PORLOCK PARISH COUNCIL

REPORT – PORTFOLIO

Date: 07 November 2025 **Author: Various**

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

High Bank Car Park
Permits – There is currently one space available.

High Bank to Pollards Court Footpath – Council approved works at last meeting, Alan Binding has indicated that works will be complete this month.

The Meadows
Red line markings have appeared in several places in the Meadows which is causing alarm that work is about to take place. No orders have been received council staff have made enquiries with the utility companies. Nothing is showing on the one network system. (No further update)

Meadowhayes – Council approved recommendations at last meeting, Alan Binding has been asked to remove the dead trees and make good the ground.

Woodcott Cottage Sewer
Environment Agency (EA) had advised that one of the owners' sons is in the process of investigating the source of the leak and having it remediated. As both properties are responsible for the treatment plant, he is in talks with the other property to have the situation resolved. EA are supporting him and advising when necessary.

Hawkcombe Stream (No further update)
Council agreed at the September meeting to hosting a Riparian Owners workshop with Somerset Rivers Authority.

Road Signs & Highways
Information received that the pavement opposite Dovery Manor Museum is damaged, this was confirmed and reported to Somerset Council.

Website & IT infrastructure (No further update)
Website Management – 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 f 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 (No further update)
Redesign – Pending final amendments. Following engagement with the Collage of Arms as to the origins of the logo as requested by Council they have advised as they can find no record of any registration of the logo that "Council may perhaps be well-advised to cease using its current logo, given the appearance of a heraldic device". Clarification has been sought form them if this is required or recommendation no response has been received.

Doverhay Toilets (No further update)
Toilet Reinstatement – A light fitting needs replacing in one of the cubicles which will be undertaken as part of regular maintenance.

St Dubricius Churchyard
Unsafe Memorials – Following our appeal the Diocese a statement of needs and statement significance is now required has been requested. A meeting of the faculty will take place on the 8th October.

Signage remains in place on the eleven memorials that have been deemed unsafe. Signs have also been placed on the three entrances to the churchyard to warn of the unsafe memorials.

Additional Works – (No further update)
Advice and quotes are being obtained and will be presented to Council for consideration once received. Quotes from stone masons to attend to the walls surrounding the churchyard have yet to be obtained. Work initially

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requested to be completed by autumn 2025 however this is subject to faculty requests being 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.
- Post finial has now been repaired and the bill settled
- 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
Maintenance visit took place in October. Memorial was found to be in good condition, although there was some surface dirt and biological growth. This has now been cleaned. The next maintenance visit is due to take place in Spring/early Summer 2026.







Hawkcombe Cemetery
Work progresses on the works as identified on cemetery assessment report and agreed by council. Funding from external sources is currently being sought to enable the programme of works to be considered.

Cemetery steps – Final deployment of safety signage has now been completed by the caretaker and Cllr. J Adlington.

Unsafe Memorials – Work to make safe the memorials has now been completed. See Item 7 – Report Hawkcombe Cemetery Memorials.

Cemetery Shed – After assessment by Cllr. J Adlington work will be carried at cost of materials. (No further update).

Plots – (No further update) Remapping of the cemetery will be carried out in relation to remaining available plots. The current mapping is now unrealistic as the space available suggests significantly fewer plots are available than are recorded. The new guideline for plot sizes has made this remapping a necessity.

Hawkcombe Playground (no update)

Grounds Maintenance
Grounds maintenance programme – amendments to the programme still require updating following the September meeting.

Tree Survey – Current quotes have been obtained £1150 + VAT and £1300 + VAT to survey six sites within Porlock. This will be added to the budget planning process 2026-27 for consideration. Many tree surgeons contacted do not carry out surveys. (No further update)

Old School Centre East Wall – East stone wall needs reviewing. A contractor will be requested to come and assess the wall. (No further update)

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Flower Displays/Barrels - The water bowsers have been identified as a safety risk if over filled. The caretaker has briefed the contractors on the filling limits and will devise a safety cut off system to prevent future over filling. (No further update)

Porlock Marsh War Memorial (No further update)

Old School Centre
OSC Shed – Caretaker and Cllr. J Adlington to assess the shed, as it is no longer weatherproof. (No further update)

Cleaning Store – installation complete, now in use.

Pellet Boiler – Following the repair, there were some further issues with the pump, which now seem to have been remedied.

Jubilee Garden – A date for works to commence is to be agreed estimate is November.

Outside Bookcases – These have been removed the Porlock Community Maintenance Team will take the majority of the waste wood for repurposing.

Drains – The drain behind the OSC building was blocked with debris, this has been cleared and the caretaker will monitor.

Business Risks
Martyn's Law – Formally known as the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, has now received Royal Assent. It is anticipated that there will be a 24-month implementation period. A report has been produced to help council understand the legislation at high level and council's responsibilities.

Business Risks Policy and Register – Risk policy and register to brought up to date and in line with requirements.

Risk Assessments – Library, Doverhay Toilets, Hawkcombe Cemetery & PPC Office Risk Assessments complete. Copies of the reports will be stored on the new council website in the meantime copies are available on request from the office. (No further update)

AGAR Assumption 10 – Training is being offered through Somerset Association of Local Councils the next course is being run on the 27th October.

Business continuity – Work needs to be undertaken to assess council's business continuity plans and Any recommendations will be put to council.

Emergency plan – Next meeting date to be set. Current working timeline to be reviewed with PERT: Q2 to gather and consider information, prepare and first draft documents, Q3 produce draft final proposal, circulate, seek feedback and any required approvals, Q4 Launch. (No further update)

Retention Policy – Training took in October to understand the role of Somerset Archives what materials (agendas, minutes, accounts) that Somerset Archives want from council and how this informs Council's retention policy, procedure to digitisation and future storage of historic files.

Alarm System – The alarm zoning activity has now been completed.

Fire Alarm – the fire alarm is now monitored.

Emergency Lighting - Waiting quote to carry out the recommendations of the report.

Fire Risk Assessment – Now all works have been carried out a reassessment will be arranged.

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Waste – No further extra weight charges accrued for October.

Water bottle refill units – Waiting assessment of other locations that cannot be accessed unaccompanied, such as toilet block in Horner Car Park where the service area is locked

Internal Wall damage – Damp damage has been identified in the Parish office in the far corner. Builder has been to assess, and it requires a membrane fitting and re-pointing externally - waiting quote (No further update)

COSHH – Cleaner supplies have been relocated from the cellar. Check list and COSHH signs to be put up and the COSHH folder will be kept at the required locations.

Somerset Rivers Authority Grant Fund – Monies have been received now the purchase of the items will be made.

Village Hall

Car Park Lease - The outcome of the review undertaken by the PME estate is still unknown. (No further update)

Flooding – Responsibility for the section of road in front of the Village Hall is being challenged, the clerk has made a request of C J Lynch to find out who previously requested the resurfacing works to be carry out in an attempt to resolve responsibility.

Replacement Trees - Trees will be purchased an installed in November.

Idverde

Street cleaner – Recruitment remains ongoing, a new advert has been put up in local shops, the PPC website and Facebook (No further update)

Street Furniture, Displays & Equipment

Notice boards at OSC – A site survey has been carried out by Active Signs, feedback on current proposals has been given to enable finalising a proposal to present to Council, costs have been budgeted as part of the OSC project works. (No further update)

Noticeboard at Central Garage – Council deferred the item until an alternative notice board system for the church railings where current users could use these new boards. In the meantime, Mike Johnson has offered to refresh the noticeboard until a decision is made and Covery Museum will take up use of the current vacant board.

Noticeboard outside hardware store - Like for like replacement to be sought. (No further update)

Benches – General – Trial bench has been refurbished, the proposed method of sanding and oiling took a excessive amount of the caretakers' hours and was deemed not cost effective. A review of method for other benches needs to be discussed with the caretaker and agreed with council. (No further update)

River Monitors - Porlock Parish Council has been approached to have flood river monitors fitted. Alistair Campbell has been put in touch with the team leading the work to get further information and arrange installation. (No update)

Finger Post at Villes Lane – The loose finger post has been reported to ENPA and they are looking to wall mount the post to prevent it coming loose again. (No update)

Finger Post by Methodist Church – New signs have been requested. Post is owned by PPC.

Elections

Future dates to be planned. Somerset Elections to advise when their next election will take place. (No update)

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Old School Centre Community Hub
Official Launch: was held on Thursday 16th October. 45 people enjoyed coffee and cake. They included representatives from outside agencies, the Library Service and Discovery class from St Dubricius, as well as members of the public.

Community Library:
Community Library Partnership (CLP): the Library Officer and Parish Clerk attended this annual event held in Taunton Library on 14th October. Two interesting talks – Somerset Community Foundation on grant applications and the head of library's IT on cyber security.
The CLP quarterly review also took place in October. Library Service reported that Porlock's Summer Reading Challenge had been very successful. 74 children signed up and 49 completed (66% which was above the library average).
Volunteers in the last quarter (Aug-Oct) contributed 530 hours to the running of the library and events.
Library visitors during this period have slightly increased compared to 2024/25 but the number of books borrowed has marginally decreased.
St Dubricius: During October, two classes from the school have visited the library. Library Officer visits Early Years weekly, reading a story then discussing likes and dislikes of the book.
Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme: the library currently has a young volunteer who is working towards their bronze award.

Lovelace Resources Community Centre:
The Centre is now fully functioning in its new space offering photocopying, laminating, word processing, poster design, booklet making and comb binding.

Community Room:
When not booked for other events, the library continues to make use of the room for Scrabble, Writing for Pleasure and Cribbage groups hopefully highlighting the space available.
The library also booked the room for a very successful author talk by Justin Newland (28 people in attendance).
The Community Room hosted the Apple Day event and has been used for meetings.
An OSC Community Health and Help drop in event takes place on 20th November, with multiple agencies participating.
Bookings for the Community Room are now being taken through the office.

Porlock Village Hall Management Committee (No update)

Late Night Shopping Working Group – Duncan McCanlis

Further actions have been taken, but essentially there's no significant changes from last month's report.
We will need a few volunteers on the night - any offers please let me know.

Events and Festival Working Group – Sue McCanlis

Apple Day was held on 25th October, the first time for six years.
The Community Orchard volunteers were cutting and pressing apples outside whilst many people enjoyed free mulled apple juice, tea, coffee and apple cake inside.
Sue put together a display of information about apples and orchards with material supplied by David Ramsey, Stephen Colson and Dennis Corner. This display will remain in the Community room until the talk about Conigar Orchard on 20th November.

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Light up Porlock
The Christmas trees have been ordered for delivery in early December. The Light up group have been busy making ribbon bows for the real trees. The wooden trees, which go above the shops, have been revamped and redecorated.
All should be ready by 10th December.

Next events
Porlock Wassail. 6th January 2026
Walk Exmoor - Porlock Pilgrims Trail walking weekend 28/29th March 2026

The Old School Centre Community Garden Working Group (No update)

Doverhay Manor Committee - Nothing to report

Dovery Manor Museum (No update)

Local Community Network – Report to follow the meeting on 6th November