



(From left) Mohammad, Ng, MPSJ Zone 4 councillor Kamarul Hisham Yeop Hashim, Housing and Local Government Ministry deputy secretary-general Datuk Azhar Ahmad watching Noraini paint a mural during the launch of the mural project at Angsana low-cost flats in USJ 1. — Photos: ART CHEN/The Star and filepics

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CREATIVE art and painting have proven to lend vibrancy and bring life to dead spaces and areas. With the emergence of street art and murals drawn by local and foreign artists, dreary back lanes and low-cost flats are being given a new lease of life.

Realising this, several local councils in Selangor are taking a step further by bringing communities together and creating in them a sense of responsibility and ownership in such art projects.

Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) and Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ) have jumped on the bandwagon and are getting community involvement in projects to revitalise their respective surroundings.

Subang Jaya

The recently launched mural project at the Angsana low-cost flats in USJ 1 will see 100 murals costing RM150,000 being drawn in the area.

MPSJ is hoping companies will fund the project as part of their corporate social responsibility initiative.

This is a collaboration between the council, Zone 4 residents committee and its synergy partner The Art Market Malaysia.

Ten artists led by Ibnuo Jalil are expected to take part in the project launched together with the SJ Riverfront USJ 1 rejuvenation initiative by Housing and Local Government Ministry (KPKT) secretary-general Datuk Seri Mohamad Mentek.

Mohamad suggested that artists adopt the 3D mural trend instead of the proposed 2D ones.

Last year, 100 motorcycles were destroyed in an arson there.

Hence, one of the objectives of the recently launched mural project at the flats is to instil a sense of ownership.

Subang Jaya assemblyman Michelle Ng hopes flat dwellers would learn to care more for their homes.

"By having residents take part in

Creating sense of belonging, ownership

Increasing effort to beautify back lanes in Selangor as local councils get proactive in community engagement

whitewashing the walls, it is hoped that they will have a sense of ownership and belonging," she added.

MPSJ president Noraini Roslan said this was one of several mural projects to rejuvenate low-cost flats and alleys in the municipality.

Previously, the council embarked on a similar project at the back lane of Jalan Kenari 5 in Bandar Puchong Jaya, Puchong.

The murals there were painted by students of The One Academy and Asia Pacific University of Technology and Innovation.

Funded by MPSJ, Kinrara assemblyman Ng Sze Han, IOI Properties Group Bhd, the project is part of MPSJ's plan to rejuvenate back lanes in the Jalan Kenari commercial area.

The new look has even given birth to a new name for Jalan Kenari 5 as it is now known as Kenari Lane Puchong.

Another two projects in the pipeline are the Kenari Lane 2.0 mural and Subang West beautification project.

"Back lanes are supposed to be public space and we want to return it to the public, create a safe, accessible and walkable area.

"It is well-maintained until today and many people get their breakfast from the hawkers at Kenari Lane," said Ng.

MPSJ Corporate and Strategic Management Department deputy director Azfarizal Abdul Rashid said the mural projects made an impact in three positive ways, namely cleanliness, safety and placemaking.

"The mural projects have changed the back lane landscape to be cleaner and more orderly as



Abdul Hamid pretending to play a game of football with Mokhtar Dahari, a scene that brightens up a back lane in Ampang Point under the Senario Ampang project.

enforcement is carried out during the project.

"It has also turned back lanes into a safer place and cheerful environment for the public to utilise.

"As for the placemaking aspect, the murals attract the public to take photos there," he said.

Ampang

Fancy standing tall at the edge of Bukit Tabur, having a meal at the Ampang Look Out Point or even playing a game of football with legend Mokhtar Dahari?

All of these will soon be possible once the Senario Ampang mural project is completed by MPAJ.

The once dingy and dirty back lane along Jalan Mamanda 7 in Ampang has been spruced up and beautified with 3D murals decorating the walls.

The murals, which invite people to become part of the art are made up of vignettes of attractions as well as landmarks of the area.

"What we are doing is to bring life back into these spaces by developing them into bright spaces.

"The spot can be turned into a lively place for people to gather," MPAJ president Datuk Abdul Hamid Hussain said.

The project is a collaboration between MPAJ and KPKT at an estimated cost of RM468,300.