

# *Fostering* **The Caring SG** **Commuters Movement**



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*Directional footsteps at the linkway of Novena MRT Station guiding commuters from the Heart Zone to Tan Tock Seng Hospital*





Novena MRT Station Heart Zone

## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

In August 2017, the Public Transport Council (PTC) started the “Caring SG Commuters” movement through a series of co-creation pilots with like-minded partners, to champion the growth of a caring commuting culture. This movement aims to transform Singapore society at large and enhance social cohesion, with citizens looking out for one another in their daily interactions.

The public transport journey is an integral part of the daily experience for many Singaporeans. These journeys are enablers that facilitate work and play. A commute is not a journey taken alone, but often involves a multitude of interactions with other commuters within a shared environment.

PTC's collaborative efforts span across sectors and constituencies, and encourage intergenerational bonding. We have established Heart Zones in collaboration with medical sector partners, including Singapore General Hospital, Tan Tock Seng Hospital and HealthCity Novena medical institutions, Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and Khoo Teck Puat Hospital. More are being planned. The CARE by Chung Cheng project was a constituency-based pilot, where students assisted the elderly commuters to carry their bags and groceries. CARE Ride @ South West facilitated intergenerational bonding between elderly

and students who enjoyed a bus ride together. Through these co-creation pilots, Singapore's MRT stations, buses, bus stops, overhead bridges, and other transport infrastructure have become social assets for commuter interactions and care.

However, culture change does not happen overnight. PTC's efforts to date are just a small step forward and more can be done at an integrated level. It is imperative that the seed that has been planted continues to receive the support needed to ensure sustainability of the “Caring SG Commuters” movement. To this end, we recommend setting up a Coordinating Committee to facilitate and pull together inter-agency efforts to foster the “Caring SG Commuters” movement within our transport network.

Together, our commuters, public transport operators, communities, partners, and government agencies can work towards the 2040 vision of an inclusive, gracious and caring commuting culture for all Singaporeans.

Richard Magnus  
Chairman, Public Transport Council



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the years, Singapore's public transport system has become more accessible and people-centred due to investments by the government. Efforts are also being taken to make our public transport system more inclusive to meet the needs of different groups of commuters. As these improvements are being made, PTC has been listening to commuters to understand how their public transport experience can be further improved.

To meet this objective, PTC has engaged nearly 50,000 commuters since 2016. For many, taking public transport is very much an emotive experience and the human touch is important. Surveys conducted by PTC support this. More than 9 in 10 commuters surveyed agreed that they have a role to play to improve everyone's travel experience and that they want to see more caring commuters.

## CO-CREATING FOR A CARING COMMUTING CULTURE

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Knowing that a culture of care among commuters is important, PTC spearheaded the "Caring SG Commuters" movement. It is a co-creation movement to provide opportunities and enabling platforms for commuters to contribute to make our commuting culture more caring. PTC has nurtured the movement through co-creation pilots in three areas.

### SECTORAL CO-CREATION PILOTS

Sectoral co-creation pilots are conducted in partnership with specific sectors such as medical institutions. Sectoral pilots recognise opportunities to help specific commuter profiles at transport nodes. As a first step, these are the Heart Zones and Heartwheels@Linkway pilots.



Heartwheels@Linkway are wheelchairs along the linkway of Outram Park MRT Station available for use by commuters. Commuters are encouraged to extend a helping hand to fellow commuters in need of these wheelchairs by pushing them along the linkway



"Every MRT station should have this bench and waiting area concept."  
- Ms Lim H. L.

"I am happy that I can find help at the Heart Zone."  
- Mdm Ng C. H.

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A commuter, Ms Lim, showing Mdm Ng, an elderly commuter using a wheelchair, how to go to Tan Tock Seng Hospital from the Novena MRT Station Heart Zone



Heart Zones are connecting points that facilitate helping and requesting for help between commuters



## INTERGENERATIONAL CO-CREATION PILOTS

Engaging our next generation commuters from a young age is important to sustain a caring commuting culture for the long-term. Intergenerational co-creation pilots encourage young commuters to interact and bond with commuters of different profiles such as the elderly (intergenerational) and commuters with special needs. The goals are to 1) build understanding and empathy between diverse groups of commuters and 2) make it easier for them to offer help or ask for help with more confidence. PTC started one co-creation pilot in this area, titled CARE Ride @ South West, with South West Community Development Council (CDC) as a partner.



Mayor Low Yen Ling graced the event in which students of ITE College West and Pioneer Junior College enjoyed a bus ride with elderly from Fei Yue Senior Activity Centre and Fei Yue Retirees Centre



CARE Ride @ South West — an initiative that aims to provide opportunities for younger commuters to better understand the travel needs of the elderly so that they can be more mindful and protective of elderly commuters in the future

## CONSTITUENCY-BASED CO-CREATION PILOTS

Constituency-based co-creation pilots are specific partnership projects with communities and organisations in a location with public transport needs that can be met by a caring commuting culture. The goals are to 1) identify specific commuter needs in consultation with commuters, communities and organisations that are familiar with the ground, and 2) to co-create with these parties to provide opportunities to meet those needs. PTC has conducted one co-creation pilot in this area, titled CARE by Chung Cheng, in conjunction with Chung Cheng High School (Yishun)'s 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.



CARE by Chung Cheng — a pilot that involved 1,200 students assisting elderly commuters to carry their heavy groceries and bags or help with their trolleys on their last-mile travel

## EVALUATION OF CO-CREATION PILOTS

Since 2017, co-creation pilots conducted by PTC were received favourably by commuters. They agreed that the pilots were beneficial and were important efforts to promote a caring commuting culture. The participants of the pilots found them to be meaningful and indicated that their behaviours towards other commuters would likely become more caring.





## FOSTERING THE “CARING SG COMMUTERS” MOVEMENT

Our SG Commuters care about one another. Many have extended a helping hand to fellow commuters who needed help, from giving directions, to walking with a lost commuter, to guiding a visually-impaired commuter to his destination. Their efforts help make public transport more welcoming and inclusive. Commuters have, and can continue to play a part in improving their public transport journey experience. There is immense potential to harness the positivity of commuters to transform their journey experience.

Commuters have also shared their aspiration to see a more caring public transport culture, and have provided validation of our efforts to promote such a culture. Our long term transport master plan needs to take into account these findings, co-create with commuters to provide practical opportunities (together with public transport operators) and re-examine the potential of infrastructure as a social asset. We will also need the necessary coordinating structure to help transform the Singapore commuting culture into a caring and welcoming one.



“I think it is very satisfying if you are able to help someone who is in need wherever you are on public transport.”  
- Ms G. Chew

“I don’t know where I am going. If they are willing to approach me, I feel grateful for their help.”  
- Mr J. Setok

Ms Chew, who was waiting at the bus stop, telling Mr Setok, a visually-impaired commuter, the service number of the approaching bus

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report outlines the background and objective of the “Caring SG Commuters” movement spearheaded by PTC since 2017 to foster a caring commuting public transport culture. It aims to enhance the capacity and contributions of public transport commuters and the community to develop a more inclusive journey experience for all. The report also proposes a formal coordinating structure to develop the movement on a national level.



## WHY A CARING COMMUTING CULTURE IS IMPORTANT

PTC's Advisory Reports of 2016 and 2018 observed that commuting is an emotive experience beyond infrastructural and design enhancements. Commuters not only receive a functional experience of getting from Point A to B, but also emotional experiences (for example, how they feel they have been served or treated). Emotional needs of commuters must be well-addressed to enhance their journey experience. Transport experts PTC consulted during an international Roundtable<sup>1</sup> in 2016 said that public transport is about providing a service where the human touch is important.

Indeed, our focus group engagement with commuters between 2016 to 2018 revealed the importance of the human touch, whether from staff or fellow commuters.

- Elderly who do not understand English may be unable to take public transport independently and may be too embarrassed to ask for help.
- Younger adults may have the desire to help, but are unsure how to help (for example, the correct way to guide a visually-impaired commuter).
- Younger adults may be afraid of offending other commuters (for example, if a commuter is not pregnant or does not want to be acknowledged to be in need of help).

Research findings also showed that our commuting experience affect us due to what we observe, how we are treated or how we feel while taking public transport. Commuters can thus shape the commuting culture through their own behaviours and actions.

There are signs of increased desire by Singaporeans for active citizenry, to have a say in public outcomes, and to volunteer.<sup>2</sup> Data collected by PTC involving 10,000 commuters showed that more than 9 in 10 felt commuters can play a part to make the public transport journey better for all. More than 8 in 10 also agreed that other commuters will help them if they asked for help. The engagement findings from the Land Transport Master Plan 2040 also ascertained PTC's understanding. Commuters acknowledged that fostering a gracious commuting culture is a shared responsibility, and many were willing to accept slight delays and inconveniences to their journeys if that meant providing help to those in need. With over seven million public transport rides per day, public transport journeys are part of the shared experience of living in Singapore and a microcosm of Singapore society. Our two million commuters, being experts in their own journeys and travel routes, have the power to contribute towards a more pleasant and caring culture.

<sup>1</sup> Public transport experts from Hong Kong, London, Seoul, Singapore and Tokyo.

<sup>2</sup> National Youth Council Research Compilation 2018.



*Ms Farah, a student, offering elderly commuters, Mdm Ng and Mdm Ong, help to carry their groceries at a bus stop*

“All the encounters we experience on our commutes... impress on us and leave their mark. Over time, and through repetition, what we experience becomes part of who we are, and who we are comes to be part of the environments we move through... rather than passively transporting us, commuting journeys and transport systems are actively changing us. Commuting can tire, deplete and cost, but it can also enliven, excite and energise.”

Extracted from an article titled *How the Everyday Commute is Changing Who We Are*, written by Associate Professor David Bissell, University of Melbourne, published on <https://theconversation.com/au> on 31 July 2018



“For my case, I will feel happy if I can help people and the other party gets good benefits.”

(Homemaker, female)

PTC’s focus group discussions revealed that commuters felt happy helping fellow commuters and hoped others would also help them in time to come. PTC conducted three additional surveys and asked more than 12,000 commuters whether they would like to see more caring commuters in public transport and whether they thought that commuters should be given more opportunities to co-create. More than 9 out of 10 survey participants agreed with the following statements:

- I hope to see more caring commuters on public transport.
- I think commuters should be given more opportunities to contribute ideas and solutions to grow a caring culture.

The results indicate that commuters want to see more caring commuters on public transport, and would like to have more opportunities to contribute ideas and solutions to improve the commuting culture. These are “co-creation” processes which are “based on the creativity of two or more people (collective creativity) aiming at the production of new, innovative ideas... to jointly create value.”<sup>3</sup> Co-creation has also been described as the process of creating value with citizens, where citizens are no longer merely the users or beneficiaries of public services but value creators and co-producers of public results.<sup>4</sup> This approach tends to build resilience and self-reliance, as well as solidarity and capability for collective problem-solving. In the context of public transport, this means fostering a caring commuting culture which can address the specific, localised needs of commuters in a system designed for the masses.

The results from our surveys encouraged PTC to pilot some co-creation projects on the ground to test if there were intangible values, norms or psychological forces at work which would only surface from the pilots.

<sup>3</sup> As defined by the Collective Innovation for Public Transport in European Cities (CIPTEC).

<sup>4</sup> By Jocelyne Bourgon in *The New Synthesis of Public Administration Fieldbook*, p. 111.

## “CARING SG COMMUTERS” – A PUBLIC TRANSPORT CO-CREATION MOVEMENT

The “Caring SG Commuters” movement began in August 2017 when PTC launched its first two co-creation pilots. The pilots provided warm platforms for commuters to interact with fellow commuters, encouraging a caring commuting atmosphere to make everyone’s travel experience more pleasant, inclusive and welcoming.

The following sections of the report present commuters’ views towards the co-creation pilots and suggestions on how an inclusive public transport culture can be further developed. PTC also brought stakeholders and partners on board to support the movement.

An iconic identifier and a catchphrase was needed to unify and rally the efforts. The “Caring SG Commuters” logo was created for awareness building in collaboration with Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, a partner in one of PTC’s co-creation pilots, and will continue to be used extensively in future.



“Now we help others, later we [become] old, people can help us.”

(Senior, female)



# CO-CREATION PILOTS (2017 – MAY 2019)

This section presents PTC's co-creation pilots according to the three areas they are currently divided into: 1) Sectoral 2) Intergenerational and 3) Constituency-based.

**SECTORAL** refers to pilots conducted in partnership with specific sectors such as medical institutions. Sectoral pilots recognise the opportunities to help different commuter profiles at certain transport nodes, such as near medical institutions.

## HEART ZONE @ OUTRAM PARK

### STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Singapore General Hospital, Singapore National Eye Centre and National Heart Centre Singapore  
LTA, SBS Transit and SMRT Trains

## HEARTWHEELS@LINKWAY

### STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

LTA, SBS Transit and SMRT Trains

## HEART ZONE @ NOVENA

### STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Tan Tock Seng Hospital together with HealthCity Novena medical institutions  
LTA and SMRT Trains

## HEART ZONE @ JURONG EAST

### STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Ng Teng Fong General Hospital  
LTA and SMRT Trains

## HEART ZONE @ YISHUN

### STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Khoo Teck Puat Hospital  
LTA and SMRT Trains  
Northpoint City



The Heart Zone and related Heartwheels@Linkway co-creation initiatives won the Asia-Pacific Special Recognition Award at the global 2019 UITP Summit in Stockholm, Sweden



**INTERGENERATIONAL** refers to co-creation pilots aimed at encouraging young commuters (Next Generation) to interact and bond with commuters across generations. The goals are to 1) build understanding and empathy between diverse groups of commuters and 2) make it easier for them to offer help or ask for help with more confidence.

**CONSTITUENCY-BASED** refers to specific partnership projects with communities and organisations in a location with public transport needs that can be met by a caring commuting culture.

## CARE RIDE @ SOUTH WEST

### STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

South West Community Development Council  
ITE College West and Pioneer Junior College  
Fei Yue Senior Activity Centre and Fei Yue Retirees Centre (Teck Whye)  
LTA and SMRT Buses

## CARE BY CHUNG CHENG

### STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Chung Cheng High School (Yishun)  
LTA, SMRT Buses and SMRT Trains





## SECTORAL CO-CREATION PILOTS

Sectoral co-creation pilots are initiatives conducted in partnership with specific sectors such as medical institutions. Sectoral pilots recognise the opportunities to help different commuter profiles at certain transport nodes, such as near medical institutions.



### HEART ZONE AND HEARTWHEELS@LINKWAY

Heart Zone and Heartwheels@Linkway at Outram Park MRT Station were PTC's first two public transport co-creation pilots, launched in August 2017. The idea for the Heart Zone was seeded by focus group discussion (FGD) participants and refined by PTC. FGD participants said that it would be good to have a physical area where people who need help can go to, indicating that they need help. Outram Park MRT Station was selected because a number of commuters who alight there are elderly, frail or visually-impaired patients of the Singapore General Hospital (SGH) and medical centres in the SGH Campus. These patients can benefit from assistance and support to get to their various destinations. Although SGH provides free shuttle bus services, PTC observed that commuters faced some difficulties locating the boarding points. Some patients may also lose their way while heading to the medical centres because of the construction work around the MRT station.

Commuters can wait at two designated meeting points ("Heart Zones"), one located at the East-West Line exit and the other at the North East Line exit. Fellow commuters (including SGH Campus staff) are encouraged to meet commuters at the "Heart Zone" and bring them to the shuttle bus boarding points or to the buildings in the SGH Campus.



Mr Agpaoa using the wheelchair at the Heartwheels@Linkway at Outram Park MRT Station, to push fellow commuter, Mr Ryhan, who is on crutches

Outram Park MRT Station also serves as an interchange station for the East-West Line and North East Line, which are connected via a 210m pedestrian linkway. Elderly commuters or those with mobility challenges may find moving along the linkway difficult. To help them navigate the linkway between the East-West Line and North East Line, the rail operators have provided wheelchairs, or "Heartwheels@Linkway", at both ends. Commuters are encouraged to help fellow commuters in need of these wheelchairs by pushing them along the linkway.



Mdm Lee, a retiree, being helped by Ms Aslinah, an SGH staff, at the Outram Park MRT Station Heart Zone (North East Line exit) to walk to the SGH Campus shuttle bus pickup point





Mdm Locquiao, an elderly commuter, often looks out to help other commuters in need. She is supporting Mr Ong, a commuter she met at the Novena MRT Station Heart Zone

Heart Zone @ Novena was a partnership with Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) and six other healthcare institutions within HealthCity Novena (i.e., National Healthcare Group, National Skin Centre, Ren Ci Hospital, Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, Dover Park Hospice and National Neuroscience Institute). Heart Zone @ Jurong East was a partnership with Ng Teng Fong General Hospital.

Heart Zone @ Novena and Heart Zone @ Jurong East serve commuters who may need directional help or physical assistance to go to the hospitals and medical institutions. Wheelchairs are available at both Heart Zones for commuters to help push patients with mobility challenges. Heart Zone @ Novena also has a mural map of HealthCity Novena that provides directional assistance.

More than 1,200 commuters required assistance within the initial one-month pilot at Heart Zone @ Outram Park. Results from the pilots confirmed PTC's initial assessment that commuters are willing to co-create a caring commuting culture.

- 😊 More than 700 commuters agreed that Heart Zone @ Outram Park was especially beneficial for elderly commuters.
- 😊 Commuters surveyed wanted to see more Heart Zones at MRT stations near hospitals.
- 😊 Commuters thought that the Heart Zones were a good idea, would like to see the Heart Zone initiative grow and were willing to keep a look out for, and assist commuters at the Heart Zones.





## HEART ZONE @ YISHUN

PTC collaborated with Khoo Teck Puat Hospital to implement a Heart Zone at Yishun MRT Station for better wayfinding. This pilot addresses the needs of commuters by enhancing aspects of wayfinding and involves both rail and bus. Beyond installing a Heart Zone at Yishun MRT Station, a Heart Zone was also set up in the hospital premises. Commuters are encouraged to help and care for one another at important junctures of their journeys to and from Khoo Teck Puat Hospital and Yishun Community Hospital.



(left)  
Student, Mr Lokesh, offering support to Mdm Ilagan and helping her to a seat on a bus

(right)  
Students, Mr Lokesh and Mr Agpaoa, assisting Mdm Ilagan, an elderly commuter, with her groceries up the bus

## INTERGENERATIONAL CO-CREATION PILOTS

Engaging our next generation commuters from a young age is important in building a sustainable caring commuting culture and public transport affinity among youths. Our next generation has the power to shape the future commuting culture and should be imbued with a sense of personal responsibility towards other commuters from a young age.

Intergenerational co-creation pilots aim to encourage young commuters to interact and bond with commuters of different profiles such as the elderly (intergenerational) and commuters with special needs. The goals are to 1) build understanding and empathy between diverse groups of commuters, and 2) make it easier for them to offer help or ask for help with more confidence. PTC has conducted one co-creation pilot in this area, titled CARE Ride @ South West, in partnership with South West CDC.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The CARE Ride @ South West is also a programme under the Adopt @ South West! Together with local partners such as Fei Yue Senior Activity Centre and Fei Yue Retirees Centre, Adopt @ South West aims to provide social support and enrich the lives of the vulnerable. Elderly beneficiaries from Adopt-A-Rental-Block @ Chua Chu Kang (as part of Adopt @ South West) embarked on the bus journey with the students.





## CARE RIDE @ SOUTH WEST

The term CARE is an acronym for **C**aring commuters **A**ssist **R**eadily with **E**mpathy. The CARE Ride @ South West initiative aims to provide opportunities for younger commuters to better understand the travel needs of the elderly so they can be more mindful and protective of elderly commuters in the future.

PTC and South West CDC launched the inaugural CARE Ride @ South West on Friday, 7 December 2018. A total of 44 students from ITE College West and Pioneer Junior College, and 20 elderly from Fei Yue Senior Activity Centre and Fei Yue Retirees Centre participated.

Ms Low Yen Ling, Mayor of South West District and Senior Parliamentary Secretary (Ministry of Education & Ministry of Manpower), Mr Baey Yam Keng, Senior Parliamentary Secretary (Ministry of Transport & Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth), Mr Richard Magnus, PTC Chairman, as well as partners from LTA and SMRT Buses participated in the first CARE Ride @ South West at Choa Chu Kang Bus Interchange.

Students were paired with elderly residents in the district for an outing on feeder bus services (i.e., bus service #301 and #302) on their scheduled loop service routes around Chua Chu Kang district. During the bus rides, the students led in enhancing social and relational bonding with the elderly through the following activities:

- Greeted and thanked Bus Captains to show appreciation (aligned with the campaign on showing appreciation to public transport workers) and
- Interacted with elderly through conversations (for example, self-introduction, shared objective of the initiative, listened to life stories of the elderly and shared information on cultural geography of places/landmarks that they passed by).

The initiative provided a platform for the two groups of commuters to bond and create a shared experience together.

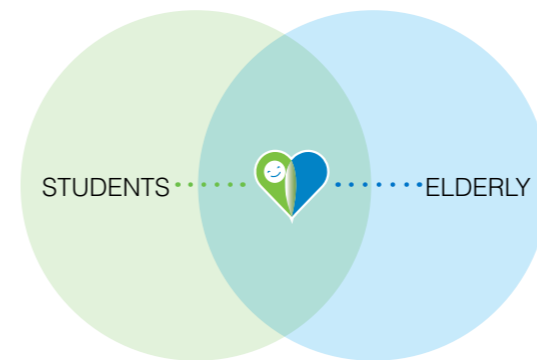
😊 CARE Ride @ South West received positive feedback from the participants and also received positive coverage in mainstream, online and social media.

😊 The elderly enjoyed chatting with the helpful and friendly students on the bus ride.

😊 Students found it meaningful to interact with the elderly and understand them better.



A group photo taken after the public bus ride with happy participants



**C**aring commuters **A**ssist **R**eadily with **E**mpathy

“Some elderly enjoyed the attention that they received from the students and the media. They did mention that the students were very helpful and attentive.”

(Fei Yue Retirees Centre)



“I really enjoyed the segment where we can interact with the elderly. It was a joyous experience to introduce my partner to the various sights around the neighbourhood which she didn't have the pleasure of exploring. Seeing how delighted she was sitting in the bus and gazing out of the window was absolutely a memory to be kept.”

(A student of Pioneer JC)



## CONSTITUENCY-BASED CO-CREATION PILOTS

Constituency-based co-creation pilots are specific partnership projects with communities and organisations in a location with public transport needs that can be met by a caring commuting culture.

The goals are to:

- Identify specific commuter needs in consultation with commuters, communities and organisations that are familiar with the ground; and
- Co-create with the parties above to provide opportunities to meet the needs.

Currently, PTC has conducted one co-creation pilot in this area, titled CARE by Chung Cheng on 6 March 2019, in conjunction with Chung Cheng High School (Yishun)'s 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

## CARE BY CHUNG CHENG

Around 18.3%<sup>6</sup> of Yishun residents are 60 years old and above. Categorised as a middle-aged town by HDB in 2013, Yishun is expected to have an increase in the proportion of elderly in the future.<sup>7</sup> PTC officers also observed that many Yishun residents use personal mobility devices, motorised wheelchairs and bicycles. The data and observations suggest that the elderly of Yishun may benefit from public transport co-creation initiatives that make their first/last mile journeys easier by helping them overcome their mobility challenges.

To meet the needs of Yishun's elderly residents, Chung Cheng High School (Yishun) (CCHSY), initiated a project as part of its Values in Action (VIA) programme. Students assisted elderly commuters in neighbourhoods near the school by carrying their heavy grocery bags to their homes. The VIA programme aims to nurture students to become socially responsible citizens.

PTC collaborated with CCHSY to incorporate more transport elements into the VIA project by including major public transport nodes into the project (Yishun, Ang Mo Kio, Yio Chu Kang and Khatib MRT stations, and Yishun Temporary Bus Interchange), titled CARE by Chung Cheng. As the name implies, the pilot was to give students the opportunity to assist and empathise with elderly commuters, so that the students will learn to be caring commuters and shape the public transport culture in the future.

<sup>6</sup> 2018's estimate. Source: Department of Statistics Singapore.

<sup>7</sup> 2013's estimate. Source: HDB. Results are based on HDB's Sample Household Survey (SHS) 2013 and the survey is conducted every five years. The results for SHS 2018 are estimated to be ready by early 2020.



The pilot involved 1,350 participants including 1,200 students, and another 150 teachers, staff, parents and alumni volunteers. The students (in small groups) offered help to elderly residents by carrying their heavy groceries and bags, or pushing their trolleys on their last-mile travel. During the walk, there were opportunities to bond with the elderly (intergenerational interaction). The goal was for students to have first-hand experience interacting with the elderly to develop empathy and awareness. Students also wore “Caring SG Commuters” wristbands to signal their desire to help. Over time, the elderly residents can learn to identify the wristbands and feel more comfortable asking for help.

- 😊 Feedback from the students and elderly was positive.
- 😊 Some elderly were friendly and kind despite sometimes rejecting the offer of help. Others thanked or praised students for the offer.
- 😊 More than half of the students a) were likely to continue helping the elderly when taking public transport, and b) felt the experience increased their confidence to approach the elderly to offer help.

“The seniors were grateful for our help and even advised us to go home and appreciate what our mother and grandmother have done for us.”

(A student of CCHSY)





“When I see someone in need in the MRT station, I would try my best to help them. It will make Singapore a more gracious society.”

- Ms Low M. E.

“... they help out, it makes things easier for us to move around and we are more comfortable.”

- Mr Tan K. Y.

A commuter Ms Low, assisting Mr Tan, a wheelchair user, to tap his card at the fare gantry

## RECOMMENDATIONS

After each pilot, PTC gathered data from multiple sources, such as:

- Survey data from participants and commuters;
- Feedback from interviews conducted with participants and commuters; and
- Coverage by media, social media and public responses.

The findings show that respondents reacted positively to the pilots and also wanted to see a caring commuting culture develop. The results provide support that our commuters have the ability and desire to contribute to an inclusive culture. Commuters also suggested that such projects would need higher visibility and awareness.

Based on the Land Transport Master Plan 2040

strategy of ‘Transport for All’, an inclusive land transport will require everyone to play their part. The Government, public transport operators and stakeholders will continue to invest in inclusive infrastructure and look into how public transport workers can help more vulnerable commuters. PTC will also expand its Heart Zones to all MRT stations and bus interchanges, where practical. Commuters can contribute in creating a safe community space and fostering a caring commuting culture. To get there, PTC will continue with our work to cultivate positive social norms that encourage commuters to look out for one another and to extend a helping hand to those in need.

To drive a caring commuting culture for the long-term, PTC recommends the setting up of a coordinating structure.

## SETTING UP A COORDINATING STRUCTURE

The key objective of a “Caring SG Commuters” movement coordinating structure, such as an executive steering committee, is to continue to drive the transformation of Singapore’s public transport system into a more caring, welcoming and inclusive one. This will enable PTC to perform the function of implementing initiatives across the entire public transport network.

The coordinating structure should be formalised at the national level, for transparency, accountability and sustainability of efforts. It will require the inclusion of public agencies, public transport operators, the people sector, companies and organisations. The coordinating structure will oversee the ideation, implementation and publicity of more public transport co-creation initiatives in support of the “Caring SG Commuters” movement. The proposal is for the Public Transport Council to spearhead this inter-agency effort.

## CONCLUSION

PTC has engaged nearly 50,000 commuters since 2016 when we took on the role as an advisor to the Minister for Transport. We found a promising and positive picture of SG Commuters. They have a sense of ownership and are willing to help shape their public transport experience. Every day, our SG Commuters extend their helping hands to others who need help, from giving directions, to walking with a lost commuter, to guiding a visually-impaired commuter to his destination. Their efforts help make public transport more welcoming and inclusive for the elderly and commuters with special needs. More can be done to encourage this. Besides commuters, community institutions, public transport operators and stakeholders have been supportive in carrying out the co-creation initiatives and their efforts are commendable.

Commuters have also shared their aspirations to see a more caring public transport culture, especially towards the elderly. They would also like to see our younger generation shape the culture. Our long term master plan needs to take into account such feedback, continue to co-create with commuters (together with public transport operators) to provide practical opportunities and harness the potential of infrastructure as a social asset. Finally, we will need the necessary coordinating structures and investments to help transform the Singapore commuting culture into a caring and welcoming one.





“... If someone can help us to walk to the shuttle bus waiting point, it's going to be very good.”

- Mr Francis Tay

## We miss Francis

### EVERY MOMENT OF CARE IS PRECIOUS

The late Mr Francis Tay was a visually-impaired commuter who appreciated how the Heart Zones were helpful for commuters like him. Despite facing challenges, Francis himself would also help others where possible. The photograph and story are printed with permission from his wife, Mdm Lim Siew Hoon. She is proud of him leaving a legacy of helpfulness and care for others.

The Public Transport Council would like to thank all our partners and commuters for their support and contributions in fostering a caring commuting culture for all Singaporeans.





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