

Porlock Parish Council – Portfolio Report October 24

War memorial (Dunster Steep)

Mortar and Weeds – MS-Group will re-pointing affected areas with a stronger mortar strength to prevent weed growth at no charge to the Council.

Doverhay Toilets

Asset Review Actions – Housekeeping of the rear service area has been completed with the removal of several items. The loose tile has been fixed by G Bloys and the broken street light has been taken away by Somerset Council.

Toilet Cleaning – Due to a cross over of annual leave cover is being sought for 4 days cleaning of the public toilets December 5th – 8th.

Soap Dispenser – Wall mounted refillable soap dispensers have been installed to Doverhay Toilets as the hand size ones kept disappearing. This improvement helps reduce PPCs single use plastic as liquid soap is now purchased in 5 ltr containers

Emergency Call Alarms – Currently investigating options to reinstate the emergency call alarm in the accessibility toilets (Doverhay & Old School Centre)

Tree survey

Tree Survey 2024 - Quotes for a tree survey at Hawkcombe Cemetery, Zig Zag Path, St Dubricus and The Old School Centre are being sought. Although work was carried out on some trees at the cemetery in 2022 and planning has been submitted for St Dubricius Churchyard it is unknown if a full survey and report was completed, based historic emails it is assumed not. Tree surveys should be conducted every 5 years.

Hawkcombe Cemetery

Memorial inspection – There is an agenda item at the October meeting for discussion and consideration.

Porlock Marsh War Memorial

Bench – A bench specification has been provided to Savills for approval. Once received the bench will be purchased and delivered to PME for installation – Sourced from Threetop Simonsbath sawmills - £140 +VAT. Budget already approved.

Old School Centre (Building)

Window cleaning – Finance & HR Committee approve spend of £120 per year for annual cleaning of the solar panels (to maximise their efficacy) and guttering (to minimise vegetation growth and keep the rain water flowing).

Flagpole – Repair to the mid-section of the flagpole has not been possible, advice was that any repair could weaken the structure and therefore be a safety issue – a replacement section is being sought costs will be presented to Council.

Fire Prevention – The annual fire extinguisher inspection and service was carried out with no major issues

Library Cleaner Store – A 6 tier racking system was donated to the Library which has been installed. Now all cleaning material is safely stored in a lockable cupboard and no longer occupying essential storage space in the staff kitchen. This will be added to the asset register.

DSE Workstation Assessment update – The second office chair has now been purchased and assembled. The loaned office chair has now been returned to the owner.

Boiler – The wood pellet boiler was serviced and now awaits the big switch on.

Outside lights & Outside socket OSC fault – A fault has been reported with the lighting and outside socket not working at the OSC. Further investigations will be undertaken by a qualified electrician.

High Bank Car park

Fence Panels – These have been fixed



Car Park at the Village Hall

Entrance Gate & Post – A contractor has been asked for a quote

Street Furniture & displays

Notice boards at OSC – A quote has been requested to replace the notice boards at the old school centre

Noticeboard at Central Garage – These have been reported as in disrepair. The PPC Caretaker has undertaken an assessment and they can be refurbished. Ownership is not exactly known. A letter will be sent to the various clubs informing them of Council's intention to refurbish them. It is recommended that these are added to the asset register.

Noticeboard outside hardware store - This is also in need of refurbishment and this will be undertaken by the PPC Caretaker

The Parks Bridleway – The Finance & HR Committee approved a quote for paring work to be carried out. The annual work required will be added to the Maintenance Contract Schedule for consideration by Council.

Benches maintenance – A request to approve the purchase of a mechanical sander is on the October agenda.

Bleed Kits & Defib Village Hall Phone Box – A meeting was held with the lead of the Porlock Vale Defibrillator Scheme to discuss installation of bleed kits in existing defib units and the possible installation of a defibrillator in the old phone box at the Village Hall. An update and proposal will be put to Council in November. The Clerk will approach the Recreation Ground regarding the bleed kit addition to the Defib at the Recreation Ground as it is not on under the responsibility of the PVDS.

Engagement

Christmas Tree Festival 2024 – The Library and Parish Council Staff are entering trees into the festival this year. Shiny Silver and Ice White are their assigned colours.

Other Highways matters

Exmoor Coaster - As the Exmoor Coaster bus service draws to an end for this year, it can be reported that there has been a significant improvement in traffic congestion as a result of east and west bound buses no longer meeting each other in the High Street. This is the result of our request for improved timetabling. There were a couple of reports of buses meeting in the High Street in late August, but we have been advised this was due to buses running late, rather than the timetabling itself.

Somerset Transport Services have responded to our query as to why there is an Exmoor Coaster bus stop on the blind bend outside St Dubricius church. This will be taken up with First Bus in the near future.

Working Group updates

Traffic and Road Safety Working Group – Provided by Cllr. S Colson,

The latest working group update is covered in a separate report to council for the 11th September meeting.

Traffic and Road Safety Working Group - Following Council's approval of the Working Group's recommendations at the September meeting, the following actions have been completed:

Chapter 8 training – Training has been scheduled for the PPC Clerk and Cllr. S. Colson, for December 12th. Following completion of the training and no issues being identified, the mobile SID can then be purchased.

Road Improvements - The Area Highways Manager has been contacted regarding various road improvements in the village ('informal' pedestrian crossing, widening the virtual footpath at Dunster Steep and aligning dropped kerbs on the High Street to improve accessibility). Feedback is awaited.

New Road Signs - The Somerset Traffic Management Team have been contacted regarding the new road signs at the junction of Sparkhayes Lane and the High Street, and the junction of Meadowhayes Road and Dunster Steep (for improving the flow of campsite traffic away from Sparkhayes Lane). Designs for the signs are now under development.

Additional Free Parking - Assuming the proposed car parking working group is approved at October's Council meeting, Somerset Parking Services will be contacted about additional free 15 minutes parking spaces at the Doverhay and Central car parks. Following recent positive contact with Parking Services regarding free parking for this year's Late Night Shopping Event, it is hoped that a solution can readily be found.

Late Night Shopping Working Group – Provided by Duncan McCanlis

The traders continue to be holding this event well.

I attended the most recent meeting on 26th September. Many items of logistical detail were either sorted or allocated to people.

Regarding the spend, there is only c. £800 committed at present, though other entertainment options are being pursued.

Once these spends are finalised, a detailed report will be issued. My job is to ensure that appropriate actions are taken, e.g. Santa's Grotto reflects Porlock's Plastic Free status, and that the budget is not exceeded.

Car parking was a particular concern – but this is being addressed by Council this month.

I work with Sue to help ensure that the trees and lights placement and switching on are coordinated with LNS/PWW.

Lighting up day was agreed as Sunday 1st December.

No other Working Group updates received