



MEDIA RELEASE

Care & Share Movement Grant Enabled Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park inclusive playground to be launched with first-of-its-kind wheelchair-accessible play equipment *More inclusive playgrounds in pipeline for special needs children to play in*

Singapore, 22 August 2015 – The Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park inclusive playground, made possible by the Care & Share Movement, with donations from Community Chest's corporate partners and government's matching grant, was officially opened by Minister for Social and Family Development Mr Tan Chuan-Jin today.

The Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park inclusive playground is a collaboration between the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) and the National Parks Board (NParks) and is one of the 11 inclusive playgrounds to be built across Singapore by end 2017. Among these 11 inclusive playgrounds, five (including the one at Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park) are made possible under the Care & Share Movement. These include two collaborations between NCSS and NParks at Pasir Ris Park and West Coast Park, and another two that NCSS is partnering with two town councils.

The Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park inclusive playground, one of the first few outcomes under the Care & Share Movement, was specially designed after consultation and discussion sessions with therapists and children of special needs from six voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs).

Donations from Community Chest's corporate partners and individual donors, such as Shaw Foundation, SMRT Corporation Ltd and Variety, the Children's Charity for the Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park inclusive playground, Madam Tan Kooi Hwa (for Pasir Ris Park playground) and Mr Lam Yew Chong, Mr Oan Chim Seng and Mr Yin Fook Cheong (for West Coast Park playground), have enabled the five Care & Share Movement-enabled inclusive playgrounds to be planned and built in various parts of Singapore.

Under the Care & Share Movement, the total proposed grant usage submitted by over 230 VWOs is \$202.3 million as of 31 May 2015. A total of 1,950 projects, which included the Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park inclusive playground, were submitted. The grant allows VWOs to launch new programmes and expand services, and implement projects that build capacity to cater to more social needs.

Mr Phillip Tan, Chairman of Community Chest and the Care & Share Movement Steering Committee, said, "We would like to thank our donors for their strong support



for the Care & Share Movement and enabling the projects submitted to come into fruition. The Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park inclusive playground is one of the projects in the area of new programmes and expanded services that has borne fruit under this Movement. We look forward to many more such projects that can improve the lives of the people we serve.”

In addition to the five Care & Share Movement-enabled inclusive playgrounds, NParks will also roll out six more inclusive playgrounds so that children with special needs will be able to access these playgrounds easily. These six inclusive playgrounds will be spread across Singapore, such as Admiralty Park, Jurong Lake Gardens, Choa Chu Kang Park, Sengkang Riverside Park, Sun Plaza Park and East Coast Park. For a map of where these inclusive playgrounds will be, please refer to **Factsheet A**.

First-of-its-kind wheelchair-accessible play equipment in Singapore

Through the consultation and discussion sessions conducted by NCSS and the VWOs, it was agreed that play is important and beneficial to a child, regardless of his or her physical and mental abilities, as it allows the child to develop age-appropriate social, communication, motor and cognitive skills. An inclusive playground provides the physical structure, or ‘hardware’, that encourages play between children with and without special needs, helping them to learn and accept differences and to be inclusive in their daily social interactions with persons of different abilities.

For the first time in Singapore, wheelchair-using children with special needs will be able to mount onto a swing to experience the joy and feeling of ‘flying’ at the Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park inclusive playground. There will also be a wheelchair-friendly merry-go-round that allows wheelchair users to enjoy the thrills of spinning with their peers. Other special needs-friendly play features include a slide that provides additional tactile stimulations using rollers and an accessible sand table. For a listing of all special needs friendly equipment at the Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park inclusive playground, please refer to **Factsheet B** or access http://www.ncss.gov.sg/events/InclusivePlay/bishan-amk_park.asp

Mr Kenneth Er, Chief Executive Officer, National Parks Board, said, “The upgrading of this playground creates a play space that considers children with special needs. As we plan for more inclusive playgrounds, we hope that more of them will enjoy playing outdoors with friends in the park, forging a more inclusive society.”



NCSS' *Children in Action* initiative to promote playground usage

In addition to setting up the 'hardware', NCSS also created the 'software' that will promote the use of the playground. NCSS will link up its network of VWOs, Early Intervention Programme for Infants & Children (EIPIIC) centres and special education schools with organisations within the community on collaborative opportunities. NCSS is also exploring with VWOs on how inclusive play can be considered when schools plan their curriculum or outdoor activities.

Mr Sim Gim Guan, Chief Executive Officer of NCSS, said, "We are encouraged by the community, corporate partners and agencies such as NParks, who have come together to make this inclusive playground possible. The Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park inclusive playground is one of the many sector-wide projects that NCSS has embarked on as part of our aim to remove barriers for persons with special needs, which should start from young and which will in turn foster a more inclusive society in Singapore."

As part of the community effort, Central Singapore Community Development Council also rallied volunteers under its Painting Smiles programme to beautify the inclusive playground through vibrant murals. The paint was donated in kind by AkzoNobel in support of this project.

For more information on the Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park inclusive playground, please access www.ncss.gov.sg/inclusiveplay

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About National Parks Board (NParks)

National Parks Board (NParks) is responsible for providing and enhancing the greenery of our City in a Garden. Beyond building green infrastructure, NParks is actively engaging the community to enhance the quality of our living environment.

NParks manages over 350 parks and 4 nature reserves. Adding to this is the extensive streetscape, or roadside greenery, that forms the backbone of our City in a Garden. An island-wide Park Connector Network is also being developed to link major parks, nature areas and residential estates.

As the lead agency on biodiversity conservation, NParks has developed an urban biodiversity conservation model, which aims to conserve representative eco-systems in land-scarce Singapore. NParks also monitors and coordinates measures to enhance the presence of biodiversity in our urban landscape.

NParks is working closely with partners in the landscape and horticulture industry to increase productivity, and provide training for all levels of the workforce. Enhancing competencies of the industry will support Singapore's vision of being a City in a Garden.

For more information, visit <http://www.nparks.gov.sg> and www.facebook.com/nparksbuzz

About the Care & Share Movement

Care & Share is a national fund-raising and volunteerism movement led by Community Chest for the social service sector, in celebration of SG50 this year. It aims to bring our nation together to show care and concern for the less fortunate, and recognise the contributions made by voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs). Eligible donations raised by Community Chest and participating VWOs from now till 31 March 2016 will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the Government. The matched amount will go towards building the capabilities and capacities of the social service sector and supporting social services to meet rising needs. To contribute to this Movement, please visit careandshare.sg or email to csm@ncss.gov.sg.

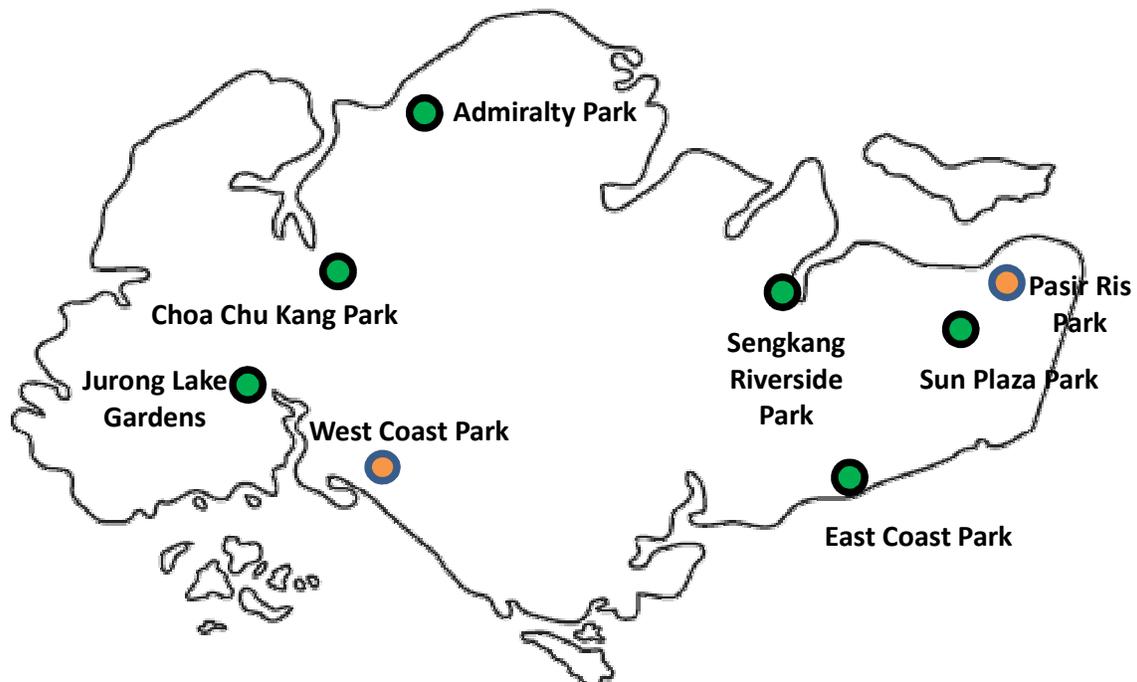
About National Council of Social Service

NCSS is the umbrella body for over 450 member voluntary welfare organisations in Singapore. Its mission is to provide leadership and direction in social services, to enhance the capabilities of social service organisations, and to promote strategic partnerships for social services.

Stay connected with the latest news and developments of the social service sector through www.ncss.gov.sg and www.facebook.com/ncss.sg

MEDIA FACTSHEET A

Map of Upcoming NParks Inclusive Playgrounds in Singapore



Legend:



Green Dot: Inclusive playgrounds to be rolled out by NParks.



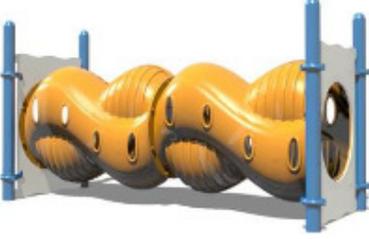
Orange Dot: Inclusive playgrounds to be rolled out by NCSS and NParks under the Care & Share Movement. Please note there are altogether five inclusive playgrounds under the Movement. The other two upcoming playgrounds not in this map are collaborations between NCSS and town councils.

MEDIA FACTSHEET B

List of all special needs friendly equipment at the Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park playground

	<p>Wheelchair-accessible Merry-go-round First-of-its-kind in Singapore!</p> <p>This merry-go-round is fitted flush to the ground to allow easy access for wheelchairs and pushchairs. It has two enclosed wheelchair stations which are secured with locking safety gates. This stabilises the position of the wheelchair user while the roundabout is in motion, helping the user to feel safe. When spinning, different parts of the brain are stimulated simultaneously, building new and more developed pathways throughout the brain.</p>
	<p>Wheelchair Swing First-of-its-kind in Singapore</p> <p>This swing allows wheelchair users to stimulate their sense of balance and eye movement by experiencing the feeling of swinging. The swing can take up to 250kg in weight and also comes with a regular seat to allow any child to play</p>
	<p>Slide with Rollers</p> <p>Unlike a traditional slide, this slide has rollers that gently stimulates the sense of touch and eases friction</p>
	<p>Sand Table</p> <p>The elevated sand table provides wheelchair users with an opportunity to play with sand. This helps to develop a child's sense of touch with the sand's granular texture</p>

MEDIA FACTSHEET B (continued)

	<p>Accessible Swing</p> <p>The accessible swing seats have rollercoaster-style safety harness lifts for entry and snap-fits into place between legs for security. It challenges and stimulates a child's sense of balance and eye movement.</p>
	<p>Semi-Enclosed Tunnel</p> <p>Tunnelling helps increase muscle tone and this tunnel allows easy access for wheelchair users to climb into. The enclosed space also provides a cozy corner for children who need a break from stimulations</p>
	<p>The Climber</p> <p>The climber encourages children with differing abilities to climb together. access to assist in transfer from wheelchair to equipment. The handrails and footholds encourages independence in climbing, contributing to physical and creative development.</p>
	<p>Sensory Play Panels</p> <p>The play panels stimulate audio, sensory and visual awareness. They help to build up a sense of discovery, attention span, auditory awareness, motor skills, eye/hand coordination, rhythm and movement.</p>