



EDDINGTON
RESIDENTS
ASSOCIATION



Eddington Residents' Association and Portal meeting
Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8 September, 2020 at 4.30pm
Virtual meeting held via Zoom

Those present

Eddington Residents' Association (ERA)

Pieter Desnerck, Chair

Kanad Mandke, Eddington resident and ERA member

Portal

Warren Forsyth, Operations Director

Alex Wynick, Communications Coordinator

Apologies

Stephanie Jones, Executive Assistant for Portal

1. WELCOME

Introductions made.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from previous meeting were agreed and published on ERA website.

3. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Terms of Reference: ERA circulated short terms of reference document for agreement. *(Post-meeting note: Portal has now reviewed this document and the terms of reference are agreed for publication and use. [ACTION: ERA publish these as required.]*)

Turing Way car park: Turing Way car park gates are in the process of being repaired *(Post-meeting note: were repaired on 9 September 2020)*. Portal appreciate resident frustration for the length of time it took to resolve this, which was due to the manufacturers being on furlough and apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Bike shed security: Since the June meeting a full review of bike sheds has taken place with any malfunctioning locks repaired and additional security mesh being installed to improve security where necessary. However bike sheds are not impregnable, however there have been no known instances of forced entry to date. There will also be another police consultation to ensure there are no other police-recommended actions Portal can take to improve security.

Portal still encourage that residents must ensure doors behind them are closed and to not permit others to enter the sheds. All crimes at Eddington should be reported to the police on 101. It would be helpful for residents to also notify Portal so staff can monitor if there is a trend for particular hot-spots, but Portal is not able to assist in the investigation of any crime or recovery of any stolen property.



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Considerate neighbours: Improvement noticed of Portal staff parking on site, following Portal communication to all staff.

Trolleys are still being abandoned, which is frustrating to both residents and Portal. There are infrastructures that Sainsbury's could introduce to reduce this issue, but this is beyond Portal's control. Portal has discussed this with Sainsbury's several times but with no results. **[ACTION: ERA to consider whether they wish to approach Sainsbury's to discuss implementing trolley anti-theft infrastructure.]**

4. REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

ERA:

- No social activities happening in person; tried to run online events but the uptake was relatively low.
- Options for socially-distanced in-person events (Open Doors and Film Club) at the Storey's Field Centre are being explored, with hopes to re-start in October depending on national/local lockdown guidelines.

Portal:

- Eddington's Project Director Heather Topel has now left the team which has resulted in the re-balancing of workloads within Portal and other teams.
- Result of resident survey: ERA confirmed that a virtual presentation of 2019 resident survey results was desired and Portal arranged this for 29 July, 2020. The meeting was well-received but poorly attended, with only 9 attendees. MS Live events worked well. Discussion about whether changing the time-slot of any future meetings would improve attendance, though the desire to be convenient for residents needs to be balanced with staff time and benefit for residents. **[ACTION: ERA to conduct a resident survey to see what timeslots would be preferred for further consideration.]** Also discussion about putting posters up which is more difficult while Portal staff are working remotely. Athena residents do not have a natural physical space for posters in the same way as University housing. ERA has contacted the block management company Anchor and been told that noticeboards will not be installed in Athena buildings. **[ACTION: Portal and ERA to think more about potential ways to target Athena residents via posters.]**
- North West Cambridge Development Community Group meeting taking place on 17 September, which the ERA is invited to. This will discuss the plans for the Phase 2 Infrastructure proposals which will be circulated to residents shortly. We welcome all feedback from residents and others to inform the proposals.
- foodPark has restarted in the Market Square, which has been appreciated by residents and the new timeslots for foodPark has worked well.
- Dulcedo installation is ongoing and Portal hope to announce an opening date soon.

5. MATTERS ARISING



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A) Health of plants at Eddington.

Some residents (mostly Athena) have contacted ERA that plants do not seem to be healthy. Residents must report these concerns to the party responsible – which may be different for Athena and University residents. **[ACTION: Portal to check that Athena residents are given accurate information by Hill about who to report these sorts of issues to.]**

Portal has not received any reports of this nature, so would encourage University residents to submit specific reports via the Portal website. Landscaping generally has a much longer schedule across the year, which is closely linked to ecology and biodiversity, so it may be that the grounds maintenance teams have not reached the task yet.

B) Parking.

ERA raised concerns about Parking Charge Limited issuing Parking Charge Notices to residents.

Portal cannot comment on individual cases, but Parking Charge Limited is a third-party company that is accredited by the British Parking Association. Portal uses Parking Charge Limited to ensure that all enforcement is done by accredited staff, and therefore cannot intervene in the appeals process for any Parking Charge Notices issued.

Parking Charge Limited staff circulate the site throughout the day and do not target any particular drivers or areas. However, Eddington is small and as there are dedicated staff the chances of being issued a Parking Charge Notice if drivers break parking policies are high.

ERA suggest a lesson learned for Phase 2 that buildings have a dedicated loading/unloading area outside each building for resident use.

If drivers park on double yellow lines or a no loading area then there is no 10 minute grace period. There is a zero-tolerance for parking on double yellow lines as this is essential to provide access for emergency vehicles for everyone's safety.

Within on-street spaces, drivers have a 10 minute "grace period" before a Parking Charge Notice is issued. In order to evidence that the grace period has been provided, enforcement staff may record images of vehicles as soon as they arrive. The timestamps of images taken in evidence then demonstrate that the vehicle was parked in violation of parking policies for (at least) the required 10 minute grace period before enforcement action was taken.

If drivers feel a Parking Charge Notice has been issued incorrectly they can appeal within a certain timeframe using the details provided on the Parking Charge Notice itself. If drivers miss the appeal timeframe then your appeal may not be considered. If an appeal with Parking Charge Limited is rejected then the driver may then appeal further to POPLA, the private parking ombudsman. If Parking Charge Limited reject your initial appeal they will provide the driver with full details of how to contact POPLA. Portal is not able to intervene in the appeals process, which is set out by the British Parking Association.



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Parking Charge Notices will be issued to drivers via Royal Mail post to the address registered with the DVLA for the vehicle within two weeks of the date of issue. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the postal address registered with the DVLA is up-to-date and accurate.

[ACTION: Portal to add these details to the Portal website, though adding more information does reduce the chances of people reading the information.]

C) End-of-tenancy clean.

ERA raised concerns about end-of-tenancy cleaning, with residents claiming that the cost of end-of-tenancy being increased and becoming compulsory.

In previous meetings, the ERA raised concerns about residents feeling pressured to take the Portal end-of-tenancy clean. There were also further complaints about how the general end-of-tenancy process was communicated to tenants. This has now been reviewed and clarified with staff and it was decided that a clear guide for the general end-of-tenancy processes for Lodge Property Services should be written for residents.

In parallel, increasingly it was found that some residents were leaving their apartments in appalling conditions resulting in the required clean taking over a week complete to the required standard for the new tenant. This was hugely disruptive and costly in not being able to move the next tenants in on time and having to change Portal cleaning staff schedules to complete the clean. But Portal did not want to simply increase the price of cleans and penalise conscientious tenants who do keep their apartments in a good standard throughout the tenancy.

As of September 2020, there is still the standard end-of-tenancy clean (costing from £185 1 bed / £200 2bed) as before. A second cleaning tier has also been introduced which is an in-depth clean, which includes all cleaning requirements such as oven, furniture, extractor-hood and bathroom. Neither of these cleans are compulsory and residents do not have to purchase them. However the apartment must be left in the state of cleanliness required by Lodge Property Services and there will be charges issued if the apartment does not meet the cleaning standards.

When tenants inform Lodge Property Services of their intention to leave Eddington they will be provided with a full pack that includes full details of the moving-out process, cleaning standards required with photo illustrations and details of costs issued to those who do not clean the property as required.

[ACTION: Portal to include general notice of these changes in the next newsletter, though not the full end-of-tenancy pack.]

6. AOB

ERA is recruiting for new members. **[ACTION: ERA will provide Portal with a notice to include in an upcoming newsletter to promote this.]**



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Portal is currently conducting sprinkler inspections in University properties. Portal appreciates that with the COVID-19 pandemic residents do not want unnecessary visits but these checks are essential for fire safety. COVID-19 measures will be in place during the appointment, including strict social distancing and hygiene measures in line with government guidance. This includes the appropriate PPE, cleaning once works are completed and keeping at least 2m from residents wherever possible.

7. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting will be in December, 2020. **[ACTION: ERA to confirm the December date with Stephanie Jones.]**