

ENGLISHCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Serving Barrow, Englishcombe, Haycombe, Inglesbatch, Kilkenny & Nailwell.

www.englishcombe-pc.gov.uk

Duchy of Cornwall Update Report.

1. Meeting Minutes: 21st May 2025

Document: FINAL Meeting with Duchy - Minutes

The Duchy confirmed the building is not viable for commercial use due to compliance issues.

- The Duchy will not fund refurbishment.
- Intends to sell The Old Schoolhouse; proceeds may fund Wheelwrights Workshop redevelopment.
- Community groups may submit a costed business case.
- Building will go on sale August 2025; lease ends September 2025.

2. Summary of May Meeting

Document: Summary of May Meeting

Highlights resident safety concerns and community space alternatives.

- Duchy will accept proposals from CICs/charities.
- Will provide a lease only after all works are completed.

3. Letter from Duchy: 27th May 2025

Document: Letter to Parish Clerk & Residents

Three options provided:

1. Refurbish under licence followed by lease.
2. First refusal to purchase.
3. Sell and reinvest in Wheelwrights Workshop.

4. Parish Assembly: 4th June 2025

Document: Parish Assembly Minutes

33 survey responses; all support a community space.

- Broad support for events, health activities, and meetings.
- Some support for restoring The Old Schoolhouse if feasible.
- Council reaffirmed neutral stance and representative role.

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5. Parish Letter to Duchy: 12th June 2025

Document: Letter to The Duchy - June 2025

- 32 of 33 households favoured a community space.
- Parish Council supports the Wheelwrights Workshop project.
- Council clarified it does not officially support REACH.

6. Schedule of Works: 13th June 2025

Document: Draft Schedule of Works

- Option 1: £682,000 basic refurbishment.
- Option 2: £747,000 with full insulation upgrade.
- All works must be completed before lease is granted.

7. REACH Response and Duchy Reply: 19th June 2025

Document: Letter to Parish Council & Response to REACH

- Duchy reaffirmed previous options and deadlines.
- 25-year lease possible with low rent for non-commercial use.
- Full works must be completed before use permitted.

8. Updated Letter from Duchy: 4th August 2025

Document: Letter to Parish Clerk & Residents 04.08.25

Duchy grants a 12-month extension to allow for proper planning.

- New deadline: 31st August 2026.
- Recent appraisal values the Old School at £400,000 + VAT.
- A CIC may secure favourable price.
- Access to building ends 29th September 2025 (car park may remain open).

9. REACH & Ongoing Correspondence

Documents: REACH.pdf, Emma update.pdf

- Continued efforts from REACH to explore funding and partnerships.
- Duchy reaffirmed need for formal structure, full business plan and funding proof.
- REACH encouraged to liaise through Parish Council.

10. Environmental Consideration – Bat Survey Required

- A bat survey is required at Wheelwrights Barn by the Duchy before any development.
- This is a statutory step and may affect timescales.

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Conclusion & Recommendations

- The Duchy will not refurbish The Old Schoolhouse.
- Community group must act professionally and prepare a costed business case.
- The Parish Council supports Wheelwrights Workshop as the primary focus.
- 12-month extension offers time for REACH to raise funds and form a CIC.
- Environmental surveys and lease conditions must be met.