

Highways Working Group report

We are still waiting for a response from the Somerset Improvements team regarding a site visit to understand the implications and costs of some of the measures supported in the traffic consultation survey, including options for highlighting the 20mph restrictions along the High Street.

Other Highways matters

In order to smooth traffic flow on the High Street and along Sparkhayes Lane/Meadowhayes, we have proposed modification of some road signs to more effectively direct traffic to the Sparkhayes campsite. Designs have been submitted and Highways have agreed to provide signs based on these designs but, as this is for business use, a charge will be made. The owner of Sparkhayes campsite has confirmed he is very happy to cover the costs which have been estimated at around £300. This should keep some traffic off the High Street and improve the flow of traffic along Meadowhayes and Sparkhayes Lane.

Love Where You Live Porlock

Anti-dog fouling campaign materials have been ordered and posters will soon be displayed in the village. Social media and other publicity will also be used as a discussion forum and to raise awareness.

The Clerk has contacted Somerset Council to discuss the bin collection services they provide, currently through idverde, for the public litter and dog bins and a meeting is being arranged. From surveys carried out in 2021 by PPC and recently updated, it is clear that some of the bins listed are no longer in place, other need replacing or repositioning and some bins are filling up too quickly.

Feedback from the Love Where You Live Working Group display at the Annual Parish Meeting suggested that more individual responsibility for maintaining the aesthetics of the Parish would be very beneficial. This could include more volunteer help in clearing vegetation from paved areas in front of homes and shops.

Other Working Group reports**Wassail**

No update this month

Late night Shopping

No update this month

Festivals & Events

No update this month

Other matters**Floral Displays**

Further plantings of seasonal bedding and perennial plants have been undertaken with replacement organic compost and feed applied where necessary. The hanging baskets at St. Dubricius Church have been replanted and replaced on the hangers. A Councillor is currently watering these until volunteers at the Church can do this.

Biodiversity and Grassland Management

The Council is committed to increasing biodiversity and as part of this has implemented grassland management in line with Somerset Council's, and will additionally encourage a 'No Mow May'. The Love Where You Live Working Group are looking at ways to positively promote these initiatives to encourage residents/shops to help maintain areas in front of their properties. The use of non-chemical, in particular non-glyphosate weed management is being investigated. Glyphosate use has already been discontinued to Europe and other countries and is due to be phased out by December 2025.

Four Councillors volunteered to clear weeds manually in the Drang near the High Street and from the Church to the Recreation ground up Parsons Street to assess the time needed to do this and to assess how quickly the weeds

return. A Councillor offered to clear the vegetation in front of a resident's house up Parsons Street who had raised particular concerns. However, a number of other residents asked them to stop as they did not think it was appropriate. There is a differing opinion and aesthetic perception in the village about the need to clear grass and wildflowers unless they are causing structural damage it would appear. One concern Councillors have raised is that the soil building up where pavements meet walls and in kerbs along the roadside is not being cleared by a street cleaner regularly as it was in the past. It is unclear if Somerset Council have contracted a street cleaner and PPC is considering taking this responsibility on using the Devolution EMR fund set up this year if Somerset Council devolve and/or cancel some services they previously provided.

Cllrs D McCanlis and L Thornton met with Somerset Wildlife representatives to discuss improving biodiversity in the Old School Centre Community Garden, a space which it was agreed had great potential for developing to encourage more wildlife and more public involvement/use including 'citizen science'.

Footpaths

A meeting with significant landowners and authorities who have responsibility for footpaths is being arranged, Cllrs. L Thornton, D Heath and the PPC Clerk, Johnathan Jones, to attend on behalf of PPC. Recent concerns raised by PPC about maintenance of the paths including the need to cut vegetation back to keep paths usable have been responded to by ENPA who confirm paring work starts week beginning 10th June and commences with Porlock. A further request to prioritise those paths that had been identified as a priority, in light of Councillor and resident information provided, has been sent to the ENPA ranger responsible for the work.

Three footpaths on PPC owned land will continue to be maintained by our contractor, these being the lane from Parsons Street to the Rec between the allotments and Swiss Cottage, the path from the Rec between the school and Church View as far as the steps leading to the Magna bungalows and the zig-zag path from the dog walking field at the Rec to Doverhay (on the Horseshoe). The zig-zag path maintenance is undertaken in liaison with the Rec who own land on one side.

Parish Online and interactive mapping services

The Flood Group has requested that PPC subscribe to this service, as we believe has been done in the past, to enable them to put all the rivers, streams, drains, culverts and bridges in the parish onto their own layer. This would allow us to know where our risks are and where we need to monitor or, perhaps, get the EA to monitor for us. It would also highlight what is not known such as which culverts appear to go nowhere, where there are outflows of unknown origin and so on.

There are also other important/useful benefits for PPC as a subscriber so PPC intends to renew a previously lapsed subscription for this year costing £120, which will be paid for from the Flood Group EMR, and a continuing subscription will be discussed at a future budget setting meeting in the autumn.

Ongoing:

- Financial support for maintaining areas devolved from SWT and permission for volunteer maintenance of some areas
- Car park provision – a Somerset Council countywide review of parking is to take place in 24/25