

Porlock Vale Coastal Community Team

Economic Plan

November 2018

Consultation Document

Table of Contents

Introduction	
Vision	3
Mission	3
Key Findings/Recommendations	3
A Partnership approach	4
Porlock Vale CCT Steering Committee	5
Accountable Body	5
Point of Contact	5
Background	
Local Area	6
The Community	7
The Economy	11
Key Findings	
Data	14
Community Priorities	14
SWOT analysis	16
Key Finding 1	18
Key Finding 2	19
Key Finding 3	20
Action Plan	
Key objectives	21
Monitoring and evaluation	21
Detailed actions	22
Conclusions and next steps	43
Acknowledgements	44

Introduction

Porlock Vale covers the four parishes of Porlock, Wootton Courtenay, Luccombe, and Selworthy and Minehead Without in West Somerset. Following the successful application to the national government's Coastal Alliance Programme, the Porlock Vale Coastal Community Team was formed in 2017. It received a standard grant of £10,000. With a part of this the Porlock Vale Tourist website was developed and launched in 2019. Part of the balance has been used to commission this Porlock Vale Economic Plan which will be used as an addendum to the 2008 Porlock Parish Plan. Porlock Vale CCT joins two other funded CCT's in the district in Watchet and Minehead.

Porlock Vale is a vibrant and engaged community with significant activity for a small population. There is a range of interesting expertise which can be harnessed to better support the economic future of the Vale ensuring that it makes the most of the assets and opportunities.

Vision

A network of sustainable communities where their character and that of the Vale are protected and economic & environmental interests are balanced.

Mission

Through engagement with the wider community to judiciously develop its economic and natural assets with a view to developing a sustainable economic base whilst maintaining the character of the built environment and its surrounding agricultural lands, wildlife habitats and scenic vistas.

Key findings/recommendations

- A range of projects have been devised to be implemented over the short, medium and long term. Initial work should address quick wins of short-term projects (found at the beginning of the Action Plan), alongside work towards medium-term projects which require some preparatory activity such as research or development meetings.
- Tourism is the primary economy of Porlock Vale with many strengths but also considerable areas for improvement to make the most of the opportunities it provides. The existing tourism infrastructure should be

strengthened and supported alongside strategic development of a range of new projects. Maximising the benefit of tourism in the Vale will require joined up working bringing together more strongly individual organisations, local authorities and larger bodies such as National Trust and other landowners. Without this collaborative approach there will be a limit to the strategic changes able to be made.

- Porlock Vale has the oldest population in the country and whilst this brings a range of benefits in terms of the economy, skills and expertise, significant focus needs to be placed on creating opportunities for the next generation both in jobs and employment and housing. As above these changes will not be achieved without working in close partnership with a range of organisations.
- In addition to improvements in the tourism infrastructure, the Vale needs investment in the wider infrastructure of the area which has suffered through a combination of cuts and the increasingly challenging rural economy. Areas of particular focus include public transport, amenities and the network of shops and cafes in the Vale.

A Partnership approach

The CCT is partnered with key local organisations, including:

- Somerset County Council
- West Somerset District Council
- Porlock Parish Council
- Minehead and Selworthy Without Parish Council
- Luccombe Parish Council
- Wootton Courtney Parish Council
- Porlock Vale Tourist Association
- Exmoor National Park Authority
- Porlock Recreation Ground
- Porlock Futures CIC
- Bridgwater and Taunton Academy Trust
- Minehead Coastal Community Team
- Watchet Coastal Community Team
- SW Heritage Trust
- National Trust

- Exmoor Society
- Onion Collective CIC

Porlock Vale CCT Steering Committee

The Steering Committee of Porlock Vale CCT is made up of a number of individuals who have been working on the development phase of the CCT and the plan. As the plan moves to the delivery phase it is expected that the individuals and organisations which form the Steering Committee will be added to and change as different people and organizations become involved in projects, including appealing to the younger members of the community.

- Karen Mills: West Somerset District Council
- David Hancock: Porlock Parish Council
- Penny Webber: Selworthy and Minehead Without Parish Council & Hindon Organic Farm
- Clare Gladstone: Porlock Vale Tourist Association
- Roger Hall: Porlock Parish Council
- Anne Looney: Community representative
- Chris Wood: Community representative

Accountable Body

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Background

Local Area

Porlock Vale covers the four parishes of Porlock, Wootton Courtenay, Luccombe and Selworthy and Minehead Without. It is situated on the easterly edge of the Exmoor National Park, with the Bristol Channel to the north, and the small coastal town of Minehead immediately to its east, on which the Vale depends for many facilities and services. The nearest larger towns are Taunton, Bridgwater and Barnstaple, all around 30 miles from Porlock Vale.

The Vale contains a number of picturesque villages, such as Bossington, Luccombe, Wootton Courtenay, Selworthy and Allerford, as well as the main settlement of Porlock with the harbour at Porlock Weir. Each village of course has its own characteristics and particular focus particularly in relation to tourism. The plan intends to be cross-cutting across themes relating to the whole Vale with some specific references to projects or ideas in particular villages where appropriate.

The area is famous for its natural beauty and is home to the largest National Trust Estate in England – Holnicote. It is also home to the remains of Ashley Combe House, the summer retreat for Ada Lovelace and William King. Although the house was demolished in 1974, the remains of the elaborate garden can still be seen, and its tunnels form part of the South West Coast Path. Ashley Combe Lodge is now the toll house for the Worthy Toll Road.

Many walkers are attracted to the area via both the South West Coast Path, and the Coleridge Way, which follows the footsteps of the Romantic poet from Nether Stowey to Lynmouth. Exmoor National Park also puts a lot of effort into marketing the area to walkers.

Historically the A39 through the Vale was the main road to North Devon and beyond, before the construction of the North Devon link road, which has reduced through traffic to the area, with a knock on implication for local traders.

Porlock is particularly famous for its hill, the longest and steepest A-road in the UK, which has become a popular challenge with cyclists.

The Community

Porlock Vale has a strong and vibrant community with a wide range of community activities taking place. For the population size the amount of community generated activity is impressive and includes successful initiatives such as Porlock Bay Oysters, the only community run library service in the county, a proactive Visitor Centre and range of community run events such as the Duck Race and Carnival.

The 2011 census data puts the population of the Porlock and District Ward at 2,338. Of that figure, there is a weighting towards the elderly, with 12.9% aged 0-17, 48.9% aged between 18 and 64, and 38.2% aged 65+.

Porlock Vale is a popular destination for those relocating in retirement, and West Somerset is now home to a greater proportion of over 65s than anywhere else in the country. Porlock village has just begun the process of becoming a dementia friendly community, following in the footsteps of the larger communities of Watchet and Minehead.

West Somerset as a district has recently been awarded the unenviable accolade of having lowest social mobility in the entire country, for the second year running, despite all bar one school in the district receiving Good or Outstanding rating in recent Ofsted reports. The problem is largely economic, with median gross weekly pay less than in Somerset and England whilst house prices are relatively expensive. Its remote location, and distance to services and meaningful employment are a main driver. The devastating effect of this problem for young people in the area cannot be overstated.

The 2017 State of the Nation report on the Social Mobility Index resulted in the formation of 12 Opportunity Areas, each funded by the Department for Education with a share of £72m, with the express aim of increasing opportunities for young people. West Somerset, as the worst performing district, is one such area. This fund provides opportunities particularly to educational establishments but also via links to third sector groups and the business community to create a range of initiatives intended to improve the social mobility position. For Porlock some of these initiatives are particularly

pertinent as they relate to access to education and training in this remote and badly-served area of the district.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas (or neighbourhoods) in England. The Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area). It is common to describe how relatively deprived a small area is by saying whether it falls among the most deprived 10 per cent, 20 per cent or 30 per cent of small areas in England (although there is no definitive cut-off at which an area is described as 'deprived'). To help with this, deprivation 'deciles' are published alongside ranks. Deciles are calculated by ranking the 32,844 small areas in England from most deprived to least deprived and dividing them into 10 equal groups. These range from the most deprived 10 per cent of small areas nationally to the least deprived 10 per cent of small areas nationally.

In the national Index of Multiple Deprivation West Somerset is ranked as the 56th most deprived out of 326 local authorities, putting it in the bottom 20% nationally. It is the most deprived district in Somerset. (IMD 2015). The district suffers from some of the lowest wages in the country and also has the lowest SME productivity in England. The combination of this range of factors highlights the importance of positive initiatives to support jobs and employment particularly, creating projects which will support the strengthening of the local economy.

Porlock and District area specific data can be found via Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOA), of which there are 32,844 in England. Each LSOA is designed to be of a similar population size with an average of 1,500 residents each and are a standard way of dividing up the country. For the LSOA relating to Porlock and District, the latest Indices Of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) provide the following data:

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	13,594
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Decile (where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs)	5
Income Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	19788
Income Decile (where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs)	7
Employment Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	20477
Employment Decile (where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs)	7
Education, Skills and Training Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	11643
Education, Skills and Training Decile (where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs)	4
Health Deprivation and Disability Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	22,399
Health Deprivation and Disability Decile (where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs)	7
Crime Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	32114
Crime Decile (where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs)	10
Barriers to Housing and Services Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	4335
Barriers to Housing and Services Decile (where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs)	2
Living Environment Rank (where 1 is most deprived)	653
Living Environment Decile (where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs)	1

While the ward is fairly average in many areas of the IMD, there are some points that do stand out and are worth highlighting.

Firstly, it fares exceptionally well in terms of its low crime rate, being in the least deprived decile nationally.

The Ward is ranked in the fourth decile for Education, Skills and Training, highlighting the need for attention in this area. Porlock and District is performing under the national averages at higher qualification levels. Long travel times are often cited as the main reason why some pupils drop out of post-16 education, despite the fact that out-of-the-area college provision is rated as outstanding. There is also local information that indicates West Somerset

students are less likely to take part in post-16 learning than in Somerset as a whole. (West Somerset Opportunity Area Local Plan, 2017)

Porlock and District is, however, performing slightly better at the lower levels, and the area has 2.3% fewer people without any qualifications than the national average.

Census data relating to qualification levels:

Qualification	Porlock and District	England and Wales
Level 4 and above	29.1%	29.7%
Level 3	13.2%	14.5%
Level 2	20.8%	17.2%
Level 1	17.8%	15.2%
Apprenticeships and other qualifications	6.5%	8.6%
No qualifications	12.7%	15%

The most pressing concern raised by the Indices Of Multiple Deprivation, is in Barriers to Housing and Services, and the Living Environment, with both showing a clear and urgent need for attention. High house prices relative to income mean that many young people are simply priced out of the area. However, within the Vale, just over 1.5% of the population is on the housing register, compared to almost 4% at District level.. This is likely reflective of the combination of travel restrictions and lack of jobs which means that most younger people move out of the area for work and to live.

Barriers to services, including the distance to the local school, Post Office and supermarket, are compounded by transport poverty, which is recognised as a key issue in the area. According to 2011 Census data, around 13% of households in the ward have no car or van. The bus service is viewed locally as being expensive and infrequent, with no direct routes to any of the major settlements. Furthermore, the road connections are poor, slow and dangerous, there is no rail link, and no ferry service to South Wales.

As highlighted in the 2008 Parish Plan, transport poverty is a significant disincentive to both tourism and business, and it restricts the ability of local people to access employment opportunities in surrounding areas, where higher skill / wage opportunities exist.

As argued in the Plan, unless these fundamental constraints to the economy of the Vale are addressed, efforts at economic regeneration through skills improvement, increased facilities etc are likely to have only a minor impact.

The Economy

Of the 16 – 64-year olds living in the ward, 75.9% are economically active, with an almost ten per cent weighting in favour of male economic activity.

The main industries of employment within the ward are as follows:

1. Wholesale and retail trade, motor vehicle repair (over 17%)
2. Accommodation and food service activities (almost 16%)
3. Human health and social work activities (almost 10%)
4. Education (just over 8%)
5. Agriculture, forestry and fishing (almost 8%)

In the main, these are recognized as low pay, often seasonal, low productivity industries. Furthermore, the proportion of part time workers (36.8%) is high within the ward (Official labour market statistics, 2011). Median salaries of full and part time workers in the West Somerset District is reported to be very low, at just over £16,000 p/a (Social Mobility Index).

Business and employment was highlighted as a key area of community concern in the 2008 Parish Plan, and this is still the case, ten years later. The sparsity, geography and rurality of the area mean that it is lacking in opportunities for young people. The major opportunities for higher skill and wage employment involve travel to Taunton, Barnstaple or Bridgwater, including Hinkley Point, each entailing a circa 60-mile daily round trip. The Vale is also remote from national transport infrastructure, at around 30 miles from either a motorway or a national rail connection. Buses are expensive and infrequent, with no direct

routes to the main population centres. Consequently, young people feel they have no choice but to leave the District in order to seek meaningful employment.

It is evident from the split of main industries described above that there is an over-reliance on service industries and opportunities should be explored to reduce the proportions by increasing alternative sectors such as manufacturing.

A healthy community is a balanced community with opportunities for all. As the mean age of the population increases, it endangers a range of local facilities and services, such as the local primary school.

The 2008 Plan identified maintaining and enhancing the commercial core as essential to the overall health and vitality of the community; without it, the economic descent, with loss of local facilities and significant knock on effect to the elderly and immobile, will continue, making it difficult for this demographic to access the services they need.

The most significant related activity for West Somerset and which impacts on Porlock, is the new EDF power station at Hinkley C. The impact on the area will be significant and have both positive and negative ramifications. The development will have the impacts on Porlock:

- Traffic congestion and potential impacts on tourism
- Opportunities for employment choices and industry development responding to Hinkley C build needs and employment opportunities once the new station is operational.
- Negative impact of general road works and disruption to Porlock
- Porlock's socio-economic vulnerability
- The cumulative effect

In addition to directly mitigating the impact on Porlock particularly felt through travel disruption and the impact on tourists and locals, there is an opportunity and need to shore up the economy of the area to protect against the likely 'boom and bust' scenario following the capital build period. In Porlock the focus needs to be on strengthening the tourism economy and creating more opportunities for jobs and employment. There are also potential opportunities for

recreational facilities and activities particularly for Hinkley workers during the build process.

Key findings

The findings which this report is based on have been sourced from a range of evidence as well as detailed consultation with the local community and interviews with the business community.

Data

Data has been sourced from:

- Porlock Vale Parish Plan (2008)
- Economic Strategy (2012) (Responding to Change) of West Somerset Council
- The Economic Impact of Somerset's Tourism Economy 2014, West Somerset (2015) Somerset County Council
- Tourism Strategy and Action Plan Hinkley Tourism Partnership
- Blueprint West Somerset by Real Ideas Organisation commissioned by DWP
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- LGA Research: Porlock and District Ward
- Census data via Somerset Intelligence

Community priorities

The Porlock Vale Parish Plan has formed the basis of this Economic Plan, with the economic elements updated via a consultation process at the end of 2017 / start of 2018. A full consultation report can be viewed separately to this economic plan.

A mixed methodology was used to garner and extrapolate community priorities, including:

- A community wide questionnaire, delivered to 1,199 houses within the Vale. 187 responded to the questionnaire.
- A business survey, mainly conducted face-to-face, but with some back-up work carried out over the phone and via email. 27 businesses engaged in this process.
- Information gathering from separate parish council representatives.

- Community consultation workshop with 20 local community members present.
- Farming data was also collected via the Exmoor Hill Farming Network.

The questionnaire was structured as follows:

- Section 1 General information: household profile and feelings about the Vale
- Section 2 Employment and education
- Section 3 Tourism
- Section 4 Housing

During the business conversations, staffing, turnover and profit, customers and marketing, and hopes, fears and ideas for the future economic prosperity of the area were discussed.

At the consultation workshops, we firstly discussed the short, medium and long term hopes of the community, as well as potential barriers to delivery. At the second event, a draft report was presented, providing opportunity for further comment and prioritization.

SWOT analysis

Strengths

- The Exmoor setting
- The Exmoor National Park brand
- Iconic and rare wildlife experience
- A reputation for high quality produce
- A large number of active citizens and community run events
- A general acceptance from the community that some change is needed
- Strong partnership between Exmoor National Park and the farming community
- A pro-active and forward looking network of farmers
- Exmoor farmers' evidence base, generated from research and pilot projects
- Healthy soils and clean rivers

Weaknesses

- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of coordinated approach from shop keepers and cafes
- A seasonal tourist offering, with quiet shoulder months
- Lack of meaningful employment and in particular under employment
- Lack of vocational training opportunities
- Lack of regular, affordable public transport
- Patchy mobile phone and broadband connectivity
- Distance from all major markets
- Lack of diversity of economic activity

Opportunities

- Exploit government's initiatives to create affordable housing
- Develop existing tourist offerings into a multi-season experience
- Capitalize upon the preponderance of seniors as an asset
- Utilize existing resources to create a nurturing environment for the young, to encourage and support further education and entrepreneurial endeavor
- Build upon existing expertise to develop a community-minded business sector
- Expand the existing heritage industries for the good of the Vale

- Build upon the SW Rural Productivity Commission's belief that the SW has the potential to deliver as a major food destination and develop Porlock Vale's high value food offer
- Explore Brexit as an opportunity, as argued for in the Exmoor Ambition; to become a testbed for national policy, and to deliver key parts of the Government's 25-year environmental plan
- Articulate and communicate the benefits of the area's natural capital as a tourist draw
- Build on existing efforts to improve digital and mobile connectivity, with improvements in superfast broadband linking directly to employment and enterprise opportunities
- Explore employment opportunities, created by the Hinkley C development – both short-term and long-term jobs

Threats

- An increasingly aging population
- An inability to retain the young and economically active
- A change in perception of the area and resulting potential decrease in tourism, created by the Hinkley C development
- A decreasing bus service, cutting the area off even further
- Brexit and the risk to farmers, especially for hill livestock production, with reduced export markets and increased competition at home
- Price volatility
- Uncertainty in the future availability of agri-environmental funding
- Second home owners, and incomers outbidding locals for land and property
- Climate change and its myriad effects, from flooding to species decline, with extreme weather events affecting both tourism and agriculture
- Transportation issues represented by the poor quality of the A39 as the principal arterial access

Key finding 1: Porlock's tourism

Tourism is the primary economy of Porlock Vale and has many strengths but we have also identified a wide range of areas where tourism related activity could be significantly improved to ensure the future economic sustainability of the area as it relates to (and relies upon) tourism. The following areas have been identified through the research and consultation as requiring further development:

- T1 - Protect and enhance the area's unique natural capital (Natural capital)
- T2 - Improve and build on Porlock Vale as a food destination (Food)
- T3 - Maximise the impact of activity tourism in the area (Activity)
- T4 - Celebrate and commercialise the heritage of the Vale (Heritage)
- T5 - Conserve and enhance the Exmoor village charm (Charm)
- T6 - Communicate the town's offer, including cultural events (Marketing)

A range of projects have been developed which will address these areas and will serve to significantly strengthen the tourism economy of Porlock Vale.

- Porlock Events (T3, T6)
- Marketing Strategy (T6)
- Activity Development (T3)
- Walking (T1, T3, T4, T6)
- Regeneration of Porlock Marsh (T1, T3, T4)
- Visitor Centre (T3, T4, T5, T6)
- Heritage (T1, T3, T4, T5)
- Porlock Futures (T2, T4, T6)
- Exmoor's Ambition (T1)
- Development of Porlock Tourist Association (T3, T6)

Key Finding 2: Porlock's next generation

There was significant concern that opportunities for the next generation in Porlock do not exist sufficiently to encourage or even enable them to stay in the Vale and the longer term impact of this is a further diminishing economy. The focus needs to be particularly on creating more jobs and employment but also affordable housing stock which will allow younger people to find appropriate housing in an area where second home ownership is increasingly rife. The following areas of activity have been highlighted:

G1 - Support businesses collectively to create new job and apprenticeship opportunities (Enterprise)

G2 - Balance the needs of the elderly population with those of the young (Community)

G3 - Improve affordable housing availability (Housing)

Within the Action plan the following projects have been worked up to address these issues and support the next generation of the Vale:

Jobs and Employment (G1, G2)

New Initiatives for Business (G1)

Affordable Housing (G3)

Recreation Ground (G2)

Also duplicated from Tourism above

Porlock Futures (G1)

Exmoor's Ambition (G2)

Visitor Centre (G1)

Development of Porlock Vale Tourist Association (G1, G2)

Key Finding 3: Porlock's infrastructure

The third finding is around the need to improve and support the infrastructure of the area. A combination of local authority cuts which particularly affect transport but also amenities such as public toilets, and the increasingly challenging rural economy which means that shops in the Vale struggle to compete with the larger centre in Minehead, have resulted in the significant weakening of the infrastructure of the Vale. We can no longer rely on the local authorities or the market to support these vital infrastructure requirements and so must work in different ways to address the challenges identified below:

I1 - Improve public transport and parking facilities (Transport)

I2 - Sustain amenities, especially public toilets (Amenities)

I3 - Support a thriving, high-quality network of shops and cafes that open more frequently (Shops)

The following activities will support improvements in this area:

Transport Solutions (I1)

Shops Strategy (I3)

Signage and Infrastructure Improvements (I2 also T1, T3, T6)

Building and Infrastructure Improvements (I2, also T4)

Traffic Management in Porlock Village (I1)

Action Plan

Key objectives

- to enable young people to stay and prosper in the area, including through the provision of suitable, affordable housing;
- to explore prospects for local employment including tourism, construction, the heritage industries and digital engagement;
- to support local business, **encourage** and facilitate good ideas;
- to build a strong year round tourism economy with infrastructure support;
- to enhance the joined up and mutually supportive network of local traders throughout the Vale;
- to communicate and celebrate the successes of the area; and
- to work collaboratively.

We will know we have succeeded when we have a thriving, year-round tourism economy, supported by the natural assets of the area. We will have retained many of our young people by enabling their ongoing education, providing affordable housing, and supporting them in meaningful economic activity. Meanwhile the charm and character of Porlock Vale will be retained and enhanced, with its vibrant community spirit and sense of collective endeavour.

Monitoring and evaluation

Porlock Vale CCT will develop a monitoring and evaluation plan that will quantify and monetise the activities, outputs and outcomes (changes) that result from the project, as well as identifying risks and evidence gaps. The focus will be on two areas: 1) guiding the work of the plan to maximise the social impact of the project and 2) providing the feedback needed to give funders and stakeholders the assurance that their investment has been effective.

As projects progress a system of defining outcomes and measurement through a Logic Framework will be devised which will lead into a formal Impact Measurement Plan where appropriate. It will incorporate measuring social value, using HACT's Treasury-approved evaluation process of Well-being Valuation.

Detailed actions

1. Marketing Strategy (T6)
2. Affordable Housing (G3)
3. Transport Solutions (I1)
4. Walking (T1, T3, T4, T6)
5. Jobs and Employment (G1, G2)
6. Porlock Futures (T2, T4, T6)
7. Porlock Events (T3, T6)
8. Development of Porlock Vale Tourist Association (T3, T6)
9. Activity Development (T3)
10. Shops Strategy (I3)
11. New Initiatives for Business (G1)
12. Visitor Centre (T3, T4, T5, T6)
13. Heritage (T1, T3, T4, T5)
14. Regeneration of Porlock Marsh (T1, T3, T4)
15. Exmoor's Ambition (T1)
16. Recreation Ground (G2)
17. Signage and Infrastructure Improvements (I2, T1, T3, T6)
18. Building and Infrastructure Improvements (I2,T4)
19. Traffic Management in Porlock Village (I1)

Title	1 - Marketing Strategy	Timeframe	Immediate and ongoing
Status	Live	Dates	Summer 2018 onwards
Lead	Porlock Vale CCT	Themes	Marketing
Description and background			
<p>A new, interactive website is now live with social media links, which works for both locals and tourists. This needs to be backed up with a clear marketing strategy – both digital and traditional.</p> <p>Consideration needs to be given to what the clear marketing message is for Porlock Vale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently very mixed with limited co-ordination. • Need to consider how it interlinks with existing marketing of ENPA, Visit Exmoor etc. • Porlock Vale CCT needs to create a strong connection with these partners to identify key audiences and create a targeted marketing strategy. • There are some opportunities currently regarding ENPA promotional funding and a funding application has been submitted to Coastal Communities fund for a new Business and Tourism Development Officer to be appointed, to develop and review a digital marketing strategy, and procedures. • A short promotional film would create early traction on social media. <p>Other elements which should be considered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging younger more active visitors • A39 and off the beaten track location as a draw • Quantocks and Exmoor as combined destination • New leaflet • More promotion of attractions • Coach trip destination • More promotion of smaller villages in Porlock Vale • Activity driven marketing • Combined activity breaks and packages 			
Cost	£4k for website £30,000 for BTDO role £10-20k marketing output		
Funding Sources	CCT seed money for website CCF for BTDO role	Funding Status	Seed money secured CCF application in process
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
Create partnership with ENPA programme Better partnership working with ENPA & Visit Exmoor		Creation of a regular e-newsletter Create a short promotional film	

<p>Create clear marketing message, key audiences, activity development Create a social media and blog strategy, including identification of young people to act as digital mentors Encourage interaction with the website New Business and Tourism Development Officer to be appointed, to develop and review a digital marketing strategy, and procedures.</p>	<p>Monitor interaction and usage of website using Google Analytics</p>
<p>Partners</p>	<p>Porlock Vale Tourist Association Exmoor National Park Authority Visit Exmoor</p>
<p>Other</p>	

Title	2 - Affordable housing	Timeframe	Immediate and ongoing
Status	Advanced	Dates	2017-2022
Lead	Porlock Parish Council	Themes	Housing / jobs and enterprise
Description and background			
<p>There is a lack of decent, affordable / social housing in the Vale, with many young families priced out of the area, and the school struggling with low numbers as a result. 46.11% of respondents to our questionnaire said that more housing needs to be provided in the Vale. 29.44% weren't sure, and 24.44% said it wasn't an issue. A recent housing needs survey carried out by the Parish Council, which was distributed to 1,140 homes, received 234 responses. Of those 234, 21 stated that they were in need of affordable housing.</p> <p>Two sites have been identified for development, one of which is in an advanced state of negotiation.</p> <p>This housing development could also be used create local jobs for young people through construction apprenticeships.</p>			
Cost	£multi millions		
Funding Sources	Locality Power to Change CIM Somerset Community Foundation	Funding Status	Research
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
Negotiate concept with landowners Open discussion with Minehead and Bridgwater College re apprenticeships.		Agree plan with landowners Create Secure funding Let contracts	
Partners	Porlock Parish Council, Minehead & Selworthy Without Parish Council Luccombe Parish Council West Somerset District Council Somerset County Council Exmoor National Park Authority West Somerset Community Land Trust Exmoor Rural Housing Network		
Other			

Title	3 - Transport solutions	Timeframe	Immediate and ongoing
Status	Live	Dates	2018 onwards
Lead	P, S&MW, and L Parish councils, CCT	Themes	Transport
Description and background			
<p>Safeguarding the one remaining bus service is vital for the economic survival of the area. After the previous service provider withdrew, Porlock, Selworthy & Minehead Without and Luccombe Parish Councils have subsidized this service. This is subject to constant review. There are also other transport considerations which could support improvements in access for visitors and locals as well as maximizing opportunities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated walkers transport service for return trips or luggage transfer • Staff transport car share system • Heritage bus service • Development of coach trips to the Vale <p>Other transport areas reference during the consultation included parking issues in the village and potential traffic calming in the village</p>			
Cost	£10-£20k per annum		
Funding Sources	Parish council precept money, Hinkley Community Fund (community transport focus)	Funding Status	Secured this year, but subject to constant review.
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
Partners			
Other			

Title	4 - Walking	Timeframe	Immediate and ongoing
Status	Live	Dates	Ongoing
Lead	Porlock Visitor Centre	Themes	Activity, Heritage, Marketing, Natural Capital
Description and background			
<p>Walking has always been an important part of Porlock’s tourism economy and is growing. There is an opportunity to develop a range of walking related initiatives. This work is already being undertaken by Porlock Visitor Centre with many of the new volunteers keen to develop new walks and lead walks around the area. This project links to others in the action plan including marketing, events, signage, Marsh and heritage.</p> <p>Potential areas for development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage guided walks around Porlock village and the wider Vale area. • Walks activity packages (as described above) • Walk and food – perhaps ending at Porlock Wier for oysters and a pint • Children’s treasure trail walk around the village • Self-guided walks – with brochures and information boards • Health walks • More support for infrastructure including return transport and luggage transfer 			
Cost	Mainly for interpretation and promotion - £2-5k		
Funding Sources	CCF, WSC SLA, LEADER	Funding Status	Some applied for, others new applications
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Create comprehensive plan for walk development over next 2 years and establish priorities.</p> <p>Cost infrastructure requirements</p> <p>Roll out initial pilot walks</p> <p>Develop relationships with potential partners and businesses</p>		<p>Apply for funding for longer term projects including new interpretation and marketing activity relating to walks.</p> <p>Promote range of walks as part of the coherent marketing plan and linking to activity packages project</p>	
Partners		CCT, Museum, Porlock Futures, local businesses, National Trust, ENPA	

Title	5 - Jobs and employment	Timeframe	Immediate
Status	Live	Dates	July 2018 onwards
Lead	CCT	Themes	Enterprise
Description and background			
<p>There are limited jobs in Porlock, most people of working age travel out of the Vale to work. Lots of the existing businesses are small scale, family run or seasonal businesses. Issues were identified regarding recruitment of suitable staff, particularly for seasonal jobs. This is compounded by transport limitations. In the Social Mobility Index 2016 and 2017 West Somerset came last in the country for social mobility. This means deprived young people in the district have the least chance of anyone in the country of changing their future and situation. A number of potential schemes were suggested to increase jobs and employment or to change the perception and level of training for the existing jobs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills swap with older residents • Skills lab in empty shop • Training for people working in the hospitality industry • Employment and jobs fair • Opportunities for increasing the service industry ie gardeners • Tourism traineeships • Customer service training for accommodation providers • Integration between education and business to get more young people trained. • Through West Somerset Opportunity Area training opportunities for young people in the Vale who struggle to travel to Taunton or Bridgwater – providing virtual learning. 			
Cost	£10-50k		
Funding Sources	WSOA, WSC, Leader, LEP	Funding Status	WSOA applied for
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
Plans are in place, and work is in progress to provide a West Somerset Apprenticeships & Skills Advisory Service.		Exploration of tourism traineeships and potential funding.	
Partners		WSC, Parish Council, SCC, LEP, Exmoor Young Voices	
Other			

Title	6 - Porlock Futures	Timeframe	Ongoing
Status	Live	Dates	
Lead	Porlock Futures CIC	Themes	Food, Heritage, Marketing, Enterprise
Description and background			
<p>As a result of the previous Parish Plan which identified economic growth and jobs as two key areas of concern in 2013 Porlock Futures CIC was set up and sponsored by Porlock Parish Council and from there Porlock Bay Oysters was born. The community bought into this project backing it with community shares matched by funding from Power to Change.</p> <p>The company looks to grow and develop over the coming years and is an important part of the success of Porlock in relation to this Economic Plan. The oysters' story has resulted in significant national media coverage which has helped to boost the tourism economy.</p>			
Cost			
Funding Sources	Power to Change Community Loan	Funding Status	Live
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
Partners			

Title	7 - Porlock Events	Timeframe	Short and ongoing
Status	Live	Dates	Jan 2019
Lead	Porlock Vale Visitor Centre	Themes	Activity, Marketing
Description and background			
<p>Project to better co-ordinate and develop the range of events in and around Porlock. The village and surrounding area host many events through the year and often the same people or organisations are involved and yet there is limited central co-ordination.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to make more of the events by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centrally co-ordinating (perhaps through separately organized committee or even company) • Producing joined up marketing material • Using new venues (Orchard for cinema or music) • Working with partners (Channel Events – cycling event) • Creating new events (or reviving old ones – Literary Festival). 			
Cost	Limited additional cost - £1-5k annually		
Funding Sources	Parish Council, Awards for All, Arts Council, local sponsors	Funding Status	Pending
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Explore appetite for more joined up approach with various event organizers</p> <p>Set up initial joint meeting</p> <p>Agree parameters</p> <p>Explore potential for new events</p> <p>Apply for funding for core/new events with existing marketing allocations potentially as match.</p>		<p>Create new committee/company to co-ordinate events</p> <p>Combined marketing material and strategy (linking with marketing project)</p> <p>Explore use of new venues or reviving old events</p> <p>Develop partnerships</p>	
Partners Event organizers in the village ?			
Other			

Title	8 - Development of Porlock Vale Tourist Association	Timeframe	Short-term
Status	Live	Dates	June 2018 – June 2019
Lead	Porlock Vale Tourist Association	Themes	Activity, Marketing, Enterprise, Shops
Description and background			
<p>Porlock Vale Tourist Association successfully supports and represents the tourism economy in Porlock Vale however many of the shops and cafes in the town are not members of the tourist association. Actions need to be taken to include more shops, ensuring that the tourist association offer is right for them and that they understand the benefit of supporting and investing in this important organisation for the future of the area.</p>			
Cost	Limited		
Funding Sources		Funding Status	
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Understand what the barriers are to the traders becoming members. Create action plan to address these barriers. Create marketing campaign and changes to the offer to accommodate these potential new members Encourage a mutual support and cooperative approach</p>			
Partners		Traders and shop owners	

Title	9 - Activity Development	Timeframe	Short-term
Status	Proposed	Dates	Sept 2018-Feb 2019
Lead	Porlock Visitor Centre	Themes	Activity
Description and background			
<p>Development of increased activity packages centred around Porlock Vale combining accommodation, activities and food and drink in sell-able packages to be marketed according to audiences defined in Marketing Activity above.</p> <p>These might include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking • Horse-riding • Sea-based activities • Cycling • Oysters • Art and culture • Wildlife safaris • Special events. <p>Links with other elements of the action plan including walking and events.</p> <p>To be developed by Visitor Centre working alongside Tourist Association and Marketing Officer role if appointed and in conjunction with ENPA, VE, National Trust etc.</p>			
Cost	Mainly time resource possible small start up cost but mainly linked to promotional £1-2k		
Funding Sources	Sponsorship or start up funding from range of providers, or as part of WSC Visitor Centre SLA	Funding Status	Proposal
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Research the potential market</p> <p>Research likely providers in Porlock Vale</p> <p>Discussions with partners about co-ordinated approach.</p>		<p>Market activity breaks – pilot at Easter 2019 for full role out for main season 2019 growing in 2020.</p> <p>Press and PR opportunities.</p> <p>Review and assessment to hone and improve the offer.</p>	
Partners		ENPA, CCT, VE, Visit Somerset, National Trust, Individual businesses	

Title	10 - Shops Strategy	Timeframe	Short to Medium
Status	Proposed	Dates	2019
Lead	CCT, Tourism Association	Themes	Food, Enterprise, Shops
Description and background			
<p>A number of suggestions have been made regarding the shops in the town. A number of shops are on the market and there are a number of lifestyle businesses in Porlock Vale. Most of the suggestions regarding opportunities with shops relate to Porlock Village. Keeping a vibrant economy of shops and publically accessed businesses is important for locals and tourists in the area and some suggested initiatives could help to strength the offer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional material to encourage tourists to shop locally • Use of empty shops for pop up shops to enable new businesses/local makers to develop their businesses (see New Initiatives for Business also). • Skills lab in an empty shop to encourage people to share their skills and knowledge • Encourage events to source and promote local food • Development of tourist association to include more traders • Encourage shops to be open later particularly in summer months 			
Cost	£5-20k		
Funding Sources	WSC SLA, Leader	Funding Status	Concept
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Assess what shops are empty or likely to become empty which could be used for pop up shops or skills lab. Invite expressions of interest for Pop up shops Survey skills and interest in skills lab Link to marketing to promote shops and encourage shopping in Porlock</p>		<p>Comprehensive retail strategy to support and encourage existing and new shops in the village and Vale.</p>	
Partners		Tourist Association, Parish Councils, shop owners	
Other			

Title	11 - New initiatives for business	Timeframe	Short to medium
Status	Concept	Dates	2019 onwards
Lead	CCT	Themes	Jobs and enterprise
Description and background			
<p>The consultation highlighted a number of areas and suggestions for new businesses building on the success of Porlock Futures. Supporting new business startups as well as business development is important for the economic future of the Vale.</p> <p>Suggestions included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A microbrewery or cider producer • A champagne and oyster pop up bar • Oyster restaurant • Co-ordinated activity breaks. <p>High speed broadband was also highlighted as a challenge to new businesses startups as well as established businesses.</p>			
Cost	£10-20k		
Funding sources	Community investment Esmee Fairbairn District Council Somerset Community Foundation	Funding Status	
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Develop coherent plan to support new businesses startups. Expression of interest process for potential sites Development from Pop Up shops project Explore opportunities for collective, community investment in high speed broadband in black spot areas.</p>		<p>Explore possibilities for creation of affordable workspace within an enterprise hub, with shared service provision and community mentors</p>	
Partners		<p>Economic Development Team West Somerset District Council – economic development team</p>	
Other			

Title	12 - Visitor Centre	Timeframe	Short to Medium
Status	Live	Dates	Oct 18 – Dec 19
Lead	Visitor Centre/Tourist Association/Porlock Parish Council	Themes	Activity, Heritage, Marketing, Enterprise, Amenities
Description and background			
<p>The Visitor Centre is co-located with the library in the old school. The building is owned by Porlock Parish Council. The Centre is run by the Porlock Tourist Association with a manager and 12-15 new and enthusiastic volunteers. The team want to make improvements to the centre including revisiting the retail offer, refurbishing the building and introducing new interactive technology such as virtual walks and interactive displays. There is an opportunity with a new team to harness lots of energy, enthusiasm and ideas and move the business model of the Centre away from accommodation bookings (which are declining) towards new schemes such as guided walks and the provision of coordinated activity breaks sold through the centre.</p>			
Cost	£10-100k		
Funding Sources	Parish Council, WSC SLA, Leader	Funding Status	Proposed
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Agree action plan for the centre Develop plan for activities and opportunities with volunteers. Consider refurbishment requirements and meet to discuss options with Parish Council. Research digital and interactive technologies to enhance the visitor offer including likely cost Explore funding options</p>		<p>Create business plan for development of the centre. Apply for funding</p>	
Partners	CCT		
Other			

Title	13 - Heritage	Timeframe	Short to medium
Status	Concept	Dates	2019
Lead	Museum, CCT	Themes	Heritage, Activity, Natural capital,
Description and background			
<p>This topic cross cuts with many others but could provide a focus for activities and marketing as it appeals to a large proportion of the visitors to the area. Suggestions relating to heritage range from development of heritage and craft businesses such as Exmoor Tweed and vineyards to activity ideas with Heritage walks and making connections with visitors who come to the area to explore their ancestry.</p>			
Cost			
Funding Sources	LEADER, Heritage Lottery Fund	Funding Status	Concept
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Discussion with Museum regarding options and interest. Link with other potential projects and partners. Create vision document to outline proposals</p>		<p>Research potential funding and partner opportunities. Submit funding applications</p>	
Partners		Visitor Centre, WSC, ENPA	
Other			

Title	14 - Regeneration of Porlock Marsh	Timeframe	Medium
Status	Revisited	Dates	June 2018 – June 2020
Lead	Chris Wood	Themes	Conservation / natural capital / tourism
Description and background			
<p>A vision to regenerate Porlock Marsh as an area of conservation tourism was created by ENPA, but the project ran out of money and was unable to be completed. The proposal is to revisit the project and see it to fruition.</p> <p>Project could include elements such as better access, parking, interpretation and visitor centre, Hides, pathways and more promotional material</p>			
Cost	£65k		
Funding Sources	CCF	Funding Status	First round CCF submitted
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Investigate the current situation with the marsh, and whether there is potential to reopen this conservation / tourism project</p> <p>Apply for funding via CCF or ESIF</p>		<p>Community consultation to further engage community in the proposals</p> <p>Master plan approach and range of activities</p>	
Partners		Exmoor National Park Authority	
Other			

Title	15 - Exmoor's Ambition	Timeframe	Medium
Status	Proposed	Dates	
Lead	Exmoor Hill Farming Network and Exmoor National Park Authority	Themes	Natural capital, environment, farming
Description and background			
<p>To develop a new, locally-led approach to farm and environmental support. This is a costed, post-Brexit proposal to:</p> <p>Secure and enhance the many benefits that Exmoor's farmed countryside gives to communities and the nation</p> <p>Deliver key parts of the Government's 25 year environmental plan</p> <p>Demonstrate to others the value of approaches piloted on Exmoor</p>			
Cost			
Funding Sources		Funding Status	
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
Partners		Exmoor National Park Authority Exmoor Young Voices	

Title	16 - Recreation Ground	Timeframe	Medium
Status	Live	Dates	
Lead	Recreation Ground Committee	Themes	Community, Amenities
Description and background			
<p>Porlock Recreation Ground was left a large legacy and are considering the options to spend this on improvements to the Recreation Ground. Suggestions range in size and aspiration from repairs to the pavilion to a swimming pool. Additional match funding may be required depending on the scheme and there is an opportunity to link any project directly to the economy of the area with potential projects encouraging more visitors and providing an attraction.</p>			
Cost	£700k - £1.5m		
Funding Sources	Legacy, LEADER, Sport England	Funding Status	Legacy secured
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
Discuss options for supporting economic activity with Recreation Ground Committee			
Partners		Parish Council, CCT, Sports Clubs, Community	
Other		This may not be a direct economic project but there is scope to link and the CCT should try to inform and stay up to date with developments	

Title	17 - Signage Improvements	Timeframe	Medium
Status	Proposed	Dates	Sept 2018 – June 2019
Lead	CCT	Themes	Natural capital, Activity, Marketing, Amenities
Description and background			
<p>Signage for tourists is not consistent and can be confusing. Signage in the Vale could be significantly improved to help visitors make the most of their visit and have a better experience. Areas which have been identified for improvement include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps around the village with local tourist points of interest • Directional signage around the village to ensure visitors know about all the things to see • Better signage from A39 and M5 • Porlock Weir signage improvements to Coastal Path • Disability friendly signage • More information & interpretation boards for example highlight the wildlife that can be found 			
Cost	£10-50k		
Funding Sources	LEADER, Somerset County Council, National Trust, ENPA	Funding Status	Concept
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Undertake signage review considering accessibility, directional, brown signs, information and interpretation</p> <p>Work with partners to share review and explore where they could use existing resources to improve signage</p> <p>Agree signage guidance or template that complements marketing and branding (considering range of brand identities)</p>		<p>Create signage masterplan</p> <p>Community consultation to consider final proposals</p> <p>Apply for funding for signage that cannot be funded through partner organisations</p>	
Partners		ENPA, National Trust, SCC, Porlock Parish Council and other Vale Parish Councils, Porlock Tourist Association, West Somerset Council	
Other			

Title	18 - Building & Infrastructure Improvements	Timeframe	Medium to long term
Status	Concept	Dates	2019/2020
Lead	Various	Themes	Heritage, Amenities
Description and background			
<p>Through the consultation process a number of buildings and sites were identified for development or improvement to enhance the offer for locals and tourists.</p> <p>These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selworthy Church • Allerford Community Hall • Wootton Courtenay Village Hall • Barn on rugged coast path – camping barn • Old Coastguards Station at Hurlestone Point – walkers shelter – possible National Trust grant via Coastal Revival Fund • New footpath – Rugged coast path link • Off road cycle tracks • Porlock Orchard – events, music, weddings • Picnic area 			
Cost	£200k - £1m		
Funding Sources	Heritage Lottery, Reaching Communities	Funding Status	
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Discuss at CCT meeting</p> <p>Meet with relevant partners including parish councils and landowners to consider options</p> <p>Further consultation to establish local support</p>		<p>Work up projects including costings and potential opportunities</p> <p>Explore funding bids</p> <p>Apply for funding</p>	
Partners		Wootton Courtenay and Selworthy Parish Councils, Landowners	
Other			

Title	19 - Traffic Management in Porlock Village	Timeframe	Medium to long term
Status	Concept	Dates	2019/2020
Lead	ENPA	Themes	Amenities
Description and background			
<p>Proposal to carry out study on traffic management and streetscape in Porlock Village focusing on the High Street and its key junctions, and the School access in Parson's Street. The study will also address a number of wider streetscape issues, and propose short-term and longer-term measures aimed at improving safety, improving accessibility for residents and surrounding communities and addressing the quality of public space in the town.</p>			
Cost	For study £10k		
Funding Sources	ENPA, Porlock Parish Council	Funding Status	Proposal
Short term actions		Medium term actions	
<p>Explore possible funding sources for initial study to be carried out. Develop partnership working with local authorities.</p>			
Partners		<p>Porlock Parish Council, West Somerset Council, Somerset County Council.</p>	
Other			

Conclusion and next steps

This is an ambitious plan and will require significant commitment and funding. However, there are many smaller elements which can be achieved in the short-term demonstrating progress and intent towards the wider plan. A strong Coastal Community Team is important as is buy in from the parish councils and other local authorities including particularly Exmoor National Park Authority and West Somerset Council.

Next steps:

- Continue to strengthen the CCT by encouraging proactive and committed participants
- Decide focus on short term projects for 2019
- Begin strategy or planning work for projects which will require more significant funding to be secured
- Establish clear leads and working groups for initial project focus
- Work in partnership with local authorities and other organisations

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the support of all the Porlock Vale Coastal Community Team members and partners, as well as residents and businesses within Porlock Vale, who participated in this study, enthusiastically gave us their views and ideas, willingly answered all our questions, and ceded to our requests for information and documentation. We would also like to thank the many stakeholders with whom we have engaged in order to find a way forward that meets the widest range of community needs and ambitions. We will have been unable to please everyone, of course, but hope that all will continue to work towards an exciting future for the area.