

Appendix A

2. Aims and objectives of your **organisation**; What does your organisation do and **how does it benefit the residents of Porlock?**

Porlock Vale Tourist Association is the umbrella organisation for Porlock Visitor Centre. Its aims are to actively promote Porlock Vale as a tourist destination, offers support and provides information to the residents and community of Porlock Parish. Income is received from a variety of sources including membership, donations, grants, bed booking commission (which is falling due to bookings being made online) and commission on the sale of goods. Membership fees are paid to support the PVTA in promoting Porlock Vale as a tourist destination.

The residents of Porlock benefit from these aims because there is a dynamic, proactive organisation that works throughout the year to support the community directly and indirectly.

PVTA is a membership organisation with social aims and objectives which support the local and wider community.

AIMS OF THE PVTA

The Association is established for the benefit of its members who actively participate in tourism in the region. The Association is non-political and receives no support, either pecuniary or non-pecuniary, from any political party or organisation.

To promote the best interests of its members where this is compatible with the preservation, protection, development and improvement of the natural amenities and features of historic or public interest in the area.

To actively encourage all who are concerned with the provision of public and commercial services and enterprises in the area to adopt a positive, comprehensive and long-term view when considering the future development of those services in the area.

To encourage members to improve the quality and the appeal of their products or services to meet the needs of the visitors, including the enhancement of the quality of the environment.

To encourage sustainable tourism growth and development which maintains the balance between the visitor, the community and the environment.

To strengthen the image and awareness of the area through effective but sensitive marketing which is in line with other policies.

To develop the full potential of the area's tourism and to lengthen the season and increase the visitor spend with due regard to the capacity of sensitive areas.

Appendix B

8. Please give full details of the circumstances related to your request.

Over the years Porlock Visitor Centre has evolved to become much more than a Tourist Information Centre. We are a centre for everyone. We offer extensive support to our community, as demonstrated by the Coronavirus Helpline, we deal with Porlock Area Lift Service bookings, lost property, sale of fishing licenses, sell tickets for other local organisations, printing, laminating, promote events in the Village, dissemination of important community information via our website or social media channels, answer numerous questions from our community or point them in the right direction for information. Sometimes, we just offer a friendly ear to someone who lives on their own and we may be the only person they speak to that day. This is all in addition to the work which we do in supporting and promoting our business members, promotion and publicity of Porlock Vale, organising events, collaborating with key partner organisations to promote wider Exmoor and offering lots of information to our visitors.

Until 2019, Porlock Parish Council contributed financially to the PVRTA, in order that the Visitor Centre could continue its community work by awarding an annual grant to the PVRTA.

Since 2020, there has been a global pandemic when the Visitor Centre was closed for 6 months and the PVRTA awarded their members a 6-month payment holiday to support local businesses. The PVRTA has been and is continuing to seek to secure alternative funding, new revenue streams, organise profit making events, expand PVRTA membership, sponsorship and reduce expenditure where possible.

Our current income streams are absorbed in promoting Porlock Vale as a tourist destination and paying for the PVRTA employees and volunteer staff to deal with local community and residents enquiries on a daily basis. We are making this request for support funding to sustain and progress our work which is presently causing overspend as we positively contribute to Porlock community welfare and the local economy.

As a successful visitor centre, we understand our centre is one of many touch-points that visitors are accessing to learn more about how to experience our destination. We know this because we have a visitor servicing strategy that is far reaching and dynamic. Our successful visitor centre adds real value to our local visitor economy as we understand the reality of our location. We know many visitors will find the information and inspiration they need for the town/region, without ever stepping in their centre making the need for us to keep up our online presence and developing collaborations.

Appendix C

9. Briefly describe the project for which you require a grant. Please make sure you give us a full breakdown of what the funding will be spent on.

The PVTA is requesting that Porlock Parish Council consider re-instating an annual grant (to be reviewed on a yearly basis) to support the contribution which the Visitor Centre makes to the local residential and business community.

We have detailed comprehensively, above and on the attached 2021 – 2022 Visitor Centre Manager report, of the achievements and work which the Visitor Centre carries out on behalf of its members and for the businesses and residential community

This grant would be a contribution towards our general staffing costs and premises overheads in order not to reduce our opening hours or any decrease in the level of services currently offered by the Visitor Centre.

All local Tourist information Centres close during November and March and the PVTA may have to consider coming into line with other Information Centre's to ensure that we can continue to support our member businesses and to continue the positive contribution towards Porlock's tourism industry.

Please note that the PVTA does not want to consider any closure of the Visitor Centre or a reduction in the services which we offer to the community, but we have to ensure the long-term sustainability and security of the Visitor Centre.

Appendix D

10. How would the funding benefit the community or residents of Porlock?

There is an overview in Appendix B of the support which the Visitor Centre offer and we repeat this again below.

The value of the Visitor Centre to the community is incalculable and almost immeasurable but the potential temporary loss of this community resource would have a negative and catastrophic impact to the community. Attached is the Visitor Centre Manager report to the PVTA for the 2021-2022 financial year, which gives a brief overview of the diversity and range of services which we provide, together with statistics of footfall to the Visitor Centre and website and social media figures.

Over the years Porlock Visitor Centre has evolved to become much more than a Tourist Information Centre. We are a centre for everyone. We offer extensive support to our community, as demonstrated by the Coronavirus Helpline, we deal with Porlock Area Lift Service bookings, lost property, sale of fishing licenses, sell tickets for other local organisations, printing, laminating, promote events in the Village, dissemination of important community information via our website or social media channels, answer numerous questions from our community or point them in the right direction for information. Sometimes, we just offer a friendly ear to someone who lives on their own and we may be the only person they speak to that day. This is all in addition to the work which we do in supporting and promoting our business members, promotion and publicity of Porlock Vale, organising events, collaborating with key partner organisations to promote wider Exmoor and offering lots of information to our visitors.

A temporary closure would mean the loss of 2 part-time employed positions as well as all of the above services being unavailable to the community.

The PVTA invite any Councillors who are not familiar with the Visitor Centre to spend a few hours as an observer or please come and visit to see the information which is fully available to our residents and community.

Financial support from Porlock Parish Council will demonstrate to the community that the Council values this resource, which is available to everyone.

The benefit of the funding is that it will enable us to continue to provide a valuable service through the winter months when the community has most need to draw in visitors and people to the area and also to continue to provide the range of facilities to the community such as PALS etc.

Appendix E

14. What fund raising activities took place in the **last** 12 months and what fund-raising activities are planned for the **next** 12 months.

Organised the following events

- *Green Lanes of Porlock walks - Monthly guided walks May – September*
- *Hidden Porlock Walks (jointly with ENPA) Monthly guided walks May – September*
- *June 2021- Inaugural Porlock Vale Art trail*
- *July 2021 - Evening of Summer Song*
- *August 2021 - Open Gardens*
- *September 2021 - Folk Concert*
- *December 2021 – Late Night Christmas Shopping – non profit making event*
- *Green Lanes of Porlock Walks – Visitor Centre organised*
- *Porlock Open Gardens – May 2022*
- *Porlock Vale Art trail – June 2022*

Please note that in addition to fund raising activities there have been major non- fund-raising events organised for the benefit of the community –

- *Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Celebrations – jointly organised with the Parish Council and local village organisations.*
- *In 2022 The Visitor Centre will participate/ has participated in the Country Fair, Porlock Carnival and St Dubricius Flower festival.*

Produced and marketed three Porlock Vale promotional videos.

Increased Porlock’s social and digital media presence Facebook followers by 140% in 2 years to over 1527 followers. Instagram followers over 1815.

Been directly responsible for promoting Porlock on local TV, radio and print coverage.

Updated the www.porlock.co.uk website to include downloadable walks, news and a comprehensive community information page.

Produced new information leaflets including a mountain biking leaflet, History trail of Porlock, Myths and Legends, What to see and Do and Where to Eat.

Visitor Centre staff and PVRTA committee members have attended digital media training courses and one to one business support and mentoring.

Produced and agreed the PVRTA long term business plan.

The Visitor Centre Manager collaborates with all key organisations such as Exmoor National Park Authority, Somerset West and Taunton Council, The National Trust, Porlock Manor Estate and local Tourist Information Centres.

The Visitor Centre continues to sell tickets and promote events for external organisations and events organised by the VC.

The Visitor Centre produces a monthly What's On and distributes via their extensive email system.

Developed and streamlined local produce sales.

The Visitor Centre team was integral in providing an outstanding and respected response to the Coronavirus pandemic by working jointly with the Parish Council on the Community Helpline. The Visitor Centre organised the only community event to take place in 2020 to enhance community moral and unity.

Future Events

- *Sea Festival Porlock Weir – September 2022*
- *Open Gardens 2023*
- *Porlock Vale Art Trail 2023*
- *Green Lanes of Porlock walks - Monthly guided walks May – September*
- *Hidden Porlock Walks (jointly with ENPA) Monthly guided walks May – September*
- *Live music event 2023*

Appendix F

17. Other grants from any other sources in the last three years, please provide the dates and amounts.

Annual 2019 – 2022 South West and Taunton Council £4,000.00 Grant from the Hinkley Point Mitigation Fund. (due to cease in 2025)

Annual 2019 – 2022 Exmoor National Park Authority £ 4,000.00

July 2020 – Somerset West and Taunton Council £7500.00 Coronavirus Discretionary grant

April 2022 – Somerset West and Taunton Council £1200 Art Trail grant

June 2022 – Somerset West & Taunton Council Community renewal fund £ 5000.00 Sea Festival Porlock Weir.