

Help a new
start up
Business

Maybe a space for toddlers
singing sessions, sensory
sessions, storytelling groups
would be good. It is a good
size for that sort of activity.

I would like to suggest that part of
the old school be used as a
second hand or swap book store.
I suspect this could be run by the
same team as run the library,
with a little careful consultation. I
also think it would encourage
more people to use the library
too.

Would a community run, pre- loved outlet be a possibility- I know that we have Tom's
Emporium
for furniture and more but currently the only way we can pass on good quality clothes that are
(in my case) too small is to take them to a charity shop in Minehead. If it were community run
any profit could then be used for community enhancing projects e.g. Christmas Lights. It would
need to have a strong committee so that the profits were used sensibly rather than frittered.
Not
sure if it would be classed as a business and therefore rateable, but might be able to be set up
as a community charity which would probably avoid rates. Just an idea.

My thoughts are that it would be good to utilise the space for use of community groups etc. but to also realise some of the value. Here is my suggestion:

- The space to be made available for commercial businesses to stage exhibitions, displays, workshops etc. The space would be rented/leased for the period required but limited to a maximum time period, e.g. One month or whatever.
- The space made available for more community-based organisations for exhibitions, workshops as above with similar time restrictions but less charges or even no charge dependent on the organisation. Examples might be the Museum needing extra space for a temporary exhibition or Stacked Wonky needing workshop space for time.

I'm leaving this pretty loose as I think this is something that could be worked on and tailored to whatever is needed. Obviously, some sort of advertising and a robust booking system with T&C's/ contracts but I think this might be a realistic compromise in the use of the space

Could have different coffee mornings for different things. One as you've suggested, maybe one for mums of toddlers, for carers, bereavement groups etc.

I think a "drop in" coffee morning for the over 60s. Start once a month as a community hub for them 10.00 to noon and go from there. Maybe the parish council could provide funds for the refreshments?

how about a sales room for local artist to display and sell their products

It would make a fantastic community space with a cultural focus. As part of the Porlock Vale Creative group I know that there are artists, writers, film-makers, performers and musicians in the village and immediate area who would jump at the chance to have somewhere they might use for exhibitions, workshops and pop-ups, including occasional short-term studio events which could include the prospect of selling work. There could also be a regular food market for local producers - perhaps using the support of the Open Food Network

There is nowhere else in Porlock at present to host these kinds of public-facing creative and cultural initiatives. This type of activity would be a draw for visitors and an economic stimulus for the wider community as well. It would complement, not compete, with existing shops and traders, who might well wish to participate in ways that supported and extended their existing businesses.

Extend library into entire area - retaining foyer but with internal wall removed to allow walk around as central counter area - library occupying one part, PPC info desk etc occupying the other - with enough room for PPC files or secure cabinets.

Folding doors between the two potential rooms in VC area - the furthestmost being available for meetings etc whilst library/PPC are open.

Or, the entire "new" space to be available for out of hours talks/meetings etc on a larger scale. Create an "academic" area in VC space for non-fiction books, book collections (mental health, reading well etc), public network computers, printing/photocopying facility (already available in library or Lovelace centre).

Community space with comfy seating for independent groups to meet up. Introduction of a "digital zone" to encourage younger users, homework club.....

Re-vamp existing library space, creating an area dedicated for younger children once non-fiction has been relocated. Making it more user friendly.

If PPC vacate Parish Room to join library then use that space for Lovelace Resource Centre, extension to the library / public network / hot desking.

From our perspective – and here I speak for young people in the Vale (Stacked Wonky works with 60 families in the Vale – far more than the Youth Club) and creatives (we host Porlock Vale Creative and are in regular contact with the Vale’s various artists) – we’d love to see it repurposed as a flexible, forward-thinking, stand-out space that might house workshops, exhibitions, meetings etc. Why?

- Looking at the recent census, under 18s make up over 10% of the Vale’s population. There is very little focused activity for these 122 youngsters once the school buses roll in: Youth Club (Monday) and Stacked Wonky (Thursday). That’s it, pretty much. Crucially, they don’t have access to a space to call their own in the village. Inevitably, either they stay at home, hang out in young drivers’ cars or loiter in public space. It would be amazing to find a space that could be used by our youngsters more regularly on their own terms.
- We feel the Down To Zero initiative was as successful as it was because it temporarily gave our youngsters somewhere of their own: the shop. Their esteem and sense of belonging flourished being able to put a stamp on a space in their village, if only for a short time.
- As for the Vale’s creatives, we often hear (at Porlock Vale Creative and via drop-ins) there is a lack of purposed space for temporary exhibitions, workshops requiring equipment/mess, talks, gatherings, action, storage of stuff etc. Whilst the Village Hall is lovely, and the Recreation Ground pavilion okay, these are shared by a host of users and can often feel impersonal/impractical.
- Lastly, we’d love to see a space dedicated to making visible and addressing the climate crisis: it would signal serious intent and thus raise the village’s profile. What this might look like could take different forms – I’m sure we could learn from other communities. Again, Down To Zero clearly demonstrated the need for a space where concerns about the climate crisis are foregrounded – so many people in the village had something to say.

It would be amazing to live in a village foregrounding the needs of the young, those who will inherit the climate crisis, whilst facilitating a space in which creativity, ingenuity, inter-generational mingling, collaboration and hope flourish. I’m sure it would bring to the fore unheard voices in our community.

I am part of a Porlock Art Group that has approximately 10 local residents (from either Porlock or the surrounding area). We meet most weeks at Stacked Wonky HQ on the high st where we pursue our own creative practices. This year we will be exhibiting as part of Somerset Arts Week in September at Bossington Chapel.

As local artists we would welcome the use of a space in Porlock that could be a space for future exhibitions. Some of the group would also like to run workshops and we would also like to host life drawing classes but as I'm sure you are aware this couldn't be done from Stacked Wonky for obvious reasons.

I think it would be a shame for the visitors centre to be rented for commercial use when there is such a need in the village for an affordable community space not just for the Arts but also for other groups and activities. We have a fantastic village hall but this wouldn't be suitable for the Art workshops or activities we would like to host.

One is for the council office to stay where it is and for the Lovelace Centre to move into the 'PIC space', the other is for the council office to move, and for the Lovelace Centre to share the parish room with other community users.

Either scenario gives more flexibility for use of the freed up space, and hopefully more opportunity for income generating use too. Just one specific variant of this would even allow some rented space too, as follows, with other variants fairly obvious from the foregoing and the example below.

The council office stays where it is and takes over the whole of the parish room. The Lovelace Centre moves to the part of the current 'PIC space' where the counter is, and this area doubles up as a community space when the Lovelace Centre isn't open. The other room is then rented out or used for other (income generating) community purposes. This seems to satisfy many needs in one go.

One idea was to have part of it as a free-to use meeting space. My thoughts on this:

There are a number of meeting spaces available in the village already. There are at least six formal venues, including three rooms at the Village Hall, the Rec's pavilion, the Methodist hall and Porlockford village hall. There are numerous informal venues, all the pubs and cafes where meetings are frequently held. All these cost money to use, in one way or another, and that money supports the business or organisation.

A free-to-use meeting space will directly compete with these businesses and organisations; many meetings will, no doubt, move to the free-to-use option.

Thus, without any more meetings occurring than before we have extra costs to the Parish Council cleaning and maintaining the room and less revenue to Porlock's businesses.

The Rec did try a free-to-use model for the pavilion some years ago, I don't know what became of that but I do know some other organisations were upset by what they saw as unfair competition.

I have, as you know, always advocated that the Old School Building should be known as The Lovelace Centre. I propose the space vacated by The Visitor Centre should be divided into two rooms by closing the existing opening between both rooms with separate entry points from the verandah. The room closest to the Library could be for a 'museum' and a display area devoted to Ada Lovelace. With the other room devoted to the History of Somerset Apple Growing and Cider Making.

It may be an opportunity for renting the space out to an entrepreneur who could set up a modern distillery specialising in the production of 'Porlock apples' etc.

I'm sure that David Salter who has some experience with this may well give advice.

The rental would help with the running of the complex.

The orchard at the rear could be planted out with more trees including the Porlock Pippin - a recently discovered tree.

The cider press is well preserved and in working order and apple pressing could be promoted, accordingly. This would link well with the new apple museum.

The Old School Building itself, in my opinion, requires a makeover. It's beginning to look tired.

The forecourt at the Visitor Centre could be turned into a green space with seating and planting incorporating the proposed Ada Lovelace water feature. This would create a quiet place to sit and contemplate.

Porlock is a tourist destination Village and we rely on tourism as one of the main drivers for our economy. From the impressive amount of work which has been done by you all, there is much to celebrate about Ada and create a legacy of her connections with Porlock.

I would like to suggest that the vacant rooms at the Old School Centre, when the Information Centre relocates to Vale Yard, could be used to create an Ada Lovelace Centre or Museum. This would create an additional reason for people to visit and stop in Porlock. We are not fortunate enough to have a Castle, Marina or be on the coast and we often seem to be a "passing" through Village. With the Vale Yard development, Doverly Manor Museum and potentially an Ada Lovelace Museum we could create a real reason for people to make Porlock a destination village and naturally increased footfall will benefit our High Street shops. The orchard grounds, to the rear could be also be used for a statue/water feature?