

ASSET & PROPERTY REPORT 10th July 2024

Compiled by the J Jones; Clerk with contributions from Cllr. L Thornton

War Memorial WG report

Following advice that there was evidence of subsidence under the cobbled area to the left of the cross as viewed from the front, and cracking to the retaining wall on that side, the War Memorial Conservation Company returned on Saturday 29th June to investigate the extent of the problem and to rectify it as recommended, depending on their findings. Cllr. Duncan McCanlis met them as Cllr. Lesley Thornton (WG lead) was unavailable that weekend. The following work was undertaken on Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th June as reported by Cllr. McCanlis.

The cobbles were taken up and the space underneath filled with gravel and cement, compacted down and the cobbles replaced. The channel running from the main cracked area to the run-off gully ran uphill just before the gap in the wall. That has been dug out and the run corrected. When the cobbles were removed the retaining wall was found to be loose. It is now 'glued' to the wall, but it is recommended that the top stones are taken off and re-cemented to secure the wall against further ingress of water.

A full report will be obtained from the War Memorial Conservation Company who will also advise regarding ongoing maintenance, a service they can supply once or twice a year if necessary. With regards to keeping the cobbles clear of weeds, as otherwise the roots break up the cement around the cobbles letting the water in, either weedkiller or regular weeding is recommended. However, plants should not be pulled out if established as that pulls out the cement and create cracks. PPC's policy is not to use herbicides if at all possible, so we will investigate other methods.

Feedback from the WG has asked, that now the workmen have fully cleared the weeds/growth from War Memorial base area, whilst the no weedkiller reference is understood, maybe a single dose when weeds start to appear would kill off most growth & then a regular clean after that may work? If there was not a build-up of soil and if seedlings were brushed off regularly, that might go a long way to keeping the weeds at bay for longer.

Assets

The A boards paid for from SW&T's High Street Support Fund became the responsibility of TOP (Traders of Porlock) at the end of the project in March 2022 and are currently stored at the OSC by PPC. These assets are lent to other organisations on request, but unless they are no longer required by TOP, they should not be sold or given away.

Cemetery

The Grounds Maintenance contractor has confirmed that placing a memorial bench for Annie Kingdon by the hedge on the north boundary opposite her grave as requested by the family would not cause a maintenance problem. The family will provide details of the bench which is to be designed and made by Annie's uncle.

The memorial inspection expected in March 2024 has been delayed by the contractor. New notice period signs will be put up as soon as a new date is provided.

The caretaker has been up to put the black bin out and bring back in however an unknown resident is doing it. The caretaker will keep this on his three weekly work cycle.

Hawkcombe Playground

The memorial bench for Mrs Fraser has been supplied and installed, completed on the 8th July 24. A donation for the total cost of the purchase and installation works has been received from Mr Fraser. (Picture at the end of the report).

Old School Centre

Alarm - Clerk has resolved the ongoing confusion with the alarm company Coomber Security. The confusion was some of their information was out of date. This has now been corrected.

Library hot water system - A quote with two options has been received and this will be presented to the Finance & HR Committee for consideration before seeking full Council approval.

Fire Risk Assessment - Outstanding actions from 2023 are being carried out including turn lock signage, fire notices and zone plans. A full report on the outstanding actions and progress will be circulated to Cllrs. in due course.

Insurance – The reinstatement cost report has been received. This has been passed on to the Council's insurance company.

Signage - The library requires a sign on the outside of the library to increase the visibility. (Expenditure expected to be under £200) – Options under review

Maintenance – The hallway/porch ceiling light remains faulty, a new LED light has been purchase for £19.99 and will be fitted on the 12 July 24.

HSE - Work Station Assessments have been carried out for the two Council office staff. A separate report and recommendations will be presented to the Finance & HR Committee.

Doverhay Toilets

Replacement bowl and cistern to the small toilet has been completed and all is in working order.

The existing honesty boxes are back in operation. One remains sealed off until work to fix the cover plate can be undertaken. This will be done within the next month. Ther is no expenditure required for this repair.

Following a recent Asset Review & Risk Assessment by the Clerk and Caretaker a number of easy fix items have been identified as needing immediate action, racking for the storeroom, COSH notices, 24/7 lighting, missing roof tile, use and general housekeeping. A full report will be issue to the Council.

High Bank Car Park

J Chilcott has been contacted for a date to fix the two fence panels between the car park and the fire station. Work is expected to be carried out in the next 6-8 weeks. Expenditure approved. The clerk has been in touch with the fire service to make them aware of the pending work.

Library

Following an earlier site review quotes are being obtained for redecoration of the Library with a view to completing this work in November. Initial quotes received are in the region of £5k. The Clerk is obtaining three quotes for presentation to the Council. A recent quote survey has identified a potential issue with part of the ceiling which would appear to show that the plaster board has come away from the joists. G Bloys has been asked to come and do a formal inspection and advise. One of the missing window locks has been secured rather than replaced as this would require a bigger job than originally assumed. Two quotes have been received to clean the carpet tiles expenditure circa £140. This cost will go to Finance and HR Committee for approval. A date needs to be agreed when to carry out this work, potentially after the current tenant in the Visitor Centre has moved out to enable the Library to continue operating.

St. Dubricius Churchyard

A finial which has been accidentally broken off will be rewelded, expenditure approved. Awaiting date. A broken bench has been reported, to be marked with hazard tape and ownership established as repair required.

Asset Reviews & Risk Assessments

The Clerk and Caretaker are now doing Asset & Risk Assessments on Fridays, reviewing previous assessments, noting any outstanding and newly identified actions. All reports and recommended actions will be shared with Council.

Car Park at the Village Hall

An initial meeting has been held with Porlock Manor Estate agents Savills regarding the renewal of the lease that lapsed in 2020. Savills have a meeting with the PME family on the 12th July.

Ongoing:**OSC**

- The flagpole needs a bracket for refixing so it can be reinstalled – the PPC Caretaker will carry out this work. Cllr. L Thornton to contact a local craftsman regarding the repair of the bird table. A quote for replacement also being sought from J Chilcott
- Light bulbs on the ceiling in the library need replacing. This work will be carried out in November when other maintenance work will be carried out. Storage for a lightweight moveable tower/platform for future use by PPC is being investigated so that PPC could purchase. This is to be arranged using the equipment available from the village hall.
- Shed behind OSC will be available by 1st November 2024.
- A review of the positioning/purpose of the post by the gate to the picnic area/orchard garden has been undertaken as part of the OSC risk assessment. It needs to remain in place but should be repainted. This has been made more visible by wrapping hazard tape around it.
- Lockable cupboard lock in the office replacement will now be deferred until full security review is undertaken in the Autumn after the current tenant in the Visitor Centre has moved out.
- National Grid has been contacted regarding the electrical supplies to the building – deferred until the Autumn.
- Crosswells have been contacted and supplied with an order for electrical upgrade work – work potentially to be carried out in November when the current tenant leaves the OSC to minimise disruption during the peak season.

Doverhay Toilets

- Disabled toilet - toilet roll holder damaged. Two toilet roll holders in the Parish Office, Caretaker will see either of these can be used.

Seating

- Three bench seats in cemetery require rectification/replacement. Hazard tape has been used to highlight to the public. Carpenter contacted, awaiting quotes.
- 6 benches (1 on the High Street, 2 at the OSC and 3 at St Dubricius Churchyard) need sanding down and oiling or revarnishing. A full review of how this work can be undertaken given the complexities, facilities and time required to complete the task will be undertaken by the PPC Caretaker and the Clerk with a report being provided to Council for consideration.

Public and staff toilets

- Covered bins for sanitary items and similar needed. However, PPC would need a contract to dispose of the clinical waste. Quotes have been received from two contractors. To be considered at the next Finance & HR Committee

Damage caused by tree roots to path behind St. Dubricius Church

- ENPA have provided advice regarding the damage caused to the path behind the Church due to tree roots primarily from the oak in St. Dubricius First School. Suggestions including retarmacking some patches, filling cracks with liquid tarmac and/or using temporary coverings to make the footpath safer to walk on are all being considered.j