



Royale Dunton Court Residents Association

Website: www.duntoncourtresidents.org.uk

Email: rdprc2022@gmail.com Edition: November 2023

Administration - the latest news ...

The joint administrators have instructed Christie & Co to market 29 residential parks in administration (including ours). Interested parties have been invited to bid for a site (or all of them) and bidding closes on 24th November.

Administrators will continue to manage the site until a sale is made and a new company is found.

Separately, Basildon Council have sent the residents association a fact sheet about our rights in administration. This reassures us that we all have security of tenure (we can't get kicked out because of administration). If you want to see a copy we have posted it in the news section of our website. We have also printed off some paper copies and these are available from the club hall Mon-Fri daytimes for those who can't use our website.

Electricity Prices ...

Royale's fixed rate of 0.39 per kWh with our supplier Pozitive Energy was supposed to be renegotiated when the fixed term ended on 30/9/23. However, because Royale went into administration that wasn't done. This means the supplier continues to charge 0.39 per kWh even though energy prices have fallen.

We have been in touch with the administrator to say it's unacceptable that, leading into winter, residents are paying more than we should be (current rates are more like 0.28 per kWh). The administrator has confirmed they have been trying to get a new deal but Positive Energy have delayed the process in terms of new contracts for certain sites. As such they have escalated a complaint. Hopefully this will be resolved soon and we will see a reduction in our electricity unit price. We will keep chasing them.

Book Exchange ...

Our book and jigsaw puzzle exchange is now open Mon-Fri 9am to 4pm. This is in the old kids room in the club which has a direct door onto Main Drive opposite the office. There's no librarian, just wander in, browse the books and puzzles and take something home. Similarly, if you have anything to donate, leave it on the shelves.

Gas left over? ...

Just to confirm, if you had gas left over when the tanks were drained, residents should be receiving credit letters which can be used against any future transactions like utilities (electricity, water, water service charges), or it can be used to purchase gas bottles.

Clubhouse Hall ...

Just a reminder, the hall is now available for residents to use Monday to Friday daytimes. The residents association has arranged a self-serve tea and coffee station and we've brought a new easy-to-handle kettle. There are also lots of board games and a table with hardcopies of recent residents' association leaflets. Feel free to use the hall. Just wander in, take your friends and family etc.

Thanks to Toni, our site supervisor, for allowing the residents association to start using these spaces more.

Pitch Fee Increase ...

This information is for residents who decided not to pay the increased pitch fee from April.

The tribunal received the paperwork from Royale at the end of June but they are bogged down with cases so still haven't processed ours yet. In the meantime Royale went into administration so management of the site passed to the administrators.

To try and avoid the hassle of a tribunal, we have reminded the administrators that we have always been willing to negotiate the pitch fee. They got back to us and asked us to put a case together and send it to them. Our case is now with their lawyers who are determining whether to accept our negotiation offer or whether to just carry on and let the tribunal decide.

Can all residents who didn't pay the increase please remind us of your name and address so we can keep in touch with you directly and let you know the outcome. Just write your name and address on a piece of paper and pop it into our black letter box marked 'Residents Association' on the clubhouse wall. Thanks.

Knit and Natter

Sheila's weekly knit and natter sessions are going well. Join fellow crafters every Thursday from 1pm-4pm in the club hall. It's a free session and it's very informal. You don't need to know how to knit. People do all sorts including crocheting, rug making and even diamond art! Just bring any of your craft work with you or just come along for the 'natter' and a cuppa.

Fish and Chips ...

Last year a lot of residents asked if we could try and get a fish and chip van to visit the site because many people don't have the means to drive to one or order takeaways on an app. So, we arranged for Howes Fish and Chips to be here every Thursday. They will continue calling at Dunton all the time there's a demand so try and support this valuable service if you can. If you have trouble getting out, we have volunteers in the association who can help bring your food.

Here: Every Thursday 4pm to 6.30pm parked by the garages opposite the office.

Life Savers ...

Just a reminder we have two defibs on site. The residents' association regularly checks and maintains them so they're always ready for use. We have registered these with the ambulance service so if you ever phone 999 and they think a defib would be beneficial, they will direct you to the nearest one on site.

When you open a defib a voice will automatically tell you what to do. They are designed to be used by members of the public with no training. However, it's good to familiarise ourselves so we're confident to use them if required.

If you missed our training session in the club there are plenty of YouTube videos showing you what they're all about so well worth a look. Just search 'How to Use a Defibrillator'.

If any residents couldn't attend the training session or would like a refresher, please let us know and we can look to arrange another free training session.

Bar news ...

When Royale went into administration the current suppliers stopped delivering to the club. This has now been resolved and a new beverage supplier has been found. However, as many of you will already know, Kim has left her job as bar manager and recruitment is underway to find a replacement. So, the bar is currently closed.

Despite all this, many activities and events continue.

Wednesday coffee mornings ✓
Wednesday night bingo ✓
Thursday afternoon Knit and Natter ✓
Thursday night pool club ✓

Entertainment News ...

We hope everyone is enjoying the selection of once-monthly events the association puts on in the club.

Coming up ...

Friday 17th November - 'Dunton's Got Talent'

Friday 1st December - 'Bill & Audrey's Quiz'

Saturday 9th December - 'NEIL DUNCAN Legends and Laughter show' Christmas Party

Sunday 31st December - 'NYE party disco'

Saturday 20th January - 'Roy Orbison Tribute Act'

As with all of our events, you can buy tickets from Sheila at 26 Orchard View or Lynda at 3 Meadow View. However, you don't need tickets for quiz nights, just turn up and pay £2 per person. Don't forget to take your own drinks to events whilst the bar is closed.

Tickets are on sale now for Dunton's Got Talent - our very own park talent show. £6 per person.

If you can sing, tell jokes, dance, or even do a bit of magic, please let us know and come along to perform on Friday 17 November. Cash prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

Our entertainment team is working on lots of exciting events for 2024 including an easter children's party where residents can bring their grandkids for an easter egg hunt.

Finally, up until now we've designed, printed, then delivered flyers to all 187 homes on site every time there's an event. This was costly and time consuming and it was felt that the lovely big posters Sheila makes for us which are displayed outside the clubhouse - and the posts on Facebook/website are sufficient from now on.

Gas Bottles

As we come up to winter it's important to keep an eye on gas bottles so you're not caught out. When the little window on the gauge above the two bottles turns red that means one bottle has nearly run out. It should automatically start using your second bottle but don't forget that's the time to order a new one. It's good to get in the habit of checking that little window and if it's red, call the office to order a new bottle. If you know a neighbour who is less mobile, perhaps you can keep an eye on their bottle too.

Just as a guide, in our house we get through one bottle every 3 weeks in the cold months of winter.

Money Money Money ...

The association is committed to being open and transparent with money matters so here's our current financial status.

Essentially, the whole residents association is funded by people who come to events (we don't have a membership fee). Currently, we have £3,855.07 in the bank and £535.24 cash in hand. On top of that, we've raised lots of money for charity.

The Alzheimer's Society £50
Great Ormond Street £108
St Luke's Hospice £100
Race For Life Cancer charity £50
Breast Cancer Care £862
MacMillian £760
Basildon Baby Care £120

Thanks to everyone who comes to our events and quiz nights for being part of making this happen.

We don't need to keep building up the bank account BUT we have to be careful to keep money in the pot for running costs. Examples of running costs include -

- Currently over £1000 a year just on admin/paper/printer ink.
- Defibrillator batteries £260 each.
- New defib pads (need renewing every time a machine is used) £75 each.
- Act cancellation insurance (we are responsible to pay acts if the hall can't open for whatever reason and functions are cancelled).

We're also putting the profits to good use by investing in things like a projector and screen so we can run our own race nights. However, we do feel the association's finances are quite healthy now so we are looking to run more subsidised events/trips for members in 2024.

PS our full year accounts to 31 October 2023 are being finalised and will be available on our website soon. We'll also pop some paper copies in the club hall. Thanks to Sheila for all her work on finances over the last year.

Helping Hands ...

Lynda and her team of volunteers are available over Christmas to help those less able with small tasks such as collecting prescriptions, driving to GP appointments, trips to the barbers/hairdresser and picking up bits from Tesco. They can even just call in for a chat and cup of tea if requested.

Just call or text Lynda on 07951 660115 if you need help with anything.

How to keep in touch ...

FACEBOOK

We now have a whopping 130 people on our Facebook group (that's about 70% of homes). The page is updated almost daily so it's a really good way to keep up to date. If you're a member of the association (or family of someone who is), you can join us here:-

www.facebook.com/groups/royaleduntoncourt

WEBSITE

If you don't have Facebook, we have a website which is packed with news and information and gets updated regularly too. Take a look here:-

www.duntoncourtresidents.org.uk

NEWSLETTERS

Every few months we produce a members newsletter. This is a summary of things that have been on our website and Facebook page over the last few months and is aimed at those who prefer paper copies so they're not missing out. We deliver these to those who registered for them and we also leave spare copies on our table in the club hall.

EMAIL

If you want to get in touch with us you can email, the association here:-

rdprc2022@gmail.com

LETTERS

If you want to contact us but don't do 'digital', just pop us a letter or note in our black letter box on the clubhouse wall marked '**residents association**'.

Finally, we'd like to wish all residents a merry Christmas and a healthy and happy new year. We'd also like to thank you all for your emails/letters of support. There's a lot of work involved in a residents association, and we all give up our time for free, essentially, to make Dunton a better place to live for us all, so we all appreciate your continued support.

We'd also like to thank Toni and Sue in the office for all their help during these difficult times.

The committee