PARK BAYS	Macalister Wing – 396 Peel Wing – 742
FACILITIES	
Cafeteria, vending machine area, concierge, prayer room, VIP holding room, retail pharmacy, bakery, sky garden, green walls and seminar halls	
ENERGY SAVING FEATURES	
Certified green chillers, LED lighting, LED built-in motion sensor lights with dimmable features, motion sensor for escalators, energy-efficient heat pump system, Low-E double-glazed laminated glass panels, building management system (BMS) to optimise energy consumption and rainwater harvesting systems	
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	
High efficiency air filters (Hepa); online monitoring systems to continuously assess Hepa filter conditions, humidity levels and temperature; NEBB-certified independent bodies annually conduct Indoor Air Quality Assurance tests for critical areas such as operating theatres, intensive care units and isolation rooms; and regular inspections of air conditioning ducts in critical areas	



Peel Wing has specialised windows that minimise heat transfer between the exterior and interior



Macalister Wing's renovated lobby



Peel Wing has advanced cancer treatments such as tumour targeting and radiation therapy using the Varian TrueBeam



A 120m underpass walkway connects the two wings

working for the long term. In fact, Island Hospital has been able to achieve that because the turnover rate of our technical staff has been below 5% since [the in-house management team was formed] in Macalister Wing and now in Peel Wing.”

Upgrading for better upkeep

The 28-year-old Macalister Wing has undergone several changes in the past years. They include an open carpark being turned into a multi-storey one managed by a carpark operator; complete refurbishment and provision of new ward facilities; construction of two new operating theatres; and ensuring shorter wait time for surgical procedures.

Apart from that, the management team worked on upgrading some of the hospital's features, including replacing some of the old improperly maintained chillers with energy-efficient certified green ones; replacing defective electrical transformers; replacing heat-generated boilers for hot energy systems with an energy-efficient heat pump system, which also uses heat transfer from the energy-efficient chiller condensers; and switching normal fluorescent lights to energy-efficient LED lighting.

“The challenges that the management team went through at Macalister Wing gave it vast experience in the planning and selection of the right products, materials and management processes to ensure that the new block, Peel Wing, would be managed more efficiently,” says Lim.

“I think that the maintenance of the new wing currently is less challenging because [of the] newer technologies and things are about two years old at this point. Peel Wing has actually been designed from the ground up, and I think it's actually less demanding than Macalister Wing.

“One of the challenges we see in Malaysia is not so much the ability to invest in nice things but to maintain them in good condition. I think with a healthcare facility, it's even more important that we take a long-term view on the maintenance and upkeep of every aspect of the facility, starting from the medical equipment, the facility equipment, to even things like green wall, landscaping, maintaining the carpark facilities, circulating roads and all that.”

Prioritising energy savings

Island Hospital's sustainability initiatives started in 2011, says Lim. At Macalister Wing, this included upgrading the air-conditioning system with a green chiller, replacing the diesel boiler with heat pumps, implementing motion sensors in selected areas and providing staff with regular training on energy-saving practices.

The results of the energy-saving culture are reflected in the Energy Saving Index, from 374.03kWh/m² to 318.57kWh/m² from 2012 to 2023, which translates into a reduction of 14.8%, says Lim. She adds that this is despite Macalister Wing's built-up area increasing from 18,882 sq m to 26,733 sq

m, which is a 41% increase.

“With all the above taken into account, the management's decision to move towards in-house facility maintenance management was accepted,” Lim says. However, some services for both wings had to be outsourced but are still under the purview of the in-house team.

The outsourced services include housekeeping, security management, parking management, pest control and laundry management. In-house services include the maintenance of its electrical, mechanical, HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning), plumbing, fire protection and biomedical equipment.

For the Peel Wing, energy-saving features were added during the planning stage itself. Lim says the facade was constructed using unitised system panels featuring IGU (insulating glass unit) spandrel non-vision glass with thermal insulation. She adds that these specialised windows minimise heat transfer between the exterior and interior. Hence, it reduces the energy required for cooling.

Additionally, aluminium cladding and extruded louvres have been installed along the façades that are exposed to sunlight, acting as barriers to prevent heat gain and further decreasing energy usage for cooling purposes. Lim points out that with these features, Peel Wing has achieved energy savings of 16%.

To further reduce energy consumption, Lim says three main projects were undertaken by the management team — installation of a heat recovery pump, motion sensors for escalators and lifts and tap sensors in the toilets.

Peel Wing also has two green walls on Level 2 and Level 9. “The technology that was implemented for the green walls is also quite unique. They are soilless and easy to maintain, and require only drip irrigation. We collect rainwater in the harvesting tank.”



Macalister Wing has undergone several renovations and upgrades since it was established in 1996

David and Tan (third and fourth from left) with (from left) The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, City & Country senior editor E Jacqui Chan, The Edge Malaysia editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee and The Edge Malaysia editor-in-chief Kathy Fong

SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE



Planning for the future

To sustain the hospital's many features in the long run, Lim says the management team practices planned preventive maintenance to mitigate issues before they escalate.

“To ensure that quality and standards are achieved, most of the planned preventive maintenance contracts are comprehensive maintenance and awarded to the direct manufacturers' vendors. The initial cost for awarding the contracts does increase operating costs but there is the understanding that in the long run, there will be savings in operating costs as the running of the operations will be smooth, and the lifespan of equipment will be longer.

“We uphold a stringent schedule of servicing and monitoring tailored to the criticality of each system. Critical systems such as emergency power supply and fire protection undergo monthly inspections, while less critical systems are serviced quarterly or annually,” Lim says.

In addition, at Peel Wing, the team leverages advanced diagnostic tools and predictive maintenance technologies, such as BMS, to detect and address potential issues proactively.

In 2023, Lim points out, the hospital had a budget of RM12.91 million for building management, of which 76.8% (RM9.91 million) was utilised. The saving of 23.2% from the budgeted amount was attributed to several factors. “First, many repair works were still covered under the defect liability period provided by the main contractor. Additionally, the significant contribution of a well-designed, energy-efficient building and the implementation of value engineering by our in-house maintenance team played crucial roles in achieving cost savings,” she says.

On winning the award, Lim says, “We are a healthcare provider first and foremost, so we are in the service industry. Yet, it is important for us to be able to recognise that for us to provide top-notch healthcare, we also need to have top-notch facilities. Therefore, our patients should rest assured when they come, because we look after our own house and them at the same time.”

10 YEARS AND ABOVE
 Multiple-owned Strata Residential
SILVER**Panorama KLCC**
 BY **RACHEAL LEE**
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With the entry of new properties in its vicinity, the management corporation (MC) of Panorama KLCC knows the importance of good and quality building upkeep to ensure the condominium continues to appeal to potential homebuyers and tenants.

“We wanted to push for changes in terms of property maintenance, especially when many construction projects were coming up around us and we needed to make sure that we stay relevant. We had this mismatch where we wanted to push the property manager to change, but they couldn’t really follow our wishes and didn’t do what was expected. We did not speak the same language,” says MC chairman Gaudenz Sturzenegger.

After realising its vision did not align with that of the previous property manager, the MC hired Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd (HBMK) in October 2020.

“The decision to appoint a new property manager was more about finding a good alignment, to make sure that we understand each other. It is important to communicate properly, to have an understanding and to move forward in the same direction. I think that the key is to have a property manager who is focused. We made sure to get somebody we can work with, who can bring the condo forward. That was the reason at that point in time. We considered various property managers and finally chose HBMK.”

MC member Steve Chao reiterates the importance of having a property management company and building manager that is not only responsive to residents’ needs, but also able to adjust and adapt to current trends, especially for a condominium within the busy and competitive KLCC area.

“HBMK is a team that really has our ear and is willing to make the hard choices that we were looking to make, especially as we were reviewing an ageing property — a property that was at a point where, in the face of competition from newer properties, our question was, ‘How do we adapt?’ We were considering some major renovations, but who would be able to walk us through those renovations and create sustainability for the next phase?” he recalls.

The MC and HBMK’s efforts paid off as Panorama KLCC has won Silver in the 10 Years and Above — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category of *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Improvement works

Completed by Promatik Emas Sdn Bhd in April 2011, Panorama KLCC offers 223 serviced apartments sized from 592 to 1,819 sq ft. Facilities on the seventh floor include a 40m swimming pool, Jacuzzi, wading pool, sundeck, gymnasium, multipurpose hall, barbecue pit, playground as well as outdoor sports area. The service charge, inclusive of sinking fund, is 73 sen psf.

Building manager Suki Leong notes that the building was already over nine years old when HBMK took over, with a lot of maintenance-related equipment at the end of their lifespan.

“We engaged contractors to propose an enhancement plan and come up with the designs. Among the works we have done are draining the swimming pool and kept it empty for two months in 2020 to repair about 200 broken tiles. Also, water was leaking from the rooftop to the units below, and we re-waterproofed it in 2022,” she says.

Other improvement initiatives include a building structure assessment in 2021, waterproofing works on the gymnasium roof, replacement of the high-density polyethylene lining of domestic water tanks and waterproofing, building repainting, replacement of the intercom system, refurbishment



Responsiveness, proactivity key to quality building maintenance



Sturzenegger and HBMK executive director Ho Kim Heung (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards’ chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan

of the main lobby, refurbishment of the void space on Level 7 to include an entertainment area, playground and outdoor sports area in 2022, and installation of LED-type barrier arms in 2023.

In addition, HBMK managed to reduce the outstanding amount from defaulters by close to 80% as of December 2023 compared to October 2020 through extensive efforts in debt collection and a strict debt-recovery procedure.

Even though HBMK took over in the midst of the movement control order that had hindered the team from moving forward quickly as it wanted, Sturzenegger reckons that it was still a good move, especially as changes were coming.

“The longer you wait, the more expensive it gets. With the new property manager, we can really move forward. It involves a pretty significant investment, where we put in a couple of million ringgit,” he says.

For Chao, quality property maintenance is about creating a home where residents are proud and feel safe to come back to as there were some security challenges in many luxury condominiums at that time. Since the reinforcement of the security, the building has not experienced any break-ins.

“We have the confidence to make changes and grow, and we’re going to spend the reserve to bring Panorama KLCC to the next level. HBMK also identifies residents’ needs and offers solutions before they become big problems,” he says.

Currently, the development is undergoing landscape improvement. Also in the plans are repairs to the driveway and possible installation of electric vehicle (EV) chargers.

“The occupancy rate is 87% right now, of which 15% are owner-occupied and 72% tenanted. We noticed that after the upgrading works, the occupancy rate increased and the willingness of tenants to extend their tenancy was higher. The tenants are mostly expats who are attracted by the unit sizes, the development’s low density and walking distance to Petronas Twin Towers and Suria KLCC,” she says.

“The location has more privacy, yet is near many amenities and public transportation. It is also next to Corus Hotel, where there is a direct bus to Singapore. We have a restriction on Airbnb and our security team has been trained to recognise the residents. You feel safe that you don’t have strangers coming in and out.”



The swimming pool was drained and kept empty for two months in 2020 to repair about 200 broken tiles

Quick facts	
NAME	Panorama KLCC
DEVELOPER	Promatik Emas Sdn Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	1.13 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2011
STOREYS	33
UNITS	223
BUILT-UP	592 to 1,819 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	514,757 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	Service charge – RM63.20 per share unit Sinking fund – RM6.32 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	87%
CAR PARK BAYS	273
AMENITIES	
Primrose Hill Active Learning, Montessorian World Internal, EtonHouse Malaysia, St John’s International Secondary School, Suria KLCC, Avenue K Shopping Mall, The Exchange TRX, Pavilion Kuala Lumpur, Prince Court Medical Centre, Gleneagles Hospital Kuala Lumpur, KPJ Tawakkal Health Centre and Tung Shin Hospital	
FACILITIES	
Swimming pool, wading pool, Jacuzzi, steam and sauna, multipurpose hall, gymnasium, playground, outdoor sports area and barbecue area	
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	
LED lights and timers	
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	
Naturally ventilated corridors, daily cleaning and sanitising, scheduled service of air-conditioning system, no indoor smoking and M&E rooms equipped with ventilation fan	



(From left) HBMK accounts manager Mohd Hafiz Zulkifly, Chao, HBMK associate director Lee Siang Ling, Leong and Sturzenegger



The steam and sauna facilities at the development



Waterproofing works were done on the gymnasium roof after HBMK took over the management of Panorama KLCC



The void space on Level 7 has been refurbished to include an entertainment area, playground and outdoor sports area

State of property management in Malaysia

Sturzenegger notes that property management and maintenance, in general, is not the strongest point in Malaysia’s property scene as the trend is to buy or rent units in new buildings.

“It is the wrong approach, and it will take years to get that mentality changed. It is not easy but important. [In Panorama KLCC,] we see occupancy rates increase after the improvement works. It shows that people do take into consideration the improvements made and good property management and maintenance. That mentality is so important,” he says.

“As an owner, to keep up the value of a property, you need to be willing to invest. If you just want to be as cheap as you possibly can in terms of property maintenance, you will pay the price afterwards because you will not be able to rent your unit, get a good rental rate or the price will be compromised when you want to sell your unit.”

The current MC is made up of a mix of owner-occupiers and investors, which Sturzenegger and Chao see as a strength. After hearing the investors’ feedback based on their homes or other properties they have invested in, the committee would then decide if it should adopt the feedback. This helps the development to stay relevant and keep up with the times.

“One thing we cannot do is to stay stagnant. Managing a property is always organic and it will change with the demands of the times. Property

management will look very different in five to 10 years, or even in 15 years, and that is a real challenge. I think that it is like a corporate company ... if you remain stagnant, you die,” Chao says.

However, he is wary about adopting technology in Panorama KLCC. “It is an exciting time, but how do we harness what is available to us and implement that in property management? You don’t necessarily want to be on the pointy end of technology because there are potential failures. We don’t want to be the guinea pig. And that’s why even for EVs, we have been very careful. We look at the data analysis. Two residents have EVs now, but we are not quite there yet.

“It is also the case with apps. If you introduce an app, you don’t want to impede on the privacy of the users, as in having to share too much. But when is the right time? Does our number of residents justify the usage of apps or do you want to just keep it simple? Then, how do we use AI [artificial intelligence] to look at the data, of the flow of people in and out, or the elevator usage and so on. We will be leaning on Henry Butcher to adapt to the technology.”

For upcoming improvement ideas, Sturzenegger says: “You always have more ideas for improvement. The problem is not really the idea, it is more of the time to execute and it also needs to be within the funding you have available. It is about staying relevant ... We have pushed up the standard, so now it is about maintaining it. Preventive maintenance is important and Henry Butcher is doing well in advising us. You don’t want to wait for accidents to happen in order to take action.”

PICTURES BY SHAHRIN YAHYA/THE EDGE

10 YEARS AND ABOVE
Non-strata Retail

SILVER

Setia City Mall

Setia City Mall is Shah Alam's largest retail and leisure destination, following its Phase Two expansion in 2021



Proactive mall management

BY **CHIN WAI LUN**
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With about 1.2 million sq ft of net lettable area spread across four levels, Setia City Mall is currently Shah Alam's largest retail and leisure destination — a feat achieved after the completion of its expansion (Phase Two) in 2021.

A joint venture between S P Setia Bhd (KL:SPSETIA) and Asian Retail Investment Fund — a wholesale fund managed by global property and infrastructure group, Lendlease — Setia City Mall officially opened its doors in 2012. It is strategically located within the main commercial hub of Setia's master-planned and integrated township development of Setia Alam.

S P Setia chief operating officer (COO) Datuk Zaini Yusoff reckons that to stay relevant in this industry, the mall needs to maintain its quality and brand awareness so people will flock to the mall.

"Shoppers expect changes. A prime example would be around the time of festivities. It is the time when malls deck their spaces in vivid and captivating festive decorations — and shoppers would not want the same decorations to be repeated year after year," says Zaini.

"We have to spend [on decorations] and we will also spruce up the mall every two to three months to provide shoppers with a fresh look and feel."

The mall management also aims to prioritise a healthy occupancy rate and not leave shop units vacant for long periods, as it will drive away shoppers and potential tenants.

As such, the mall constantly seeks to upgrade its store concept and refresh its tenant mix to achieve the target occupancy rates and mall positioning. For example, AEON Supermarket recently emerged as the latest tenant and has served as one of the mall's two major anchor tenants, alongside Parkson Malaysia, since March this year.

Other tenants include Golden Screen Cinemas (GSC), Grand Imperial Restaurant, More Design, Objet, Uniqlo and Harvey Norman. Altogether, the mall has 413 retail units, with about 3.4 million sq ft of gross floor area and a 7-storey car park housing 4,095 parking bays.

According to Lendlease Malaysia managing director Yong Su-Lin, the mall management will continue to engage with the community to achieve the ideal tenant mix as newer brands or food and beverage offerings come along. "We also have to bear in mind that this is a suburban mall that not only serves the community of Setia Alam but also neighbouring areas, such as Klang," says Yong.

As a testament to the efforts put in by the mall management, the occupancy rate stood at a healthy 98% as at June 2024, and Zaini considers it a reflection of the trust and support the partners and retailers have in the mall. He adds that Setia City Mall ended 2023 with a record-high footfall



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

Zaini and Yong (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan

of more than 2.3 million. "We expect to see a continued increase in this trend and are looking to surpass that record," says Zaini.

Agreeing with him, Yong chalks it up to the resilience of the mall management and partnership between S P Setia and Lendlease in staying relevant. "This allowed us to weather the challenges, especially through the difficult times — the Covid-19 pandemic, for instance. Thus, this is demonstrated in our occupancy rate."

In addition, the mall continuously strives to enhance the shopping experience with proper maintenance and upkeep of its facilities as well as by focusing on sustainability efforts. These initiatives have proved to be the winning formula, as Setia City Mall won Silver in the 10 Years and Above — Retail category at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

In safe hands

As with any shopping mall, safety is of the utmost importance. All maintenance work undergoes a series of risk analysis and control procedures.

Technicians or competent personnel for criti-

cal mechanical and electrical (M&E) systems such as the air-conditioning and mechanical ventilation (ACMV) systems, lifts and escalators are always available on-site during the mall’s operating hours. Meanwhile, certified electrical chargemen and emergency response personnel, such as the fire command centre, are available and ready 24/7.

In addition, the mall requires contractors to conduct a risk assessment before embarking on any work to identify potential hazards and mitigation measures. As an added security measure, each contractor that comes into the mall is registered, insured and given a safety induction.

For tenants, there is an online platform that allows them to submit complaints, track their status and receive updates on resolutions. The platform helps streamline the process while improving communication and enhancing overall tenant satisfaction.

In the event of a crisis, Setia City Mall has prepared a crisis response plan that outlines the steps to be taken during emergencies. This plan includes communication protocols, resource allocation strategies and specific actions to mitigate the crisis effectively.

“For example, the emergency response team is trained to immediately respond to the emergency alarm and reach the incident location within four minutes,” says Yong.

As part of a proactive approach to crisis management, Setia City Mall coordinates with the relevant authorities such as the police and fire department annually to conduct full emergency evacuation exercises involving tenants and patrons. Following each exercise, a debriefing is held to review and make the necessary adjustments to the crisis response plan.

Ensuring sustainability

In terms of eco-friendly initiatives, the Green Building Index (GBI) Silver-certified mall is focused on improving energy, water and waste efficiency to ensure as little impact as possible on the environment.

The mall’s green features include using high-efficiency motors, chillers, water pumps and fans. Roughly 16% of water usage is saved daily via the recycling of condensate from air conditioners, in

Zaini (with Yong): We are in the midst of exploring new technologies for better waste management, to cater for evolving market demands



PICTURES BY SHAHRILL BASRI/THE EDGE

addition to rainwater harvesting systems.

The installation of solar photovoltaic panels has led to savings in energy costs. Moreover, the lights are equipped with daylight sensors to save about 50% of daily energy usage; and lifts and escalators enter sleep mode when not in use.

The mall also has a dedicated facility to collect waste left by tenants and shoppers for recycling. Meanwhile, food waste is collected from F&B tenants and sent off-site for composting.

“Currently, waste management is limited to the recycling centre, and wet and dry refuse chambers. We are in the midst of exploring new technologies for better waste management, to cater for evolving market demands,” says Zaini.

As the mall is now 12 years old, it is important to focus on cost optimisation as well, Zaini notes. “The cost [of maintenance] will only rise. We will always be on the lookout for new opportunities and better solutions to balance this cost.

“When we obtain quotations [from service providers], we explore several other options and select the most competitive,” he says.

Echoing similar sentiments, Yong says: “We periodically review service contracts and tenders for better terms while maintaining a quality shopping experience. There are SOPs in place to standardise and simplify our purchasing process while obtaining the best pricing and services.”

She adds that the mall prepares an annual business plan to set the business goal and focus for the year. “There will be monthly monitoring of financial performance, effectiveness of marketing strategy and operational and energy efficiency. From there, we set a quarterly forecast to ensure money spent is aligned with our business goal while maximising business value. We will prioritise expenses that will affect mall operations and postpone those that are not critical.”

Meanwhile, the mall is looking to digitalise or automate certain processes — for example, the use of robot cleaners, going paperless in day-to-day operations and the use of a mobile app for voucher redemptions.

A mall for all

A mall is only as good as the people in it — it is the people who make the place. “I would say the biggest challenge in managing a mall is the people. We are very dependent on them to deliver good products and services.

“Therefore, people management is very important. Basically, we have to keep the mall staff and tenants happy. This will lead to shoppers’ satisfaction as well,” Zaini points out.

Yong says: “We seek to nurture a culture for the team to identify and speak up for areas that need improvement or new, better ways of doing things. We also constantly organise and plan our campaigns with the community in mind. We work with tenants closely on monthly activities

Quick facts	
NAME	Setia City Mall
DEVELOPER	Joint-venture project between S P Setia Bhd and Asian Retail Investment Fund, a wholesale fund managed by Lendlease
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Commercial
LAND AREA	78 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	Phase 1 – 2012 Phase 2 – 2021
STOREYS	Retail mall – 4 Car park – 7
UNITS	413
GROSS FLOOR AREA	3,402,148 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	1,172,873 sq ft
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	98%
CAR PARK BAYS	4,095
AMENITIES	
Setia City Park, Setia City Convention Centre, private schools such as Peninsula International School Australia and Tenby Schools Setia Eco Park, Lotus’s Setia Alam and Columbia Asia Hospital Klang	
FACILITIES	
ATMs, car wash, courier service, dedicated disabled and family parking bays, disabled access at all mall entry points, parents’ rooms with private nursing cubicles, hot and cold water dispensers, baby changing stations, surau, public WiFi, baby stroller, wheelchair and motorised shopping cart rentals, complimentary gift-wrapping	
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	
Chiller optimisation programme, online management systems for maintenance team and tenants, annual condition-based monitoring at electrical power installations and solar PV panels	
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	
Real-time operation of ACMV plants and monitoring of indoor air quality through building management system, indoor air quality audit by third party every three years and on-site ACMV maintenance team during mall operating hours	



Children’s playground

such as workshops and performances to benefit the shoppers.”

For example, Setia City Mall has collaborated with offices and schools nearby on programmes such as blood donation drives and contests to keep the community engaged and increase brand awareness.

“For the mall, the greatest asset — you will usually be told — is location, location, location. Setia Alam is a great place, but credit also goes to the team running it. The people represent the heart of the mall. Ultimately, Setia City Mall aspires to serve the community and I think we have achieved that aspiration,” says Yong.

10 YEARS AND ABOVE
 Multiple-owned Strata Residential
SILVER**The Pearl @ KLCC**

Taking its sheen up a notch

 BY **CHAI YEE HOONG**
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There are not many high-rise strata residential properties in town whose fund surplus is strong enough to comfortably provide several months' worth of service charge waivers every year. The Pearl @ KLCC is one of those.

Located in Jalan Stonor, The Pearl is a luxury condominium comprising 179 units with built-ups ranging from 3,109 to 11,312 sq ft. The 1.7-acre freehold property, developed by Malton Bhd, was completed in December 2011 and has been exclusively managed by Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd (HBMK) since October 2017.

HBMK associate director Lee Siang Ling says The Pearl is the only property in the property and facility manager's portfolio that provides two to three months of service charge waivers to good paymasters every year since 2016 "and still has a very healthy surplus increase each year".

"Plus, the building is already 13 years old and we have done most of the capex (capital expenditure) maintenance, such as repainting and waterproofing, and we're currently in the process of upgrading the lifts," says Lee.

In fact, the management corporation (MC) recently reduced the service charge, inclusive of the sinking fund, from the original developer-imposed 55 sen psf to 40 sen psf in lieu of waivers. "While most properties are increasing their service charges due to the electricity tariff hikes, inflation and minimum wage adjustments, among other things, The Pearl was able to reduce the service charge because the MC opines that the funds are very healthy and that most of the major projects have been carried out."

The Pearl's MC chairman Ben Chong says some may argue that the original service charge was too high. "But that might not be the case as it was among the most competitive in the KLCC market. Also, I would say that one of the right decisions that the MC made was not to rush to reduce the service charge, even though we could have done that back in 2016 and 2017. So rather than reducing the service charge [then], we managed to build up a healthy surplus, which brought with it compounded benefits."

"Having a healthy surplus is good, but having the surplus grow each year without a sense of direction is also pointless, as we are not a business organisation but here to take care of the building. So having factored in the building's financial sustainability, we find that we can still reduce the service charge."

How did The Pearl manage its funds so prudently? Chong says it boils down to good governance. "We have managed the place well, we're using our funds correctly, we're getting good and competitive rates from our service providers, and there are no leakages."

He adds that having a team of dedicated staff is also key.

At The Pearl, the building maintenance team as well as its service providers have pretty much been the same since 2016, says Lee. "This makes a lot of difference. We always say we have to grow up and grow old together with the building. This is important because when we know the building well, we can do what's best for the building."

She adds that the MC's clear direction is also key to the good management of the property. "I would say that, having managed so many buildings, The Pearl's MC is one of the few that has a very clear vision and mission. Property managers are just there to enforce or implement an action, so hav-



PICTURES BY LOW YEN YEING/ THE EDGE

ing decision-makers with a very clear objective and with joint effort will bring us better results."

"I think it goes both ways," Chong adds. "For it to be sustainable, the MC and the building managers must be [aligned]."

The Pearl won Silver at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024 under the 10 Years and Above — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category. The property previously took home a Bronze in 2019 under the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category.

Providing top-notch living experience

The Pearl exudes an air of opulence and hospitality, from its grand lobby with koi-filled ponds to the concierge, doorman and attentive security personnel.

The grand lobby was refurbished in 2019 to set the tone for the living experience at The Pearl. "This was one of the significant projects we did to maintain the building's competitiveness in the market," says Lee.

"The other thing we did was improve the con-

The Pearl @ KLCC is located on Jalan Stonor and comprises 179 units with built-ups ranging from 3,109 to 11,312 sq ft

Lee and Chong (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media* Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan



SUHAIMI YUSUF/ THE EDGE

cierge services because we understand that the service level expectations for this high-end property are different. Previously, the concierge could only speak English but our concierge today can speak multiple languages including Malay, English, Chinese, Thai and some other dialects and help residents with parcel collection, notify residents of parcels and help residents arrange additional services such as laundry, housekeeping and car services."

The service level that Lee mentions caters for The Pearl's affluent resident profile, comprising mainly families of VVIPs, ambassadors, expatriates and professionals from the oil and gas and banking sectors. The building is currently 82%-occupied, of which 64% are tenanted and 36% are owner-occupied. Of the total tenants, 60% are foreigners and 40% are local, whereas 58% of the owner occupiers are foreigners and 42% are local residents.

The concierge also provides guided tours of the property when a new tenant or owner moves in. "This is a very original concept that has been initiated at The Pearl, whereby the concierge is trained to welcome new residents, bring them on guided tours and introduce them to the house rules and facilities. The concierge is also trained to know all the residents by name and the unit they live in," says Chong.

Apart from the lobby and concierge upgrades, other improvements HBMK oversaw in the last five years include new electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, CO2 cylinder replacements, external facade cleaning, car wash upgrades and implementing a new web-based residents portal for easier communication with residents and administration.

The building, meanwhile, is in the process of having its lifts refurbished. "Of the 10 lifts, we have already upgraded six. We're planning to do two lifts each year and to complete this modernisation exercise in two years," says Chong. "Previously, we had a lot of breakdowns with the lifts but after we started the upgrades, the improvement was very significant."

Chong explains that implementing a reward and penalty system tied to the management's key performance indicators (KPIs) has been instrumental in the performance of the lifts. "When the service provider doesn't achieve the targets, 10% comes out of the service contract value, and if the performance target is achieved, the service provider will qualify for an additional 10% bonus. We measure this every month."

Implementing KPIs started when HBMK took over the management of the property, Chong says. "Previously, we had some big issues, especially with the non-performance of equipment and lifts always breaking down. When Henry Butcher came in 2017, we started on a journey and a process to be driven by KPIs and a few things were set for that year, including improving our occupancy to at least 70% and attaining *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards. Sustainability involves planning and basically having a goal in mind. And in 2019, we got the award."

"Fast forward to now, our current occupancy level is the highest in the past six years and we have been conscientiously following the programme and meeting the performance targets, which, thanks to HBMK and its dedicated staff, we can to an extent look at the KPIs each year to see how we're doing and move the goals a standard higher."

Result-driven initiatives

Challenges are part and parcel of life and property management.

One of The Pearl's main challenges is mislead-

ing listings made on property websites, says Lee. Chong adds: “Some property agents would list units at prices very much lower than the market rate; it’s their business strategy. And the owners are not aware of this. This is very bad for the entire property. So we’ve started this project rescue initiative at the direction of the MC to monitor all these listings and call and report them to be taken down.”

“We actually check with the owners if they are genuine advertisements, and if they are not genuine, the owners will give us the direction to get them taken down.”

The team at HBMK also keeps the owners abreast of current market prices and rents from time to time. “A lot of the owners here are foreign-based, so they rely on agents. So if the agents are not professional in doing their job, then in-



From left: HBMK concierge Chan Kok Hong, senior accounts executive Amira Handani, accounts executive Nurul Huda Hanim, building executive Chai Yu Ling, Chong, Lee, building manager Ashvinder Singh, technician Muhammad Azrul Amri and chargeman Shafiq Samion

formation can get distorted,” explains Chong. Following this initiative, Lee says rents at The Pearl have also picked up. “The average rent is around RM3 psf and up to RM14,000 per month depending on the size, furnishing and where the unit is facing. The average transacted price has also increased from RM667 psf in 2021 to RM888 in 2023. The current rental yield is around 5% to 5.43%.”

Ensuring a healthy collection rate is also key to safeguarding the property’s financial sustainability. The Pearl’s collection rate is 80% to date, thanks to the team’s proactive debt recovery procedure. “We proactively approach owners who have defaulted on their payments as we have a number of foreign-based owners but we don’t have many of such cases. So we have a very good collection rate.”

Other than prudent fund management, optimising operating costs also plays an important role in ensuring a property is well managed and sustainable. Cost optimisation strategies implemented at The Pearl include installing LED lighting, timers and sensors in the common spaces; water conservation and pump monitoring; and ensuring the HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) system is running at optimal energy efficiency.

“The cost optimisation strategy for electricity alone had helped us save 40% of the electricity cost per month before the change in tariff,” says Chong. He adds that the team is looking into incorporating more technology to reduce operating costs such as facial and car number plate recognition systems as well as robot cleaners.

To further future-proof the property, there are plans to upgrade the entire recreation and facility floor on Level 8, which houses facilities such as a 38m infinity pool, jacuzzi, sauna, gym, children’s

Quick facts	
PROJECT NAME	The Pearl @ KLCC
DEVELOPER	Ceramic Home Tiles Sdn Bhd (Malton Bhd)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	1.8 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2011
STOREYS	41
UNITS	179
BUILT-UP	Typical – 3,109 to 3,973 sq ft Duplex – 5,538 to 7,196 sq ft Penthouse – 7,985 to 11,312 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	Service charge – RM4.86 per share unit Sinking fund – 49 sen per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	84%
CAR PARK BAYS	562
AMENITIES	
Pavilion Kuala Lumpur, Royale Chulan Kuala Lumpur, Prince Court Medical Centre, Conlay MRT station, embassies and banks	
FACILITIES	
38m salt water swimming pool, EV charging station, parcel storage room, gym, sauna, Jacuzzi, massage room, barbeque area, yoga room, meeting rooms, library, cinema room, golf simulator room, nursery space, children’s outdoor playground, driver’s waiting room, car wash area, epoxy visitor car parking area, soccer room, basketball court, bicycle room, sky lounge, multipurpose hall, pool deck, cabana and games room	
ENERGY SAVING FEATURES	
LED lighting, LED sensor lighting for car park area, timer for pumps, sensor for air-conditioning units, inverter air-conditioning units and solar street lights	
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	
Ventilation fans in common areas and M&E rooms, indoor plants in management office and scheduled servicing of air-conditioning units	

playground, water features, massage room, barbecue pit and cafeteria.

“It’s a big project, but then again, the building is more than 10 years old, so it’s high time and good that the common facility floor has a new lease of life. We think it’s important to update and upgrade to stay competitive with the new buildings coming up around us,” says Chong.

Facilities at The Pearl @ KLCC include (from top) EV charging stations, golf simulator, convenience store, swimming pool and the grand lobby



PICTURES BY LOW YEN YEING/THE EDGE

**THE EDGE MALAYSIA-ILAM SUSTAINABLE
LANDSCAPE AWARD 2024 — Landscape Planning**
SILVER
KL East Park (Phase 1)

An urban green treasure trove

 BY **CHIN WAI LUN**
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The ridges of the Klang Gates Quartz Ridge — the longest quartz formation in the world at about 14km long — serve as the backdrop for KL East Park (KLEP), appearing like the spine of a majestic dragon.

KLEP (Phase 1) is a 17-acre park that is part of a 53-acre secondary forest on the northern fringes of Kuala Lumpur. It is located within Sime Darby Property Bhd's (KL:SIMEPROP) vibrant KL East township near Taman Melawati.

Opened to the public in February 2023, the park is envisioned as an extension of the quartz ridge. It is home to a rich array of flora and fauna, including more than 300 plant species, 40 species of birds and many unique species of insects.

"KLEP is based on the concept of symbiosis — the mutualism between architecture and nature. The aim is to create a balanced urban forest ecosystem while preserving the aesthetics, health, well-being and property value," says Sime Darby Property chief operating officer (COO) — integrated development Datuk Mohd Idris Abdullah.

He elaborates that the landscaping ethic is based on the philosophy of American writer Aldo Leopold, considered by many as the father of wildlife ecology and modern conservation. "[The philosophy] in which nature is not a commodity but a community. People are encouraged to participate in nature conservation and preservation so that they have respect, love and care for nature," says Mohd Idris.

"Over the years, our team has diligently improved and preserved this space and ecological integrity to maximise its benefits for the community and, by extension, the environment."

Sime Darby Property's efforts have paid off. KLEP (Phase 1) wins Silver in the Landscape Planning category of *The Edge Malaysia-ILAM Sustainable Landscape Award*, a feature of *The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024*.

**KL East Park (Phase 1)
is located at Sime Darby
Property's KL East township
near Taman Melawati**



PICTURES BY SIME DARBY PROPERTY



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

Sime Darby Property chief marketing and sales officer Datuk Lai Shu Wei (centre) with (from left) The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, City & Country senior editor E Jacqui Chan, The Edge Malaysia editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee and The Edge Malaysia editor-in-chief Kathy Fong

Community-oriented and responsible planning

"The topography of the park is unique with steep hillocks consisting of viewpoints, valleys, ridges, small streams, waterfalls and meadows among the thick foliage," says Mohd Idris.

Experts were consulted during the design and planning stages to ensure quality and safety. "We engaged a university to conduct site studies and inventorise the flora and fauna of the park," he says. The six-month study was carried out in

partnership with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

The developer also engaged with Persatuan Arborist Malaysia to assess and ensure the health of the trees within the park.

In addition, Mohd Idris says during the construction phase, Sime Darby Property consulted the authorities such as the Wangsa Maju police and fire departments to review the park and provide feedback. "Their comments were carefully considered to enhance the safety of park visitors."

KLEP benefits the surrounding communities and businesses by protecting the soil, cooling the ambient temperature, retaining rainwater and providing shade. "Moreover, our efforts have demonstrated the park's capacity to sequester approximately 300tCO₂-equivalent annually, contributing significantly to a reduction in carbon emissions," says Mohd Idris.

"To safeguard the park's delicate ecosystem, we have conducted biodiversity assessments to catalogue the diverse flora and fauna, transforming KLEP into a living urban wildlife library. Our approach involves carefully selecting and planting native species, particularly those on the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of Threatened Species, to maintain and preserve ecological balance."

He adds that KLEP helps protect urban biologi-





KLEP has a unique topography, with steep hills and ridges among the thick foliage



cal diversity, preserving plant and animal species and genetic variation, and acting as a biological bank for the future.

These efforts hinge on more than just conservation. “Beyond this, we engage the community through placemaking activities, in the belief that environmental education plays a crucial role in fostering green space protection,” Mohd Idris says.

“It is not just about designing something sustainable. It is important to obtain the buy-in of the surrounding community and most importantly, to involve them even during the development and planning stage.

“It is also essential to ensure that the capital expenditure is justified and that the company is committed to investing in corporate social responsibility efforts. It is not just about the initial outlay but also the long-term benefits and the goodwill.”

Apart from the ecological benefits and serving as a recreational space, the park plays an important role as an outdoor space to foster community awareness of urban biodiversity and forest conservation. “Our Citizen Science programmes with the nearby communities such as Kolej Yayasan Saad is a testament to such efforts that benefit the surrounding communities,” says Mohd Idris.

“This is our approach to ensure that the park provides multiple functions to the people, planet and businesses.”

Plans for phase two of the park, which aims to be a sustainable business model for KLEP, is currently in the planning stages.

Sustainable initiatives

KLEP incorporates features that are easy to maintain yet durable while providing benefits to visitors. There are easy-to-read signs that provide directions and information throughout the park.

The park’s facilities were developed with sustainability in mind. “For instance, viewing and resting stations incorporate a minimalist design, bridges are made of recycled materials while benches use porous materials as part of a sustainability initiative,” says Mohd Idris.

He says some trees have QR tags that function as learning and discovery experiences. “There are temperature displays that serve to educate the public on the effect of trees on surrounding temperatures as part of the sustainable education initiative.

“Visitors also get to [enjoy] the view of the KL city skyline while immersed in nature, with a contemporary sculpture depicting the topography of the park that doubles as a viewing platform. They get the best of both worlds — a symbiotic relationship between nature and the urban landscape.”

At some areas in the park, one can spot dead



Mohd Idris: Experts were consulted during the design and planning stages to ensure quality and safety

trees lying where they fell. “This serves to demonstrate the natural decaying process — the cycle of life — to visitors while serving as obstacles for thrill-seekers,” explains Mohd Idris.

The overall aim, he adds, is to promote respect and love for the natural ecosystem for future urban generations.

Further plans for the park

“Moving forward, we are motivated to develop a trail or space that is inclusive and accessible for individuals with disabilities. It is crucial to us that everyone can enjoy and experience our park’s natural beauty without barriers,” says Mohd Idris.

For Phase 2, Mohd Idris anticipates that it will create a steady stream of revenue sufficient to sustain both the existing park (Phase 1) and the extension.

“We have a few other plans in the pipeline centred on demonstrating how KLEP can have a sustainable social business model that not only brings profit but can also general strong social and environmental impact,” says Mohd Idris, adding that this is still a work in progress.

Sime Darby Property plans to keep admission to Phase 1 free by bearing the cost of maintenance and operations. “Aside from that, to promote safety and sustainability, we plan to continue patrols and requiring appointments (to visit the park) to ensure effective crowd control.”

Appointment to visit the park can be done via Sime Darby Property’s KL East Park website.

Meanwhile, he notes that it is important to periodically review the sustainable initiatives to assess their impact on the community.

“Although we haven’t conducted such a review yet, it is on our agenda. This approach enhances the visi-



The park facilities have a minimalist design



KLEP has been open to the public since February 2023 and entry, which is free, is by appointment only

tor’s experience and contributes to a broader understanding of the benefits of sustainable living spaces.

“The park is the beginning of our long, ambitious sustainability journey to integrate urban biodiversity, forest protection, economic opportunities and community participation. Since its launch a year ago, we have seen and experienced the positive traction it has received. Our weekend visits are almost always fully booked in advance.

“This is a strong testament to the fact that we are doing something positive not just for our business, but also for the benefit of other stakeholders. Today, KLEP stands as a public sanctuary that is open to all. We are committed to preserving this space for future generations. We take pride in the KL East team’s efforts to conserve and enrich the natural heritage at KLEP.”

BELOW 10 YEARS

Mixed Development (Entire)

BRONZE**Jesselton Residences and Mall**

Getting ready for the future

BY **CHELSEA J LIM**
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In the heart of Kota Kinabalu (KK) city centre stands a 2.4-acre leasehold mixed-use development called Jesselton Residences and Mall. Soaring 28 storeys high, it comprises three condominium towers with 333 units sitting atop a three-storey retail podium. The mall has 123 retail units and a net lettable area of 75,087 sq ft.

Jesselton Residences and Mall was developed by Palikota Sdn Bhd, which is a subsidiary of Jesselton Waterfront Holdings. Jesselton Waterfront Holdings is the property development division of Jesselton Group.

Knight Frank Property Management Sdn Bhd (KFPM) has been the property manager since it was completed in 2017.

"Jesselton Residences and Mall is the first property that we managed in KK. The expectation of the client was that we bring the standards and processes of what we were doing here in Peninsular Malaysia to KK — to export all the best property management practices to Jesselton Residences and Mall," says KFPM managing director Kuruvilla Abraham.

To manage a mixed-use development is no easy task; hence, for the attention to detail and management efforts, Jesselton Residences and Mall is the Bronze recipient for the Below 10 Years — Mixed Development (Entire) category of the *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Working towards a common goal

In the early stages of managing this property, clear lines of communication between the client and KFPM were needed.

"After our appointment in 2017, we worked closely with the developer during the defects liability period (DLP)," says KFPM executive director Winnie Lim.

"We handled all the defects in the common area and in the units, maintained proper records of the defects and facilitated communication between all parties such as the Palikota project team, owners and subcontractors. We provided clear communication and explanations to all parties and assisted them in resolving issues promptly.

"After the DLP, we then focused on planned preventive maintenance to ensure the common areas were well-maintained and to prolong the lifespan of the building's machinery and equipment. The focus was on property value enhancement at that stage," she adds.

One aspect that both Kuruvilla and Lim had to deal with was the mindset of the workers, who were not familiar with property management and did not understand the need to go the extra mile. However, this mindset has changed over the years.

"We told them that they needed to give a full effort to [managing the property] and to change their perspective if they wanted to grow in the company," says Kuruvilla. "There are guys that were trained at Jesselton Residences and Mall who have now gone on to higher positions in other properties managed by KFPM in KK. They see that there is an opportunity for career growth."

Another challenge that KFPM faced was how



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

Palikota director Samson Chu and Lim (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan and *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat

properties were being managed in Sabah. Unlike Peninsular Malaysia, where the Strata Management Act (SMA) governs strata property, this is not the case in Sabah.

According to Lim, stratified living is governed by the Sabah Land Ordinance, which is a simplified version of the SMA. "We are guided by the ordinance and we follow its provisions, but at the same time, we also adopt best practices from the SMA.

"We then customised the SMA best practices into standard operating procedures for Jesselton Residences and Mall. For example, we don't have annual general meetings but we do conduct di-

alogues with the residents. Everything from our accounting to our day-to-day operations is based on the requirements in the SMA."

According to Kuruvilla, this is to ensure that the KFPM team, residents, tenants and the developer are ready for the implementation of the SMA in Sabah: "We are making ourselves ready so that when the Act is enacted, we can transition easily."

Financial sustainability

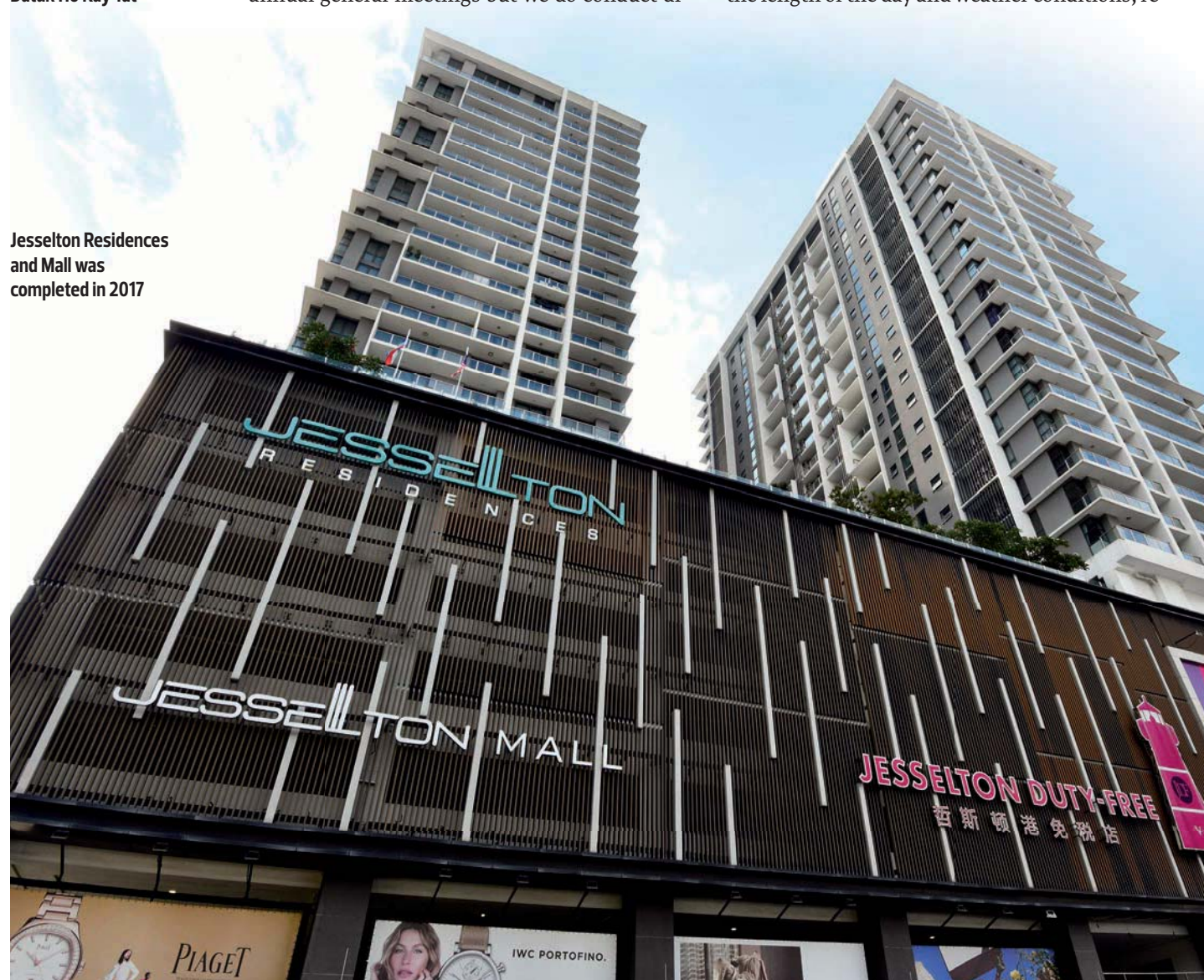
The main challenge is in maintaining a sustainable operational budget. "We implemented several cost-saving measures to reduce building operation costs, which included reviewing the manpower of the security and cleaning [sections] to consolidate their scope of work and renegotiate the contract value with the vendors," says Kuruvilla.

Incidentally, in 2019, the KFPM team applied for the Sabah Electric Sdn Bhd Off Peak Tariff Rider and Sunday Tariff Rider, which were offered to all medium voltage commercial and industrial buildings. Participants enjoy a 20% discount on electricity usage during off-peak hours of 10pm to 8am daily if the current month load factor is greater than the average load factor for six months.

The management also schedules an annual energy audit on all mechanical and electrical (M&E) components to detect any energy loss or possible wastage due to mechanical problems and current flow caused by unwanted current, overheating or misoperation of equipment. Based on this data, appropriate action is taken.

In 2023, a building control system was installed to help manage the energy usage of the chillers. It is able to adjust temperature settings, close chilled water valves in unoccupied shops or start and shut down certain chillers when necessary.

Several other sustainable initiatives implemented in the development included replacing bulbs and fluorescent tubes in common corridors, staircases and car parks with LED lighting; adjusting the common area lighting schedule based on the length of the day and weather conditions; re-



Jesselton Residences and Mall was completed in 2017

PICTURES BY MOHD IZWAN MOHD NAZAM/THE EDGE



Jesselton Residences features a variety of facilities for the residents



KFPM

Quick facts

NAME	Jesselton Residences and Mall
DEVELOPER	Palikota Sdn Bhd (subsidiary of Jesselton Waterfront Holdings)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Mixed-use
LAND AREA	2.4 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	2017
STOREYS	28
UNITS	Jesselton Residences – 333 Jesselton Mall – 123
BUILT-UP	Jesselton Residences – 965 to 6,443 sq ft Jesselton Mall – 137 to 2,738 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	194,136 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	75,087 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	Jesselton Residences – 39 sen psf Jesselton Mall – RM1.18 psf
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	Jesselton Residences – 82.9% Jesselton Mall – 76%
CAR PARK BAYS	915

AMENITIES
Suria Sabah Shopping Mall, hotels, Sabah International Convention Centre, Jesselton Point Ferry Terminal, Gleneagles Hospital Kota Kinabalu, hotels, banks and nearby shophouses providing everyday needs

FACILITIES
Function room, gymnasium, aerobics and yoga deck, library and lounge, infinity swimming pool, wading pool, jacuzzi pool, sauna, common washroom, accessible washroom, children's playground, nursery room, table tennis room, viewing deck, water features and landscaping, common area for leisure, meeting room and management office

ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES
Building control system (BCS), LED lights, photo sensors for lighting control in the common areas and perimeters and hand dryers (replacing hand towels)

INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES
The air-conditioning service provider regularly maintains the Chiller Plant System and conducts monthly servicing of all fan coil units (FCUs) and split units within the building. The site team checks the FCUs and split units daily, and the filters of the FCUs are regularly replaced when necessary

placing paper towels with energy-efficient hand dryers; and replacing sliding door sensors with a button door mechanism.

Besides cost-saving measures, KFPM explored various opportunities to generate revenue that would be allocated to the building maintenance fund. Such initiatives include renting out parking spaces and advertisement spaces within the development.

"We've always looked into not increasing the service charge first. We try to optimise the cost by looking into other revenue streams," says Kuruvilla.

However, even with their best efforts, due to the implementation of the Imbalance Cost Pass-Through (ICPT) and minimum wage, there was a revision of the maintenance charges for Jesselton Residences in 2022.

Kuruvilla notes: "The manpower cost had increased significantly after the increase in minimum wage, followed by ICPT. The increase has put a lot of pressure on our build-

From left: Jesselton Group group CEO Kevin Thong, Palikota director Ryan Chu, Palikota director Nick Chu, Knight Frank executive director of Sabah branch Alexel Chen Yun Ngen, Lim and building manager Josephine Liew Chieh Pin



In Jesselton Mall, Jesselton Duty Free takes up about 37,000 sq ft of the ground floor

ing operation budgets and we need to maintain our service level within the budget allocated."

No one likes having to pay more and to deal with queries, clear and transparent communication was adopted.

Lim says, "The key to overcoming this was to provide transparent communication and explain the reason. We even showed them the audited accounts and put them on the notice board for them to view. Any further enquiries, they were welcome to [visit] the management office."

Meanwhile, the mall's charges remained unchanged. Lim reveals that they are currently reviewing the budget allocation: "We are currently monitoring and reviewing the budget for Jesselton Mall. We didn't raise the service charges because we want the retailers' businesses to stabilise after the pandemic."

To ensure that preventive maintenance, predictive parts replacement and servicing adhere to specified standards and are conducted promptly, KFPM utilises a computerised property management web-based system called iKFPM. This system handles preventive maintenance schedules, equipment asset lists and maintenance historical records.

Furthermore, it is used to record all complaints and feedback received. The software also generates status reports on works or complaints to prompt the management team to deal with an issue.

Apart from normal building services management, subject matter experts (SME), which are based at the main headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, will assist the on-site team and provide technical support in areas such as technical matters, safety and security and housekeeping. The SME team will visit KK on a yearly basis to conduct management audits on the property.

"The findings from the audit will be shared with Palikota. Any gaps and areas that need improvement, we set a reasonable timeline to close the identified gap to ensure the building is well maintained and in good condition," says Lim.

In addition to managing the property, KFPM also spends time building relationships with the residents and mall tenants through a 24/7 hotline and regular training of the staff.

Continuous improvements

There are plans to implement new elements in the development. These include the installation of a rainwater harvesting system to help reduce water consumption and also EV charging stations, which are targeted to be launched this year.

One key focus of KFPM and Palikota is increasing the occupancy of the mall, especially on the lower ground floor. Currently, the occupancy rate stands at 76%.

Before the pandemic, in 2019, Jesselton Waterfront Holdings partnered with Valiram Group to establish Jesselton Duty Free (JDF). Valiram Group took up 37,000 sq ft of space on the ground floor, offering a range of beauty, fashion and time-piece brands. This was a big draw and footfall was encouraging.

Commenting on the mall and its direction, Kuruvilla says: "We want to get it [footfall] back up again because Jesselton Mall was doing well before the pandemic. JDF was an attraction for tourists. It was one of the places where the tour buses would stop. Recovery was slow post-Covid-19 but it is recovering quite well [now]."

"Jesselton Mall has been gaining more interest from smaller business owners. This is owing to the growing confidence of the market as tourist arrivals increases."

Kuruvilla adds that Jesselton Mall needs the tourist market, and he foresees improvements for the mall as tourist arrivals increase, with more international flights going into KK.

Taking care of someone's home and livelihood can be daunting at times but when done with clear objectives, the end result will always be beneficial to everyone.

BELOW 10 YEARS

Mixed Development (Entire)

BRONZE**Urban Residences**
 BY **CHELSEA J LIM**
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Located at Jalan Central Timur in Kuching, Sarawak, Urban Residences was developed by Interhill Property Development Sdn Bhd, the property arm of Interhill Group. Completed in 2022, the development features the concept of “luxé meets art”, aimed at redefining the concept of urban living in Sarawak. It is a challenging task, given that strata living is still uncommon in Sarawak.

“Generally, the communities in Sarawak are not as exposed to strata living in comparison to Peninsular Malaysia. Based on our observations, the strata revolution in Sarawak only started to pick up pace in the last 10 to 15 years,” says Kelvin Jong, deputy general manager of real estate management for Interhill Property.

The transition from landed houses to stratified high-rises has not been smooth for many residents, especially as they do not have the freedom to do whatever they want to their units due to the constraints of the Strata Management Ordinance 2019 (SMO 2019) in Sarawak.

“They felt constrained because they couldn’t do certain things that they used to be able to do. In fact, we [received] some enquiries such as why they cannot place flowerpots on the balcony, keep pets in the unit or play loud music past certain hours at night,” Jong recalls.

As such, open and periodic communication has been key to addressing these challenges. Its property manager Narra Realty Services Sdn Bhd (Narra), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Interhill Property, spent much effort and time advising and educating the residents to comply with the house rules, including adherence to procedure, on-time payment of service charges and the importance of proper upkeep of common areas and common facilities.

The education effort started at the vacant possession (VP) stage. Owners were briefed on the charges to be paid and their deadlines, the repercussions and penalties as well as the house rules.

“The developer put a lot of emphasis on VP because it can pass the right message to the owners [during this stage] and ensure compliance among them. And we see those [results] today. Now, Urban Residences seldom has issues with late payments and even if there are late payments, the owners take accountability. Although our VP session takes a long time, we don’t mind [spending the time] because we [believe] that it yields benefits down the line,” Jong states.

Adjustment to strata living also meant having to cultivate a functional joint management body (JMB) that is equipped with the right knowledge of strata property management and the law to achieve a well-managed and sustainable development. Initially, this proved to be a challenge as well, as the SMO 2019 was only implemented by the Sarawak government in March 2022. According to Jong, prior to these, rules and regulations for stratified properties were lacking and loosely interpreted, and many developers and property managers had managed stratified developments as they saw fit.

“When the new ordinance came into effect, many of the relevant parties tried to understand the new ruling. The transition was a bit haphazard but we’re happy that the Commissioner of Buildings was very understanding. They were able to point us in the right direction whenever we had any queries or issues. So we were able to pick it up very quickly,” says Jong.

Narra also made it a point to educate the JMB on the strata law.

“As a property manager, and especially in Sarawak, we understand the challenges faced by the JMB. Not only would they need to understand the legalities of strata management but they would also need to have a grounding knowledge of man-

Urban Residences, located on Jalan Central Timur, Kuching, has a raw cement and concrete facade



Making the extra effort

SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE



Interhill Property general manager Chin Kok Onn and Interhill Group group executive director Albert Hu Yun Chai (third and fourth from left) with (from left) The Edge Malaysia editor-in-chief Kathy Fong, The Edge Malaysia editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, City & Country senior editor E Jacqui Chan and The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat

aging the building. As such, we adopt open and transparent communication with the JMB. At the same time, we embarked on a consultative approach to management.

“We are happy to note that there is a great collaborative spirit between Narra and the JMB of Urban Residences. Its community has been quite receptive and cooperative, and they do share their comments and thoughts with the JMB or directly with us. This [collaborative spirit] needs to be preserved moving forward,” Jong remarks.

The ability of the developer, property manager and JMB to overcome these hurdles has paid off, turning Urban Residences into one of the most sought-after high-rise residences in Kuching.

Urban Residences is the Bronze recipient in the Below 10 Years — Mixed Development (Entire) category at *The Edge Malaysia Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024*.

High expectations

It is easy to see why Urban Residences has become home to Kuching’s affluent, which includes respected members of the business community as well as foreigners who are under the Sarawak-Malaysia My Second Home (S-MM2H) programme.

Raw finishes of cement and concrete lend sophistication to Urban Residences’ architecture. Many premium facilities are available such as a concierge service, a mini art gallery that features and promotes local Sarawakian talents, a commercial-grade gymnasium, a saltwater swimming pool, a children’s playground and playroom, barbecue facilities, function halls, and gardens and green spaces as well as other recreational facilities. As it is one of the taller buildings on Jalan Central Timur, residents have a panoramic view of the surrounding neighbourhood and the Kuching city skyline.

The development offers 132 units and four penthouses that are sized between 1,409 and 1,590 sq ft and 3,153 and 3,196 sq ft respectively. It also has a commercial component, Shoppes @ Urban Residences, comprising 14 retail units sized from 702 to 2,246 sq ft, which are located at Level 1.

Due to the affluent profile of the owners and residents, expectations are higher when it comes to management and maintenance, says Jong. It is also vital to keep track of costs to ensure the longevity and sustainability of Urban Residences. As such, Narra has adopted a proactive approach to



Quick facts	
NAME	Urban Residences
DEVELOPER	Interhill Property Development Sdn Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Mixed-use
LAND AREA	2.02 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	2022
STOREYS	17 storeys
UNITS	Residential – 136 Commercial – 14
BUILT-UP	Residential – 1,409 to 3,196 sq ft Commercial – 702 to 2,246 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	477,680.82 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	235,360.85 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM3.25 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	60%
CAR PARK BAYS	202
AMENITIES The Spring shopping mall, Plaza Merdeka, Vivacity Megamall, Borneo Medical Centre, Sarawak General Hospital, Swinburne University and Kuching International Airport	
FACILITIES Salt water swimming pool for adults and children, BBQ facilities, gardens, gymnasium, multipurpose hall, children's playground, children's playroom and mini art gallery	
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES LED bulbs and timers for lightings	
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES Ventilation fans, air conditioning and designated smoking areas	



A variety of outdoor facilities is available on Level 3



Jong: We are happy to note that there is a great collaborative spirit between Narra and the JMB of Urban Residences. Its community has been quite receptive and cooperative, and they do share their comments and thoughts with the JMB or directly with us. This [collaborative spirit] needs to be preserved moving forward.

making the operation and management of the development sustainable by regularly reviewing the cost-benefit analysis.

“The primary goal is to lower operational expenses while maintaining the quality of procured items and services. Besides cost, we also consider the lifespan of the items, their warranties, ease of maintenance, support service and energy-saving features.

“These analyses allow the management team to identify potential savings, which can then add value to the improvement of other aspects of the development. In addition, the management team can leverage the expertise of Narra’s advisory committee, which comprises various experts in relation to the building, strata management and legal fields to facilitate the sustainability of the development’s strata operations and management,” says Jong.

The team has implemented a few energy-saving initiatives including the usage of LED bulbs that are energy-efficient and have a longer lifespan, and the use of timers for lighting management that helps to better manage energy costs and optimise lighting operation.

The management team has also embarked on multitasking operations: “This is to help better manage operational costs, while strict supervision is provided for periodical maintenance of machinery and equipment (M&E) to ensure durability and mitigate breakdowns and damages.”

Meanwhile, the M&E team undergoes regular training programmes to increase their capability and productivity.

“We will continue to ensure that periodical maintenance is done for all equipment, complemented by regular checks on these equipment and strict supervision of the maintenance exercise,” says Jong.

Of course, good property management also involves fostering a good relationship between the property manager, JMB or MC and the residents.

“This spirit of togetherness is very important in strata development and realising this, events have been organised to promote this collaborative spirit. Events such as residents’ gatherings or engaging the residents in CSR (corporate social responsibility) activities have been organised so that we can get the community together,” Jong notes.

Planning for the future

Urban Residences currently has a take-up rate of 85%, of which only 60% of the units are occupied.

Commenting on the occupancy rate, Jong notes that several owners are keeping the units as a holiday home or future home for their children. He adds that several units are currently under renovation and he expects to see a boost in the overall occupancy later on.

Jong also points out that Narra is prepared to connect the owners, who intend to lease out their units, to property agents.

The 14 retail units of Level 1 are currently unoccupied and Jong shares that Narra is working with the JMB and the developer to find the right tenants.

“Because our residents are high-profile individuals, there are certain standards that need to be met to complement the profile of our development and the needs of the residents. Definitely, we are constantly on the lookout for any opportunities, but we’d rather take the time and get the tenant mix right the first time,” says Jong.

Jong understands that its role as property manager is not permanent and it is prepared to do the necessary.

“It is not an issue for Narra when it comes to handover. Narra is very strong in procedure and documentation in terms of records and filings. We also use a property management app and accounting system. Therefore, handing over records to the next management agent or briefing the next JMB is not a problem,” says Jong.

He adds that Narra takes a consultative approach to its management, which the JMB is familiar with. This approach will be communicated to the next JMB to ensure a proper handover.

PICTURES BY MOHD IZWAN MOHD NAZAM/THE EDGE



A concierge service is provided at Urban Residences



The mini art gallery displays artwork by Sarawakian talents

10 YEARS AND ABOVE
Mixed Development (Entire)

BRONZE

Paradigm PJ

Finding right balance at mixed-use development

BY **CHELSEA J LIM**
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It is not easy to manage a mixed-use development, which consists of different components — each with owners and residents of different needs, expectations and requirements.

Paradigm PJ in Kelana Jaya is one such development, and Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd (HBMK) — which has been the property manager since 2019 — recognises the complexity of managing a project like this.

HBMK managing director Low Hon Keong is aware that managing Paradigm PJ is not without its challenges and flaws.

“In a mixed-use development like this, [every component] needs each other but we are also conflicting with each other,” he says. “The residential components need to [prioritise] the safety and security aspect, the retail components need to have as many visitors as possible. How do they live together then? This is our objective as the property manager.”

Developed by Jelas Puri Sdn Bhd, a member of the WCT Group of Companies, Paradigm PJ is a 12-acre freehold mixed-use development. It comprises a mall segment and three towers that houses two serviced apartments, a hotel and an office. Paradigm PJ was completed in 2019.

One of the two serviced apartments are The Azure Residences, which is part of a 31-storey tower. The Azure Residences occupies Levels 5 to 18 and offers 189 units with built-ups from 765 to 1,815 sq ft. In the same tower, there is a hotel component called Le Meridien Petaling Jaya which occupies Levels 19 to 30.

The other serviced apartment is also 31 storeys high called Sapphire Residensi. It offers 229 units that have built-ups from 1,001 to 1,815 sq ft.

The other tower is the 32-storey office tower called The Ascent. The mall component, Paradigm Mall PJ, has been operating since 2012 and is a landmark in Kelana Jaya.

The Azure Residences, Sapphire Residensi and the common areas of the entire Paradigm PJ are managed by HBMK while Paradigm Mall PJ, Le Meridien Petaling Jaya and The Ascent are managed by their internal teams.

Joint management body (JMB) treasurer Cheong Yee Sem, representing Sapphire Residensi, says to have everyone’s interests at heart, the JMB and property manager must first understand the objectives of each component and align them with the other components.

“Different components have their own agenda and interest in taking care of the development. We need to boost the visitor footfall at the mall, but that would mean compromising the security aspect for the residential side. So, we have to consider all these factors, resolve the issues together and align ourselves [towards the same goal].”

For example, he brings up an interesting case that had become a pain point for The Azure Residences and Le Meridien PJ due to the conflicting nature of the components.

“We had difficulties when it came to the renovation hours. Residents can only renovate during working hours, but at the same time, the hotel could also have a function or conference when renovations are taking place,” says Cheong, adding that the noise from the renovations was affecting the atmosphere at the conferences.

To solve this issue, the JMB decided that Le

Meridien PJ and The Azure Residences must constantly check each other’s schedules. Residents who want to do renovations would inform the management, and HBMK would then check with the hotel to make sure that the timing does not clash with a conference.

“At the end of the day, our long-term goal is to increase the value of the commercial, residential and office components,” says Cheong.

Low concurs, adding that it is very important that the committee work well together. “If they are not responsive, the property manager cannot [do their job properly],” he adds.

Although the retail components are not managed by HBMK, Low notes there is a collaborative spirit between each component. He cites the mechanical and electrical (M&E) teams as an example. The M&E teams of each component are very clear on their responsibility and scope of duty, yet at the same time, they monitor each other.

“Whenever we find out that there’s a fault in the retail component, we will report [the fault] to representatives of that component. We report to each other very closely so that we have more eyes. This way, the upkeep of the property will be even better. For example, our transfer rooms are right next to each other. If there is something wrong with the other component’s transfer room, we will quickly inform them,” Low says.

The collaboration between the committee has paid off, with Paradigm PJ winning Bronze in the 10 Years and Above — Mixed Development (Entire) category at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Fair representation

Besides finding the middle ground, having a fair representation in the committee is crucial so that concerns from all parties can be discussed and addressed during committee meetings. This ensures a harmonious environment for all the users of the different components.

“The participation of representatives from each component in the committee is very important. Every component needs to be represented so that everyone’s concern can be addressed during meetings. Without fair representation in the committee, how are we able to [effectively] communicate with the [people]?” asks Low.

JMB secretary Yaw Choon Yee, representing Paradigm Mall PJ, cites a recent situation involv-

Completed in 2019,
Paradigm PJ is a mixed-use
development in Kelana Jaya



From left: HBMK account manager Mohd Hafiz Zulkifly, JMB committee member Jazreal Raymond, Low, Yaw, Cheong, Lee, building managers Gladys Sikop and Joanne Yong



JMB chairman Loh Tian Loon, HBMK building manager Gladys Sikop and committee member Chew Ann Boon (third from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards’ chief judge Au Foong Yee, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan and *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

ing Grab drivers’ parking at non-designated areas around the mall and near the residential towers, which became an issue among the residents.

“Cheong raised a concern about Grab drivers parking everywhere in our JMB. I informed the mall operator of this issue so that they can take action. Once action had been taken, the mall operator immediately informed me and I updated the group chat,” says Yaw, emphasising her role as representative of Paradigm PJ and as a bridge between the mall operator and the JMB.

Safety is a crucial aspect for Paradigm PJ. Therefore, HBMK has designed a security system for each component. Basic security apparatus including a CCTV system, alarm handling system, vehicle access system, guard tour system, access card system and vigilant round-the-clock security.

Financial sustainability

A well-maintained development is also dependent on its financial health and planning. At Paradigm PJ, the JMB, together with HBMK, has prepared a comprehensive project roadmap that details future projects as part of the asset lifecycle management in the next five years. Through this project roadmap, they will plan their finances accordingly, HBMK associate director Lee Siang Ling says.

“We have a project roadmap that we have planned for the next five years. Some of these [future undertakings such as facade cleaning, repainting and floor polishing] have been discussed in the annual general meeting for the residential side,” she adds.

WCT MALLS MANAGEMENT



PICTURES BY SHAHRIN YAHYA/THE EDGE



The lobby of Sapphire Residensi



The swimming pool area at The Azure Residences



Playground facility at Sapphire Residensi



A newly installed police booth at the entrance of Paradigm Mall PJ

Quick facts

NAME	Paradigm PJ
DEVELOPER	Jelas Puri Sdn Bhd (a member of WCT Group of Companies)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Mixed-use
LAND AREA	12 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	2019
STOREYS	Paradigm Mall PJ – 7 The Ascent – 32 Le Meridien Petaling Jaya – 15 The Azure Residences – 16 Sapphire Residensi – 31
UNITS	Paradigm Mall PJ – 287 The Ascent – 70 Le Meridien Petaling Jaya – 300 The Azure Residences – 189 Sapphire Residensi – 229
BUILT-UP	Paradigm Mall PJ – 766 to 1,005 sq ft The Ascent – 1,500 to 7,153 sq ft Le Meridien Hotel – 386 to 398 sq ft The Azure Residences – 765 to 1,815 sq ft Sapphire Residensi – 1,001 to 1,815 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	522,720 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	711,000 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	11 sen per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	Paradigm Mall PJ – 98% The Ascent – 95% Le Meridien Petaling Jaya – 80% The Azure Residences – 95% Sapphire Residensi – 73%
CAR PARK BAYS	Paradigm Mall PJ – 3,214 The Azure Residences – 427 Sapphire Residensi – 566

AMENITIES
Kelana Jaya LRT station, Lincoln University College, Unitar International University, Kelana Jaya Medical Centre, Taman Bandaran Kelana Jaya, banks, schools, mosque and clinics

FACILITIES
The Azure Residences - Swimming pool, wading pool, jacuzzi, children's playground, relaxing pod, badminton court, meeting room, gymnasium, steam room and prayer room

Sapphire Residensi - Swimming pool, wading pool, jacuzzi, BBQ pit, gymnasium, squash court, children's playground, nursery room, games room, meeting room, function hall and prayer room

ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES
Replacement of conventional lighting with LED; installation of inverter air conditioner; waste recycling programme and EV charging stations

INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES
Open concept corridor; VRV system in common areas such as lobby and corridors; plants and creeping vines and fresh air fan operation in parking podium; and ventilation fan in basement parking

Cheong concurs that a proper strategy is necessary to ensure the property is well managed and maintained.

Besides that, several cost-optimisation initiatives have also been implemented by HBMK at the residential component including a reduction in the number of cleaners and security personnel. In addition, the air-conditioning units in the corridors of all levels at The Azure Residences has been turned off, replaced instead by ventilation fans on timers. Lighting at all components have been replaced with energy-efficient LED light bulbs.

Through this initiative, the JMB has managed to substantially reduce its electricity bill and lessened expenses for security and cleaning services.

Other sustainability initiatives that have been implemented throughout Paradigm PJ are the installation of power inverters for the air-conditioning units and elevators, waste recycling programmes and the recent installation of electric vehicle charging stations at Sapphire Residensi.

Improvement works

As Paradigm PJ is more than a decade old, enhancement works have been done. These initiatives include road repairs, drainage cleaning, tunnel board installation, wall painting, landscape rejuvenation and road grating between 2020 and January 2024.

Security has been beefed up with the implementation of a police booth at the entrance of Paradigm Mall PJ, which Low notes is not only beneficial to the mall but also the entire development.

Aside from having a good property manager, Low reckons the developer also plays an instrumental role during the design stage of the development for the project's functionality and management feasibility. Next, it is the responsibility of the property managers to study the concept of the project, he adds.

"The planning of a mixed-use development whether it is by the developers, consultants or architects, is very important because a well-planned mixed-use development will result in a well-managed development. Then, as a property manager, our role is to understand the concept of the mixed-use development and its design," he notes.

"Once we understand these, we would then be able to work out a financial plan for each component. This is to ensure there is no confusion on how much one should pay for the maintenance charges."

He also advises developers and consultants: "When it comes to the management of the common area, this all falls back to the design of the mixed-use development itself. Therefore, it is very important that the developers and consultants [give] serious consideration [to] the design."

10 YEARS AND ABOVE
 Mixed Development (Entire)
BRONZE**Ativo Plaza**

Working hand in hand to benefit the community

Ativo Plaza features both retail and office spaces intermingled with greenery, making it an oasis for tenants, patrons and weekend visitors



BY **WONG KING WAI**
 city.country@bizedge.com

Driving into Bandar Sri Damansara, it is hard to miss TA Global Bhd's Ativo Plaza, with its rows of shops that offer F&B outlets, a grocer, a bank, clinics and other conveniences. This commercial development is part of TA Global's 48-acre freehold Damansara Avenue master plan, a transit-oriented development featuring six main components — residences, retail, offices, a sports complex, a performing arts centre and lush landscaping.

Ativo Plaza is made up of two 8-storey blocks and is the master plan's maiden commercial component. Completed in April 2013, it sits on 5.73 freehold acres, and features 198 office suites and 43 retail lots, with an occupancy rate of 88% and 100% respectively. It also has 488 parking bays.

Designed using biophilic principles — where the architecture seeks to connect building occupants more closely to nature — there is plenty of greenery and a breezy environment. For their ingenuity and constant monitoring of what needs doing, Ativo Plaza has won Bronze in the 10 Years and Above — Mixed Development (Entire) category at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Speaking with *City & Country* are TA Global chief operating officer Lee Yen Foong and Ativo Plaza's joint management body (JMB) chairman Yoong Wai Seng. TA Properties Management Sdn Bhd under TA Global is the property manager.

Lee says, "The biggest challenge in managing Ativo Plaza, which is mixed-use with office and retail, is balancing the needs of the users. The reason I say this is because the occupancy levels are pretty high, so you have the traffic of office occupants and retail patrons. There is always a challenge to strike a balance in meeting the needs of the users,



Yoong and Lee (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan and *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat

especially when it comes to car park management and traffic flow, to ensure there are enough parking bays for both the offices and the retail component.

"How we overcame this is with ParkEasy, a digital valet car park service, and it enables us to unlock the car park podium to give the flexibility, especially for the retail patrons to park and enter the retail portion. For the basement car park, we monitor very closely to strike a balance between the season passes for office users and the floating bays for customers who visit the retail shops or to meet their suppliers or business partners in the offices."

Yoong adds, "We worked with Park Rite, the car park operator, and rationalised the number of season passes that we offer to the office units. As a lot of offices were holding on to the season pass [four to five] but were not utilising them, we then decided that for offices of 10,000 sq ft, we would allow two to three parking bays, and those

with less than 10,000 sq ft, we would give one. By doing this, I can say the situation has improved."

Lee and Yoong assure that the parking situation is something that the management office is always looking into, particularly in the early years when the office and retail units started to fill up, to ensure the convenience of all users.

Constant review

Monitoring the cost of goods and services is something that is also done regularly. "I think what we practise is to constantly monitor, especially the hike in cost by service providers' service contracts and maintenance costs," says Lee.

"We do periodic reviews in terms of the performance of all the service providers and pricing structures. When they try to increase the cost, then we have to rationalise — what are the resources we have, is it the optimum that we have and is there any way we can still save costs?"

A large chunk of the JMB budget goes to landscaping. Yoong says, "The cost of maintaining the landscape is high, so we reviewed with the landscaper about replacing some plants, especially the shrubs, with plants that are easier to maintain. We have trialled this in the last six months in a localised area and are monitoring the situation. So far, it is going well and I think the maintenance cost will be less moving forward."

The greenery is used as a dynamic filter to reduce the buildings' overall carbon footprint and to promote better physical and mental well-being of the occupants. To the question of taking drastic action such as removing a large amount of greenery to reduce cost, Yoong and Lee maintain that this will not happen.

Yoong says, "We will definitely continue with the quality and volume of the landscape we have. Because every evening, we have a lot of people from Azelia Residence, which is next to Ativo Plaza, or from the neighbourhood who come to walk their dogs or

SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

Quick facts

NAME	Ativo Plaza
DEVELOPER	TA Global Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Mixed-use
LAND AREA	5.73 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2013
STOREYS	8
UNITS	Retail – 43 Office – 198
BUILT-UP	547 to 4,094 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	499,549 sq ft
NET LETTAGE AREA	370,158 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM4.78 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	Retail – 100% Office – 88%
CAR PARK BAYS	488
AMENITIES	CIMB Bank, Sri Damansara Sentral MRT Station, Sri Bestari International School, The International School @ ParkCity, ParkCity Medical Centre, Empire Damansara, PJ Trade Centre, The Curve, IKEA Damansara and IPC Shopping Centre
FACILITIES	EV charging stations, children’s playground, water feature, pavilion swing, landscaped walkway, urban park, 24-hour security system, pet waste disposal facilities, ParkEasy parking facilities, courtyard area (event space) and pedestrian walkway
ENERGY SAVING FEATURES	LED lights at the corridor and fire staircases
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	Biophilic principles - Naturally ventilated development and greenery

their pets. And we believe they enjoy the landscape and atmosphere. Also, in the morning, we have people doing line dancing and yoga. So, if we reduce the landscape, I don’t think it will be very nice.”

Lee adds, “Using more suitable shrubs that require less maintenance will help us save a lot compared to replacing the shrubs. It cannot be done just one time, it has to be done progressively so as to not burden the JMB with the costs. So, we need to really narrow down the areas that require the shrub replacement.”

One major exercise taken by the management was the installation of LED lights. From October 2021 to March 2023, over four phases, the management replaced 1,273 common area lights at the corridors and fire staircases with LED lights. This effort has resulted in a reduction in electricity consumption. However, due to the increase in electricity tariffs, the savings are not evident. Nevertheless, Yoong and Lee say the costs could be higher if they did not make the changes. Other cost-saving features include the rainwater-harvesting system, the water from which is used for irrigation purposes.

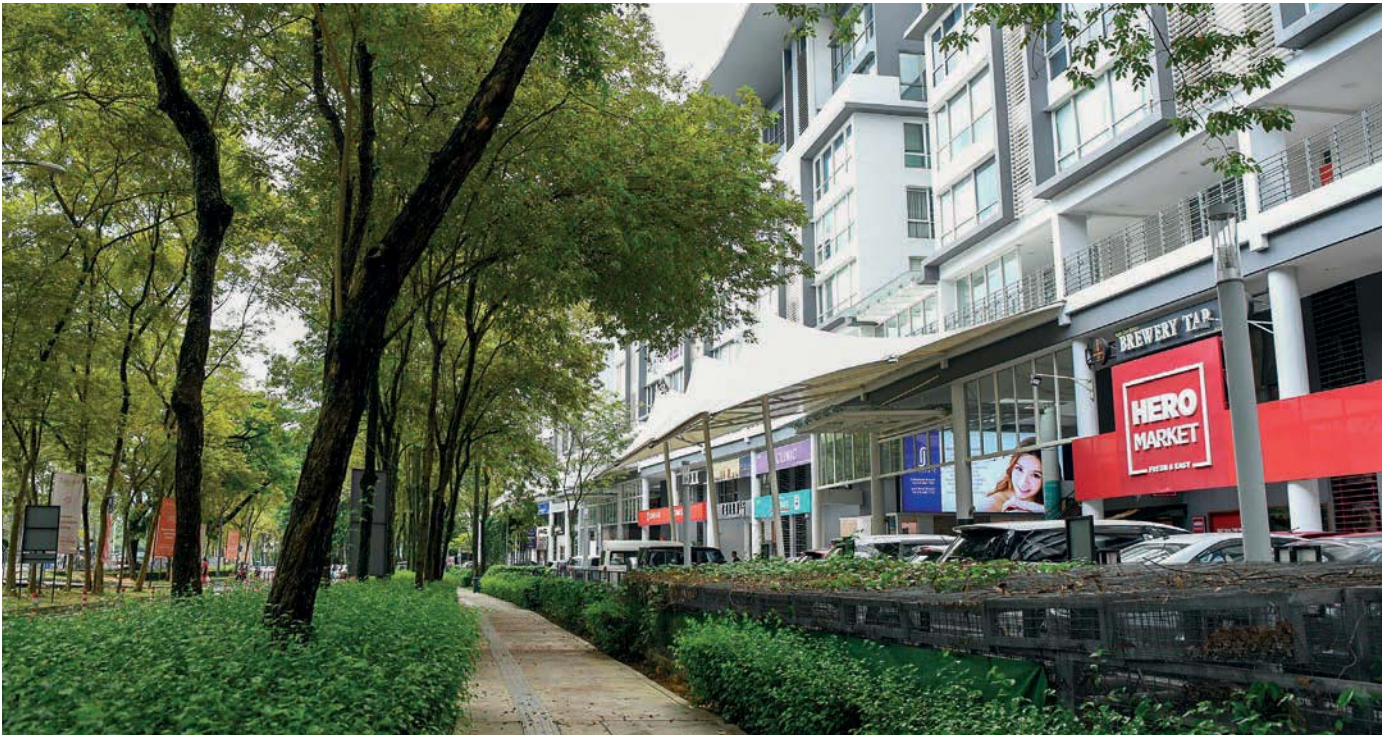
Creating an engaging space

To create a more social setting, Ativo Plaza has introduced new concepts and activities that not only increase social well-being but also the revenue of businesses in the development.

Lee says, “Recently, we promoted [Ativo Plaza] as a pet-friendly development. Working together with the JMB, we put in pet waste disposal stations throughout the development. This attracts a lot of pet owners and this benefits both the social and economic aspects of the development.”

He adds that the increase in footfall of pet lovers provides a social setting where people can engage and interact with like-minded people while patronising the retail offerings.

There are retail lots providing a selection of



The retail element offers options like HeroMarket for grocery needs and F&B outlets that cater to the office staff and visitors who bring their pets on the weekends to enjoy the greenery in the development



Because it is a pet-friendly development, Ativo Plaza’s management has installed pet waste stations for easy pet waste disposal

Yoong (left) and Lee believe that the good working relationship between the JMB and management office is key to maintaining Ativo Plaza’s attractiveness to visitors and users of the development



dining and recreation options, as well as clinics and dental centres, a fitness centre and beauty, hair and wellness outlets. A HeroMarket grocer and CIMB Bank outlet are also available.

Lee and Yoong highlight the introduction of a weekend bazaar that operates fortnightly. The event started in October 2023 and the rent from it has provided the JMB with some revenue that can be used for the maintenance of Ativo Plaza.



The inviting and biophilic design of the development offers a welcome respite for busy people to chill and commune with nature

Another source of income are the walls of Ativo Plaza, which have become advertising spaces. These alternative revenue streams have helped to ensure the maintenance charges remain at RM4.78 per share unit.

Future looking

To ensure Ativo Plaza continues to do well in the future, Lee and Yoong mention some of the plans they have in store.

Lee says, “Very soon, we will embark on an upgrading exercise to install solar panels on the rooftop so we can generate clean energy to support the reduction in consumption in the common areas.”

Yoong reveals that it is in the midst of getting quotations to decide which installer to use. Then during the annual general meeting in August, it will seek approval for the budget for the proposed installation of solar panels before moving on to the procurement and installation process. The time frame for the completion of this project is one to two years.

As the interview draws to a close, Lee says the management of Ativo Plaza will continually look out for ways to maintain the development at a good standard by monitoring the latest technologies and sustainability measures. “We should not be reactive, always preventive,” he points out.

Yoong finds the management office very responsive and is open to suggestions from the parcel owners. This has made working together pleasant and beneficial to all parties.

A close working relationship and the determination to ensure high standards will certainly keep Ativo Plaza in good standing in the years to come. **E**

BELOW 10 YEARS

Multiple-owned Strata Residential

BRONZE**SkyMeridien Residences**

High-rise built for healthy living

 BY **WONG KING WAI**
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Diving into SkyMeridien Residences, with its cooling water features and welcoming drop-off area, almost feels like you're heading into a resort. The only noticeable enclosed areas are the lift lobbies of the two towers. Developed by SkyWorld Development Bhd (KL:SKYWLD), the high-rise in Bandar Baru Sentul, Kuala Lumpur, sits on 2.94 acres. Completed in 2022, it has a total of 780 units spread across both towers. There are also 1,645 parking bays and 291 motorcycle bays.

According to SkyWorld CEO Lee Chee Seng, the building was designed to incorporate sustainable elements to ensure maintenance would not impose a heavy financial burden on its residents. The development is managed by Transpacc Property Management Sdn Bhd.

As a testament to its effort and dedication to the care of this two-year-old development, SkyMeridien Residences has won Bronze in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category of *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Lee and Transpacc managing director B H Tan speak with *City & Country* on what they have done to ensure this fairly new development continues to stay relevant for years to come.

Conductive living environment

Says Lee, "In SkyWorld, when we think about development, we don't simply design what we want. We need to think from the customer's pain points. Why does he prefer staying in a high-rise rather than landed property?"

"Cost is one of the considerations for the buyer in deciding whether to live in a high-rise or landed property. So, to save on costs, we always look into natural ventilation.

"We also try to include passive design in our development, reducing mechanical elements. For example, our lobby and waiting area is open-air. There is no need for air conditioning. Only the lift lobby area is enclosed for security purposes (accessible via access card). This design enables us to save on costs."

The overall design of the development showcases a myriad of facilities as well as lush landscaping that offers residents a welcome respite from the hustle and bustle of city life. Maintaining all this can be a challenge, but Tan says the situation is manageable.

"The residents are beginning to be more educated in terms of staying in high-rises. One thing that is lacking is the understanding of how we should conserve energy," says Tan.

"Some owners think, 'I don't want to sacrifice my comfort or convenience over some energy saving'. We have to educate them on this. That is a very important factor.

"At the same time, whether they are owners or tenants, they also need to be very well versed in what they can and cannot do in a condo. Many residents just assume that because they paid the service charge, they can do whatever they like."

The by-laws, which are accessible via the SkyWorld Connects app, are enforced when they are breached. Tan says the management will issue a warning before a fine is imposed. Most of the by-laws are standard, offering guidance on how to live in a high-rise development.

SkyWorld Connects is also a cost-saving element because it is used for various purposes such as making payment or announcements and booking



Located in Bandar Baru Sentul, the development features two towers with a total of 780 residential units



ZAHID IZZANI/THE EDGE

Lee (right) and Tan believe in a proactive approach to maintenance and to keeping close contact with residents of SkyMeridien to foster community spirit

facilities. An addition to the app is the Solution+ platform, which connects residents to vendors who provide services such as air conditioning, curtain installation and other home services at competitive prices.

The app also allows residents to provide feedback on matters pertaining to the building. One such feedback that was quickly acted upon was the request for a covered walkway on the facility podium floor. Such prompt action make residents feel that their feedback is valued and the management is responsive, according to Lee and Tan.

Eco-friendly features

Lee and Tan say the development has green features and certain measures have helped lower energy consumption.

Tan says artificial lighting is either turned off or the duration is reduced and at least one of the three air conditioning units in each lift lobby area is turned off when not needed.

"We have inverter lifts. When idle, they will go into sleep mode," says Lee.

He explains that the building has a shallow design that allows plenty of natural light into the space, particularly into corridors and the common areas, which reduces the need for artificial lighting. Louvres along some corridors allow light in while acting as a barrier against rain and to shield the aircon compressors.

"Another initiative is the automated waste system, which reduces the need for cleaners. In a typical condo design, there is a refuse room on every floor. Every night, a cleaner will come and drag the rubbish bin into the lift. This leaves a bad smell in the lift, if you come back late at night. Also, it isn't hygienic," says Lee.

He explains that at SkyMeridien Residences, the rubbish is vacuumed into a central refuse chamber and this system saves costs, as there is no need for an extra cleaner or refuse bins on each floor.



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

 Lee and Tan (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan

Quick facts

NAME	SkyMeridien Residences
DEVELOPER	SkyWorld Development Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	2.94 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	2022
STOREYS	38 and 39
UNITS	780
BUILT-UP	581 to 1,318 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	80,978 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM4.46 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	94%
CAR PARK BAYS	2,017

AMENITIES
Chong Hwa Kuala Lumpur Independent High School, SJK (C) Chi Man, SMK La Salle Sentul, Wesley Methodist International School, Sentul Medical Centre, KPJ Tawakkal, Hospital Pusrawi, Sentul Raya Golf Club, Titiwangsa Lake Gardens, Sentul Timur LRT station, Sentul LRT station, Titiwangsa monorail station, DUKE highway, Middle Ring Road 2 and North Klang Valley Expressway
FACILITIES
Multipurpose hall, cycling track, rock climbing wall, futsal court, half basketball court, hydro gym, outdoor fitness station, indoor gymnasium, wave pool, Olympic-size swimming pool, arcade games room, barbecue pits, kids playground and yoga deck
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES
Reduce artificial lighting duration and turning lights off when not needed, automated waste system and shallow building design to allow more natural light in
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES
Periodically open corridor casement windows for natural ventilation during the day to flush out indoor pollutants, prohibit smoking indoors and at common areas, cleaning of ventilation fan and air conditioning system

To maintain this system, the developer has come up with a cleaning system with the vendor using biodegradable cleaning fluid, which is cleaned up with water and leaves the refuse chute odourless. There is also a rainwater-harvesting system that waters the wide variety of plants in the development. Tan says Transpacc uses internal software to help with scheduled maintenance by sending out an email reminder to vendors to make the necessary appointments for maintenance works. Everything is automated, which reduces time wastage and increases efficiency. Moreover, the payment records, along with the accounting software, are integrated, making the whole process paperless and seamless to ensure that all records are updated.

Best practices

Tan says several practices have been implemented in the development for security and emergencies. “We insist that body cameras (bodycams) are worn by security guards at all times to record any form of communication with everybody. Bodycams are quite important because they will serve as evidence if there is any breach in the SOP (standard operating procedure) or if the guards are assaulted or they assault someone. It is all captured as evidence,” he says. Also, each guest entering the development is registered. “In SkyMeridien, we insist that every single visitor, whether they come in a Grab car or their own vehicle, must be registered. In other places, you register only the driver, and not the passengers, but that is where the danger lies. So, every person is registered. It can be inconvenient but we found ways to shorten the process. We take a photo of the IC or driving licence, with the exception of those aged below 11 and above 70, and link that photo to the unit provided by the occupants of the vehicle.”

In a survey that was done to see how many residents would require help in case of an emergency, seven units were identified as having residents who would require evacuation assistance, and guards were assigned to those units. Lee says to ensure that residents, who may be future buyers of its other projects, are happy with the products and services provided, SkyWorld conducts detailed surveys via the SkyWorld Connects app. Besides customer satisfaction, the survey provides the developer with important design data that can be used in upcoming projects to build what customers want in their future home. Several ideas from previous surveys were implemented in SkyMeridien. For instance, the entrance to the parking area



The swimming pool area with greenery and elevated views of the surroundings



SkyMeridien boasts a well-equipped gym

and the turning radius on the ramps are wider to accommodate larger vehicles. There are also more motorcycle bays, as there are many residents in the project who use two-wheelers.

Relationship building

Besides ensuring the development is well maintained, the management also keeps residents updated through face-to-face meetings. This is done through events such as health screening, wellness classes and seminars on strata living. Before the management corporation was set up, a temporary committee, comprising unit owners and the developer, was formed to help collect residents’ feedback and for knowledge sharing. Owners were not familiar with what was involved in maintaining a property and this engagement provided greater insight that has allowed for easier communication and quicker decision-making. Lee and Tan note that although the development is still new, and many of the assets remain under warranty, they are still thinking of how to enhance the development in the future. Lee says there are plans to automate the watering of plants in the development as well as install motion sensors in the car park. Security-wise, they hope to have car plate and QR code visitor registration systems. “During the design stage, we designed extra capacity for electric vehicle charging stations. We are working with vendors to add additional charging stations to the development,” says Lee. The care and attention to detail given to the two-year-old SkyMeridien so far are an indication that residents can continue to expect quality from the developer in the future.



The lobby drop-off area with its welcoming water feature



The arcade games room (above) and the half basketball court (right) at the development



BELOW 10 YEARS

Multiple-owned Strata Residential

BRONZE**M Centura**

The airy and welcoming open-air lobby

 BY **WONG KING WAI**
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MCentura, the first in Mah Sing Group Bhd's (KL:MAHSING) M Series, was designed and developed as an affordable product for the low- to middle-income groups. The developer also wanted to ensure easy maintenance over time. Completed in November 2021, M Centura boasts natural ventilation and a lush landscape, with units that are shielded from the harsh rays of the sun.

For the group's efforts from the get-go, M Centura won Bronze in the Below 10 Years — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category of *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Mah Sing chief operating officer Chris Chen says, "M Centura is the first in our M Series line. At that point in time, we already knew our target market, which was more towards the B40 and M40 segments as the price range then was RM300,000 to RM500,000. So, we knew in the long run, we would need to design something that was sustainable. Today, if you walk into the lobbies and facilities [of other high-rises], they are air-conditioned and you end up paying a lot for electricity, even if no one is using it."

"So, what we did at the beginning was to design the entire building [in M Centura] with units in the north-south orientation. And you see a lot of greenery in the east and west sides of the development."

Several large transplanted trees were placed on the western side of the development, providing shade and preventing heat from entering the building. Moreover, the development is well ventilated, thanks to its design that allows air to flow through naturally and the use of ventilation blocks.

"The only places that we have air conditioning are the co-working space and the gym — that's it. The rest of the spaces and facilities are naturally ventilated," Chen reiterates.

The project sits on 4.66 acres and comprises two towers with 1,413 units in total. To ensure that there is a healthy collection of maintenance fees, the common areas are well maintained and funds are wisely managed, clear objectives need to be in place.

Mah Sing chief experience officer Bernard Yong says, "One of the key issues is financial health, which is of utmost importance and covers three aspects — collection, operational expenses and income generation. We continue to place great emphasis on improving all three aspects. For collection, by going down to the ground more frequently and implementing all the mandates and steps that are stipulated, we have managed to boost our collection at M Centura."

"In terms of operational expenses, we are talk-



Being intentional from the get-go

SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE



Yong and Chen (third and fourth from left) with (from left) The Edge Malaysia editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, The Edge Malaysia editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and City & Country senior editor E Jacqui Chan

ing to a supplier of LED lighting to come in with a capex-free model, and it would take a cut of the savings in terms of the utility bills. This LED lighting can guarantee similar brightness or lumens at a reduced consumption rate, and the supplier has forecast savings of about 30% plus, based on its experience. We are exploring that for M Centura and other projects.

"For income generation, we are looking at generating auxiliary income. So, things like the laundry room can generate about RM1,000 a month. We are looking at renting out retail space for RM800 to RM1,000 plus to businesses like minimarts, and there are spaces for temporary kiosks that businesses can set up for periods as short as one or two weeks; anything to generate income," he continues.

"We are also in talks with a vendor for promotional LED screens at the lift lobbies. They normally pay RM100 to RM200 per screen. In M Centura, we can set up around eight screens — possibly generating RM800 to RM1,000 a month."

Furthermore, M Centura's property management team is objective-oriented and works towards ensuring that residents are highly satisfied with the team's performance, says Yong.

"In order to ensure M Centura performs well, we are adopting something quite unique in property management — a very performance-centric mindset. What I mean by that is there are very clear-cut KPIs (key performance indicators)," he says, adding that the ultimate test of how well a property manager is doing is the level of customer satisfaction after the resolution of their complaint or issue.

"The ultimate stakeholders are the owners. We believe in very close collaborations, coordination and feedback sessions with the residents. Ultimately, ideas for improvement and suggestions for enhancements are best discussed with, and sometimes best sourced from, the owners themselves. We focus on that a lot and that is part of our month-to-month operations."

Reducing costs

Chen and Yong explain how M Centura is managing its costs. "Besides the laundry room, which generates income that helps to lower the cost of maintenance, there is also the park-and-leave concept. It only applies to residents staying on levels one to nine, where the parking bays are on the same level. This reduces the use of lifts," says Chen.

"We use a rainwater harvesting system to re-



PICTURES BY SAM FONG/THE EDGE

M Centura is designed to be sustainable, with the building in a north-south orientation, while greenery is planted on its east and west sides to reduce heat

cycle rainwater for gardening purposes. We also have EV (electric vehicle) charging stations, which is a hot topic — everyone wants to own an EV and, hopefully, it will reduce carbon emissions.

“There is also a centralised garbage disposal system. This is an expensive system but a lot of people don’t understand the benefits of using this. Just imagine every day, you have a cleaner going to every single floor, pushing the rubbish bin into the lift. The use of the lift, the cleaner, the rubbish bins — all these are additional costs.

“Using this centralised garbage disposal system, you open a chute and you drop the garbage, which is then vacuumed into the central bin. Nowadays, because of the minimum wage, cleaners no longer come cheap. All these features will help reduce costs in the long term,” says Chen.

Yong concurs, adding that to ensure the waste disposal system is well maintained, M Centura occupants were educated on how to use it properly since many had not lived in a high-rise development with such a system before.

Besides the concerted efforts to keep the expenses of the development manageable, it also helps that Mah Sing’s size and clout afford some bargaining power that ultimately keeps costs under control.

“Another factor that helps to lower the maintenance cost is the use of the MY Mah Sing app. This helps a lot in terms of long-term security management, visitor management and booking of facilities,” says Chen. He adds that M Centura also receives support from the property management and security team at headquarters, who provide guidance and direction when needed.

Yong handles the customer service aspect, so all feedback or complaints go to his department, making it more efficient and easier to resolve issues and disseminate information. Moreover, he reveals that customer satisfaction is high, at about 80%.

Future savings

To further enhance the longevity of the development, Chen and Yong have a “wish list” of items that they hope can be adopted.

Yong says they are exploring the Internet of Things (IoT) to help with preventive maintenance. “For example, can we begin embedding or exploring systems with sensors, which can then provide us with data in real time, or alert us when there is an impending service or maintenance issue? Right now, the system is on an on-time framework but that sometimes doesn’t factor in premature breakage, premature wearing out or high usage.

“We also want to encourage everyone to use the app because it is traceable and easier for us to manage,” he says, adding that they are looking to artificial intelligence (AI) to score the interactions.

“AI can listen in on your call, read the transcripts of your email or app interactions, and score the



The co-working space is one of two areas that are air-conditioned. The other is the gym.



Yong (left) and Chen believe in collaborating closely with homeowners to improve services, and using customer satisfaction as a gauge of how they are doing to ensure that M Centura is well maintained

quality of the call on two things: customer sentiment — so AI can tell if a customer is happy, frustrated or angry — and, this is probably the easier one, script adherence, namely whether our staff greet customers in the correct way.

“We are still exploring this technology. It is at a very early stage and if this does work, then it will help in training our staff better and providing better customer service,” he says.

Yong says the group is also trying to help prepare the new generation of property managers to maintain Malaysia’s buildings.

“One area we are focusing on a lot is the people in property management because property management is changing dramatically. I think with new technology — AI, IoT and apps — what makes for a good property manager is no longer the same as before. They need to be savvy in interpreting data, managing people and directing them on what these insights tell them. So, basically, it is upskilling the whole industry.”

In the long term, they are looking into revenue generation at M Centura and their other projects, which will contribute to the funds for maintenance without having to raise the service charges, particularly as overall costs have been going up.

Chen says, “A lot of times when cost increases, the joint management body or management corporation will try to cut costs by reducing certain forms of maintenance — say, landscape: a plant has died, let’s not replace it. But that will bring the property value down. In contrast, for M Centura, the landscape is very well maintained even after three years. That is because we don’t cut costs for the sake of cutting. We will find ways to minimise cost and not increase the maintenance fee, but still keep to a high standard.”

Future-proofing and upskilling the people to manage properties effectively and efficiently, in tandem with changes in the marketplace, is certainly a goal worth pursuing.



The bright indoor badminton courts are complete with a high ceiling

Quick facts

NAME	M Centura
DEVELOPER	Cosmowealth Housing Development (subsidiary of Mah Sing Group Bhd)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	4.66 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2021
STOREYS	Tower A – 46 Tower B – 47
UNITS	1,413
BUILT-UP	646 to 1,001 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	96,056 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM3.00 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	81%
CAR PARK BAYS	2,019

AMENITIES
DUKE Highway, MRR2, Karak Highway, LRT Sentul Timur, KTM Sentul, Sentul Medical Centre, Kuala Lumpur General Hospital, Sunway Putra Mall, Giant Hypermarket Batu Caves, SJK (C) Sentul Pasar Peng Ming, SK Convent Sentul 1, SK Methodist Sentul, SK Kampung Batu, Wesley Methodist School, SMK Batu Muda, SMK La Salle Sentul, International Islamic College and Tunku Abdul Rahman University College
FACILITIES
Guardhouse, pavilion, floating gym, hammock garden, 50m Olympic-size pool, spa pool, amphitheatre, children’s pool, children’s playground, BBQ area, multipurpose hall/badminton courts, laundry bar, co-working space and surau
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES
Rainwater harvesting system, vertical planting and tree preservation, electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and integrated garbage disposal system
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES
Vertical planting and tree preservation and open-air grand lobby concept

BELOW 10 YEARS
Non-strata Retail

BRONZE

Design Village Outlet Mall

Implementing innovative solutions from the beginning

BY PRIYA DEVAN
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The first of its kind in the northern region, Design Village Outlet Mall (Design Village) in Penang is also the largest outlet mall in Malaysia. Similar to Genting Highlands Premium Outlets and Johor Premium Outlets, it has an open-air concept, plenty of natural light and ventilation, and is set amid lush greenery.

The mall is located in Bandar Cassia in Batu Kawan and spans 25 acres. It opened its doors on Nov 23, 2016, and has grown steadily since.

Developed and managed by PE Land (Penang) Sdn Bhd, Design Village comprises 183 shop lots that offer a diverse array of merchandise by local and international brands, including fashion, beauty, sports, home living and F&B. As at March this year, the mall had an occupancy rate of 83% and is targeting to reach 93% by March 2025.

“At PE Land, we believe in creating a retail environment that not only delights our shoppers but also contributes positively to the community and environment. Our commitment to sustainability is at the core of everything we do.

“We were very conscious at the time of ensuring it was more lifestyle-driven and sustainable instead

of just a typical shopping mall model that is more value-driven,” says PE Holdings Sdn Bhd CEO and PE Land (Penang) executive director Joanna Ling.

Concurring with Ling, PE Land (Penang) chief operating officer Andy Song says the design and planning stages of the mall were crucial for its long-term upkeep. “I think it was our decision from the very beginning to create a more experiential retail offering. Not many shopping malls in Malaysia have built something like ours, especially on a 25-acre land. Our founders and owners had a very long view of our assets.

“The open-air concept of Design Village allows us to provide a unique shopping experience that embraces the natural landscape of Batu Kawan. It’s a win-win for our tenants and shoppers, offering a refreshing ambience while reducing our carbon footprint.”

Song adds that shoppers will also benefit from the quality products offered at low prices. “This helps reduce redundant stock that might otherwise end up as waste in landfills, aligning with our sustainability goals. By providing affordable options for consumers, we contribute to a more sustainable retail ecosystem that minimises waste and promotes responsible consumption.”

The RM160 million mall is part of Penang Development Corp’s master plan for the Northern

Quick facts

NAME	Design Village Outlet Mall
DEVELOPER	PE Land (Penang) Sdn Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Commercial
LAND AREA	25 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	2016
STOREYS	Retail – 1 F&B – 2 Car park – 6
UNITS	183
BUILT-UP	2,000 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	445,259 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	345,330 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEES	RM2.10 psf including sinking fund
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	86%
CAR PARK BAYS	2,259 units

FACILITIES
Baby and nursery rooms, handicapped parking services, surau, locker storage, baby stroller and umbrella services, APRIL personal shopper, power riders, wheelchairs, lost and found services, ATM, medical and security room, local and international courier services (MBE)

ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES
3,584 solar panels that can produce an average of 8,000 kWh per day, LED light features in entire mall including tenants’ lots, internal and external light features linked to light sensors, timer lighting for corridors, inverter variable refrigerant volume air conditioning system and automatic pressure for every water pump that will be triggered only in low-pressure situations

Housing 183 retail lots, the mall offers a wide variety of local and international brands

SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE



Ling and Song (third and fourth from left) with (from left) The Edge Malaysia editor emeritus and the awards’ chief judge Au Foong Yee, The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, The Edge Malaysia editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and City & Country senior editor E Jacqui Chan



The mall also features an outdoor children's playground and recreational area

Corridor Economic Region. The master plan aims to develop a retail catalyst to transform the quiet agricultural backwater in Penang into a new, rapidly growing township.

For ensuring the development will be self-sustainable in the long run, Design Village Outlet Mall is the Bronze winner in the Below 10 Years — Non-strata Retail category in *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Healthy rebound from pandemic

“So we decided to pick up an MBE franchise and run it on our property. We created additional income for us, as well as supporting our ecosystem in terms of e-commerce. [In 2021], we made about RM1 million in sales from e-commerce alone,” he explains.

The Covid-19 pandemic caused many businesses to struggle, and Design Village was no exception. “The pandemic hit us by surprise but we immediately sprang into action. Bandar Cassia in Batu Kawan is an island accessible via two bridges. So when the [movement control order was implemented], we had no access to the outside world. The barrier was at the bridge, so you can’t come in and out without prior approval.

“We had limited F&B outlets here, so we were categorised as non-essential operators. Then it came down to shutting down the mall completely or opting for a more innovative solution. We decided to choose a defensive model in order to protect our interests in Batu Kawan, by not charging rent on any of our tenants during that particular period.”

To adapt to the situation, Song says the team created APRIL, an e-commerce platform aimed at marketing the products sold at the mall. “We devised, planned and launched it in less than six months. Our marketing team assisted the tenants in promoting their products. These efforts not only maintained tenant engagement but also significantly increased our branding and visibility in the market.”

As a result, once movement restrictions were eased, Song says there was a surge in shopper traffic that helped them recover faster. The team also managed to retain 99% of their tenants, minimising the loss of retail staff.

To further improve its income stream, the team ventured into logistics services by setting up its very own Mail Boxes Etc (MBE) outlet called MBE Design Village. “We realised that shipment had become a problem, [as we had issues shipping the products out] due to MCOs. We’d always have to drive to the nearest courier company but with movement restrictions, that was difficult.

“So we decided to pick up an MBE franchise and run it on our property. We created additional income for us, as well as supporting our ecosystem in terms of e-commerce. [In 2021], we made about RM1 million in sales from e-commerce alone,” he explains

Challenges of open-air mall

According to Song, the main challenge in maintaining an open-air concept mall is the weather. Unlike indoor malls, Song says Design Village had to prioritise weatherproofing and regular maintenance of the ETFE (ethylene tetrafluoroethylene) canopies that protect shoppers from the sun and rain.

“We anticipated weather issues when we were designing the mall, so naturally we were prepared. We made calculations of the sun’s position and studied the area’s wind path. Even if there’s a storm, we won’t be worried because we have built enough drainage to ensure there is no stagnant water anywhere within and around the mall,” Song says.

“Additionally, as a greenfield project in a greenfield area, we face the challenge of land settlement due to the peat soil in the region. With many developments causing the new land to sink, we need to continually monitor and plan to rectify these settlements to ensure the stability and safety of our infrastructure.”

Another significant problem is the occasional intrusion by reptiles such as monitor lizards and snakes into the mall’s green spaces. “This site used to be an oil palm plantation, so naturally we did get



quite a few reptile infestation cases in the last three to four years. To address this, we invested in training our security personnel with Jabatan Pertahanan Awam to handle these reptiles safely and effectively.”

Song adds that the training includes learning about the reptiles’ breeding and feeding habits to minimise their intrusion and effectively catch them when detected during their inspection of the landscape, which is done daily before the mall opens.

Besides reptiles, Song says Batu Kawan also has a large crow population. “This poses a challenge to us because crows are scavengers and they might become health hazards. To manage this, we ensure our trees are not used by crows for nesting. Our gardeners regularly inspect the trees for them. We also work closely with the local council to keep their population in check, ensuring that our waste management practices do not attract these birds, and maintain the safety and cleanliness of our mall environment.”

Regular inspection key to longevity

Ling says Design Village’s commitment to sustainability extends to regular maintenance, including weekly cleaning of sewage and drainage systems to prevent blockages and maintaining optimal performance to avoid contamination of the environment.

“These initiatives form part of our broader strategy to ensure long-term financial sustainability and resilience, enabling us to invest in future growth and improvements while maintaining our commitment to environmental stewardship,” she adds.

To ensure the mall is consistently well-maintained and upgraded, the team implemented comprehensive standard operating procedures (SOPs) for all departments of the mall’s management. The SOPs are divided into four categories, namely tenant relations, facility maintenance, security protocols and emergency response.

Ling adds, “Our commitment to SOPs extends beyond mere documentation. We conduct regular training sessions and workshops to familiarise staff with SOPs, reinforce best practices, and promote a culture of accountability and continuous improvement. Feedback mechanisms are in place to solicit

The sunken gardens will be revitalised by October this year

From left: Design Village Mall housekeeping team lead Santhanasamy, tenancy design and fit-out manager Tan Ean Ling, purchasing manager Ch’ng Lee Ting, marketing manager Ooi Su Li, executive assistant Choo Yin Suen, finance manager Cheah Kheng Han, Song, building service assistant manager Wan Muhammad, security and carpark manager Hairusany and leasing manager Voong Shu Lee



PICTURES BY PE LAND (PENANG)

input from staff and tenants, enabling us to refine our SOPs based on real-world experiences and evolving needs.”

Taking it a step further, Song says the mall also has many green features to reduce energy consumption. They include a large-scale solar power system, LED lighting, variable refrigerant volume (VRV) air conditioning units as well as 790 trees.

“To ensure the longevity and effectiveness of these features, we have established comprehensive maintenance schedules, and continuously monitor and optimise our systems. For instance, our solar panels have a lifecycle of 25 years and are subject to annual performance reviews and cleaning. The LED lighting system, with a lifespan of approximately 50,000 hours, undergoes periodic inspections and replacements as needed. Similarly, our VRV air-conditioning units, which have a lifespan of around 15 years, are maintained regularly to ensure optimal performance and energy efficiency.”

As part of its long-term plan to maintain these green features, Ling says, “Sustainability is not just a buzzword for us; it’s a commitment. Our long-term plan includes staying abreast of the latest sustainability technologies and practices to keep improving our environmental impact.”

Besides its commitment to sustainability, Ling says it was crucial for them to incorporate energy-saving features as an outlet business model typically has a slimmer profit margin than traditional retail malls.

“We developed it this way so that we’d be able to keep our costs down. This consideration influenced our decision to adopt an outdoor mall concept that ensures the rent remains competitive [while] helping our tenants keep their operating costs low at the same time.”

According to Song, Design Village’s solar power project with 3,584 units of solar photovoltaic panels, installed in May 2023, has already yielded significant savings by generating 2,868MWh of green energy annually. This initiative, he adds, has helped avoid 39,037 tons of CO2 emissions over 10 years, equivalent to the petrol used to drive 151 million kilometres. The estimated total solar power generated will save RM5 million over 15 years and RM17.8 million over 25 years, he explains.

Additionally, the mall’s use of LED lighting and automated systems further reduces utility expenses.

Striving to execute more upgrades

Song says the management team plans to maximise the capacity allowed for solar power installation to further reduce its energy costs and enhance its sustainability efforts. Additionally, it also plans to implement advanced water wastage and leakage detection systems with annual rectification processes to ensure efficient water usage.

“We also plan to enhance our digital infrastructure to improve the shopping experience and streamline operations. This includes implementing smart building technologies and expanding our e-commerce capabilities. We also aim to enhance our waste management and recycling programmes to further our sustainability goals. Moreover, we will continue to host community-centric events and initiatives to strengthen our engagement with the local community.”

Song also says his team is pursuing a Green Building Index Bronze certification starting this year. “Over the next 10 to 12 years, we plan to continuously improve our practices and infrastructure to eventually achieve Platinum certification. This phased approach ensures that we systematically enhance our sustainability standards and remain at the forefront of sustainable retail development.”

Ling says her team has set an eight-year target to be 10 times ahead of where it was on day one, describing it as an ambitious yet not impossible goal.

“By doing so, we’d be able to redeploy our gains into redeveloping our mall because 25 acres is a lot of land and there are a lot of things we can do there.”

BELOW 10 YEARS
Strata Retail

BRONZE

KL East Mall

Staying relevant in a resilient urban consumer market

BY RACHEAL LEE
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It is not easy being in a competitive market, but the operator of KL East Mall (KLEM) is up to the task. It is focusing on strategies that will keep the mall — located a stone's throw from the Wangsa Maju Fire and Rescue Station and the new Terminal Bersepadu Gombak in the eastern part of Kuala Lumpur — relevant and attractive to a wide clientele.

According to Sime Darby Property Bhd (SDP) [KL:SIMEPROP] chief operating officer for investment and asset management Aurelia Lee, it has several key strategies to drive footfall, including a strong tenant mix, a well-managed building and car parks, biophilic design elements and exciting events. "Focusing on these strategies ensures that KLEM remains a dynamic and attractive destination for shopping patrons, even in a competitive market," she says.

To ensure there is a strong tenant mix, the mall's offerings include high-quality F&B options, homegrown Malaysian brands and other lifestyle and experiential activities to enhance the shopper experience and encourage longer visits. There is

also GSC's new IMAX cinema experience, one of six locations in Malaysia, along with the highly anticipated third PlayPark Hall.

The other tenants include Café Chef Wan, Dolly Dim Sum, Kenny Hills Bakers, Habib, Kapten Batik, Calaqisya, Naelofar, Blue Ice Skating Rink, Jungle Gym, Camp5 and BookXcess. There are 182 units in a net lettable area of 401,585 sq ft.

Lee notes that cleanliness, safety and efficient operations are its priorities to ensure a welcoming environment for all visitors. The enhanced car park system offers contactless and cashless access, providing seamless accessibility, improved security and greater convenience for shoppers.

With the opening of KL East Park last year, SDP has enriched the shopping experience with biophilic design elements by integrating natural elements and recreational spaces.

The developer maintains a robust calendar of year-round activation programmes and reward campaigns in collaboration with its tenants. Up-



Quick facts

NAME	KL East Mall
DEVELOPER	Sime Darby Property Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Commercial
LAND AREA	6.74 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2019
STOREYS	8
UNITS	182
GROSS FLOOR AREA	611,685 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM1.959 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	98.41%
CAR PARK BAYS	1,300

FACILITIES

Concierge service, baby stroller, wheelchair, lost and found, first-aid kit, automated external defibrillators, 24-hour mall security, EV charging station, ladies parking, car wash, laundrette, washrooms, prayer room, nursing room, valet parking and ATM machines

ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES

Replacement of traditional lighting with LED lights that consume less energy and have a longer lifespan; energy monitoring system (implementation of ENISCOPE Analytics to monitor the real-time energy usage); implementation of building automation system to monitor and control electrical, lighting as well as air-conditioning and mechanical ventilation systems, optimising energy use; allowing in natural daylight with the glass canopy and façade to reduce the need for artificial lighting; installation of energy-efficient elevators and escalators that use solenoid braking and energy-saving standby modes; and chiller that runs at optimum efficiency of 0.576kW/ton

INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES

Ventilation system equipped with adequate fresh air; air filtration at fan coil units and AHUs; implementation of no-smoking policies and designated smoking areas



Sime Darby Property head of retail Tan Boon Leong (centre) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan

Sitting atop the four-level KLEM is The Ridge at KL East, which offers 508 serviced apartments in two blocks



coming highlights include Hari Merdeka and Hari Malaysia celebrations with deals and rewards campaigns, a Mid-Autumn giveaway, Halloween trick-or-treat events, the mall's fourth anniversary celebration and a Christmas experience with an exclusive partner.

Completed in 2019 and officially opened on Nov 25, 2020, the mall operator focuses on continuous enhancement of the tenant mix and year-round

PICTURES BY SIME DARBY PROPERTY



SDP's key strategies in driving footfall for KLEM include a strong tenant mix and exciting events

events for its patrons, in addition to regular refurbishment and updates to its interior design to maintain its appeal to tenants and patrons, says Lee.

"Additionally, we are focusing on implementing green building practices to enhance sustainability and reduce our carbon and waste footprint. These initiatives reflect our proactive approach to creating a vibrant and environmentally conscious shopping environment," she adds.

These strategies have proved successful as the mall has won the Bronze in the Below 10 Years — Strata Retail category at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

KLEM is part of a mixed-use development. Sitting atop the four-level shopping mall is The Ridge at KL East, which offers 508 serviced apartments in two blocks. The units, with built-ups of 651 to 865 sq ft, were completed in 2020 and are sold out.

With a total built-up area of 611,685 sq ft and 1,300 parking bays, KLEM was completed in 2019. The mall and The Ridge are part of the 153-acre mixed-use township KL East, developed by SDP.

KL East is near several highways such as the Middle Ring Road 2, Duta-Ulu Kelang Expressway, Sungai Besi-Ulu Kelang Elevated Expressway, KL-Karak Expressway, Ampang-Kuala Lumpur Elevated Highway and Setiawangsa-Pantai Expressway. The Gombak LRT Station is 800m from the township.

KL East has a primary catchment of 1.28 million people, who have a total household income of RM29.5 billion a year, within a 15-minute drive of the township. KLEM benefits from the easy accessibility and population of the township.

Lee says managing a mall in a mixed-use development requires prioritising the differing needs of various stakeholders, from the residents to the retail tenants and patrons.

"Fostering open and transparent communication, collaboration and mutual understanding is essential to addressing these challenges. By doing so, management can promptly address issues and create a congenial environment that satisfies the diverse needs of all stakeholders. This approach ensures that the development's operational and community aspects function smoothly, ultimately enhancing the overall experience for everyone involved," she says.

Managing the mall

Lee says the operation of KLEM is aligned with the group's environmental, social and governance (ESG) commitments. With that in mind, financial sustainability is something the team looks at and several cost-saving initiatives have been implemented. One of them is the replacement of 2,187 conventional T5 fluorescent lights with T8 LED tubes in the car park from last year to early this year. The move is expected to reduce electricity consump-

tion by 72%. The target saving is 23,712kWh or RM9,722 per month.

Another concern in mall management is the security and safety of the tenants and patrons. A comprehensive network of surveillance cameras has been installed throughout the mall, covering key areas such as entrances, exits, parking lots and common areas. These are monitored in real time by trained security personnel.

An advanced access control system is in place to restrict entry to sensitive areas in the mall. The system includes biometric access, key cards and PIN-based entry for authorised personnel.

Other security-related works include emergency response planning, collaboration with law enforcement and training for security personnel, auxiliary police and mall staff. In the near future, the operator will look at utilising technology to enhance mall security.

"Looking forward to [the later part of] 2024, KLEM will utilise the integration of CCTV with an intrusion protection system to revolutionise the capabilities of the security measures. Future CCTV systems will likely incorporate advanced video analytics, such as facial recognition, object detection and behavioural analysis. These features can automate the identification of potential threats, reducing reliance on manual monitoring," says Lee.

These include integrating CCTVs with intrusion detection sensors to enhance the overall security apparatus. For instance, when an intrusion alarm is triggered, CCTV cameras can automatically focus on the affected area, providing real-time visual confirmation and aiding in a more precise response.

There are also automated alerts and notifications, whereby the integrated system can send automated alerts and notifications to security personnel or designated authorities when unauthorised access or suspicious activities are detected. This ensures a swift response, minimising potential risks.

With these advancements in connectivity, the CCTV system can be monitored and controlled remotely. This allows security personnel to access live feeds, review recorded footage and manage the intrusion protection system from a centralised location.



Lee: We hope that KLEM, as SDP's first wholly-owned mall, will serve as a blueprint and model for future malls in our other townships

The integration also enables the fusion of data from various security systems, creating a comprehensive picture of security events. This holistic view enhances decision-making and streamlines responses to complex security situations.

Other proactive measures taken include the use of a visitor and identity management system via ServeDeck to manage and monitor individuals, particularly contractors, vendors and suppliers, in the mall. It involves comprehensive visitor management (pre-registration and real-time updates of visitors); access control (authorised access and biometric access for certain individuals to specific areas); monitoring and tracking (real-time monitoring and historical tracking of an individual's movement in the mall); enhanced security records database (centralised database and integration with security system); compliance and reporting (compliance checks and customisable reports); as well as streamlined communication (automated notifications and communications with contractors to provide a platform for sharing important information or updates related to contractors/visitors' activities in the mall).

Moving forward

Lee notes that with the ever-growing supply of new retail spaces, securing good tenants has become highly competitive as retailers now have more choices and attractive offers. Nevertheless, she is confident that KLEM's strong and curated tenant mix, alongside a robust marketing plan, will continue to attract patrons in a growing and resilient urban consumer market.

"We are committed to enhancing our retail offerings, organising engaging placemaking activities and maintaining high facility standards to attract more foot traffic to the mall, ensuring we remain a preferred shopping destination for our patrons," she says.

The mall operator will continue to align with SDP's ESG commitments. This vision includes achieving net zero carbon emissions, demonstrating our commitment to environmental stewardship and making a positive contribution to our community, says Lee.

A sustainability initiative currently run by the mall is the Recycling & Buy-Back Centre, which collects recyclable items such as corrugated cardboard, newspapers, books and plastic bottles every second Sunday of the month. A total of 2,502.8kg of recycled items were collected last year.

"We hope that KLEM, as SDP's first wholly-owned mall, will serve as a blueprint and model for future malls in our other townships," she says.

10 YEARS AND ABOVE
Non-strata Office

BRONZE

Crystal Plaza

Crystal-clear vision for an old building

BY **RACHEL CHEW**
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Situated along the Federal Highway in Petaling Jaya, Crystal Plaza has been a landmark building since its completion some 29 years ago in 1995. Despite the growing number of new office buildings in Seksyen 51A, it still stands out.

Credit for its enduring significance goes to the owner and facility manager, Axis REIT Managers Bhd (KL:AXREIT). The team has kept it up-to-date and well-maintained since the 6-storey office building was injected into the REIT in 2005, ensuring Crystal Plaza remains a strong contender among the new competition.

"We believe that as a REIT company, it is our responsibility to nurture our properties to ensure they remain profitable and competitive no matter when [they were built]. It is one key reason we established an in-house property management team to manage all 63 properties of Axis REIT so [that] we get to control the quality of the building and to provide the best service we can to the tenants," says its CEO Leong Kit May.

The commitment to quality has certainly paid off as Crystal Plaza is a Bronze winner of the 10 Years and Above — Non-strata Office category in *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Situated on 1.7 acres leasehold land at Jalan 51A/223, Crystal Plaza encompasses a total gross floor area of about 303,430 sq ft and a net lettable area of 205,176 sq ft. It provides 250 parking bays for cars and 156 for motorcycles on the ground and basement levels; with more bays available at the open-air car park opposite the premises, as well as at the Park & Ride car park located at the Asia Jaya LRT Station, which is just a two-minute walk from the building. Crystal Plaza is highly visible and easy to access from the Federal Highway.

The office is currently 92.5% occupied. The anchor tenant, RHB Bank Bhd, takes up about 40% of the total space. Other prominent tenants are DHL Asia Pacific Shared Services Sdn Bhd and AsiaWorks Malaysia Sdn Bhd. The overall billing collection rate in 2023 was 99.8%.

"In fact, the occupancy rate and collection rate of Crystal Plaza have always been maintained at a very high level; the same goes for the scoring of our tenant satisfaction survey that we carry out annually. I think that explains why most of our tenants have been here with us for a very long time. Some of them have been with us for more than 20 years," says head of real estate Jackie Law.

Law attributes the low tenant turnover rate to the strategic location, as well as to the big floor plates and high ceilings of the building, which are not very common in such a mature location.

"Not many would know this but Crystal Plaza was first built as an industrial property. We took the route to convert the premises into an office commercial property but retained some of the industrial property features, such as the very high ceilings and large floor plates, high-tension electrical supply system with large power reserves, as well as two cargo lifts with 2,000kg capacity per unit, which are still in service today.

"It could be why the building was attractive to many tenants who needed both office and warehousing at the same location in the early days, especially those who were doing high-value item businesses, such as handphone and camera

... Fujifilm used to be one of our early tenants," Law explains.

The connectivity of Crystal Plaza was further enhanced when Asia Jaya LRT Station began operations in 1998. Combine that with the standout features, the building became even more attractive, especially to outsourcing and back-end operation businesses.

Staying relevant

When asked the secret to Crystal Plaza's success, Leong attributes it to the effort of the property management team, which is committed to constantly upgrading and enhancing the property.

"In order to stay competitive in the market, a building must continuously evolve to meet the changing needs of its tenants, especially when we are talking about older buildings like Crystal Plaza. From upgrading the building's facilities to implementing energy-efficient solutions, we are proud to say the team has been at the forefront of ensuring that Crystal Plaza remains a premier office destination," Leong notes.

Tenaga Nasional Bhd (KL:TENAGA), a key tenant for over 20 years, moved out of Crystal Plaza to relocate to its own building in 2020, causing the occupancy rate to drop to 46%. Instead of filling up the vacant space immediately, Axis REIT decided to take the opportunity to carry out major refurbishment and enhancement works.



Leong (centre) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan and *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat

"Tenaga shared the [relocation] plan with us much earlier to make sure we had sufficient time to look for the next tenant because they occupied quite a big space. However, we decided to take the opportunity to do major refurbishment works to minimise the disruption to the existing tenants [as more than half of the building was unoccupied] and to better prepare ourselves to serve the next tenants," she recalls.

The refurbishment and enhancement works, which took over three years from 2019 and cost RM10 million to complete, included replacing the air-conditioning system and lighting to energy-efficient types; installation of new energy-efficient transformers; the replacement of conventional lighting to LED lighting, fitted with motion sensors; the refurbishment of washrooms, including the infrastructure parts such as incoming and outgoing water piping and plumbing fitting; lift lobby refurbishment; and upgrade of the fire-fighting system to comply with the latest Bomba's requirements.

"Other than those major upgrading works, we





The upgraded main lobby



The pick-up and drop-off point

also did some minor works where we found was needed, such as the review and enhancement of the security system, including adding more CCTVs; continuing to upgrade our online tenant portal; and so on,” says Siva Shankar, head of facilities management at Axis Facilities Management Sdn Bhd, the property management arm of Axis REIT. He elaborates that the team practises asset life-cycle management in all the properties under the company’s management, where the team keeps track of the building assets’ lifecycle and plans replacement or refurbishment.

“For example, [for] the air-conditioning system, the plumbing system or something as simple as the cable wiring, we keep an eye on the performances and keep track of how long before they are due [for change]. We take action to check and change them before they are due because we want to avoid disruption to the operations of the tenants and occupiers, some of whom are running 24 hours a day and have servers set up here in the building,” Siva shares.

While the team declines to share the savings on the monthly operation cost of Crystal Plaza



PATRICK GOH/THE EDGE

From left: Siva, Low, Leong (seated) and Axis Property Services principal Selina Khor

after the refurbishment and replacement to energy-efficient fittings, Siva highlights that what is more important is the company’s commitment to environmental, social and governance (ESG).

“A 30-year-old building like Crystal Plaza is certainly not designed to be green or energy-efficient, but that doesn’t mean they can’t contribute to a greener tomorrow. We have set KPIs to reduce the electricity and water consumption of Crystal Plaza to a certain level and we are moving towards that target with the help of all these upgrading works we have done, ongoing and in the pipeline,” he says.

He adds that two ongoing projects are the installation of electric vehicle car charging stations, as well as a cashless carpark system, which are slated for completion by the end of this year.

It is worth noting that the Building Energy Index (BEI) in Crystal Plaza was 99 kWh/m2/year, below the benchmark of 135 kWh/m2/year. BEI is the ratio of total amount of energy consumed by a building in a year over the built area of the building. Currently, Malaysia has a MS 1525:2007 Building Energy Index standard of 135 kWh/m2/year. A lower BEI rating translates into an efficient and energy-saving environment in a building.

Leong says efficient property management is important to Axis REIT from the business perspective, because it affects the occupancy and rental rate of a building, which in turn impact the company’s overall performance. She highlights that it is also paramount to prove that an old building like Crystal Plaza is still relevant in the current tough office market, and continues to create value to the owner, tenants and the city.

“I always love older buildings because they are solid, sturdy and timeless. Efficient and effective property management could make these old buildings continue to shine bright and contribute to the city. The winning of the Best Managed and Sustainable Property award is a testament to what we always believe and a very meaningful recognition of the team’s efforts,” Leong adds. **E**

Quick facts	
NAME	Crystal Plaza
OWNER	Crystal Properties Sdn Bhd (subsidiary of Axis REIT Managers Bhd)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Office
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	1995
STOREYS	6
BUILT-UP	12,000 to 37,000 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	303,430 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	205,176 sq ft
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	92.5%
CAR PARK BAYS	250
AMENITIES	
Automated teller machine, AED device, Asia Jaya LRT Station (walking distance), public bus stops (PJ free bus route), international hotels, financial and commercial centre, nearby private and public hospitals and easy accessibility to major highways and city roads	
FACILITIES	
Café cum bakery within the building, four passenger lifts and two cargo lifts, OKU-friendly features, automated car park system and high water storage tank capacity in preparation for water disruption	
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	
LED lighting and motion sensors in the washrooms and common areas, solar PV panels, water-efficient fittings and energy-saving air-conditioning system	
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	
Periodic maintenance of air-conditioning system and water quality test by independent lab in the cooling tower system and San-Air sanitiser for prevention of air-borne bacteria and viruses	

All the washrooms have been upgraded recently



Crystal Plaza has been a landmark building since its completion some 29 years ago



10 YEARS AND ABOVE
Mixed Development (Entire)

SPECIAL MENTION

PJ8



Placing emphasis on a strong partnership

BY **CHELSEA J LIM**
city.country@bizedge.com

Managing a mixed-use development such as PJ8 is no mean feat, but having a collaborative and supportive partnership between the property manager and the management corporation (MC) helps ease the task. “With multiple stakeholders from multiple components, it is always about collaboration [between us and the MC],” says Knight Frank Property Management (KFPM) Sdn Bhd director of property management Nageswaran Muniandy. Developed by IJM Land Bhd, PJ8 was completed in 2012 and KFPM was appointed property manager from day one. One thing that has been consistent all these years is the determination of the MC members, notes Nageswaran.

“Over the years, we have seen some MC members who have stayed until today and taken on positions in the MC. There will always be issues in any stratified development, but with members who put their heart and soul into the community, the job becomes easier.”

Located in Jalan Barat, Petaling Jaya, PJ8 comprises four blocks — two corporate office towers (Block A and C), a multiple-owned strata office (Block B), a 38-storey serviced apartment (Block D), car parks and a food court with 20 units. It received a Special Mention in the 10 years and Above — Mixed Development (Entire) category at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Main takeaways

To achieve efficient management and maintenance of the property, a responsive and transparent management is crucial.

“We have regular monthly meetings with the MC to discuss all operational issues before making a decision. This allows KFPM to carry out policies and decisions more efficiently. We also have an active WhatsApp group, where important and urgent matters are communicated to ensure MC members are well informed and up to date with the current situation at PJ8,” says Nageswaran.

“Our transparent management approach is an important point for strong collaboration as well. KFPM provides a monthly report to the MC, which includes financial reports, schedules and other relevant data. All expenses and activities are done based on the MC’s prior approval. We also ensure that a representative of each block is elected as a committee member during the annual general meeting (AGM) to ensure issues and concerns faced by each block are addressed and attended to by the MC.”

Expert MC members

Having MC members who are experts in certain fields such as finance and legal has been beneficial to the management of PJ8.

Former MC chairperson Daljit Kaur says: “We have been very lucky because all of us are experts in our own areas. Whenever there are decisions to be made, we have members who [have different expertise] and are able to look into the details to make sure the decision will contribute to everyone’s benefit. That has been an added advantage for us.”

While MC members come and go, to continue PJ8 in good shape, typically there will be two or

The 3.06-acre PJ8 was developed by IJM Land Bhd and completed in 2009



PICTURES BY LOW YEN YEING/ THE EDGE



SUHAIMI YUSUF/ THE EDGE

Nageswaran and MC chairperson Hong Ching Ching (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards’ chief judge Au Foong Yee, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan and *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat

three existing MC members in the committee for every new term. “We will ensure that those members can pass on the message from the previous MC. At the end of the day, our message has always been about [looking after the interests of] everyone without making selfish decisions and to take accountability for all decisions made,” she says.

Enhancement works

As PJ8 is more than a decade old, the MC and KFPM have taken improvement initiatives such as façade painting, repairing of wooden planks at the swimming pool at the serviced apartment and replacing the tiles at the common area’s lift lobbies with the aim of refreshing the development.

Another major enhancement was the replacement of wood sleepers at PJ8’s common area forest-themed podium, says Nageswaran. The wood sleeper flooring is made of wooden planks sourced from Keretapi Tanah Melayu Bhd (KTMB).

“These planks were already aged when they were installed at PJ8 and over the years, a portion of the wooden planks had rotted so we had to change them. We took a long time to decide



(From left) KFPM area manager S Aravindashan, former MC chairperson Daljit, MC secretary Angeline Shoon, MC chairperson Hong Ching Ching, building manager Gurdarshan Singh and Nageswaran

Quick facts

NAME	PJ8
DEVELOPER	IJM Land Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Mixed-use
LAND AREA	3.06 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	2009
STOREYS	Block A – 13 Block B – 12 Block C – 17 Block D – 38
UNITS	Block B – 46 Block D – 325
BUILT-UP	Block B – 1,485 to 4,595 sq ft Block D – 560 to 5,235 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	926,277 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	681,699 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	Blocks A and C – RM1.35 per share unit Block B – RM4.13 per share unit Block D – RM4.73 per share unit Car park – RM1.35 per share unit Food court – RM1.35 per share unit
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	Block A – 100% Block B – 85% Block C – 100% Block D – 89%
CAR PARK BAYS	388
AMENITIES	Shopping mall, F&B outlets, hotels, banks, hospitals, police station, Road Transport Department (JPJ) and Asia Jaya LRT station
FACILITIES	Swimming pool, Jacuzzi room, sauna, BBQ area, gymnasium, squash court, table tennis court, function hall, business centre, sky lounge, convenience store, hair salon and surau
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	Replacing old incandescent and fluorescent lighting with energy-efficient LEDs throughout the property
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	Vent blocks for natural ventilation, high ceiling in the lobby and regular maintenance of air-conditioning units

whether to retain the original material or replace it with cheaper material.

“It would have been easier for us to remove everything and replace them with other materials. Ultimately, we decided to [source the original materials] because we didn’t want to change the environment, which the residents and tenants take pride in,” Nageswaran explains.

Moving forward, as materials are hard to come by, retaining the original flooring may be a challenge in the future.

These planks have a lifespan of about 10 years but because of material scarcity, it will be more difficult to retain the original elements, says Nageswaran.

Nonetheless, the property manager is determined to keep the original aesthetics of PJ8 by sourcing for the materials abroad.

With the strong partnership between the MC and the property manager, PJ8 is expected to continue thriving in the coming years.

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10 YEARS AND ABOVE
Multiple-owned Strata Residential

SPECIAL MENTION

Cendana KLCC



Proper financial planning is crucial

BY RACHEAL LEE
city.country@bizedge.com

Proper financial planning for building improvements is essential to ensuring quality building management, says Cendana KLCC management corporation (MC) chairman Darayus Happy Minwalla.

“Something that I insist on is that we hold a committee meeting at least once a month. In fact, in June, we had two meetings, and the reason for the second one is because we are looking at the budget for another three months to see what we can do to improve the quality of life in the building. We have set up a separate committee meeting for just that purpose,” he says.

“We keep building our reserves, which has always been consistently over the RM2 million mark for whatever major works we need to do, such as the change of water pipes for the whole building (to polypropylene random copolymer pipes) as well as the upgrade of the main entrance and guardhouse recently. We are hoping that by the end of this year, we will have built our sinking fund back up for the money we spent on these two items. That has to be planned and thought of now, as we are looking at next year and the amount of money that will be available. Then we prioritise the works that need to be done.”

He adds that the intercom system for all units has been upgraded, as has the vehicle entry system for automated number plate recognition. A community app has also been developed, where owners and residents can check their service charges and house rules as well as carry out facilities booking and visitor registration.

The playroom and gymnasium have also been upgraded, while a library has been set up within the building.

SCM International Property Management Sdn Bhd executive director Krishnaraj Perumalu sees the importance of proper financial management as he has seen how major improvement works could not be carried out at some older properties due to insufficient funds. “Pre-planning is very important and



PICTURES BY CENDANA KLCC

Cendana KLCC only puts in facilities that are really required by the residents

that’s what we are doing to make sure that we don’t overspend. At the same time, we have sufficient money to do our work and not to be caught off guard.”

SCM has been the property manager at Cendana KLCC since 2018. Completed in 2008, the condo has 152 units in a single tower on Jalan Cendana, and a stone’s throw away from Petronas Twin Towers and Suria KLCC.

Cendana KLCC receives a Special Mention in the 10 Years and Above — Multiple-owned Strata Residential category at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Changes ahead

MC member Dr Saeed Zaki explains that before SCM came on board, Cendana KLCC was managed by a property manager that had become complacent.

“I was on the committee at the time and we had the same property manager since the inception of the building until we decided to change. The quality of the building was going down and there were a lot of complaints from residents, owners and tenants. So we undertook a major exercise, evaluating all the top property managers in the market. Our purpose was to make sure that we find a property manager who can represent a Grade A building,” he says.

“SCM provided us with a team and they promised that we would get the quality that we required. I am very happy to say that our decision was justified. We have had SCM now for more than six years and the building has improved significantly. We were looking for a company with good governance, that follows a very strong protocol and also has a very strong system of check and balance.”

Krishnaraj recalls that, upon taking over the management of Cendana KLCC, the first thing that SCM did was get a building assessment report before planning the necessary works.

“The first thing we look out for is whether the basic maintenance is there. So, when I say basic maintenance, it [means] things like landscaping, security services, cleaning companies, facilities and equipment. So, these have been forecasted, and we need to make sure that things are periodically maintained



SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

Cendana KLCC MC committee member Che’ Engku Puan Sri Rozeeta Ahmad Baharudin and SCM International Property Management Sdn Bhd joint chairman Datuk Ling Keak Ming (third and fourth from left) with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards’ chief judge Au Foong Yee, *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong and *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan



SAM FONG/THE EDGE

(Standing, from left) SCM senior associate director Low Chee Bin, residential manager Rebecca Ann Bateman and director Ling Li Wynn; (seated, from left) Krishnaraj, Minwalla and Saeed

and we have sufficient funds to do it,” he says.

“The second thing is to make Cendana KLCC appealing among its competitors, which involves a lot of upgrading, improvement and refurbishment works. We also want to see if the facilities serve the purposes of the property. We don’t over exaggerate the amount of facilities but only put in those that are really required by the residents.”

He adds that community engagement is also important and the property manager makes the effort to tell new residents the history of Cendana KLCC, the works that have been done and where it is now. It is a move he believes the residents will appreciate. The MC organises festive season celebrations and town halls to further cultivate community engagement.

SCM has established planned preventive maintenance for Cendana KLCC, which was not in place before, to avoid any costly downtime from unexpected equipment failure.

Reaping the fruits

The MC is keen on increasing the value and rental of Cendana KLCC. Saeed observes that the increased quality of the building has attracted quality residents as well, thus holding up the property value.

“We sent a letter to all owners, telling them that if they want to rent out their property, don’t just rent to anybody at any rate. We gave them some [benchmarks for] the rental. We advised them. Previously, we had some issues with a tenant where we had to

Quick facts

NAME	Cendana KLCC
DEVELOPER	Tan & Tan Developments Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Residential
LAND AREA	1 acre
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	2008
STOREYS	42
UNITS	152
BUILT-UP	2,195 to 7,986 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	446,889 sq ft
MAINTENANCE FEE	RM42.32 per share unit (sinking fund – RM4.23 per share unit)
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	80%
CAR PARK BAYS	362
AMENITIES	Renaissance Hotel, Suria KLCC, Bukit Bintang, Pavilion Kuala Lumpur, Lot 10, The Starhill and Sungei Wang Plaza
FACILITIES	Heated swimming pool, Jacuzzi, sauna, gymnasium, games room, table tennis, children’s playground, reading room, function room and car lift
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	Energy-efficient lighting programme by installing motion-type LED lights at the staircase, car park and corridors; LED lights timer in the corridors and car park
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	Fresh air duct motorised ventilation to maintain air quality, air purifier, air freshener and live plants

call the police and that’s why we are vigilant now. Also, we don’t allow short-term stays.”

The improvements to the building have helped to increase the occupancy rate at Cendana KLCC, which is now at 80%. Comparatively, Saeed notes that the figure was less than 40% seven to eight years ago.

“We are now working with the SCM team and evaluating all the back-of-house systems to make a plan. Like, for example, we have already upgraded our communications. So we have now allowed a vendor to come in and put in 5G cabling for the internet,” he says.

Moving forward

Saeed says the priority is to ensure that the building’s commitment to sustainability is reflected in its work. “We have started implementing a lot of initiatives and one of them is going to be done this year. It is to install solar panels to capture as much renewable energy as we can to run the common facilities. We are already speaking to several vendors. Hopefully, if things work out, we will use our rooftop to install solar panels and all the public lighting will use the energy from the solar panels. We want to reduce our electricity bill [while also showing] our commitment to the environment. We are also planning to install two EV chargers.” ■





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10 YEARS AND ABOVE
Non-strata Office

SPECIAL MENTION

Menara Ambank

Unfazed by challenges

BY RACHEAL LEE
city.country@bizedge.com

It is a challenge to manage and maintain an old office building, especially post-pandemic where flexible working arrangements have become the trend and with the growing emphasis on green features. Nevertheless, AmREIT Managers Sdn Bhd, the manager of AmFIRST Real Estate Investment Trust, is unfazed in the case of Menara AmBank on Jalan Yap Kwan Seng.

One of the efforts the trust manager has been working on with its property manager Knight Frank Property Management Sdn Bhd (KFPM) is incorporating green features in the building. AmREIT Managers CEO Chong Hong Chuon says its green journey began when it applied for a grant from the Sustainable Energy Development Authority in 2022.

"We were the very first few batches to get this grant, and a green consultant was appointed to carry out a building energy audit. A gap analysis was done and recommendations were made. The gap analysis tells us that we are sitting at a very comfortable level to get accreditation from a green body. We would like to see where this building stands in terms of ESG (environmental, social and governance)," Chong says.

"Of course, we also want to be a responsible asset owner. Hopefully, with this effort, we can showcase and improve the marketability of this building, especially with tenants who are environmentally conscious or want to be in a building that complies with ESG components."

Menara AmBank has gone through several upgrading works, including the adoption of green building practices and energy-efficient initiatives, to offer a sustainable working environment. These works include major LED lighting replacement and air-conditioning duct cleaning; staggering of air-conditioning operation time to reduce maximum demand; rescheduling of water pump operation hours to after office hours; turning off some of the lifts during off-peak hours; and implementing motion sensors for the lighting of common washrooms.

For its efforts, it was recently awarded the Energy Management Gold Standard (EMGS) of 2-star certificate by Malaysian Green Technology and Climate Change Corp, which recognises excellence in energy management of a building.

It is currently retrofitting the air-conditioning system from a water cooled packaged unit system to a chiller system to achieve higher energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions, while addressing occupants' concerns on the system's performance.

Chong says the cost of retrofitting a building into a more sustainable one is expensive but as energy costs rise, green proposals become more feasible, and building owners are taking a long-term view on the return on investment.

KFPM managing director (property management) Kuruvilla Abraham applauds the move. "That's a testament to AmREIT Managers, because most people look at older buildings



The 49-storey Menara AmBank was completed in 1996 and boasts a total net lettable area of 458,450 sq ft



From left: KFPM senior manager (property management) Mirdeeliana Amir, AmREIT Managers head (marketing and leasing) Danny Chee Kok Leong, KFPM executive director (property management) Lee Siow Sung, Chong, Kuruvilla, AmREIT Managers deputy CEO Zuhairy Md Isa, KFPM building manager (property management) Desmond Lim and AmREIT Managers vice president (operation) Mohammad Ashraf Shamshiri

and say there's no hope of getting any green accreditation or it's too expensive to do it. But their commitment shows that they are heading towards getting some level of recognition.

"It gives hope to the market, especially for the older buildings, that there is a way to get some recognition. You can own an older building and just let it run down or run as it is...but improving it helps increase the asset's value, making the building more marketable. It's not just about the whole ESG agenda."

Menara AmBank receives Special Mention in the 10 Years And Above — Non-strata Office category of *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024.

Efforts to enhance the building

A stone's throw away from the Petronas Twin Towers, the 49-storey Menara AmBank was completed in 1996 and boasts a total net lettable area (NLA) of 458,450 sq ft. KFPM has been the property manager since August 2016. The occupancy rate is 71%, with AmBank Group being the anchor tenant, occupying about 64% of the total NLA. Other tenants are clinics, dental services, a café, food court and convenience stores.

Kuruvilla notes that a challenge in the early days was managing underperforming service providers. This led to numerous Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) that were in line with its vendor management policy and many sessions were carried out in the presence of AmREIT Managers to improve their performance.

He says: "For certain service providers that still failed to meet the building's expectation despite undergoing PIPs, we initiated

the termination processes and subsequently procured new service providers via our procurement process. Our procurement function also encompasses the evaluation and monitoring of vendors appointed for Menara AmBank. The site team conducts regular performance evaluations and we had previously replaced pest control and firefighting service providers."

Works undertaken included water pump upgrading in 2018; lift modernisation in 2019; upgrading of undersized filter driers of the air-conditioning system in 2020; repainting of car park levels in 2021; and high-tension system upgrading in 2023.

Chong believes collaboration between the asset owner, property manager and tenants is important in making the building a desirable and successful location. One of the best examples is obtaining the EMGS of 2-star certificate, whereby the anchor tenant AmBank Group has also put in place green practices within the company.

More to be done

To draw a wider range of tenants, AmREIT Managers is now in advanced talks with a co-working operator to take up a floor in Menara AmBank. Chong says: "We feel that probably there is demand for this kind of short-term, flexible office space; so, why not we tap the demand. [If the deal goes through,] this operator will take up one full floor, which is about 12,000 sq ft, or 2% to 3% of total NLA."

Other than the upgrading of the air-conditioning system, he is looking to further expand its green building certifications and sustainability initiatives, as well as strengthen-



Chong and Knight Frank Property Management Sdn Bhd executive director Lee Siow Sung (third and fourth from left with (from left) *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards' chief judge Au Foong Yee, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan and *The Edge Media Group* publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat

Quick facts

NAME	Menara AmBank
DEVELOPER	MBf Finance Bhd
OWNER	Maybank Trustee Bhd (as a trustee of AmFIRST Real Estate Investment Trust)
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Office
LAND AREA	1.85 acres
TENURE	Freehold
COMPLETION	1996
STOREYS	49
BUILT-UP	12,334 sq ft per floor plate
GROSS FLOOR AREA	907,402 sq ft
NET LETTABLE AREA	458,450 sq ft
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATE	71%
CAR PARK BAYS	557
AMENITIES	Café, bakery, detergent refill machine, childcare centre, clinics, dental care, vending machine and convenience store
FACILITIES	Surau, gymnasium, nursing room, food court and club house
ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES	Adjustment of operation hours of air conditioning, replacing common area lightings with LED lights, motion sensor lighting at all car park levels as well as the washroom on Level 11, turning off 80% of the lifts after office hours, more frequent chemical coil cleaning in air-conditioning units and installation of a descale system to save electricity
INDOOR AIR QUALITY FEATURES	Monthly maintenance of AHU filters, on-site air-conditioning technician to carry out maintenance work during office hours, fresh air damper opened to ensure mixture of fresh air and return air to maintain balance of carbon dioxide and moisture levels, regular air purge exercises and stringent SOPs on attending to tenants' enquiries/complaints on air-conditioning-related issues

ing tenant engagement and communication to better understand and meet their needs.

Kuruvilla adds that, while continuously seeking other opportunities to enhance Menara AmBank, there will be enhancement of building façade lighting and replacement of the water piping system to improve the building's performance.

"In line with AmREIT's direction, we steer ourselves towards enhancing the building's energy efficiency as well as procurement of green certifications to further unlock the building's potential and secure a placement in the market with a growing consciousness in environmental sustainability," he says. ■

PICTURES BY SAM FONG/THE EDGE

SUHAIMI YUSUF/THE EDGE

MENARA AMBANK

ICONIC OFFICE
BUILDING IN
THE HEART OF
KL CITY CENTRE

THE EDGE
MALAYSIA

BEST MANAGED
& SUSTAINABLE PROPERTY
AWARDS 2024

Menara AmBank stands tall along the bustling Jalan Yap Kwan Seng with sleek, modern architecture and towering 49-storey presence making it as one of the iconic purpose-built office buildings in the heart of Kuala Lumpur City Centre.

Surrounded by modern high-rise commercial buildings, serviced apartments, premier shopping complexes, and international hotels, all just a stone's throw away. Menara AmBank is conveniently accessible by numerous public transportations, including major LRT and MRT lines.

Scan for leasing enquiries;



Or Email: leasing.amreit@ambankgroup.com.my

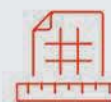
www.amfirstreit.com.my



Why Menara AmBank Stands Out?



Prime
Location



Architectural
Excellence



Sustainable
Practices



Superior
Amenities

AmFIRST
Real Estate Investment Trust

**Knight
Frank**

BELOW 10 YEARS
Specialised

SPECIAL MENTION

PARC @ Taman Subang Ria

A community-driven, sustainable project

BY CHAI YEE HOONG
city.country@bizedge.com

Located in Taman Subang Ria, one of the largest privately owned urban parks in Subang Jaya and opened in 1982, PARC is a 7½-acre community hub developed by Sime Darby Property Bhd (KL:SIMEPROP) in collaboration with social enterprise Epic Communities.

Built as an urban showcase for community and sustainable living, PARC was opened in July 2023 and has welcomed more than 50,000 visitors. “[We] initiated the PARC project in June 2019 and, by December 2020, the vision had begun to materialise, with plans to pilot PARC. Construction started in April 2022, and PARC was fully realised by June last year,” says Sime Darby Property chief operating officer — integrated development Datuk Mohd Idris Abdullah.

In fact, the project was conceived with the help of the community via public feedback and surveys. “The community expressed a desire for various features, and we listened. They wanted a tranquil place to relax, a cosy spot for coffee and socialising, pet-friendly areas, picturesque picnic spots, spaces for group discussions, reading nooks and essential public amenities such as toilets, parking and a prayer room,” he adds.

“We’ve delivered on these requests, providing event spaces, an open fitness area, workshops, creative hubs and a recycling and upcycling yard.”

With a built-up area of 19,400 sq ft, PARC currently comprises a multi-purpose community space known as PARC Hub, which houses multi-functional event spaces, eateries, a café and makerspace, and an upcoming sustainability lab, along with basic amenities such as toilets and a surau.

For the project’s second phase, there will be space for an urban farm, microfest and a farm-to-table restaurant, says Mohd Idris. “In addition to serving the community, PARC is a beacon of environmental sustainability. We’ve established an urban farm that supplies fresh produce, effectively reducing the carbon footprint by shortening the food chain. We’re conserving biodiversity by planting endangered and rare trees, offsetting carbon emissions through afforestation, and managing solid waste through recycling initiatives. Moreover, we are harnessing clean, renewable energy with solar PV panels.”

It is clear that PARC’s mission is to be more than just a space. “To us, it’s a living, breathing example of the future of sustainable living, featuring prefabricated tiny homes, modular buildings and off-grid systems. It’s a testament to what we can achieve when we work together towards a common goal of sustainability and community well-being.”

As a model for community and sustainable living, PARC @ Taman Subang Ria has received Special Mention at *The Edge Malaysia* Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024 under the Below 10 Years — Specialised category.

Striking a balance

To ensure PARC is financially sustainable, the developer, which has invested about RM10 mil-



PARC is a 7½-acre community hub conceived with the help of the community



Sime Darby Property chief marketing and sales officer Datuk Lai Shu Wei (centre) with (from left) The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, *City & Country* senior editor E Jacqui Chan, *The Edge Malaysia* editor emeritus and the awards’ chief judge Au Foong Yee and *The Edge Malaysia* editor-in-chief Kathy Fong



Mohd Idris: [PARC] is a testament to what we can achieve when we work together towards a common goal of sustainability and community well-being



Since it opened last year, PARC has hosted activities such as bazaars, community initiatives, recycling workshops and community social celebrations

lion in the project, leverages a diverse revenue model and a commitment to social innovation.

In addition to a mix of short- and long-term rentals at PARC, which generates a monthly income of RM100,000 to RM200,000, the project is supplemented by funding from Yayasan Sime Darby (YSD), the philanthropic arm of Sime Darby, says Mohd Idris. “Events and programmes, often co-supported by YSD, contribute significantly to our operational expenses.”

PARC has four distinct rental spaces: The Function Room, which is ideal for meetings, private events, talks and seminars; The Hall, which accommodates pop-up markets, group activities and workshops; The Xchange, a creative hub for woodworking, cooking classes, makerspaces and a recycling and upcycling yard; and The Eatery, a spot for various F&B outlets and cafés.

The project also leverages eco-friendly furnishings and features such as 114kW solar panels, recycled art and rainwater recycling systems.

Meanwhile, the project’s maintenance costs, which range from RM100,000 to RM200,000 monthly, cover facility management, cleaning, landscaping, pest control, security, and operational fees and licences. “In addition, land-related costs, including

quit rent and assessment fee, are more than RM600,000 annually, despite Taman Subang Ria’s recreational zoning,” says Mohd Idris.

“To break even, we are focused on optimising our operational efficiency, expanding our income sources and continuously engaging with the community to ensure PARC remains a vibrant and valued destination. Our financial strategy is designed to ensure that PARC not only sustains itself but also thrives as a beacon of community-driven, sustainable development.”

Over the next three years, YSD will disburse funding exceeding RM1 million through a sponsorship agreement to bolster the placemaking efforts at PARC. “This long-term funding arrangement is particularly beneficial for a nascent space such as PARC, which is focused on building its community and outreach initiatives,” says Mohd Idris.

Last year, the developer organised activities such as festivals and bazaars, community initiatives, recycling and repair workshops, biodiversity classes, and community social celebrations.

Quick facts

NAME	PARC @ Taman Subang Ria
DEVELOPER	Sime Darby Property (Subang) Sdn Bhd
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Recreational
LAND AREA	7.5 acres
TENURE	Leasehold
COMPLETION	2023
STOREYS	1
BUILT-UP	19,400 sq ft
GROSS FLOOR AREA	21,603 sq ft
CAR PARK BAYS	Flexible car parking areas that can accommodate up to 61 cars in a lot adjacent to PARC and another 114 cars throughout Taman Subang Ria

AMENITIES
Unfold (café), comocomo (Japanese fusion sandwich shop) and A Scoop Of (gelato shop) at PARC Hub

FACILITIES
Multipurpose community space with sustainable furniture, outdoor events area powered with solar street lights, F&B stations, outdoor car parks with EV chargers, water refill station, restrooms, surau, inclusive playground and calisthenics station, art sculpture from salvaged construction material and 2km jogging path

ENERGY-SAVING FEATURES
Turning old tennis/futsal court into PARC Hub via adaptive reuse, biodiversity-friendly design with less environmental impact, solar panels and rainwater harvesting system

PICTURES BY SIME DARBY PROPERTY



Unfold café is a permanent F&B tenant at PARC

Nurturing a community

The developer is in the midst of developing The Farm and PARC Village at PARC. “The Farm will integrate the establishment of a community farm, agritech farming techniques and the launch of a farm-to-table restaurant. These initiatives will promote local agriculture, reduce food miles and offer the community fresh, healthy dining options,” says Mohd Idris.

“PARC Village will establish a welcoming gateway into a vibrant microforest, foster biodiversity and provide a serene environment for residents and visitors. The development of PARC Village is designed to be a model of sustainable living where every aspect, from construction to daily operations, is guided by an eco-friendly principle.”

More than just expanding its physical footprint, these projects are also about nurturing a community that values sustainability, innovation and connection to nature, he adds. “By achieving these targets, we ensure that PARC remains a thriving, resilient space for generations to come.”



LEADING WITH EXCELLENCE

We are honoured to receive five distinguished awards at The Edge Best Managed & Sustainable Property Awards 2024. This recognition underscores our dedication to property management excellence and sustainability. The properties under our care adhere to the highest standards of environment responsibility, social care, and strict governance.

We extend our gratitude to our valuable clients and partners for their continuous support.



Non-Strata Office
for 10 years and above
Menara AmBank



Non-Strata Office
for below 10 years
Menara KWSP



Multiple-owned Strata
Residential for below 10 years
The Astaka, Johor Bahru



Mixed Development (entire)
for 10 years and above
PJ8



Mixed Development (entire)
for below 10 years
**Jesselton Residences
& Mall, Kota Kinabalu**

KNIGHT FRANK ESG PILLARS

RESTORING
THE NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT

CREATING
AN INCLUSIVE
WORKPLACE

STRENGTHENING
OUR COMMUNITIES

Scenes from the gala night



Charlene Yus (V-Tech), Celene Tan (Nippon Paint), Oliver Wee (Master Builders Association Malaysia), Anthony Lee Tee (Architect Centre) and Aw Sei Cheh (Avaland Bhd)



Gamuda Land's Bryan Lim, Lee Tong Xiang, Krishna Vesvanathan, Prashanth Kumar, Gladwin Samuel and Azlina Annuar



Kevin Thong (Jesselton Group), Christopher Chan (PEM), Jeremy John Lo (Arkitek Billings Leong & Tan), Kuruvilla Abraham (Knight Frank Property Management or KFPM) and Tan Choon Siang (Capitaland Malaysia REIT Management)



Tan Sri Teo Chiang Kok (See Hoy Chan Holdings Group) and SCM International Property Mgmt's Datuk Ling Keak Ming and Li Wynn



Pavilion Suites KL MC's Datuk Lee Whay Hong, Francis Ong, Michelle Lim, Sharon Cheong and Datuk Angie Ng with Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd's (HBMK) Christy Kong and Lee Siang Ling (fourth and fifth from left)



Laurelcap Property Management's Mohd Ferdaus Othman, Rosemawati Ab Manan, Nurashy Mohd Azmi, Wan Siti Aisyah Wan Hanafi, Kenneth Wong, Nur Aina Amira, Syairah Sulib, Ho Hon Chiap, Norsunarti Kassim and Mohamad Azlan Zakariah with The Park Residences 1 MC's Sharon Chang (fourth from left)



Paradigm PJ JMB's Chew Ann Boon (extreme left), Cheong Yee Sem and Loh Tian Loon (fifth and sixth from left), with HBMK's Marilyn Ongkino and Gladys Sikop, and KL East Mall's Tan Boon Leong



Cendana KLCC MC's Nur Ain, Rebecca Bateman, Dr Saeed Zakiahmed, Christine Rometsch, Datuk Jeremy Smeeton and Engku Puan Sri Rozeeta



HBMK's Kathrine Yong, Jessie Koh, Paris Tian, Low Sook Ling, Shirleen Wong, Lee and Cianne Lim



Richard Chan (RCMC), The Edge Malaysia's E Jacqui Chan and Au Foong Yee, Teo, Datuk Ho Hon Sang (Rehda), Zuhairy Md Isa (AmREIT Managers), Chris Tan (Chur Associates) and Lee



The Edge Malaysia's Lim Shiew Yuin and Au with Datuk N K Tong (Rehda)



Axis REIT and Axis REIT Facilities Management's Muhamad Naquiduddin Zulkifli, Selina Khor, Leong Kit May, Siva Kumar, Loh Wai Yan and Nurultiyana Zulkepli and (seated) Siva Shanker and Saravanakumaran



11 Mont'Kiara MC's Ng Say Heng, Ian Leong Seong Wah, Chu Yun Shing, Tan Kark Seng, Joshua Goh Keng Cheong and Chew Sung Loke with HBMK's Low Hon Keong (fourth from left), Karmen Lee (sixth from left) and Koh (right)



KFPM's Yuen May Chee, Winnie Lim, Nageswaran Muniandy, Natallie Leong and Lee Siow Sung



Tenaga Nasional Bhd's Ahmad Hafizul Zainan, Mohamad Halil Haron, Noorleza Abd Jalil and Marzuki Mustapha with Praxcis Design's Yap Nga Tuan (centre)

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KL East Park's Nik Alisya Mohamed, Mohamed Izereen Amat Mukri, Mohd Khalis Baharom, Afzan Zarina Zaidi and Dr Yasmin Rasyid



The string quartet entertaining guests



KFP's Kuruvilla (fifth from left) with EPF and Kwasa Land's Phoebe Toh Pei Shi, Zanaime Mohd Serju, Abdul Kharis Shaharudin, Mohd Afzal Abdul Rahman, Nordin Muhamad Aris, Muhammad Suhaili Mohd Shafie and Alfyan Mohd Adnan



S P Setia's Razly Mohammad Rus, Koh Sooi Meng, Datuk Choong Kai Wai, Datuk Zaini Yusoff, Tan Siow Chung and Joyce Teh with Rehda's Ho (fourth from left) and The Edge Malaysia's Au (sixth from left)



Sunway SPK Damansara RA's Lee Lai Sim, Sandra Tee Bee Lian and Au Yong Soon Kok



(Clockwise from left) KLCC (Holdings)'s Mohamed Makarimi, Suraya Hussein, Ikhwani Hamzah Azizan, Mohamee Tahir, Nuratiqah Kadir Sutan, Bindu Menon, Mohd Izwan Yahya and Nor Azalina Hassan



Avaland's Apollo Bello Tanco and Lim Tek Guan



The Essex Gardens team gets into the spirit of things



Datuk Leanne Goh, Datuk Ho Kay Tat (The Edge Media Group) and Ben Chong (The Pearl @ KLCC MC)



HBMK celebrating its win



Venus Chai (Kaginic Corp) and Ronny Yong (HBMK)



Essex Garden MC's Tee Lian Fui helping Ng Yoke Thai with his bowtie



Adelene Wong (S P Setia) and Lyanna Tew (Mah Sing)



KLCC (Holdings)'s Suraya Hussein cheering Datuk Md Shah Mahmood on

Scenes from the gala night



S P Setia's Chan Ching Hiong and Ho Wei Siang (third and fourth from left) with Lendlease's Wong Yukeen, Vivien Phuah, Tan Dee Wah and Lee Sheng Yee



Nippon Paint's Celene Tan (left) with TA Global Bhd's Kimmy Khoo and Lee Yen Foong and Ativo Plaza JMB's Yoong Wai Seng



Lim Lan Yuan (Association of Property and Facility Managers) and 11 Mont'Kiara MC's Joshua Goh



The Edge Malaysia's Cecilia Too, Chelsea J Lim, Rachel Chew, Chin Wai Lun, Priya Devan and Au, with EdgeProp's Ian Leong and Jacqueline Lim



Yee Wing Peng (Deloitte Malaysia), Kathy Fong (The Edge Malaysia) and Datuk Lai Shu Wei (Sime Darby Property)



Nagashanthini Sukalingam (KPM) and Michelle Chu (Palikota)



Jerry Lee (Laurelcap Property Mananagement) and C K Lee (Essex Gardens MC)



Gamuda Land's Celina Ong (in red) and (seated from left) Wong Siew Lee, Tang Meng Loon, Victor Tay and team



Avaland's winning team giving the thumbs up



Panorama MC's Jessica Tan Fei Lee (left) with HBMK's Suki Leong, Lina Athirah Azali and Norhayati Bonah



The Menara UOA Bangsar team celebrates



Nor Atiah Ismail (ILAM), HBMK's Tian and Low (extreme right) and Au (The Edge Malaysia)



Skyworld Development Lee Chee Seng, Chang Sook Han and Wilson Khor



Architect Centre's Lee flanked by The Edge Malaysia's Chai Yee Hoong and Wong King Wai

Congratulations

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EDITOR'S CHOICE AWARDS

Timeless Excellence
PETRONAS Twin Towers

**Exemplary Community
Magnet**
KLCC Park

**Sterling Stakeholders
Partnership**
Menara UOA Bangsar

**Exemplary Commitment
To Excellence**
Sunway SPK Damansara

**Malaysia's Outstanding
Affordable Homes**
Lakefront Homes @
Cyberjaya

BELOW 10 YEARS – MIXED DEVELOPMENT (ENTIRE)

BRONZE: Jesselton
Residences and Mall

BRONZE: Urban
Residences

10 YEARS AND ABOVE – MIXED DEVELOPMENT (ENTIRE)

GOLD: Menara UOA
Bangsar

BRONZE: Ativo Plaza

BRONZE: Paradigm PJ

SPECIAL MENTION: PJ8

BELOW 10 YEARS – NON-STRATA OFFICE

GOLD: Menara KWSP

10 YEARS AND ABOVE – NON-STRATA OFFICE

GOLD: PETRONAS Twin
Towers

BRONZE: Crystal Plaza

SPECIAL MENTION:
Menara Ambank

BELOW 10 YEARS – SINGLE-OWNED OFFICE IN A MIXED STRATA DEVELOPMENT

GOLD: UOA Business Park
Tower 7

BELOW 10 YEARS – RETAIL-NON-STRATA

BRONZE: Design Village
Outlet Mall

10 YEARS AND ABOVE – RETAIL-NON-STRATA

SILVER: Setia City Mall

BELOW 10 YEARS – RETAIL-STRATA

BRONZE: KL East Mall

BELOW 10 YEARS – MULTIPLE-OWNED STRATA RESIDENTIAL

GOLD: Essex Gardens,
Setia Eco Templer

GOLD: Pavilion Suites
Kuala Lumpur

GOLD: Ryan & Miho
Residence

GOLD: The Astaka @
One Bukit Senyum

SILVER: Residensi Duta
Kiara

BRONZE: Skymeridien
Residences

BRONZE: M Centura

10 YEARS AND ABOVE – MULTIPLE-OWNED STRATA RESIDENTIAL

GOLD: 11 Mont' Kiara

GOLD: The Park
Residences 1

SILVER: Panorama KLCC

SILVER: The Pearl @ KLCC

SPECIAL MENTION:
Cendana

10 YEARS AND ABOVE – NON-STRATA RESIDENTIAL

GOLD: Jade Hills

GOLD: Sunway SPK
Damansara

BELOW 10 YEARS – SUSTAINABLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

GOLD: Lakefront Homes @
Cyberjaya

BELOW 10 YEARS – SPECIALISED

SPECIAL MENTION:
PARC @ Taman Subang Ria

10 YEARS AND ABOVE – SPECIALISED

GOLD: KLCC Park

SILVER: Island Hospital

THE EDGE MALAYSIA- ILAM SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE AWARDS

Landscape Design
GOLD: TNB Platinum
Bangsar

Landscape Planning
GOLD: KLCC Park

Landscape Planning
SILVER: KL East Park
(Phase 1)

At the photo wall



Sime Darby Property and Epic



Gamuda Land



Mah Sing Group and M Centura



Henry Butcher Malaysia (Mont Kiara) Sdn Bhd (HBMK)



Axis REIT



Jesselton Mall & Residences, Palikota and Knight Frank Property Management (KFPM)



Deloitte Malaysia and The Edge Malaysia



TA Properties Management Sdn Bhd and Ativo Plaza



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Menara UOA Bangsar



Interhill Group and Urban Residences



11 Mont'Kiara and HBMK



Paradigm PJ and HBMK



Medklinn



KFPM, The Astaka and PJ8

At the photo wall



AmFIRST REIT



KLCC Urusharta



HBMK and Panorama KLCC



Ryan & Miho Residence



HBMK and The Pearl @ KLCC



Essex Gardens, Setia Eco Templer



Tenaga Nasional and Praxcis Design



Laurelcap Property Management (Sel) and The Park Residences 1



Nawawi Tie Leung Property Consultants and The Edge Malaysia



PE Land (Penang)



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