

Dunton Park Residents' Association

September 2025 Newsletter

Stay Connected with Our Website

Just a quick reminder to everyone: our website is the fastest and easiest way to stay up to date with everything happening in Dunton Park. It is not practical to deliver a paper newsletter every time there is news, but with the website, we can post updates within minutes.

It is packed with useful information, including upcoming events, club activities, planning updates, and even a fascinating page about the history of our site. We spend hours each week keeping it fresh and relevant.

If you have not already, visit www.duntonparkra.co.uk - you can even pop your email into the sign-up box on the homepage. That way, you will get the news in your email.

And if you are not online, do not worry. Feel free to ask a friend or family member to sign up and keep you informed.

What's On in the Club

Our club is the beating heart of Dunton Park. Without it, we would just be another housing estate. Thanks to our brilliant volunteers, it is buzzing with activity.

Here is what is coming up this month:

- Tuesday 9 September – Line Dancing Lessons
- Thursday 11 September – Art Class with Tony
- Saturday 13 September – Pub Night
- Tuesday 16 September – Line Dancing Lessons
- Saturday 20 September – Race Night
- Tuesday 23 September – Line Dancing Lessons
- Tuesday 30 September – Line Dancing Lessons
- Friday 3 October – Quiz Night

For full details and ticket prices, please check the notice board outside the club or visit the events page on our website. You can buy tickets from Sheila at 26 Orchard View, Lynda and Laurie at 3 Meadow View, or simply drop us a message and we will deliver them to you.

Planning Applications: What's Happening

If you have been following the news, you will know Lower Dunton Road is under serious pressure from developers. The government's relaxed planning rules have made it easier to build on Green Belt land, especially if it is not actively farmed. Basildon Council has suggested our area could take up to 1,800 new homes, and developers are circling.

Recent Applications

First came the battery farm application, roughly the size of four football pitches, just across the railway line. Despite being the closest housing development, neither residents nor the RA were consulted. When we raised this with the council, we were told the planning officer had met her legal duty by sticking a notice on a lamppost and placing an advert in the Yellow Advertiser. That application was approved four weeks ago.

Then came the 146-home development near Friern Manor. Even the council's own planning officer admitted it would cause serious harm to the Green Belt. Conservative and Reform councillors voted against it, but all Labour councillors voted in favour, and it passed.

Let us be honest: the odds are stacked against us. Even if Basildon Council rejects a proposal, it often goes to appeal, and the inspectorate nearly always approves it. We are facing a government determined to build, and a council that seems happy to play along.

What the RA Is Doing

We had a meeting with Richard Holden, our MP. We laid out everything: the scale of development, the lack of consultation, and the pressure on our community. Richard was fully supportive. He has pledged to raise the issue in Parliament and write to Basildon Council on our behalf. It is a start.

We also continue to have the backing of former Laindon councillors Jeff Henry and Kevin Wingfield. They do not sit on the planning committee anymore, but they are still fighting for us. Sadly, the three Labour councillors who replaced them have been silent on planning issues. Not a single word of support.

We have reached out to the local press, who are keen to run a story. A full statement from the RA is being prepared, but they would love to hear from residents too. If you are willing to speak to the press, please get in touch with us.

Where Do We Go from Here

Honestly, it is exhausting. The RA pours countless hours into this work, and the outcomes are often limited. But Richard Holden urged us not to give up. Every objection, every press article, every delay adds pressure. So we will keep going. We will fight every step of the way. We are up against a government that sees South Essex's green fields as prime real estate. But we are not backing down. We will keep you posted.

What's in the Pipeline for Future Development

As many of you will know, Regency has submitted plans to build 70 residential park homes on the old touring field. We met with their development team at head office to raise residents' concerns directly. While we do not expect Basildon Council to reject the application outright, we made sure Regency understood the key issues, giving them a chance to address and mitigate these before any work begins.

We have also held discussions with representatives from Vistry Homes, who have submitted an application to build 375 homes on the meadows directly adjacent to our site. Let us be honest: this development is unlikely to be stopped. But that does not mean we have stayed silent. We have made our voices heard and pushed for the build to be as respectful as possible to the residents of Dunton Park.

Among other things, we have requested:

- Proper screening hedges to protect privacy and reduce noise between their site and ours
- Construction traffic to be routed via Manderville Way, not Lower Dunton Road
- Consideration of mains gas access for Dunton Park, since their development will be connected and they're just next door!

We will continue to monitor both applications and keep you updated. As ever, our aim is to ensure your concerns are not just heard, but acted upon.

A New Way to Deal with Complaints on Site

We recently met with the new Head of Customer Service at Regency Living and raised several resident concerns. Their response was: "Why are residents going through the RA instead of coming directly to us?" We explained that many residents feel more confident coming to us, and they know we will not be brushed off. But Regency Living now wants the chance to handle complaints directly, which is fair enough.

New Complaint Process

1. Email Lisa.Kelleher@regency-living.com
(We recommend email so you have a written record.)
2. If you are not satisfied, escalate to the Area Manager: Sharon.Reach@regency-living.com
3. Still unresolved? Contact Head of Customer Services: customercare@regency-living.com (Sarah)
4. If needed, ask Sarah to escalate to the Operations Director: Chelsey Le Fevre
5. If you have followed all the steps and still hit a brick wall, RA members can contact us at duntonparkra@gmail.com
We will review the situation and either take it up on your behalf or advise if the company's resolution seems fair.

Let us give this new system a fair try. Regency Living says they are committed to improving customer service, and we encourage residents to use these direct channels first. Of course, the RA is still here to help with advice, complaint drafting, or understanding your rights.

Power Cuts: What's Going On

We have had a lot of questions about the frequent power cuts on site. So we wrote to UK Power Networks to ask what is causing them.

Their response? We are experiencing a number of high-voltage “auto reclose” events. Basically, the system shuts off and resets. The most common cause? Bird strikes.

They assured us it is not a capacity issue. We have plenty of power. It is just those pesky birds causing trouble.

How to Contact the RA

We are always happy to hear from residents. Whether you have a question, concern, suggestion, or just want to stay informed, here are the ways you can reach us:

- Website: www.duntonparkra.co.uk
- Email: duntonparkra@gmail.com
- Post box: Drop a letter into our black post box by the clubhouse entrance, marked ‘Residents Association’

We check all channels regularly and will do our best to respond promptly. Your voice matters.

MP Surgery at Dunton Park

The Rt Hon Richard Holden MP *Member of Parliament for Basildon & Billericay* will be coming to Dunton Park Clubhouse on Friday 12 September 3.30pm to 4.30pm

No appointment is needed – just drop in.

These surgeries are a chance for constituents to speak directly with our Member of Parliament to raise concerns, or ask questions. We're fortunate to have Richard visiting us on site.

Site Inspection

Positive news. The council carried out their annual site inspection last week. We sent a list of our concerns before their visit and they have since written back to say that all matters requiring attention under the site licence - including signage, road markings, surface quality, lighting, and visitor parking - have been brought to the landlord's attention and are currently being addressed.