PORLOCK PARISH COUNCIL
REPORT – PORTFOLIO

Date: 06 February 2026 **Author: Various**

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

High Bank Car Park (Feb 26)
Permits – There is currently one space available.

High Bank to Pollards Court Footpath (Jan 26) – Council approved works at October meeting, the grounds maintenance contractor has indicated that works will be completed by mid-February.

Power Interruptions (Feb 26)
Following an enquiry sent to National Grid an investigation into the frequency of power outages in the parish is underway.

The Meadows
Red line markings (Feb 26) The road is now closed for 12 days from 2nd February for remedial earthworks.

Meadowhayes (Jan 26) – Council approved recommendations at October meeting, the grounds maintenance has been asked to remove the dead trees and make good the ground, confirmed that this will be completed by mid-February.

Villes Lane (Feb 26) – Council has received two complaints about the amount litter and dog waste at the top of Villes lane and the requirement for a bin. In addition, it was suggested that could council provide litter picking equipment so volunteers could act. Representation will be made during public session.

Hawkcombe Stream (Feb 26)
Council have been asked to resolve if carrying out a leaflet drop to promote the workshops being held in March should be carried out by council staff Workshops will be held in the Community Room at the old school centre on the 4th March 3.30 to 5pm and 6pm to 7.30pm.

Road Signs & Highways
Road Closures (Feb 26) - A resident has been to the offices to raise concerns over the visibility and notice of road closures.

Blocked Drain (Feb 26) – A resident has attended the office to raise concerns over a blocked drain in the High Street, which could cause flooding with more rain expected. Reported to Somerset Council and advised the resident to do the same.

Website & IT infrastructure (No 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 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 (No 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 update)

St Dubricius Churchyard
Unsafe Memorials (Feb 26) – The Diocese have queried the method proposed and has requested alternative approach. A revision of the method statement was received from the memorial company.

Signage remains in place on the memorials that have been deemed unsafe. Safety signs have been replaced, and one unsafe memorial by the pathway has been made temporarily safe.

Additional Works – (No 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 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 (No update)

Hawkcombe Cemetery
Improvement works – (No further update)
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.

Unsafe Memorials – (Feb 26)
Following the review of quotes received a contractor has been appointed to commence the memorial repair works.

Cemetery Shed – (No update)
After assessment by Cllr. J Adlington a quote is being sought from a local contractor for repairs to be carried out.

Plots - (No 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.

War Grave – (No update)
Commonwealth War Graves Commission provide services to the German Government which includes maintaining their war graves in the UK and elsewhere. CWGC and the German War Graves Commission (Volksbund) have identified some German War Graves in the UK that are not being maintained and are not properly marked. The grave of Wilhelm Reuhl at Porlock is one of those identified as needing to be marked and then maintained.

Volksbund may wish to hold a small event to mark the installation of the new headstone. The installation of several temporary markers over the years is a significant gesture and this installation will make this memorial a more permanent and official headstone.

An exclusive right of memorial permit has been granted, and a standard pattern German war grave headstone will be installed by CWGC staff once it is ready.

Hawkcombe Playground (No update)

Grounds Maintenance
Grounds Maintenance Programme (Feb 26) – Amendments to the programme were reviewed by the Environment & Amenities Committee and are now up to date.

Devolved Grounds Maintenance (No update) – In touch with Somerset Council to try and ascertain the exact agreement what areas of grounds maintenance were devolved from West Somerset Council to PPC in 2013. Chased January 2026.

Tree Survey **(**Feb 26) - New quotations from three tree surgeons have now been obtained and RFIs requested. The quotations are £1150 + VAT (price held from last year), £1390 + VAT and £1335 + VAT. The E&A committee will review these quotes at their next meeting and make recommendation to council.

Flower Displays/Barrels (Feb 26) – a review of the flower displays is being undertaken by the E&A committee. One barrel has been reported as broken.

Street Cleaning (Feb 26) – Following an enquiry to Somerset Council the current service contract is an output-based contract, so the contractor sets its schedules to ensure that it meets a given standard. As far as Porlock is concerned, the contractor has stated that the main areas are litter picked daily and the bins are also checked on this frequency. This does not include weekends. Porlock is also mechanically swept every 8 weeks. The contract does not state how the contractor should provide the manual cleaning. Somerset Council will review the contract as part of its normal process before the contract ends.

Litter (Feb 26) – A resident enquired about borrowing litter pickers, but the Council do not own any. They were advised to make public representation at a Council meeting to raise purchasing some.

Porlock Marsh War Memorial (No update)
Information received that the stile and fence to get to the War Memorial are rotten and quite wobbly. Reported to Porlock Manor Estate for action.

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

Old School Centre West Wall (Feb 26) – A couple of stones have come loose in the wall. A contractor will be requested to come and assess the wall.

Jubilee Garden (Feb 26) – Works will commence week beginning 2nd March.

Smart Meter (Feb 26) – Installation appointment cancelled by provider, rebooked for 26th March.

Emergency Lighting (No Update)- Awaiting quote for consideration to carry out the recommendations of the report.

Internal Wall damage (No Update) – Damp damage has been identified in the Parish office in the far corner. Builders have attended again and we are now waiting to see if the problem reoccurs.

Outside Light (Feb 26) – Light appears to be working fine with no further action required.

Village Hall
Car Park Lease (Feb 26) – Council's legal team are conducting a review of the expired lease.

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

Replacement Trees (Feb 26)– Trees have been installed and ENPA have been advised.

Abandoned Vehicles (Feb 26) – The abandoned vehicle has now been removed. Another vehicle is un-taxed but is still in daily use, this has been reported to the DVLA and local Police have also been informed.

Parish Defibrillators (Feb 26)
Village Hall Phone Box - Electrician asked to provide a quote for the installation of power spur in preparation for a defibrillator in the old phone box by the Village Hall.

The Porlock Vale Defibrillator group met recently to discuss the current and future provision, management and maintenance of defibrillators in the Parish. It was agreed that there needs to be greater strategic focus of defibrillators to ensure ongoing and future provision of this critical emergency resource. The question was raised if council would discuss taking on the oversight, maintenance, provision and management of defibrillators across the parish.

Street Furniture, Displays & Equipment
Notice boards at OSC (Feb 26) – A review of current proposals is being carried out by the E&A committee.

Noticeboard at Central Garage (No update) – 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 Dovery Museum will take up use of the current vacant board.

Noticeboards Church Railings (Feb 26) – A prototype A3 board has been tested and is currently being reviewed and costed.

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

Benches – General (Feb 26) – A review of benches is to be carried out by the A&E committee.

River Monitors (No update) **-** Porlock Parish Council has been approached to have flood river monitors fitted.

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

Finger Post by Methodist Church (No update) – Active Signs have confirmed that they made the original sign and have the template, wording needs to be agreed that fits the current space.

Water bottle refill units (No update)– Awaiting assessment of other locations that cannot be accessed unaccompanied, such as toilet block in Horner Car Park where the service area is locked. Contact details required for keyholders of each service area.

Elections (Feb 26)
The Next notice of election will take place on the 20th February

Old School Centre Community Hub
Community Library - Quarterly Community Library Partnership meeting in January – the library in the 3rd quarter has seen a 7% increase in footfall compared to the same period for 2024-25. Most libraries have seen a decrease in this period. Porlock's increase can mainly be attributed

to the support at events. Book issues were however down by 24% but was not of any major concern as this follows the general trend.

Nic Saint – Library Service ICT – presented an interesting and sobering talk to ten volunteers regarding internet safety.

A new library service scheme is the creation of a "Costume Exchange Rail" for outgrown children's costumes. Costumes can be donated or just taken. Porlock is participating.

The library has taken delivery of three more blood pressure monitors from the library service. The NHS Health Checks – this is being well received by the community

One new volunteer, Michelle Vernon, has been added to our team and starts in February.

Wessex Water held a successful drop-in and is booked for two further sessions this year.
The new Community Health and Help Drop-Ins are beginning to see clients.

On March 4th Somerset Rivers Authority will be holding two workshops discussing riperian rights. Bookings being taken through the library.

As a participant in the national Warm Welcome Scheme, the library was invited to be part of a new "Storm Support" scheme being set up by Warm Welcome and the National Grid. This is being considered by Council at the February meeting.

Lovelace Resources Community Centre - The LRCC continues to offer a valuable service to the community for printing, design, laminating etc. The next Newsletter deadline is 17th February.

Community Room - An ideal space for meetings and talks with a limited number of attendees. The library has made use of this space – when not required by any other groups – 85 people have attended.

Porlock Village Hall Management Committee – Duncan McCanlis
(See minutes attached as separate document)

Late Night Shopping Working Group – Duncan McCanlis
Came in under budget and was largely a success. (Spending record attached as a sperate document). Main lesson learned is to hold the Santa Dash earlier.

Events and Festival Working Group – Sue McCanlis (Feb 26)

Walk Exmoor - Porlock Pilgrim Trail. 28/29th March 2026 - Working with the Porlock Pilgrim Trail team to organise the weekend. There are almost 40 entries so far, all from outside the area, who will be using accommodation, pubs and shops during their stay.

Festival of Nature 16 - 31st March 2026. - Exmoor National Park are organising a series of events throughout the fortnight. Cllr. S Mccanlis is talking to Nigel Hester (Exmoor Society) and Jeff Cox (Dovery Manor Museum) about holding a walk/presentation on Porlock Marsh to link with the Museum's exhibition which this year is about the Marsh - thirty years on from the breach. The idea is to protect and promote Porlock Marsh as a significant Site of Special Scientific Interest.

National Cycle Hill climb - 24/25th October 2026 - Cllrs. Heath and S McCanlis are working with Exmoor National Park to organise Dark Skies events suitable for families during the weekend. Venues will be the Recreation Ground and pavilion, the Old School Centre and Library. Minehead Cycle club will organise the cycling with a base at the Village Hall. This will bring a lot of people, cyclists and spectators, to Porlock therefore parking and accommodation must all be considered in good time.

2027 – Currently looking into organising another Coleridge event probably linked with the Coleridge Way.

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

Doverhay Manor Committee (No update)

Local Community Network (No update)