



Chairman's letter

Dear Alto Members,

Please find enclosed the 2021 maintenance fee invoice in respect of your week(s) at Alto Club. Obviously with the continued uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak, this is not an ideal time to be writing to you with an invoice for next year's maintenance fees but unfortunately that is the situation we find ourselves in.

Before moving on to deal with the events of the past 8 months and a tentative look into the future, I thought I would cover one or two housekeeping points. Firstly, you will notice that we have not produced the

normal glossy, full colour newsletter this year. For reasons of economy (of both printing and postage costs), we have made the decision to produce an electronic newsletter which has been posted to the Resort News section of the Alto Club page on the Resort Solutions' website (www.resort-solutions.co.uk). In the newsletter you will find a number of informative articles relating to your ownership and I recommend that you take a look.

In a similar vein, due to the minutes of the Club's AGM having been issued only relatively recently and the previous email communications which have been

issued to members (dated April, June and August 2020), all of which are available on the Resort Solutions website, I do not intend to repeat the information contained therein. However, if there are any owners who may have missed either the previous communications, or the AGM minutes, I recommend that you visit the Resort Solutions website to familiarise yourself with them.

One of the most popular options which we introduced last year was the introduction of fee-free payment of maintenance fees by direct debit over 12 months. In its first year of operation, this has proved to be very popular as a means of spreading the cost of maintenance fees and I would encourage more members to consider switching to payment by this method, details of which are contained in the newsletter and in the paperwork accompanying this letter.

I would like to thank our long-standing members for your continued support of the Club and welcome our new members who have joined us during 2020. Despite COVID-19, Monica has continued to sell a mixture of both Club and member-owned weeks at the Resort and we are particularly pleased to welcome on board our new members.

The guest feedback and comments from the reduced numbers of members who have visited Alto this year continue to remain excellent. As a Committee it is pleasing to see how much the members value the help and support they receive from the onsite team of Monica, Erica and Jose, and from the team at Resort Solutions. The comments received regarding the efforts made by the onsite team to adapt the Resort and guest experience to the COVID-19 situation have been particularly appreciated by both the team and the Committee.

Although 2020 has been a very difficult year for many European destinations, the demand for renting extra weeks at Alto and for exchanges through RCI and DAE has remained at a higher than expected level. The Committee have always encouraged these activities because many of the people that come to Alto for the first time then go on to buy weeks and become members. The feedback from guests coming through RCI has again confirmed our status as a Gold Crown resort for 2020. This is excellent news for Alto Clubshare as it encourages more people to come and try Alto and helps boost our profile as a desirable location for rentals, timeshare ownership and exchanges.

The decision the Committee took to re-open the Resort on 4th July 2020 was vindicated by a far higher level of occupancy than we had originally envisaged. Occupancy for the third quarter of 2020 averaged circa 65% with occupancy in August, boosted by the temporary opening of the “travel corridor” with the UK, reaching as high as 85% to 90%. Even following the closure of the “travel corridor”, a number of British members have continued to travel to the Resort, accepting the requirement to quarantine on their return to the UK as a price worth paying to visit their “second home in the sun”. Whilst the Committee neither endorses nor criticises those who have made the decision to travel to Portugal at the current time, the feedback we have received from those who have visited has been almost 100% positive. Many members have commented on how safe they have felt within the Resort and the Algarve in general and we continue to receive a steady flow of enquiries about rental bookings for the first quarter of 2021. Alto is open to those who want and are able to travel.

During the summer, the onsite restaurant and pool bar re-opened under new

management. The building is still owned by FOAS but is now operated by a local, professional restaurateur. The feedback so far has been good and although operating under some strict COVID-19 guidelines, the service has been well supported.

When the COVID-19 outbreak started, the Committee looked to reduce costs and made a commitment to share those savings with members who had been unable to travel to their weeks, either because the Resort was closed or because of the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office (“FCO”) advice against all but essential travel to Portugal. This matter was covered in some detail in the email updates to members dated 22nd April 2020 and 22nd June 2020.

At the time of writing those updates, we had hoped that by now we could finalise these calculations and advise the affected members of the outcome. However, in order to do this, the Committee need to know with a high degree of certainty the following two numbers:

- The quantum of savings which have been achieved during 2020 as a result of the actions taken to reduce costs in the light of COVID-19, net of any additional costs we have faced in implementing our new COVID-19 secure protocols at the Resort; and
- The total number of weeks which have been affected by the Resort closure and the FCO advice against all but essential travel.

Following the lifting of the guidance against non-essential travel to Portugal on 20th August 2020, we were again hopeful that the calculations would be finalised before issuing the 2021 maintenance fees. However, the reimposition of the FCO advice in early September and, as I write, its continuation, means that this is simply not possible.

Accordingly, at our meeting in October, the Committee concluded that the only sensible approach was to defer the calculation of the savings to be shared with the members until both the cost savings and the number of weeks affected could be known with certainty. For all practical purposes this will not be until the Club’s accounts for 2020 are finalised in March 2021.

However, I must point out, as I did in my updates of April and June 2020, that we expect any credit to be only a very small fraction of the maintenance fees paid.

Moving to the future, we have a commitment via contracts signed prior to the COVID-19 outbreak to complete the programme of improvements to the bedrooms which started last year. This will be completed over the coming winter, along with some routine exterior painting work, which is carried out on a periodic basis.

It is important that your Club continues to remain in a strong financial position going forward to provide the facilities that our members expect. At our recent Committee meeting to set the 2021 budget, we were faced with an even greater number of uncertainties and variables than we normally do in undertaking the budget process. In addition to the issues of COVID-19, we also face significant volatility in the exchange rate between sterling and the euro. Fortunately, we have been able to hedge our Euro / Sterling exchange rate for next year which removes a big unknown from the budget for 2021.

In terms of the impact of COVID-19, we have budgeted as if our occupancy will be relatively unaffected next year as, in the absence of a crystal ball, the Committee had no other basis upon which to make a judgement. Accordingly, we have agreed to hold the maintenance fees at £460.00

for a one-bedroom apartment and £565.00 for a two-bedroom apartment.

As I write today, it looks unlikely that all of 2021 will escape some impact from COVID-19. All I can say in this respect is that the Committee will look to put in place what measures it can to mitigate the impact on members. However, it is too soon to say what form this might take.

Members themselves have options with respect to how they make use of their weeks and all are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the guidance previously issued by Resort Solutions via their website on exchanging your week with an exchange company, This advice is updated and repeated in the current Alto newsletter.

No one can pretend that I relish the task of writing to you requesting your 2021 maintenance fees in the current circumstances, but the situation we are in is both not of our choosing and beyond the Committee's influence to control. As I wrote back in April, one of the key things that differentiates Alto Clubshare from many timeshare operations is that it is collectively owned and operated by us all as members of Alto Club Associates. Our sole objective is to provide our members with their "second home in the sun" and our ability to do this is solely down to the support we receive from our members. Around 90% of our income derives

from the maintenance fees paid by the members; put simply without this income there would be no Alto Club Associates.

The Committee is 100% confident that Alto Clubshare, with the support of its members, will emerge from COVID-19 as a strong and successful Club and will retain its place as one of the most desirable resorts at which to holiday on the Algarve.

Finally, the Committee have provisionally set a date for the Alto Club AGM of Thursday 27th May 2021 starting at 12.00 noon. On the assumption that we are able to hold a physical meeting by then, the meeting will be held at the Three Swans Hotel in Market Harborough. If some government restrictions on public meetings remain in place, we may need to either restrict attendance or look at an alternative method of hosting the meeting. Members will receive the AGM notice pack, complete with resolutions, accounts and other details nearer the time.

Finally, may I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas. I hope that 2021 sees many more of us enjoying our time at Alto than were able to in 2020.

Yours faithfully
Stephen Smith,
Alto Club Associates Chairman

AGM News



The 2021 Annual General Meeting for Alto Club Associates will take place on Thursday 27th May 2021, starting at 12:00noon.

It will once again be held at the Three Swans Hotel in Market Harborough, Leicestershire.

Further information will be forwarded to all members closer to the date.

Site update

Dearest Friends,

We truly hope these words find you and yours safe and healthy. It has been a peculiar year! No-one was ready or even imagined the unprecedented events we have witnessed in 2020.

Life at Alto continues and be assured that your team endeavours to keep your second home as tidy and beautiful as ever.



After a great start early in the year, we were forced to close for three long months, our spirits were devastated and we were counting the days until we would re-open and start seeing guests once again. The Summer was very pleasant, with higher levels of occupancy than we expected, albeit below our normal occupancy. We have developed a series of safety protocols and I am pleased to report that all guests felt safe. At this point Alto hasn't had one single case of Covid-19, which we are immensely proud of.

Earlier in 2020, we completed the first phase of our bedroom refurbishment programme and we continued to improve



our Clubshare apartments throughout the year. We are now focused on 2021 and ready to start the last phase of bedroom refurbishment and the massive work of painting block A. We can only hope this virus clears as soon as possible so we may welcome you back.

Thank you for your support to Alto Club and the appreciation you have for your onsite team. We give you our best! Perseverance, attention to detail, respect, and our utmost care for you all. It is because of you our loyal members, that Alto is healthy enough to sustain through this crisis and carry on into the future without compromising quality service. We continue to hold the RCI Gold Crown and DAE Resort of Excellence prize.

It is extremely difficult to predict anything these days, but we hope and expect a great 2021 for Alto.

The Clubshare Team wishes you the MOST incredible Holiday Season, full of Joy, Love and Compassion.

***Mónica, Érica, José
& the Housekeeping team.***

Paying your Invoice

On the reverse side of your invoice you will find all of the options available to make your Maintenance Fee payment, including bank transfer, Direct Debit, with a credit or debit card online or by completing the remittance slip and sending in a cheque.

It is essential that you quote your Owner Number as a reference with every transaction made. You will find your Owner Number in the box at the top right-hand corner of your invoice.

Direct Debit

Don't forget you now have the option to pay your invoice by Direct Debit over 12 months. There is no administration fee if you elect to pay by this method, and you can pay your 2021 invoice over 6 months with the option for 2022 fees (and subsequent years) to be paid over 12 months. Simply return the completed Direct Debit Mandate enclosed with your invoice pack and indicate which direct debit option you wish to opt for.

Once the Direct Debit is in place, you will not need to worry about your Maintenance Fees again. Your completed Mandate will be carried over from one year to the next so there is no need to cancel and renew at the end of each year. You will be notified of your annual Maintenance Fee as usual in December.

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Don't forget you can also pay your fees at any time, 7 days a week on-line by visiting www.resort-solutions.co.uk

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We recommend that when using the online payment facility, Owners check their bank statement before they call RSL with any queries.



Your Direct Debit options for annual Maintenance Fees

Resort Solutions Ltd continues to work with your Committee to provide the easiest and most cost-effective methods of payments for Owners.

Don't forget you have the option to make 12 monthly Direct Debit payments for your annual maintenance fees.

This is available to all Owners with a UK bank account.

All new direct debit instructions, in respect of 2021 fees will be taken over 6 months (January to June 2021) in accordance with previous practice. The option to pay over 12 monthly payments will then come into effect from July 2021 with respect to 2022 maintenance fees.

The 12 monthly plan takes six payments in advance of the due date and then six payments post due date.

The due date for your payment of your 2022 maintenance fee will be 1st January 2022. The programme will start six months prior on 15th July 2021 and continue taking monthly payments on 15th August, 15th September, 15th October and so on ending 15th June 2022, which then completes the 12-month payment option.

The first five payments will be based on the 2021 maintenance fees and when the 2022 maintenance fees have been agreed by your Committee, the system will simply adjust the remaining payments to ensure full payment for 2022 fees are taken over the remaining 7 payments.

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IT'S THAT SIMPLE.
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If this sounds like the thing for you then please complete the Direct Debit Mandate enclosed within your invoice pack by ticking the appropriate direct debit box and returning in the envelope provided.

If you need any further information on these options please contact the Customer Services team at RSL on 01858 431160 or email admin@resort-solutions.co.uk.

It really could not be easier, and you can relax in the knowledge that payments for your annual maintenance fees are being taken in manageable amounts across the year.

*And remember
there is no charge
for Direct Debits!*



It is fair to say that 2020 has not been the year we had all planned and hoped for.



We have all found ourselves experiencing very challenging and difficult times with so much uncertainty which has impacted our personal and professional lives in so many different ways.

Like many other businesses and industries; timeshare clubs and resorts across the U.K and the rest of Europe have faced a very difficult year after being forced to close their doors to all owners' and guests due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the travel restrictions that were put in place by governments. All EUROC member clubs and resorts worked tirelessly throughout this closure period to keep their day to day club operations afloat but most importantly, their main efforts were dedicated towards implementing new policies and procedures to ensure that their staff, owners' and guests safety was their top priority in order to be prepared for the 'new normal' when their clubs' reopened.

Although many areas of the travel and tourism industry have suffered greatly because of the COVID-19 situation, the timeshare sector has proved just how robust it actually is and this has been mainly down to good strategic club and committee management but most of all, it is down to the continued support, loyalty and understanding of timeshare owners who have stood by their clubs' during the unfortunate and unforeseen circumstances they were faced with.

Recently, there has been a substantial increase in the amount of contact made by fraudulent operators who are targeting timeshare owners, by using the COVID-19 situation to their advantage, and offering them ways of exiting their timeshare or some kind of 'too good to be true' offer. Some owners have sadly parted with large

sums of money and have fallen victim to such scams.

EUROC works alongside the relevant parties involved in protecting timeshare owners from such activity. It is our advice to you that it is more important now than ever before that you stay alert to this type of activity and tread with caution at all times should you receive any form of unsolicited contact regarding your timeshare by phone or email. If you wish to discuss your timeshare ownership at any time, please contact Resort Solutions or your resort committee and do not engage with any 3rd party company to be on the safe side.

There is much still to be done, but EUROC continues to remain on course to fulfil its aim of being the organisation recognised as the independent and definitive timeshare owners' representative organisation in Europe. The organisation will continue to facilitate and encourage a platform whereby timeshare club and resort representatives can join forces and work together, find solutions to common issues and continuously explore ways to encourage and enhance owner engagement and their timeshare experiences.

Looking forward to 2021, the outlook for timeshare is hopefully a positive one given that 'self-catering holidays' and 'staycations' are the new holiday trend and will be in very high demand for some time to come. There has never been a better or more important time to continue with your timeshare ownership and offering your ongoing support to your club. But most important of all, is you as owners' securing your future holidays and getting back to spending quality time and making memories with your family and friends at the resorts you have grown to love over the years.

TIMESHARE SCAM WARNING TO ALL TIMESHARE OWNERS

Over recent months and in light of the COVID-19 situation, there has been a significant increase of fraudulent activity and unsolicited contact taking place. Timeshare owners are being targeted with nuisance calls and emails from rogues who are offering them ways to exit their timeshare or in some cases, offering some form of 'to good to be true reward' offer. Some owners have sadly fallen victim to such scams and have innocently parted with large sums of money and received nothing in return.

All timeshare owners are being advised to exercise extreme caution and due diligence if you receive any form of unsolicited contact from any company contacting you regarding your timeshare.

If you are contacted, please be very cautious if they:

- *Cold-called you and initiated contact by email, phone or text – this will likely be a case of data theft.*
- *State that your club/resort, an exchange company or a European listing of timeshare owners provided your telephone number and/or have asked them to reach out to you. This will not be the case.*
- *Promise you a large cash reward or invite you to a sales presentation that is not at your Home Owner Club*
- *Claim to already have a buyer for your timeshare.*
- *Tell you not to speak to your club or resort at all and to deal only with them.*
- *Promise to pay an unusually high price for your timeshare.*



- *Ask you to pay an upfront fee for legal, registration or administrative purposes in order to sell your timeshare. This is now illegal.*
- *Pressure you into signing up for a holiday club or discount travel club in return for your timeshare.*
- *Are a firm of solicitors asking for an upfront payment to help you obtain a refund of money you paid to a company which has failed to deliver the service it has promised.*

What to do if you are contacted, are thinking about engaging with the 3rd party or have parted with any money?

Primarily, always contact the team at Resort Solutions Ltd or your Committee (admin@resort-solutions.co.uk or 01858 431160)

In the first instance, it is strongly recommended that you always contact the team at Resort Solutions Ltd to discuss any concerns or questions you have relating to your timeshare before engaging with any 3rd party claims management company and/or solicitor offering you a way to exit your timeshare or offering you some form of reward.

It is advised that any timeshare owner receiving any form of unsolicited contact (such as a cold call, text message or e-mail) from a 3rd party company or solicitor should report this as soon as possible by completing the following online form: <https://timesharebusinesscheck.org/cold-calling-data-theft/>

If you choose not to travel to your ownership here is a list of options available to you:

1 Bank your weeks with an exchange organisation

If you are unsure whether you will travel or not, you have the option to bank your weeks with either RCI (if you are a member of that organisation) or Dial an Exchange. Various costs will or may be payable depending upon which organisation you use and the length of time in advance that you bank your weeks. However, in both cases, it will be possible to take your exchange weeks within two to three years of you banking your weeks (subject to the terms of the respective organisation).

Contact details for the respective exchange organisations are as follows:

RCI

Website: www.rci.com

Telephone: 0345 60 86 380



Dial an Exchange

Website: www.dialanexchange.com

Telephone: 01756 749966.



2 Request an internal exchange for later in the same maintenance fee year

Owners are able to request an internal exchange for occupancy into another week in the same maintenance fee year, subject to the request being made at least 8 weeks in advance of their occupancy date and to there being available inventory into which to exchange.

All internal exchanges are subject to a transaction fee of £70, which applies to each block of weeks you are moving. For example, if you own two weeks in June and you would like to take those weeks in December, the charge would be £70 for arranging the internal exchange. However, if you wanted to take one week in October and the other week in December, the charge would be £140, as that would represent two separate bookings.

If you would like to enquire about availability for an internal exchange, please contact Resort Solutions on admin@resort-solutions.co.uk

3 Place your weeks on the rental program

You can place your week(s) up for rent with Resort Solutions by requesting, completing and returning a rental agreement. We will do our best to rent it out for you. Contact RSL on admin@resort-solutions.co.uk

4 Gift it

You can allow your family or friends to use your weeks. Just let Resort Solutions know prior to travel.

Now more than ever it is essential to ensure you have adequate travel insurance. Individual insurers will have their own policies with respect to timeshare ownership.