



WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

WHITE COLNE VILLAGE HALL,

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RCCE VILLAGE OF THE YEAR 2025

Action Plan 2025-26

1. Environmental Sustainability & Energy Efficiency

- 1.1 Continue optimizing the solar panels, battery storage, and air source heat pump at the Village Hall.
- 1.2 Host renewable energy education events to support the progress of the Colne Valley Community Energy Project.
- 1.3 Support biodiversity and habitat conservation throughout the village.
- 1.4 Create Management Policies for parish council owned and/or managed land.

2. Community Engagement & Volunteers

- 2.1 Continue supporting the Stationmasters Café as a bi-weekly community hub.
- 2.2 Ensure the successful reopening of the Community Warm Hub in November 2025.
- 2.3 Empower the WO Helpers Group to organize events and support community initiatives.
- 2.4 Support the introduction of the new mobile Social Supermarket at the village hall.

3. Infrastructure & Facilities Development

- 3.1 Promote the community garden and continue to engage with local groups, e.g. the Scouts, children's holiday club.
- 3.2 Maximize the use of the upgraded village hall for community events.
- 3.3 Research external funding opportunities to improve playground facilities.
- 3.4 Aspire to install Village Gateways.

4. Allotments: Fencing, Promotion & Community Involvement

- 4.1 Explore funding for new fencing via budgeting, sponsorship, fundraising, or in-kind support.
- 4.2 Encourage formation of an Allotment Society to:
 - o Coordinate group buying for discounts
 - o Sell surplus produce to raise funds
 - o Assist with site maintenance and representation
- 4.3 Promote available plots and the benefits of allotment gardening.

5. Community Orchard Maintenance

- 5.1 Engage local volunteers or groups for ongoing care and education.
- 5.2 Host orchard-themed events.
- 5.3 Create Management Policy for the Community Orchard.

6. Governance & Financial Stewardship

- 6.1 Manage council finances responsibly, keeping the precept stable if possible.
- 6.2 Complete statutory audits and ensure public rights to view accounts.
- 6.3 Review and update council policies regularly.
- 6.4 Encourage all councillors to undertake relevant training to support their roles and improve the effectiveness of the council.

7. Communication & Community Relations

- 7.1 Keep the council website updated with relevant news and information.
- 7.2 Ensure information leaflets are printed and delivered free to every household at least quarterly, maintaining this as a vital communication channel.
- 7.3 Develop new ways for residents to provide feedback and ideas.

8. Community Safety & Wellbeing

- 8.1 Deploy the mobile SID (Speed Indicator Device) at various locations around the village to monitor vehicle speeds and collect data for sharing with the police.
- 8.2 Continue to fund and maintain the village defibrillator, and to provide training for local volunteers in its use.
- 8.3 Continue to report highway defects and maintenance issues to Essex County Council: [Tell us - Essex County Council](#)
- 8.4 Attempt to find a new solution to the continued destruction of the pavement in Colneford Hill. Identify and implement ways to keep pavements clear, signage clean, and public areas well-maintained to ensure a safe and accessible environment for all residents.

9. Looking Ahead: Devolution and Local Empowerment

- 9.1 Monitor developments in the Essex devolution programme and advocate for increased responsibilities and funding at the parish level.
- 9.2 Continue to pursue the transfer of the village hall tenure via a community asset transfer, in line with the ongoing devolution programme.
- 9.3 Prepare for potential new duties such as local highways maintenance, green space oversight, or small grants administration.
- 9.4 Build partnerships with neighbouring parishes, Braintree District Council, and Essex County Council to demonstrate readiness and capacity for devolved responsibilities.
- 9.5 Develop partnerships, where possible, with forthcoming Unitary Authority.

Reviewed & Amended 16.09.2025