

Cultural Tour – A Journey Through the Lee Gardens Area & Soilless Botanic Workshop (遊走利園區脈絡導賞團 x 無土種植工作坊)

By Ms Terry TAY

Hong Kong's Lee Gardens area has undergone quite a transformation over the past century and a recent community-guided tour organised by the YMC gave participants a captivating glimpse into this neighbourhood's evolving story in the Causeway Bay neighbourhood. The tour, titled "100 Years of Placemaking: A Journey through the Lee Gardens Area", was held on 20 July 2024 and aimed to take participants along on a deep dive into how this locale has evolved from a quiet residential area into a bustling commercial and dining hub and, now, into a major commercial area and shopping mall.

The tour started with an introduction to the history of Lee Gardens. The Lee Gardens was transformed significantly from a residential enclave to a commercial hub through rapid urbanisation in the mid-20th century. This was mainly driven by land redevelopment, the economic growth of Hong Kong and the architectural transformation, which involved both architectural landscape and the modern skyline of skyscrapers. The participants walked through Hysan Place, including the newly built Urban Park and Urban Sky. These two areas mainly allow skateboard players and musicians to showcase their techniques and professions.

After that, the participants walked along the streets in Causeway Bay to be shown some historical buildings and the remaining neon light plates of some old-fashioned shops and restaurants. They eventually arrived at a studio, where they took part in the soilless botanic workshop. There, they had the chance to cultivate a little plant for themselves, using advanced soilless techniques. The coach also presented the science of how plants can grow and thrive without soil, with a special organic carbon cuddle.

The tour was an eye-opening experience for all participants, giving them a new-found appreciation for the importance of community involvement in shaping urban spaces. The tour has also sparked a renewed sense of engagement for preserving the character of local neighbourhood. It showed how important it is to value the places and their unique qualities. It served also as a good reminder of the great need to sustain our environment, which greatly deserves everyone's care and attention.



Participants of the cultural tour at Urban Park, Hysan Place