



Two Tiong Bahru blocks pass HIP re-poll, with upgrading from November

Description

Two 1949 walk-up blocks in Tiong Bahru will get the Home Improvement Programme after all, a year after missing the 75 per cent threshold by two votes and one. Block 34 Kim Cheng Street and Block 35 Lim Liak Street both cleared the bar in a re-poll on 25 October, and works under HDB's [Home Improvement Programme \(HIP\)](#) are expected to start in November.

Tanjong Pagar GRC MP Foo Cexiang posted the results on Facebook on 27 October. Support at Block 34, which has 24 flats, rose from 66.67 per cent in the November 2025 poll to 75 per cent. At Block 35, with 15 flats, it climbed from 73.33 per cent to 87 per cent.



Singapore Improvement Trust walk-up flats in the Seng Poh precinct built in the 1940s.
Photo: mailer_diablo via Wikimedia Commons (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Two holdouts in a precinct of 29 blocks

The pair belong to the Seng Poh precinct, 29 four-storey walk-up blocks built by the Singapore Improvement Trust, HDB's predecessor. The other 27 blocks passed the HIP vote in November 2025, and their upgrading went ahead.

The 27 blocks went first, and residents whose flats had already been upgraded opened their homes to neighbours in Blocks 34 and 35 to show them the finished works. HDB, the Seng Poh Residents' Network and volunteers also tracked down residents who had been uncontactable, along with owners of tenanted units who had not voted.

The 27 blocks went first so they can serve as an example and provide greater assurance to those still on the fence, Foo wrote. A straw poll in July 2026 put both blocks within reach of 75 per cent, and HDB agreed to a fresh vote.

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Singapore Improvement Trust blocks at Tiong Bahru Road and Lim Liak Street, where Block 35 also stands. Photo: Wzhkevin via Wikimedia Commons (CC BY-SA 4.0)

What the upgrade covers inside the flat

HIP has three parts. Essential Improvements, such as repairs to spalling concrete and structural cracks and a new clothes drying rack in place of old pipe sockets, are fully funded for Singapore Citizen households.

Optional Improvements, including toilet upgrading, a new entrance door and grille gate, and a refuse chute hopper, are heavily subsidised, with citizens paying as little as five per cent of the cost depending on flat type. Households with seniors can add fittings under the Enhancement for Active Seniors (EASE) programme.

Works inside each flat take 10 working days or less, with no work on Sundays. Dust screens go up before hacking, and temporary toilets with showers are set up at the void deck during working hours.

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Low-rise walk-up blocks along Tiong Bahru Road; 27 Seng Poh blocks passed the HIP vote in November 2025. Photo: Wzhkevin via Wikimedia Commons (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Re-polls have a clean record

Only eligible Singapore Citizen households vote on HIP, and permanent resident households cannot. Six blocks failed the vote over the past decade: one in Serangoon Avenue 2 in 2017, three in Lengkong Tiga in 2023 and the two Tiong Bahru blocks. The Serangoon and Lengkong Tiga blocks all passed when re-pollled.

A written reply to Parliament on 14 January from National Development Minister Chee Hong Tat set out a study of how blocks with fewer flats are grouped for HIP votes. Works at Blocks 34 and 35 run from November to the end of January 2027.

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