

## Action plan 2025 – 2027

Theme 1						
Support village and rural communities to identify and plan for their future priorities, building upon their strengths, connections and sense of pride in the place where they live						
1	Action	Description	Lead	Performance Measure	Resources	Indicative timescale
1.1	<p><b>Be proactive in supporting the development of local action plans in order to help local communities prioritise their key issues and for TVBC to assist in delivering these priorities</b></p> <p>by working closely with our Community Councillors and providing dedicated support to parish councils and other community stakeholders to understand and deliver local priorities which are informed by evidence, insight and a full range of voices from across the community</p>	<p>Support the co-creation and <b>development of local action plans</b> and priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support Community Councillors as ‘conveners’, bringing the partners, skills and knowledge to bear, in the areas where communities tell us they are needed.</li> </ul> <p>Continue to explore and develop wider opportunities for <b>community action plan development</b> and create space for communities to come together and develop local ambitions into (shared) actions - convened by Community Cllrs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop toolkit for local action planning (including templates / framework for action plan development)</li> <li>Develop democracy and engagement pilots (understanding how to stimulate and motivate community participation)</li> </ul> <p><b>Development of bespoke action plans within relevant communities</b> (led and developed by and with Community Councillor, Parish Councils and wider community stakeholders) as building-blocks for local action planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate a programme of activities with partner organisations and PC’s across rural communities to further the development and delivery of local priorities and community action plans.</li> <li>Refresh and promote the community planning toolkit</li> </ul>	C&L, PPED	Number of action plans developed with rural communities	Staff time	March 2026  (with annual refresh)

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1	Action	Description	Lead	Performance Measure	Resources	Indicative timescale
1.2	<p><b>Provide meaningful community engagement support and access to resources</b></p> <p>(data, experience / expertise, intelligence) to support local led action planning activities</p>	<p>Promote access to and awareness of support available to rural communities, partners, residents and groups</p> <p><b>Provide access to dedicated support</b> – and local point of contact. enable rapid delivery by bringing together teams (staff and partners) and by help to assess what support is needed to deliver on community priorities.</p> <p>Provide advice and expertise on community engagement, evidence gathering and interpretation, facilitation and consultation.</p> <p><b>Resource bank for community stakeholders</b>, including support with;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to data, intel, ward profiles and insights</li> <li>• Technical advice and practical support to build ongoing engagement, review evidence and support action planning with communities</li> <li>• Building engagement around democratic processes (and Ward Councillors)</li> <li>• developing action plans</li> <li>• bid writing / access and signposting to funding</li> <li>• Targeted rural community communications</li> <li>• Applying an asset-based approach to community development and sharing knowledge via Councillors with community partners.</li> </ul>	C&L	<p>Promotion of information (on website)</p> <p>Proactive and regular partner engagement</p> <p>Promotion of resources (on website and shared through Engagement officers, Councillors and stakeholders)</p>	Staff time	<p>May 2025 and ongoing</p> <p>June 2025 and ongoing</p>
1.3	<p><b>Promote access to funding to help deliver local priorities</b></p> <p>through our Councillor Community Grants, Community Asset Fund and access to</p>	<p>Promotion of <b>funding opportunities to deliver rural community priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• linking rural community projects and priorities with funding opportunities</li> <li>• Promote Council funding streams including CIL and s106 (and support rural communities with access to them)</li> <li>• Promotion and signposting to wider support and funding opportunities</li> </ul>	C&L, PPEd	<p>Published funding options details and summary information</p> <p>Spending on rural community projects</p>	Staff time  (access to 'grant finder' resources)	June 2025

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	Community Infrastructure Levy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support with joining funding opportunities together (match funding)</li> </ul>		Matched funds levered		
1.4	<p><b>Support and develop networks</b></p> <p>that build upon the success of the Test Valley Association of Town and Parish Councils and the Community Resilience Forum to innovate, share practice, and address needs</p>	<p>Continue to host <b>rural marketplace / showcase events</b> across rural communities</p> <p>Facilitate a programme of activities with partner organisations and parishes across rural communities to further develop local priorities, identify shared objectives and community action, with a focus on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Communication</b></li> <li><b>Getting others involved</b> – volunteering, succession planning and capacity building</li> <li><b>Connection / accessibility</b> – with each other and rural services</li> <li><b>Access to Funding</b></li> </ul> <p>Support Parish and Town councils and the Test Valley Association of Parish and Town Councils (TVAPTC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with representatives from Parish and Town Councils to develop a programme of initiatives to raise awareness of the positive impact that parish and town councils have for local communities and encourage interested residents to stand / volunteer for the parish and town councillor positions (and links to LGA be a councillor campaign). This programme may include events, case studies, communications and other awareness raising activities</li> <li>Continue to proactively engage with and support the programme of events, meetings and activities for the TVAPTC, increasing networks and support for local councils.</li> </ul>	<p>C&amp;L (and wider partner support as appropriate )</p> <p>C&amp;L / L&amp;D</p>	<p>Programme of bi-annual marketplace / showcase events hosted in rural communities across Test Valley</p> <p>Attendance at events</p> <p>Agenda development and programme of events / forward plan</p> <p>Reduced Parish Council vacancies</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Event and venue hire</p> <p>Existing service budget</p>	<p>September 2025</p> <p>March 2026</p>
1.5	<p><b>Continue to support action to Protect, promote and enhance rural community assets,</b></p> <p>Explore opportunities to work with villages</p>	<p><b>Protect and enhance access to rural community assets</b> - recognising social value and impact on wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Enhance our support offer and advice</b> to parish councils and community organisations in such areas as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community asset and infrastructure projects</li> </ul>	<p>C&amp;L, PPED</p>	<p>Projects delivered</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>March 2026</p>

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	<p>and rural communities that provide access to spaces for recreation (that are so important for residents' wellbeing) including important environmental and/ or climate related projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ land management and habitat restoration projects</li> <li>○ design of projects to deliver objectives within the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)</li> <li>○ Support the delivery of green space development projects including equipped play</li> <li>○ Support for sports clubs and societies including advice on facility and club development</li> <li>○ Development of 'green' / CEAP grant, and provide advice and support for sustainable energy projects</li> </ul> <p><b>Promote awareness and support as to how and when Assets of Community Value (ACV) can be registered to protect vital rural assets.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide the opportunity for rural communities to protect against the loss of vital community assets and services</li> </ul>	<p>L&amp;D, C&amp;L</p>	<p>LNRS adopted</p> <p>Number of scheme promoted (impact measure CO2 reduction)</p> <p>number of rural assets on ACV register</p>	<p>Staff time / (£10,000)</p> <p>staff time</p>	<p>(details tbc)</p>
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## Theme 2

## Support villages and rural communities to plan for their future development and housing needs, to ensure the long-term sustainability of their communities

2	Action	Description	Lead	Performance Measure	Resources	Indicative timescale
2.1	<p><b>Refresh and continue to develop our Community Planning Toolkit and provide direct support including funding to enable communities to undertake neighbourhood plans</b></p> <p>This will support villages and rural communities to pro-actively plan for their future development and housing needs, to ensure the long-term sustainability of rural communities, so that the needs of all are understood</p>	<p>Refresh and promote our <b>Community Planning Toolkit</b>, and further review our <b>Neighbourhood Plan offer</b>.</p> <p>Continuing engagement activities to explore the potential scope and improvements of the newly remodelled community planning toolkit to support plan preparation</p> <p>Promote our support offer to rural communities including the development of templates to aid policy drafting and site assessment methodology, to encourage greater community participation</p> <p>Continue to promote information sharing on rural affordable housing matters – raising awareness of rural affordable housing needs, and encouraging local communities to consider supporting new development where needs can be evidenced. This will include guidance on the options available to communities including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to use Local Plan policies COM8 and COM9 (and their replacements in the emerging Local Plan) to assist with development of rural exception sites and community led housing in rural areas</li> <li>• continue to work with local communities to understand housing challenges and aspirations, alongside the Neighbourhood Planning work, and help to identify potential solutions</li> <li>• community led schemes and the Community Land Transfer approach.</li> <li>• Promote and highlight the financial and other resources available to support these approaches</li> </ul>	PPED	Level of take up from parish councils	£ and officer time	March 2026



		<p>and encourage greater participation in rural communities, and to ensure that a full range of views - in particular the seldom-heard – are taken into account)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• train the participants to undertake the research within their community to ascertain what they value and what they would be happy to see change</li> </ul> <p><b>Continue to enable and promote awareness of Community Led Development and Rural Exceptions, to;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitate the delivery of affordable homes (and other uses) on sites in the countryside that are community led and which help meet the needs of our communities (Policy COM9)</li> <li>• Support the delivery of affordable homes on rural sites as exception sites outside of settlement boundaries (Policy COM8)</li> <li>• Consider the use of affordable housing S106 contributions to support delivery of rural affordable housing schemes where there are proven viability challenges</li> </ul>	HEH / PPED			
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Theme 3						
Work with villages and rural communities to strengthen connectedness and community resilience, that enable people to live well, and to mitigate the impacts of rural isolation						
3	Action	Description	Lead	Performance Measure	Resources	Indicative timescale
3.1	<p><b>Work with local people and partners to strengthen community resilience</b></p> <p>By supporting community to community learning and sharing of experiences that help develop relationships across agencies and within communities.</p>	<p>Recognising the <b>impact and value of volunteer support</b>, preparedness and the role this plays in the generation of social capital</p> <p><b>Lead and develop Test Valley Community Resilience Forum -</b> Recognising the impact and value of volunteer support, preparedness and the role this plays in the generation of social capital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host, manage and develop community resilience (in its broadest sense, not just emergency planning) with parishes and partners.</li> </ul> <p><b>Implement and develop new national resilience framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and share best practise and learning</li> <li>• Develop and promote shared resources for pre-planning and volunteer development</li> </ul> <p><b>Build on existing community resilience arrangements in Test Valley.</b></p> <p>Develop our localised community resilience information in our emergency plan to include details of parish and place level plans, local risks, local rest centres such as village halls and the names of resilience co-ordinators across the Borough.</p> <p><b>The Test Valley Community Resilience Forum and Network</b> Co-ordinate the existing Forum and establish more regular communications with local community resilience groups between events.</p> <p><b>The Test Valley Emergency Plan</b></p>	Corp, L&D, C&L,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme of events planned across Test Valley</li> <li>• Number of resilience plans made</li> <li>• Wider community resilience plan templates and support available</li> <li>• Resource bank developed</li> </ul>	within existing resources	ongoing

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		<p>Work with TVBC's emergency planning group to update the TV emergency plan and more closely integrate it with local resilience plans.</p> <p><b>The Test Valley Annual Emergency Planning Exercise</b> Work with local communities, through the Forum, to prepare an annual emergency planning exercise that better reflects the risks on the ground in the Test Valley.</p> <p><b>Promotion of Community Resilience in Test Valley Communities</b> Working with the Community Team, to grow the number of communities in Test Valley that are actively involved in considering their own resilience and preparing local resilience plans.</p> <p>Promote place-based, community-led approach from statutory partners including (but not limited to) blue light services.</p> <p>Building strong and impactful partnerships brings the benefit of a community-led and place-based approach to wider service delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion and demonstrate the benefits of a place-base and community-led approach.</li> <li>• Positively engage relevant partners in TVP, community resilience forum and other key partnerships</li> </ul>		<p>Hold an annual exercise (and involve local community resilience representatives in the annual TVBC exercise).</p> <p>In addition to Town and Parish Councils, engage with more groups from the voluntary sector and the business community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner contribution to key partnerships</li> <li>• Review Test Valley Strategic Partnership community safety priorities</li> </ul>		
3.2	<p><b>Bring people and organisations together, share good practise and promote support networks</b></p> <p>harnessing action around issues of mutual interest – approaching ways to respond to common issues such as</p>	<p><b>Support Rural Service Networks</b></p> <p>Continue to support the ongoing development of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Association Network (TVCAN)</li> <li>• Village Shop Network – bringing businesses together to share good practise, network, and raise awareness of wider support.</li> </ul> <p>Explore viability and support for new service networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further rural networking and connecting opportunities</li> <li>• Volunteer / succession planning (Parish Councillors)</li> <li>• Rural Sports Clubs (etc)</li> </ul>	C&L / L&D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meetings</li> <li>• Membership of networks grow</li> </ul> <p>New Group / networks formed and meeting regularly as a support network</p>	Staff time  (existing resources)	Ongoing





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	<p>Establish a new grant scheme and make use of external funding initiatives that support our village shops, the sustainability and development of rural businesses (including free business support to all our rural businesses), and the rural visitor economy</p>	<p><b>Investing in and supporting rural businesses – supporting key sectors to grow</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help to build a climate in which entrepreneurs, and small and medium sized businesses can thrive in rural areas.</li> <li>• Secure external funding such as REPF and seek to distribute this as part of small business service</li> <li>• Support crucial rural services which add to the social fabric of rural communities</li> </ul>		<p>forward, funds allocated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See EDS measures - eg Increase BIG grants in rural communities.</li> </ul>	<p>Subject to future government funding (e.g. further REPF)</p> <p>Small Business Service contract</p>	<p>March 2026</p>
<p>4.3</p>	<p><b>Seek to quantify the economic value of the River Test</b></p> <p>through identifying all the interconnected sectors and its impact on the environment and development.</p>	<p>The River Test is a highly valued asset and recognised as a globally renowned chalk stream. There is limited understanding of the River Test's economic impact, the opportunities and risks associated with business activities and land-use in the river's catchment area. This knowledge would support the council in shaping strategic plans for sustainable growth and reconsidering any current limitations that stem from environmental concerns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope and produce a report that quantifies the <b>Economic Value of the Test</b> and its tributaries and connected economic sectors</li> </ul>	<p>PPED</p>	<p>Report produced</p>	<p>Partnership with University of Southampton</p>	<p>Summer 2025</p>