



WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

White Colne Village Hall, Bures Road, White Colne, CO6 2QA.

www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Village of the Year 2025

BACKGROUND PAPER – 20.01.2026

Please note supporting information regarding the following Agenda items:

Item 8i Village Hall Fees

Cllr Wilson carried out a review of Village Hall hiring fees towards the end of 2023:

In order to fully consider any future increase to the village hall hire rates I have undertaken a number of calculations based on the use of the village hall for the twelve-month period 1st October 2022 to 30th September 2023 extracted from the Hallmaster booking system. The cost for running the hall has been calculated using the data extracted from the bi-monthly financial reports and an estimated energy use provided by the parish clerk. In order to ascertain if our hire rates were realistic a comparison with those for village halls from the adjacent villages, Earls Colne, Colne Engaine, Chappel and Wakes Colne, Mount Bures, Great Tey and Bures was also undertaken. A spreadsheet in which the potential new hire rates could be input in order to calculate the new potential income based on current use was also constructed and is appended at the end of this report.

Comparison of rates

This was not as straightforward as first thought since a number of the halls worked on the principle of block period bookings rather than hourly booking rates. As a result direct comparison of hourly rates was not always realistic. The rates have been summarised below:

HIRE PERIOD	MOST EXPENSIVE	LEAST EXPENSIVE	AVERAGE	WHITE COLNE CURRENT RATE
PREMIUM (PARTY) HIRE	£22/hr (Colne Engaine 2hrs min)	£15/hr (Bures 07:30 to 1200hrs)	£18/hr	£15/hr
WEEKEND HIRE	£28/hr (Gt Tey for non resident)	£5.50/hr (Earls Colne min 4 hrs)	£17.92/hr	£12/hr
EVENING HIRE	£17/hr (Chappel)	£10/hr (Bures)	£10.22/hr	£10/hr
STANDARD HIRE	£22/hr (Gt Tey)	£5.50/hr (Colne Engaine min 2hrs)	£10.72/hr	£9/hr
KITCHEN	Included	Included	Included	£20/session

Increase in Hire Charge

There are a number of facts to take into consideration with regard to any future increase in the village hall hire rates. First and foremost the hall is an asset that was conceived to be of benefit to the residents of White Colne. In this respect the charging rates should not prevent them from using the Hall. Whilst many of the regular hires for Bridge, Pilates etc draw in residents from the village they are not exclusive to White Colne residents. The same applies to the hire of the hall for parties which is not solely utilised by non-residents of White Colne. There is a case for differential hire rates for residents and non-residents for parties but this could be difficult to operate. It is for this reason that the future increase in hire rates should be uniform and not aimed at one group of users.

The easiest way is not a straight percentage increase across the board but by smaller incremental increases that equate to a similar percentage increase for each use. The only exception is the hire charge for the use of

the kitchen which should remain frozen or possibly reduced since this is included in the hire rates for the other halls.

It is suggested that the rates be increased as follows:

Party hire be increased by £3/hr to £18/hr (20%)
 Weekend hire be increased by £2.50/hr to £14.50/hr (20.8%)
 Evening hire be increased by £2/hr to £12/hr (20%)
 Standard hire be increased by £1.50/hr to £10.50/hr (16.7%)
 Use of Kitchen to remain unchanged at £20 per session.

A review of Village Hall hiring fees was carried out in November 2025:

Summary – Average costs of hire per hour				
	Day	Evening	Weekend	Party (etc.)
Aldham	£18.00	£18.00	£21.00	
Chappel & Wakes	£9.50	£9.50		£15.00
Coggeshall	£16.00	£19.00	£19.00	
Colne Engaine	£11.25	£11.25	£11.25	£20.00
Earls Colne	£24.50	£24.50	£24.50	£35.00
Halstead	£19.00	£19.00	£20.50	£20.00
Great Tey	£16.70	£16.70	£20.98	
Pebmarsh	£18.50	£18.50	£18.50	
Wormingford	£18.50	£18.50	£18.50	£18.50
Average:	£16.88	£17.22	£19.28	£21.70

Only Coggeshall charges different rates for daytime / evening.

White Colne				
	0800-1800	1800-2300	Weekend/ Bank Holiday	Party (min. 3hrs)
Cost per hour	£9	£10	£12	£20
+ Kitchen	£20	£20	£20	£20
Kitchen Only	£30	£30	£30	

Suggested new rates (to take effect from 01.04.2026):

White Colne			
	Weekday	Weekend/ Bank Holiday	Party (min. 3hrs)
Cost per hour	£12	£15	£20
+ Kitchen	£20	£20	£20
Kitchen Only	£30	£30	

Item 11i Village Hall User Agreement

The User Agreement (including amendments) is attached at Appendix a.

Item 11v Allotment request to place a shed

The owner of Plot 13 would like to place a 6' x 4' shed on the Plot.

Allotment Agreement clause 2.8:

Buildings: Not without the written consent of the Council to erect any building on the Allotment provided that consent shall not be refused under this clause to the erection of any building reasonably necessary for the purpose of keeping hens or rabbits or be unreasonably withheld to the erection of a garden shed.

Any building permitted by the Council should be sited so as not to interfere with any adjacent allotment, interference to include obstructing rainfall, light or access. No large greenhouses in either glass or poly to be erected.



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WHITE COLNE VILLAGE HALL HIRE

Terms and conditions for hire

An Agreement between:

White Colne Parish Council ("Village Hall"); and

The person or organisation completing the booking ("Hirer").

AGREED as follows:

In consideration of the payment of the hire fee and security deposit (where applicable), the Village Hall agrees to permit the Hirer to use the premises for the purpose described on the booking and confirmed by email and invoice from the Village Hall. The conditions here on, form the terms of this agreement.

The authorised representatives of the Village Hall are the Parish Clerk: Jim Morris and the Bookings Clerk: Jade Lock

The minimum hire is: 1 hour. Part-hours are charged at the hourly rate.

On the submission hereof, the Hirer shall pay as deposit a minimum of £50 unless an alternative sum is otherwise advised by the Bookings Clerk. The hire fee and deposit are payable on the date of booking.

Occasional hirers will be sent an invoice once a booking has been made. Payment must be made in full within 5 days upon receipt of the invoice, to reserve the date. If the hire is cancelled at any time, the deposit element of the hire charge (currently £50) **will not** be repaid. The hire fee will only be repaid if the cancellation is made within 14 days of the event date.

A regular hirer must pay a £50 deposit upon booking to reserve a block of dates, and in full once the invoice is issued at the end of each month. If the booking is cancelled less than 7 days before the event date, the hire fee will still be charged. The £50 deposit will be retained until such time as the hirer ceases using the hall and will be refunded in accordance with our terms and conditions.

The Village Hall reserves the right to withhold all or part of this deposit if the hall is not left in a reasonable state of cleanliness or if any of the Conditions of Hire are not adhered to. The deposit will be returned within approx. 14 days after the hire date provided that no damage or loss has been caused to the premises and/or contents nor complaints made to the Village Hall about noise or other disturbance during the period of the hiring because of the hiring.

Failure to sweep the hall after use will result in a minimum of £10 deduction from the deposit

The Hirer agrees that, if appropriate, a member of the Village Hall (or an authorised representative) may be present during the hiring.

It is hereby agreed that the Conditions of Hire (together with any additional conditions imposed under the Premises Licence) or that the Village Hall deem necessary, shall form part of the terms of this Hiring Agreement, unless specifically excluded by agreement in writing between the Village Hall and the Hirer.

None of the provisions of this Agreement are intended to or will operate to confer any benefit pursuant to the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 on a person who is not named as a party to this Agreement.

The Village Hall has a Premises Licence authorising the following regulated entertainment and licensable activities at the times indicated. Recorded music, indoors, live music, and dance performance indoors until **11pm Monday to Saturday** and until **10.30pm on Sundays**.

The sale of alcohol in the hall is not licensed

If you wish to sell alcohol at your event you will need to complete a Temporary Event Notice available from Braintree District Council. Intentions to sell alcohol on site must be declared in the booking portal, and an email copy sent to the Clerk.

The hirer agrees not to exceed the maximum permitted number of people in the hall including the organisers / performers.

Max permitted no.	100
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Where a licensable activity will take place, the hirer hereby agrees to the conditions of the Premises Licence and/or operating Schedule for the premises, in accordance with which the hiring must be undertaken, and agrees to comply with all obligations therein.

The hall holds a licence with the Performing Right Society (PRS) and with Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL). Commercial organisations and individuals hiring the hall and earning an income from providing any activity such as commercial exercise classes, dance classes etc and who play copyright music as an integral part of their business, are not covered by the hall's PPL music licence. Such commercial hirers require their own relevant PPL licence. This is a legislative requirement.

The Hall's Audio / Visual equipment can only be used for viewing live events.

CONDITIONS OF HIRE:

These standard conditions apply to all hiring of the village hall. If the Hirer is in any doubt as to the meaning of the following, the Clerk should immediately be consulted.

1. Age

The Hirer, not being a person under 18 years of age, hereby accepts responsibility for the premises at all times when the public are present and for ensuring that all conditions, under this Agreement, relating to management and supervision of the premises are met.

2. Supervision

The Hirer shall, during the period of the hiring, be responsible for: supervision of the premises, the fabric, and the contents; their care, safety from damage however slight or change of any sort; and the behaviour of all persons using the premises whatever their capacity, including proper supervision of car parking arrangements so as to avoid

obstruction of the highway. The Hirer must notify immediately the Clerk, of any damage and shall be liable to pay for all damage (including accidental damage) to the premises or to the fixtures, fittings, or contents and for loss of contents.

3. Use of premises

The Hirer shall not use the premises for any purpose other than that described in the Hiring Agreement and shall not sub-hire or use the premises or allow the premises to be used for any unlawful purpose or in any unlawful way nor do anything or bring onto the premises anything which may endanger the same or render invalid any insurance policies in respect thereof nor allow the consumption of alcohol thereon without written permission.

4. Gaming, betting and lotteries

The Hirer shall ensure that nothing is done on or in relation to the premises in contravention of the law relating to gaming, betting, and lotteries.

5. Licensable activities

The Hirer shall ensure that the Village Hall holds relevant licences under the Performing Right Society and the Phonographic Performance Limited. Commercial or profit-making hirers should obtain their own licences, where necessary, before using the hall and send a copy of the licences to the Clerk to confirm these have been obtained. If other licences are required in respect of any activity in the village hall the hirer should ensure they hold the relevant licence, or the hall holds it.

6. Public safety compliance

The Hirer shall comply with all conditions and regulations made in respect of the premises by the Local Authority, the Licensing Authority, the hall's Fire Risk Assessment or otherwise, particularly in connection with any event which constitutes regulated entertainment, at which alcohol is sold or provided or which is attended by children. The hirer shall also comply with the hall's health and safety policy.

The Hirer acknowledges that they have read and agreed the risk assessments and policies pertaining to White Colne Village Hall and will make all attendees before the commencement of the hire period, aware of these risk assessment and policies.

7. Health and hygiene

The Hirer shall, if preparing, serving, or selling food, observe all relevant food health and hygiene legislation and regulations. Dairy products, vegetables and meat on the premises must be refrigerated and stored in compliance with the Food Temperature Regulations. The premises are provided with a refrigerator and thermometer, but these are not in constant use and the Hirer must advise that this facility will be required at the time of hiring

8. Electrical appliance safety

The Hirer shall ensure that any electrical appliances brought by them to the premises and used there shall be safe, in good working order, and used in a safe manner in accordance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.

9. Insurance and indemnity

a. The Hirer shall be liable for:

(i) the cost of repair of any damage (including accidental and malicious damage) done to any part of the premises including the curtilage thereof or the contents of the premises

(ii) all claims, losses, damages, and costs made against or incurred by the village hall, their employees, volunteers, agents or invitees in respect of damage or loss of property or injury to persons arising as a result of the use of the premises (including the storage of equipment) by the Hirer, and

(iii) all claims, losses, damages, and costs made against or incurred by the village hall their employees, volunteers, agents, or invitees because of any nuisance caused to a third party as a result of the use of the premises by the Hirer, and subject to sub-clause (b), the Hirer shall indemnify and keep indemnified accordingly each member of the village hall and the village hall's employees, volunteers, agents and invitees against such liabilities.

b. The Village Hall shall take out adequate insurance to insure the liabilities described in sub-clauses a(i) above and may, in its discretion and in the case of non-commercial hirers, insure the liabilities described in sub-clauses a(ii) and a(iii) above. The Village Hall shall claim on its insurance for any liability of the Hirer hereunder, but the Hirer shall indemnify and keep indemnified each member of the Village Hall and the Village Hall's employees, volunteers, agents, and invitees against (a) any insurance excess incurred and (b) the difference between the amount of the liability and the monies received under the insurance policy.

c. Where the Village Hall does not insure the liabilities described in sub-clauses a(ii) and a(iii) above, the Hirer shall take out adequate insurance to insure such liability and on demand shall produce the policy and current receipt or other evidence of cover to the Clerk. Failure to produce such policy and evidence of cover will render the hiring void and enable the hall secretary to rehire the premises to another hirer.

The Village Hall is insured against any claims arising out of its **own** negligence.

10. Accidents and dangerous occurrences

The Hirer must report all accidents involving injury to the public to the Clerk as soon as possible and complete the relevant section in the village hall's accident book. Any failure of equipment belonging to the village hall or brought in by the Hirer must also be reported **as soon as possible**. Certain types of accident or injury must be reported on a special form to the Incident Contact Centre.

Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR). The Incident Contact Centre can be contacted in any of the following ways:

- Telephone: 0845 3009923
- Facsimile: 0845 3009924
- Website: www.riddor.gov.uk or via the HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk
- Post: Incident Contact Centre, Caerphilly Business Park, Caerphilly, CF83 3GG

11. Explosives and flammable substances

The hirer shall ensure that:

- (a) Highly flammable substances are not brought into, or used in any part of the premises and that
- (b) No internal decorations of a combustible nature (e.g., polystyrene, cotton wool) shall be erected without the consent of the village hall. No decorations are to be put up near light fittings or heaters.

12. Heating

The Hirer shall ensure that no unauthorised heating appliances shall be used on the premises when open to the public without the consent of the Village Hall. Portable Liquefied Propane Gas (LPG) heating appliances shall not be used.

13. Drunk and disorderly behaviour and supply of illegal drugs

The Hirer shall ensure that to avoid disturbing neighbours to the hall and avoid violent or criminal behaviour, care shall be taken to avoid excessive consumption of alcohol. Drunk

and disorderly behaviour shall not be permitted either on the premises or in its immediate vicinity. Alcohol shall not be served to any person suspected of being drunk nor to any person suspected of being under the age of 18. Any person suspected of being drunk, under the influence of drugs or who is behaving in a violent or disorderly way shall be asked to leave the premises. No illegal drugs may be brought onto the premises.

14. Animals

The Hirer shall ensure that no animals (including birds) except guide dogs are brought into the premises, other than for a special event agreed to by the village hall. No animals whatsoever are to enter the kitchen at any time.

15. Compliance with the Children Act 2004

The Hirer shall ensure that any activities for children under eight years of age comply with the provisions of The Children Act of 2004 and that only fit and proper persons who have passed the appropriate Criminal Records Bureau checks have access to the children. Checks may also apply where children over eight and vulnerable adults are taking part in activities.

16. Fly posting

The Hirer shall not carry out or permit fly posting or any other form of unauthorised advertisements for any event taking place at the premises and shall indemnify and keep indemnified each member of the village hall accordingly against all actions, claims and proceedings arising from any breach of this condition. Failure to observe this condition may lead to prosecution by the local authority.

17. Cancellation

If the Hirer wishes to cancel the booking before the date of the event the deposit will be forfeited and the hire fee will be refunded if cancellation is more than 14 days before the start of the hire. The village hall reserves the right to cancel this hiring by written notice to the Hirer in the event of:

(a) the premises being required for use as a Polling Station for a Parliamentary or Local Government election or by-election

(b) the Village Hall reasonably considering that (i) such hiring will lead to a breach of licensing conditions, if applicable, or their legal, health and safety or statutory requirements, or (ii) unlawful or unsuitable activities will take place at the premises because of this hiring

(c) the premises becoming unfit for the use intended by the Hirer

(d) an emergency requiring use of the premises as a shelter for the victims of flooding, snowstorm, fire, explosion, or those at risk of these or similar disasters.

(e) the Hall is required for a specific village event. This will apply to regular hirings and there will be a minimum of 28 days notice given.

In any such case the Hirer shall be entitled to a refund of any deposit or hire fee already paid, but the village hall shall not be liable to the Hirer for any resulting direct or indirect loss or damages whatsoever.

18. End of hire

The Hirer shall be responsible for leaving the premises in a clean and tidy condition, including the car park and the surrounding area, at the time agreed in the Terms of Hire Agreement. The hall must be swept throughout. All lights to be switched off except where they are on automatic sensors. **All rubbish must be removed from the site by the Hirer.** Any contents temporarily removed from their usual positions should be properly replaced, otherwise the village hall shall be at liberty to make an additional charge.

19. Noise

The Hirer shall ensure that the minimum of noise is made on arrival and departure, particularly late at night and early in the morning.

20 Stored equipment

The village hall accepts no responsibility for any stored equipment or other property brought on to or left at the premises, and all liability for loss or damage is hereby excluded. All equipment and other property (other than stored equipment) must be removed at the end of each hiring or fees will be charged for each day or part of a day at the hire fee per hiring until the same is removed.

The village hall may use its discretion in any of the following circumstances:

- (a) Failure by the Hirer either to pay any charges in respect of stored equipment due and payable or to remove the same within 7 days after the agreed storage period has ended
- (b) Failure by the Hirer to dispose of any property brought on to the premises for the purposes of the hiring. This may result in the village hall disposing of any such items by sale or otherwise on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit and charge the Hirer any costs incurred in storing and selling or otherwise disposing of the same.

21 No alterations

No alterations or additions may be made to the premises, nor may any fixtures be installed, or placards, decorations or other articles be attached in any way to any part of the premises without the prior written approval of the Clerk. Any alteration, fixture or fitting or attachment so approved shall at the discretion of the village hall remain in the premises at the end of the hiring. It will become the property of the village hall unless removed by the hirer who must make good to the satisfaction of the hall or, if any damage caused to the premises by such removal.

22. No rights

The Hiring Agreement constitutes permission only to use the premises and confers no tenancy or other right of occupation on the Hirer.

23. Dangerous and unsuitable performances

Performances involving danger to the public or of a sexually explicit nature shall not be given.

24. Smoking

The Hirer shall, and shall ensure that the Hirer's invitees, comply with the prohibition of smoking in public places provisions of the Health Act 2006 and regulations made thereunder. Any person who breaches this provision shall be asked to leave the premises.