

Fishing village's culture and geology go on show in Kat O

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Secretary for the Environment Edward Yau Tang-wah checks out some of the displays at the Kat O Geoheritage Centre.

Photo: K.Y. Cheng

A geopark education centre has opened on Kat O island showcasing the cultural heritage of the old fishing village as well as rock specimens found in the northeastern New Territories.

The centre was the fourth one of its kind set up in the Hong Kong National Geopark and was different in that it had a cultural interest, Young Ng Chun-yeong, chairman of the Association for Geoconservation, said at the opening ceremony yesterday.

"Now, when it comes to the geopark, the first thing coming to people's minds is the signature hexagonal ... rocks in Sai Kung. We hope this centre in Kat O can add to what the park offers," Ng said.

The centre, a converted house formerly used by the rural committee as an office, displays rock specimens found in different parts of the northeastern New Territories, including coarse ash crystal tuff, formed across most of Kat O about 160 million years ago.

The centre also tells stories about the 300-year-old fishing village, including that of Lung Dajiu, a festival celebrated every 10 years.

A sponsorship fund of HK\$300,000 from Fung Ying Seen Koon, a Fanling-based Taoist organisation, will cover the cost of building renovations and the first two years of the geoheritage centre's operation. The other three centres are in Tai Po, Lai Chi Wo and Sai Kung. They were set up with the help of local community organisations to provide exhibitions and guided tours of the park areas.

The Hong Kong geopark comprises two parts of Sai Kung, formed from volcanic rocks, and the northeastern New Territories, formed from sedimentary rocks.

It covers about 50 square kilometres of sea and land, and is largely within country parks and marine parks.

The mainland authorities would nominate the park to Unesco as a world geopark next year, Ng said.