



**EDDINGTON**  
RESIDENTS  
ASSOCIATION



Eddington Residents' Association and Portal meeting  
Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 23 March 2021 at 4.30pm  
Virtual meeting held via Zoom

### **Those present**

#### **Eddington Residents' Association (ERA)**

Pieter Desnerck, Chair

Marcus Maier, Support Officer

Patrick Sweeney, Support Officer

Margreet Vogelzang, Support Officer

#### **Portal**

Warren Forsyth, Operations Director

Alex Wynick, Communications Coordinator

### **Apologies**

Stephanie Jones, Executive Assistant for Portal

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies from Stephanie Jones.

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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

### **3. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Sainsbury's trolleys: ERA did a trolley collection and gathered 27 trolleys from across site before returning them to Sainsbury's. Have spoken with Sainsbury's manager and, while store staff can collect trolleys in the immediate vicinity of the store, insurance liabilities mean store staff cannot gather trolleys from elsewhere. Sainsbury's to review what options are available and continue dialogue with ERA.

Christmas party: Portal provided more than 20 Dulcedo vouchers for the ERA virtual Christmas party in December 2020. These were gratefully received and the party was a success.

Parking enforcement around the school: Parking enforcement began in January 2021, though as most pupils were not at school from January-March 2021 due to national lockdowns, it has only recently come into practical effect. Parents were reminded of the parking enforcement as they returned to school in early March 2021. ERA queried how parking enforcement took place; Portal explained that a dedicated parking enforcement officer (from an external specialist company) circuits the site throughout the day and is not posted at any particular points at any particular times to avoid "targeting" any specific drivers. ERA expressed concern that unless an enforcement officer was stationed near the school during drop-off/pick-up times then parents will continue to commit parking infractions. It was suggested that the ERA reach out to the school directly to see if the school could provide staff support during drop-off/pick-up times to encourage parents to park responsibly.



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**[ACTION: ERA to consider whether they wish to open a dialogue with the school regarding parent parking and to take action accordingly.]**

Rubbish collection: ERA monitored bin chutes outside Athena apartment buildings and it is clear that by Saturday evenings the bins are full. **[ACTION: ERA to contact Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Authority to request additional collections. Portal to provide the necessary contact details if required.]**

Road markings: Following the last meeting Portal has completed some re-marking of speed tables to make the markings clearer. Unclear if this was completed across all speed tables. **[ACTION: Portal to check on progress and complete where necessary.]**

Speedwatch: ERA are now in touch with Transport Stakeholder Group and local Speedwatch group. Speedwatch are not currently operational due to the pandemic. ERA commented that traffic is continuing to speed at Eddington and suggested additional signage/speed display equipment on site.

Voile curtains: ERA asked resident opinion on the suggestion of using film on windows instead of voile curtains in ground-floor apartments. Feedback was received, anonymised and sent to Portal. As most – but not all – feedback stated a preference for the voile curtains no further action will be taken.

Neighbourhood Watch: ERA discussed possibility of re-establishing a Neighbourhood Watch group but decided, due to time constraints and current social restrictions, not to proceed. This will be reviewed in due course as social restrictions lift and in-person social events can resume.

#### **4. REPORT OF ACTIVITIES**

ERA:

- Not a lot of social events due to lockdown, though ERA are now in discussions with Storey's Field Centre to resume some socially-distanced activities later in the year when restrictions allow. 1:1 walks around Eddington are also going to be offered to residents as a way of reducing isolation while restrictions remain in place.
- ERA applied for and partially received a second grant from the local authority. The use of these funds will be decided by the ERA in due course.

Portal:

- Activity continues to be limited due to lockdown, though planning for larger-scale events later in the year has begun.
- Eddington Hotel construction works are progressing, with the hotel due to be completed later in 2021. There will be facilities open to the public, including a bar and rooftop terrace, which will be a welcome addition to Eddington.
- Portal works continue where necessary, with staff in full PPE and adhering to social distancing guidance.



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- **5. MATTERS ARISING**

**A) Access to apartments.**

ERA raised concerns that during the recent audit of fire signage that Portal issued communications within the fortnightly newsletter, instead of dedicated communications, and that the warning did not provide a date of when the audit visits would take place, only a date range of a week. This made it difficult for residents to know when the audit visits would take place. Portal appreciated the feedback and will make sure that in future as specific a timeframe as possible for visits will be given and that communications will be issued separately to the newsletter.

ERA asked about the procedure for providing prior notice to residents and the vulnerable persons policy. Portal explained that – unless it is an emergency where the property and/or resident is likely to experience considerable damage - advance warning is always given. Wherever possible residents are contacted a week before an appointment, and then issued a reminder the working day before. These communications are issued via email. Portal has a vulnerable persons register, and individuals on that register have their own requirements and procedures for access, as agreed between Portal and the individual.

**B) Feedback on NW Cambridge Community Forum (held 17/3).**

ERA thanked Portal for taking steps to arrange Parkrun at Eddington and asked about timelines for when that will be available. Portal said that, due to ongoing national restrictions, it is not possible to confirm a timeline for when Parkrun will begin at Eddington. As soon as a date has been confirmed it will be announced to residents.

ERA also requested clarification on Warren Forsyth's comment at the Community Forum that Phase 2 Infrastructure works were currently "on hold". Portal clarified that these were simply paused while there is an internal restructure of the North West Cambridge Development's board and senior leadership structure, in order to fully brief any new board members. There is no change in terms of the long-term plan for future phases of the North West Cambridge Development. Portal apologised for any confusion caused.

**6. AOB**

**A) Estate Service Charge.**

ERA raised concerns that the current decision-making process behind the Estate Service Charge (applied to commercial and private housing residents only, not University tenants) is unclear. Also expressed concern that residents are not fully receiving all elements of the Estate Service Charge due to the COVID-19 pandemic and queried whether the 2021/22 cost would be adjusted to reflect this. Portal explained that the Estate Service Charge is audited annually (Aug-Jul) by external consultants who compare actual costs with the proposed budget.



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ERA suggested that a meeting for Portal to explain the logistics and specifics of the Estate Service Charge would be welcomed. Portal said that could be arranged, but previous staff meetings for residents had been very poorly attended so had been stopped. ERA suggested that with a larger community of private residents a one-off meeting would probably be well attended. **[ACTION: Portal to review and arrange a meeting for private/commercial residents regarding the Estate Service Charge makeup.]**

**B) ERA meeting with Susie Chan.**

Portal is aware that the ERA met with Susie Chan, resident representative of the Portal Board, and various concerns were raised by the ERA. Those concerns have been passed to the Portal team and are being reviewed and actioned as appropriate. Portal reiterated that a direct dialogue between the ERA and Portal is always welcome and ERA can always contact Portal in between meetings if required.

**C) POE 2021 survey.**

Portal has issued the POE survey for 2021, after there not being a 2020 survey due to time constraints due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey is open until April 5 and Portal would encourage all residents to participate as all feedback is valuable to us. **[ACTION: Portal to provide ERA with text to use to promote the POE survey among residents.]**

**D) End-of-tenancy cleaning.**

Following the two-tier system for end-of-tenancy cleaning that was implemented from September/October 2020, feedback from residents has been clear that the two-tier system was confusing. Therefore, from April 2021, the two-tier system will be removed and residents will be able to purchase an all-inclusive clean or opt to clean the apartment themselves. Portal reiterated that the Portal clean was optional.

ERA asked whether residents would be notified via newsletter and Portal said no, as this only affects those who are coming up to the end of their tenancy and did not want to cause confusion or distress to others to whom the information is not relevant. As residents come up to the end of their tenancy, or inform Lodge Property Services of their intention to end their tenancy early, they will be provided all relevant information. ERA stated they would continue to monitor resident reaction to this on social media and report back, and Portal reiterated that if residents have any concerns or queries the best thing to do is to contact the Portal/Lodge teams directly.

**7. NEXT MEETING**

Next meeting in June 2021. **[ACTION: ERA to confirm the remaining 2021 dates with Stephanie Jones.]**