PORLOCK PARISH COUNCIL
REPORT – PORTFOLIO

Date: 04 September 2026 **Author: Various**

(Ongoing unresolved items from previous reports have been left in)

High Bank Car Park (Sep 26)
Permits – One parking space has become available from September 2026. Another permit-holder is in arrears – see RFO Report.

Hawkcombe Stream (Sep 26)
We continue to receive concerns from residents regarding overhanging trees/overgrown vegetation and the lack of coordinated approach since the Environment Agency will no longer be maintaining the stream. We have written to the Somerset Rivers Authority for further information/advice or residents.

Road Signs & Highways – Stephen Colson (Sep 26)
All the outstanding Highways matters in the Parish of Porlock are as follows:

- The Somerset Area Highways Manager has agreed to level the bank which was made uneven following the work to install a retaining wall, at the junction between Meadowhayes Road the The Meadows. The work is expected to be done this Autumn, subject to Highways resources.

- The Property Management Agent for the owner of Burleys hairdressers in Porlock has agreed with Somerset Highways for the work to repair the shop front to occur in September or October this year.

- The work order for installing signage to improve pedestrian safety at Dunster Steep is due to be issued by Somerset Highways to their contractor. An update on timing has been requested.

- The order has been sealed to remove 5m of double yellow lines on Redway. An update on timing has been requested from Somerset Highways.

Burleys Scaffolding – High Street (Sep 26) – included in the Highways report

Meadowhayes (Sep 26) (included in the highways report)

Website & IT infrastructure (Sep 26)
Website Management – This project is on hold until Spring 2027 to allow alignment with the new accounts and cemetery system. A proposal is being developed for the build of the new improved website (Visual and Functionality) and how to make the move as seamless as possible for all. One of the key considerations is how to improve the process and functionality to store documents while maintaining security to council's system to provide improvements to accessibility and transparency.

Porlock Parish Council Logo (Mar 26) – Cllr. Adlington and the Clerk have an action to digitise the current logo.

Doverhay Toilets (Sep 26)
Following the annual asset assessment several items need addressing. A full report will be presented to Finance & HR Committee on 16th September for consideration.
A quote is being sought for a sensor light to be purchased and installed at the service entrance, following a request from the cleaner.

Doverhay Car Park (Sep 26)

Resident reported a low hanging limb of the tree by the Bus Stop, which is low enough to hit big vehicles parking in the Free Short Stay bays. Report submitted to Somerset Council.

Drains (Sep 26)
Somerset Highways are under considerable pressure following a difficult winter on the roads and as such they will not be undertaking routine drainage clearing and have to risk assess which immediate issues will be rectified and which cannot be attended to. The drain at Doverhay Car Park has been reported as blocked again.

St Dubricius Churchyard
Unsafe Memorials - (Sep 26)

- The method statement submitted in July for the individual memorial was once again rejected by the Diocese.
- Contact has now been made with Simon Morgan of the War Memorial Conservation Company (MS Group Ltd).
- Simon Morgan will assess all required churchyard works, including the memorials, walls and preaching cross, and prepare a proposal for submission to the Diocese. It was checked in advance that this assessment can be carried out while the scaffolding is being erected.
- MS Groups will also prepare a quotation for carrying out the works.
- As qualified conservators, the company will take a different approach from memorial masons, which may help move the matter forward.
- The main caveat is how much work can be undertaken while the church works are in progress.

Additional Works – (Sept 26)

MS Group Limited will be looking at some of the works outlined below but are unlikely to be able to address the footpath. These works and any respective quotes are scheduled to be heard at the next Environment and Amenities committee meeting. Work initially requested to be completed by autumn 2025 however this is subject to faculty requests being submitted approved by the diocese of bath and wells.

- Footpath at the rear which ENPA have advised the only option is to raise the path to avoid damage to the roots of the yew tree. Quote has been received this will be presented to Council once all quotes have been received.
- Masonry wall to the south. Cavities in between stones is showing a loss of mortar. This whole wall could undergo a consolidation.
- Coping to the west of the gate piers to the north path need consolidation.
- Church cross on the churchyard will require minor masonry maintenance every other year.

War Memorial (Sep 26)
Annual Maintenance contract has been renewed. The next clean is due in October in time for Remembrance services.

Porlock Marsh War Memorial (Sep 26)
Reports of unsafe stile. (See marsh report).

Porlock Cemetery
Improvement works – (Sep 26)
As identified on cemetery assessment report and agreed by council. Funding from external sources is being sought to enable the programme of works to be considered. An initial review fr the priority of works has been carried out by the chair of the Burials & Memorials committee and proposals will be discussed by the Environment & Amenities and Finance & HR committees as part of the annual budget process.

Quote requested for initial works, replacing of handrails etc – scope to be agreed

Unsafe Memorials – (Sept 26)
All memorials within kerbsets which were part of Phase 2 part 2a have now been completed. There are 5 memorials within kerbsets that form Phase 2 part 2b which are remaining to be fixed.

Cemetery Shed – (Sep 26)
Local contractor has been contacted to carry out repairs, quote was resolved by council at the May meeting. Date of works to be confirmed following issuing of the works order. Works are now urgent as the hinge on one of the doors has become detached. Works order has been acknowledged by contractor. No date for commencement of work has been provided. The cemetery shed has been completely cleared and cleaned out so it can be used for storage once the doors are replaced and a lock has been attached.

Plots - (Sep 26)

The process for remapping the cemetery plots has now been established. Once this has been carried out and we know how many plots we have available, plot markers will be ordered to be placed on each available plot. This should make things more efficient when directing the grave digger to a particular space.

Quotations have been requested for grave shoring with a lockable lid as this is a requirement for grave digging going forward.

War Grave – (Sep 26)

The re-dedication event took place on 13 August and was a great success. It was reported in a most positive light in the press and on the local news. Both the CWGC and the Volksbund have expressed thanks to the Council for making the event possible.

Grit Bin (Sep 26)
A new grit bin has been purchased for the tarmacked slope up into the Cemetery to enable easier access in the winter and make use of the grit currently in storage.

Memorial Inspections - St Dubricius Churchyard and Porlock Cemetery (Sep 26)
Signs were placed at the churchyard and the cemetery on 26th August 2026 notifying the parish of the upcoming inspections which are expected to be carried out from 28th September. Notices were also included on the PPC website, Facebook (Council and Porlock Pages) the West Somerset Free Press and the Porlock Vale Newsletter.

Hawkcombe Playground (No update)

Porlock Weir Car Park (Sep 26)
We continue to receive numerous complaints from users of the car park operated by Horizon Parking. We signpost to contact Horizon directly and have raised these concerns with Porlock Manor Estate.

Grounds Maintenance
Devolved Grounds Maintenance (Sep 26) – Somerset Council are unable to provide the original agreement from 2013 and have suggested a new agreement is drawn up. This is on the Agenda for a future Environment & Amenities Committee meeting.

Tree Survey (Sep 26) – Tree Survey carried out at the end of August, awaiting the full report.

Street Cleaning (Apr 26) – Somerset Council will review the contract as part of its normal process before the contract ends. E&A Committee deferred the item and will consider needs following service review.

Coach Road / Church View Path (Sep 26) – A dangerous tree was removed from the path by our contractor. A complaint has been received as the fence has come down due to the tree being removed. The contractor has assessed the fence and will provide a quote for replacement. The contractor will also be clearing pathway vegetation as part of contractual arrangements. The Environment & Amenities committee have discussed maintenance of the path and fence requirements, and this will go to full Council once a quote has been received. Quote has been chased as not yet received.

ZigZag Path (Sep 26)
Discussions to be held with Exmoor National Park Authority (July 2027) to renew the Permitted Path from the dog field up to the Horseshoe from September 2027.

Grass Removal (Sep 26)
Mowing the grass at OSC Orchard and part of the Churchyard after not mowing since the Spring has created over 30 builders 'dumpy' bags of cuttings that need to be disposed of, which is an unbudgeted cost.

Old School Centre
Old School Centre East & West Walls (Sep 26) – One contractor has assessed the walls and we are awaiting a quote. After chasing the original three contractors, others have been contacted to arrange an assessment.

Smart Meter (Sep 26) – Installation booked for 15th September. There will be a 40 minute power outage to the Old School Centre in the morning before the Library opens.

Emergency Lighting (Sep 26) – Quote resolved by Council and works order complete. Awaiting contractor availability.

Internal Wall damage (Sep 26) – No further damp has been identified after considerable rain. Caretaker will be asked to re-plaster.

OSC Orchard (Sep 26) – The gates continue to be locked at night and there have been no further incidents of damage. The caretaker will be making a repair to one of the picnic bench seats. When the weather permits, all of the benches in the OSC Orchard will be painted. The Community Orchard Group have kindly offered to volunteer their time in February to prune the tress in the OSC Orchard.

OSC Pond Project (Sep 26) – The E&A Committee will hear an update on the OSC Pond Project at the next meeting. Feedback has been received on the Pond Project from the Porlock Fair, the display in the Community Room, directly via email and from the comments on the West Somerset Free Press article on Facebook.

Kitchen Tiles (Sep 26) – 6 tiles in the kitchen have come off a wall that has blown. Tiles have been sourced and the caretaker has re-plastered the wall, awaiting the tiles being put up.

OSC Toilets (Sep 26) – Sink is staff toilet is slow to drain, caretaker to inspect. Quote requested for a hand dryer to be installed in each of the OSC toilets (Community Room, Staff and Public).

OSC Jubilee Garden (Sep 26) – Retractable hosepipe reel installed on the corner of the OSC building, making it quicker and easier to water the flower barrels and hanging baskets (once the hosepipe ban has been lifted).

Water Leak/OSC Pipework (Sep 26) – Water spotted running on the surface at the corner of the Council office building. Wessex Water attended and confirmed the leak was coming from underground but within our boundary and we were given a 14 day notice to repair the leak. Contractor repaired the leak but advised that all the pipework is old and rusting and therefore further issues and leaks are likely.

Water has already back-filled into the meter chamber. The contractor has been out again and believes this is now coming from the roadside, which would make it Wessex Water's responsibility. However, as it's not an active leak, Wessex Water will not take action until they are satisfied that our pipework is suitable. A quote has been requested for the pipework to be replaced. A claim has been submitted to the water provider to try to reclaim some of the cost of the leaked water.

Boiler (Sep 26) – Chimney swept in August. Boiler service booked for 9 September. Pellet Hopper clean will take place when next delivery is scheduled, if this cannot be done as it's during their busy season then we will wait until the end of the Winter. 10 bags of wood pellets purchased as a back-up for emergencies. Replacement Carbon Monoxide alarm to be purchased for the boiler shed.

Caretaker Shed (Sep 26) – Quote requested for electrical supply to be extended to the caretaker's shed so that batteries can be charged and a light can be fitted.

Village Hall
Flooding (No update) – Responsibility remains disputed and unresolved; a meeting has been requested with Porlock Manor Estate to try and find a way forward.

Abandoned Vehicle on bank (Sep 26) – Reported to Somerset Council but as it is taxed, they do not class it as abandoned. Reported to the Police for no MOT.

Tree Planting (Sep 26) - Due to location challenges, the Horticultural Society are no longer proceeding with the plan to plant a tree in the Village Hall Car Park for their 125th Anniversary.

Parish Defibrillators
Management (Sep 26) – Porlock Parish Council is now overseeing the management of the parish defibrillators and completing the monthly maintenance checks of each device.

Village Hall Phone Box (Sep 26) – Redecoration work has taken place, once funding has been secured a defibrillator will be purchased and installed.

Street Furniture, Displays & Equipment
Notice boards at OSC – Top of Steps (Sep 26) – There is an item on the agenda for the next Environment & Amenities Committee meeting.

Noticeboard at Central Garage (Sep 26) – There is an item on the agenda for the next Environment & Amenities Committee meeting. Attempts have been made to ascertain the owner of the land across the stream where the noticeboards are located – it is not listed on the Land Registry as being owned by either adjoining property and it does not belong to the Environment Agency so we have made enquiries with Somerset Council to see if it is owned by Highways.

Noticeboards Church Railings (Jul 26) – The caretaker has made the hardboards and they're in use for Council notices to be attached and put up on the railings.

Noticeboard outside Hardware store (Sep 26) – There is an item on the agenda for the next Environment & Amenities Committee meeting.

Noticeboards at Central and Doverhay Car Park (Sep 26) – The locking mechanisms are sticking on both of the Village noticeboards; replacements will be sought and installed.

Benches – General (Sep 26) – Asset Reviews for the benches have been completed and recommendations have been compiled into a report for consideration at the next Environment & Amenities Committee meeting.

River Monitors (Sep 26) **-** Porlock Parish Council has been approached to have flood river monitors fitted. An update has been requested from Somerset.

Water bottle refill units - Duncan McCanlis (Jun 26)
Porlock Manor Estate are engaging with us and are in the process of deciding where they want to install a unit. Emails were exchanged on 5th May but there has been no further response from Savills. Regarding the National Trust. They have a new Estates team who have not responded since May; a reminder has been sent.

Porlock Recreation Ground. Once the building work is finished in a month or two, we'll re-open discussions.

Doverhay Car Park. The Council will consider whether to open discussions with Somerset Council about installing a unit here. The E&A Committee will review the matter at its next meeting and make a recommendation to the Council.

Wootton Courtenay shop - no reply to email.

Floral Displays (Sep 26)
A car hit one of the wooden planters by St Dubricius First School which the caretaker has rebuilt.

Bins (Sep 26)
All council owned rubbish bins have been cleaned. Stoppers have been attached to stop the swinging flap making a noise late at night. Dog Waste Bins have had their hinges oiled

Methodist Church Finger Post (Sep 26)
Vegetation was encroaching on the Finger Post, which has now been cut back.

Elections (Sep 26)
There were no nominations received for the September election. Next election to be confirmed. Casual vacancy applications have been received and will be considered for co option at this months meeting.

Porlock Emergency Response Team (Sep 26)
An 0800 number has been purchased, which will be used for residents to call and receive a recorded message giving information regarding any active emergencies.

Old School Centre Community Hub
Community Library -
The monthly Community Coffee and Chat drop-in, which offers people an opportunity to contact several professional agencies all in one place continues. Due to other commitments some agencies are unable to attend ever month. Regular attendees are Thrive (Village Agent), EMpact West Somerset and West Somerset Food Cupboard and Pantry. Age UK will also be in regular attendance from this month.

The Summer Reading Challenge (SRC): 104 children signed up to take part and to date over 50% have completed the Challenge.

Porlock Country Fair was a success for the library, being able to enrol children in the SRC and register new library borrowers.

Lovelace Resources Community Centre - The LRCC continues to offer a valuable service to the community for printing, design, laminating etc. There is a steady customer base.

Community Room – usage of the room is gradually increasing. The NHS Health Checks continue fortnightly, the monthly Community Drop-In with multiple agencies in attendance make use of both the Community Room space and the library. Various organisations now hold meetings in the room.

Village Hall – Duncan McCanlis (Jul 26)
A resolution was passed to spend c. £1,200 on upgrading the stage lighting in the big hall.
Insurance arrangements have been reviewed and updated guidance will be issued to users, with particular emphasis on the need for some organisations to provide their own Public Liability Insurance.

Rosalinde Haw wishes to stand down as Treasurer. Diane Renton has been approached, and it was agreed that she should be appointed, subject to a successful handover in the coming months.

Dovery Manor Committee – Duncan McCanlis (Jul 26)
At a meeting of the trustees and myself on 1st June, DMC resolved to work with the Museum charity with the aim of dissolving both charities and creating a new CIO. A working group was set up of two trustees for each of the organisations.
Since then no updates have been received. Council will need to approve of any such change, when we are informed of the details.

Events and Festival Working Group – Sue McCanlis (Sep 26)
A request to reinstate the Christmas Lights & Tree working group is on this month's agenda.

Local Community Network – Duncan McCanlis (Jul 26)
At the LCN meeting on Thursday 11th June, the following topics were discussed:

Highways - Gave an update on the Winter maintenance programme.

Avon & Somerset Police - Provided their usual update on crime statistics.

Exmoor Young Voices - Their Chair, Robyn Gummer and a member, Megan, spoke of what they do and their plans. Their overall purpose is to support young people living and working on Exmoor, particularly on housing, employment and childcare, with the aim of ensuring people can continue living and working on Exmoor.

They are currently working on self-build projects; one completed, two in progress. They give advice on legalities and practical advice. They work with Housing Associations and the Exmoor Society.

Somerset Youth Alliance - Paul Matcham was due to speak but was not present.

Exmoor National Park - Sue Applegate gave an informative talk on Rights of Way. Public RoW generally go across private land. There are 221,700 kms of RoW in the UK. Permissions include:

- Footpaths - walking
- Bridleways - walking, cycling & riding
- Restricted Byways - as above, plus non-motorised carriages
- Byway - open to all traffic
- And c. 300kms of Permitted Paths, on private land, kept up by ENPA.

The historical basis for these is based on the 1949 map. This is now digitised and available online at Somerset Council.

They survey all paths every six years. Actions are followed up by their Access & Recreation Team. Based at Exford, where they make gates, fingerposts etc. their Field Services Team and volunteers go out and do the work. We can report matters at 'SomersetRoam' online. Their Rangers are intending to come to LCN meetings.

Next meeting: 10th September 2026 at 7pm.

103rd Land's End Trial

The organiser of the 103rd Land's End Trial has advised that the event, which has passed through Porlock since the 1920s, is proposed to take place on 26-27 March 2027 and will use a revised route through Porlock and West Porlock. Approximately 340 motorcycles and cars are expected to pass through the parish between 20:00 and 04:00 at around one-minute intervals, with most vehicles using the main trial route and a smaller number using the Worthy Toll Road. The organisers have confirmed that, as required, local residents will be notified in advance of the event and that strict measures will be in place to minimise disturbance, including low speeds, quiet running requirements, and dipped headlights. The organiser has offered to meet with councillors to discuss the proposals further.