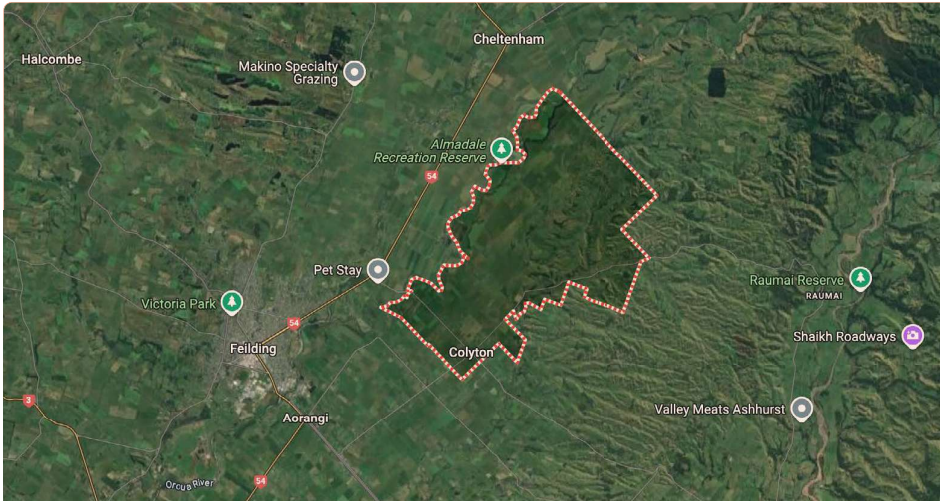


# Colyton Community Plan

May 2025

 third  
bearing

 **MANAWATU**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



## What you'll find in this plan

This Community Plan has been prepared on behalf of the Colyton community which approximately covers the area outlined in the map.

The content in this Community Plan is a summary of discussions from a community planning workshop held in March 2025.

The Community Plan provides:

- > Short history of Colyton;
- > A summary of the Community Planning process;
- > A shared community vision statement;
- > Three strategies that will help implement the vision;
- > A list of actions that have come from the community;

This Community Plan is intended to be a living document that is updated and refreshed on a regular basis.

Please email the Colyton Community Committee for further information on this Community Plan: [colytoncc@gmail.com](mailto:colytoncc@gmail.com)

# Community planning in Manawatū

## Colyton Community Planning Programme

The Manawatū District Council's Community Planning Programme supports our community to shape a shared vision for the future of Colyton. It creates a space for collaboration between residents, Council, and other agencies to drive positive, place-based change.

### The programme's aims are to:

- > Set a clear strategic direction that reflects Colyton's unique rural character and community values.
- > Provide a practical pathway for community aspirations to influence Council and agency planning.
- > Strengthen community identity and pride, helping to attract and retain residents.
- > Empower locals to actively shape the future of their place.
- > Build strong working relationships between Colyton residents, community groups, elected members, and Council staff.

The Colyton Community Committee led this process by hosting workshops and collecting local feedback. The plan outlines a shared vision, current challenges, and opportunities for improvement. It includes an action list—some simple and achievable in the short-term, others requiring more planning and support.

This Community Plan will guide local priorities and support Council in aligning investment and initiatives with what matters most to Colyton. Actions identified may be considered through Council's Long Term Plan, Annual Plan, or via partnerships with external agencies.



From Manawatū Heritage, PNCC Archives

# The Colyton area history

## Te Ahuturanga, Upper Manawatū Block

Map showing part of the area bought by the Government to open up the interior of the lower North Island. It follows the course of the Manawatū and Oroua Rivers. The main part of this map is traced from one drawn by Mr G L Adkin in Nov. 1956 based on a half-scale copy (dated 1860) of J T Stewart's 2 inches to 1 mile survey of 1859.

## Pre-European Settlement

Ngāti Kauwhata have had a long association with the Manawatū Block and the land around the Oroua River. The lowland forest and swamp lands (including the Taonui swamp) provided many resources for the hapū of Ngāti Kauwhata prior to the sale of the Ahuturanga Block and subsequent European settlement of the area. Three hapū of Ngāti Kauwhata continue to occupy the Oroua Valley area – Ngāti Hinepare, Ngāti Tūroa, and Ngāti Tahuriwakanui with marae at Aorangi, Kauwhata, and Te Iwa. Ngāti Kauwhata are closely linked with Rangitāne and Ngāti Raukawa, and Ngāti Kahungunu and Ngāti Apa also trace involvement nearby.



Photos from book 'A township like ours'

**1850s – Early European Settlement**

European settlement in the wider Manawatū region began in the 1840s and 1850s. During this period, early settlers transformed dense bush and wetlands into farmland. While specific references to Colyton at this time are limited, the area would later be surveyed and developed as part of these early colonial efforts, primarily by settlers from England and other parts of the United Kingdom.

**1900s – Community formation and commemoration**

By the early 1900s, Colyton was a growing rural hub with a hall (built 1890), school (late 1890s), and St. Andrew’s Church (1896, by F. de J. Clere). The hotel, central to village life, burned down in 1904 and wasn’t rebuilt. In 1919, the district’s first war memorial was unveiled at the church, honouring 20 fallen locals from WWI.



Colyton School 1904



Colyton Hotel – date unknown

### 1950s–2010s – Quiet Strength and Renewal

Colyton stayed a close-knit farming community through the mid-20th century. The original hall, a hub for events, burned down in 1995 but was quickly rebuilt. In the 2010s, retired local farmer, Peter Olsen led a restoration of the war memorial ahead of its centenary.

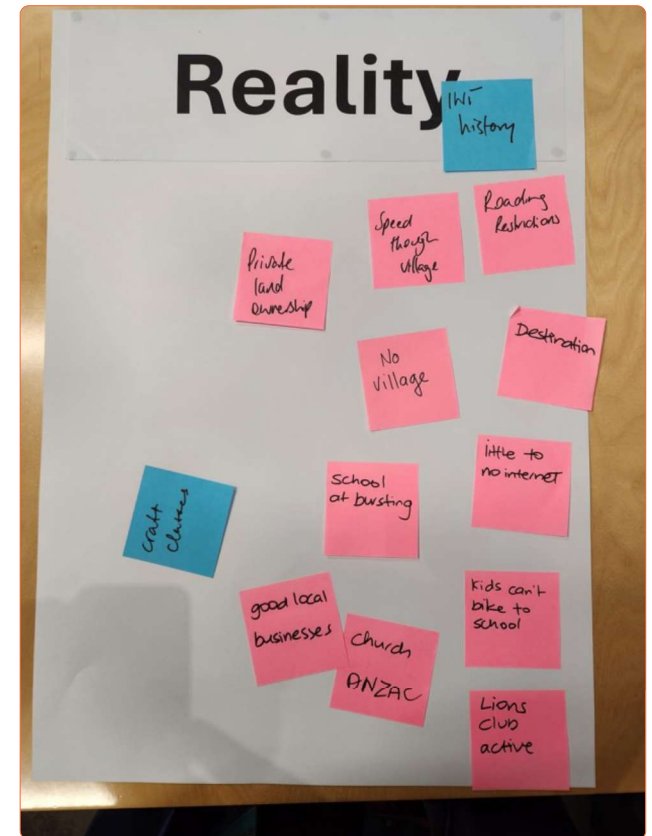


### Today

Colyton has remained a peaceful rural community, but recent years have seen steady growth through the subdivision of farmland into lifestyle blocks. Its convenient location between Feilding and Palmerston North has made it an attractive base for those wanting rural living with easy access to urban centres.

The community retains a strong sense of identity, anchored by its heritage and long-standing facilities such as the rebuilt hall and historic St. Andrew’s Church, which continue to serve as focal points for local gatherings.





# Community planning in Manawatū

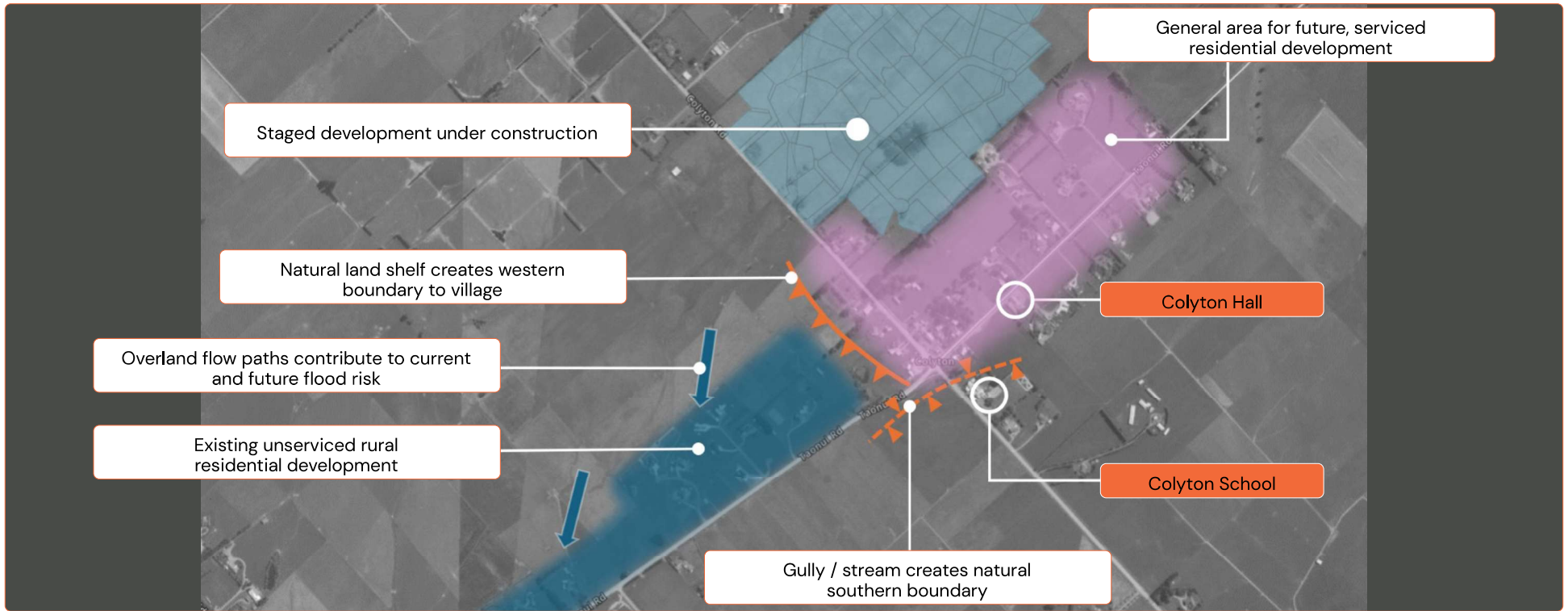
## Community Workshop

In March 2025, we hosted a community workshop at the Colyton Community Hall to help shape the direction of the Colyton Community Plan.

The session brought the locals together to reflect on where we're at as a community, where we want to head, and how we might get there. Together, we explored key themes like goals, current realities, and future opportunities.

The workshop was relaxed and hands-on, with activities designed to spark kōrero and capture a wide range of ideas. People shared their views through group discussions, sticky note feedback, and themed stations around the room.

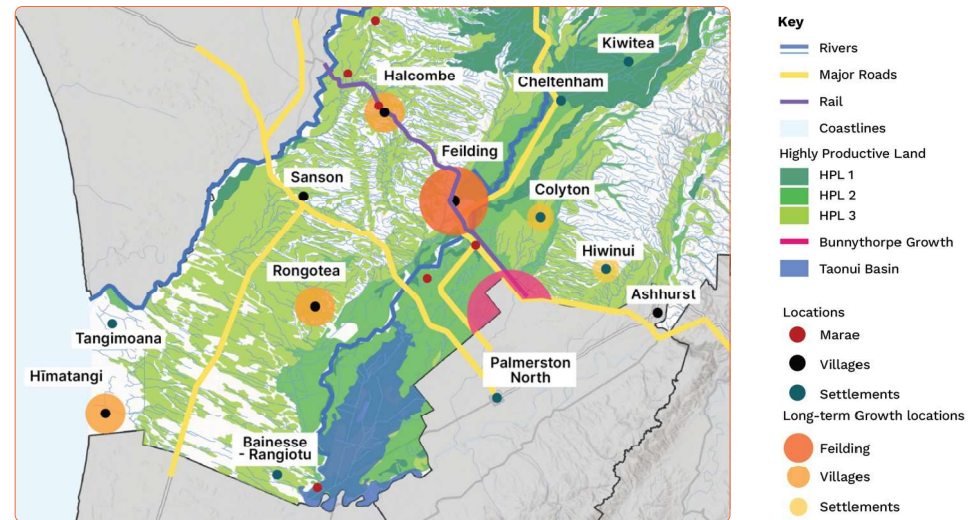
This early input set the foundation for the draft plan and ensured it reflects the voice of the community from the outset.



## Colyton Future Growth

Manawatū District Council has identified Colyton as one of the long-term growth locations. Recent lifestyle section growth is expected to continue, and staged developments are under construction.

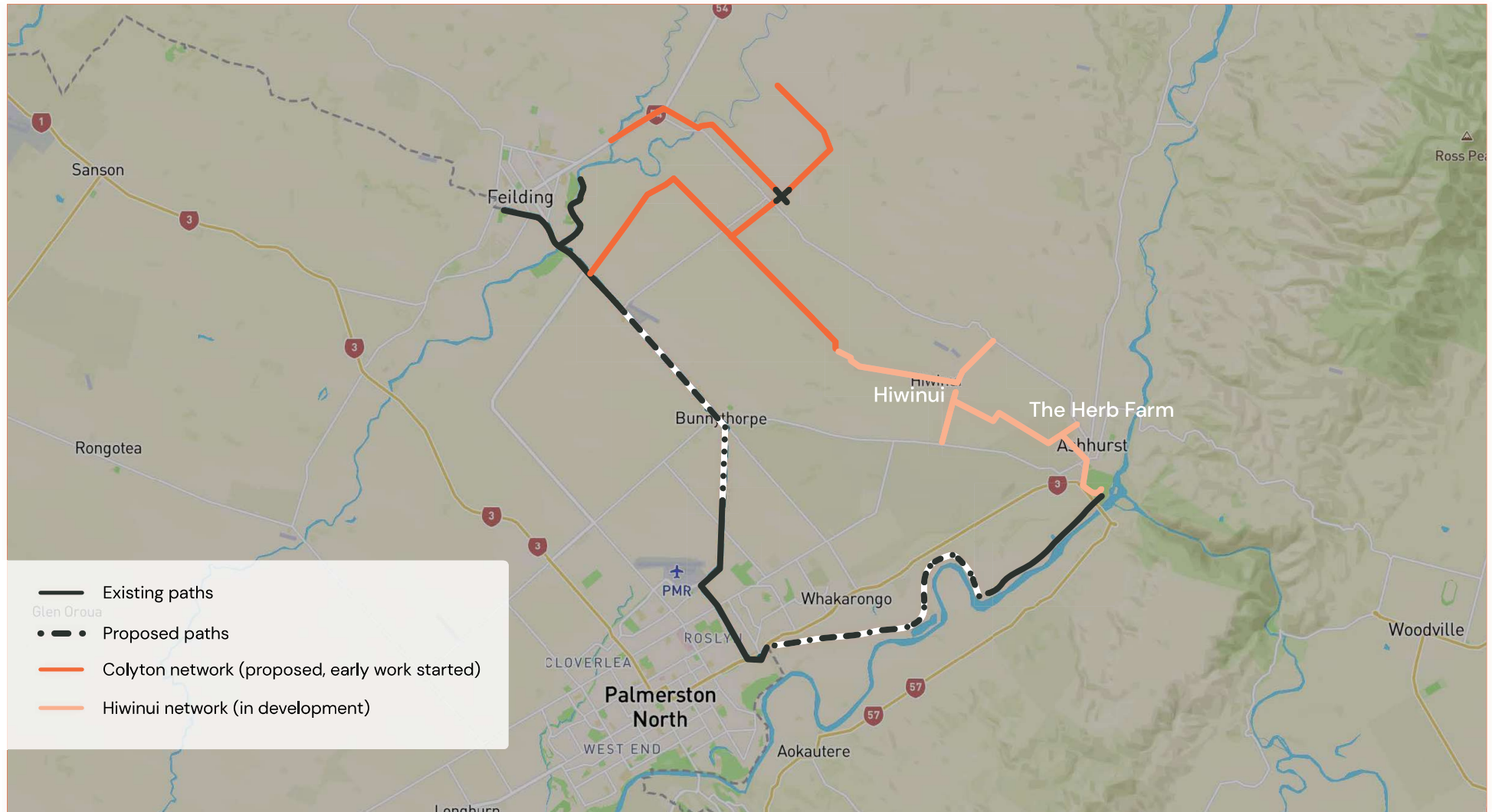
Managing this growth in a way that is consistent with the community's wishes will be important. One way to do this will be the development of a Structure Plan by Manawatū District Council, helping to guide future decisions around growth and development. There is an opportunity for the Community Committee to be actively involved in the Structure Plan's creation.





# Cycling and walking plan

Colyton Community Committee members have also worked on a plan to develop a walking and cycle pathway that will be able to connect to planned ones in Hiwinui and between Feilding and Palmerston North.



# Current issues and constraints

Through the Community Planning process, we've uncovered the key issues, constraints and challenges facing our community.

No clear village centre or shared community hub.

School is at or over capacity.

Disconnected community groups.

Roads are narrow and not suitable for growth, with a number of one-way bridges further limiting vehicle flow and access.

Little or no internet coverage.

Kids can't safely walk or bike to school.

Limited public land and reserve areas.

Incomplete footpath links make it difficult to move safely through the village on foot, particularly between the school, reserve, and key community spaces.

Wet ground conditions, drainage swales, and the presence of livestock restrict where paths, planting, and play areas can be safely developed.

Uneven traffic flow, fast through village, slow at school times.

High vehicle speeds, limited pedestrian crossings, and unsafe school drop-off areas create hazards for residents, especially children.

# The Opportunities

As we explored what Colyton could look like in the future—shaped by our Vision and current challenges—we identified a range of ideas and opportunities.

These have been developed into clear actions outlined in the Actions section of this Community Plan.

Strong collaboration and community connection (including digital) between local groups and connections.

The reserve offers strong potential for low-impact development like rustic play areas, wetland planting pockets, orchard trees, and lookout decks that connect people to nature while preserving the rural setting.

Host more community events like food trucks, markets and craft classes (boutique).

Support local businesses to enhance the area's destination appeal by creating inviting spaces, showcasing local products, and offering authentic community experiences.

Create off-road walking and cycling paths for safety and recreation.

Support local businesses to grow.

Create a central community space that links the school and hall through connected footpaths and clear signage.

Calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety (eg. flushing signage, drop off zones and speed reduction) – especially near the school and central village area.

Improve internet and cell coverage for residents and businesses.

Establish new recreational areas – including playgrounds and skateparks – while supporting the enhancement of existing play spaces within the school and behind the hall.

Improvements around the War Memorial and Church to create safe and welcoming spaces.

Celebrate and promote Colyton's history and cultural heritage through history boards and digital tools.

# Colyton Community Workshop thematic insights

## Desire for a safe environment, especially for children

Safety emerged as a major theme, particularly around roads and traffic. Residents raised issues with speeding vehicles, unsafe intersections, and narrow roads, noting that most children travel to school by car. The community highlighted the need for safe off-road parking and improved crossings to better protect children and encourage more walking or biking in the future.

## Need for accessible and connected movement

Participants expressed a strong desire for better connectivity – both within Colyton and to nearby areas. The development of the Colyton Walkway and Cycle Path and Colyton Village Beautification Plan has helped to advance these ideas, including walkways, cycleways, and safer routes linking key places like the school, hall, and further afield to Feilding. There was some interest in ensuring future housing developments support connectivity, with ideas around linking roads and pathways to maintain a sense of flow, movement, and openness throughout the village. It was suggested that Manawātū District Council (MDC) engage with the community to discuss potential impacts and ensure future planning aligns with local aspirations.

## Tension between growth and infrastructure limits

While there's openness to thoughtful growth – including new homes and community development – concerns were raised about pressure on existing infrastructure. The school is at capacity, internet and parking are limited, and road safety is a challenge. There's a need to plan ahead to ensure the village can support future change.

## Connection and collaboration across the community

Colyton values its strong community spirit. It is home to active groups – including the school, Hall Committee, and Lions Club – that play a valuable role in village life. Feedback from the workshop reflected a desire for these groups to work more closely together, while recognising that people lead busy lives and collaboration should be practical and manageable.



### Recognition and celebration of heritage

There is a clear pride in Colyton's past – including both iwi and pioneer heritage. Feedback reflected an interest in acknowledging this history more meaningfully and keeping it visible as part of the village's evolving identity, particularly through landmarks such as the Hall and Church.

### Community identity through rural character

Colyton's rural charm – including open spaces, the "farm village feel," and a quieter lifestyle – was a key part of how residents define their place. There is strong interest in maintaining this character while considering future change, and residents expressed a desire for Manawātū District Council (MDC) to share its vision and plans for what is happening in and around the area to ensure alignment with community values. People also emphasised that Colyton is unique – they want it to retain its own distinct feel and identity rather than becoming an extension of nearby towns.

### Interest in growing local experiences and offerings

Many people expressed enthusiasm for more local amenities and activity – such as an evening café or bar, food truck nights, boutique businesses, rural accommodation, and community events.

### Need for improved digital connectivity

Internet and cellphone coverage were frequently identified as lacking. There's a strong desire for high-speed internet and reliable service to support learning, business, communication, and future development.

### Value placed on shared spaces for gathering

Spaces like the school, community hall, green areas, and reserves were consistently mentioned as important gathering points. These shared spaces are central to community life and are seen as key to connection, recreation, and celebration.

### Children's vision for play and learning spaces

Young people offered thoughtful and specific feedback about what they need: improved playgrounds, deeper and larger pools, creative learning spaces, quiet reading areas, and more books. Their ideas point to a desire for spaces that are fun, supportive, and engaging.



## Village snapshot

A safe, connected, and vibrant rural village that embraces its heritage.

### Safe

Ensure safe movement for everyone, especially our children.

### Connected

Foster strong community connections and shared identity by enhancing local spaces and supporting community life.

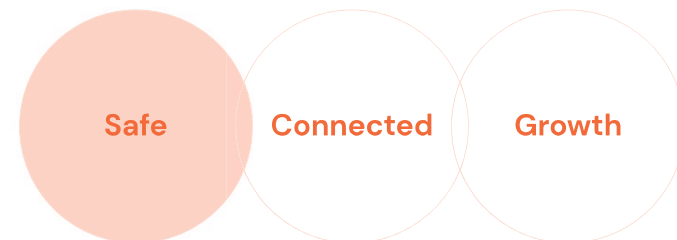
### Growth

Support thoughtful development that balances infrastructure and character, and grows Colyton as a vibrant local destination.

# Safe Actions

Ensure safe movement for everyone, especially our children

Key documents: *Colyton Village Beautification Plan, Colyton Walkway and Cycle Path Plan*

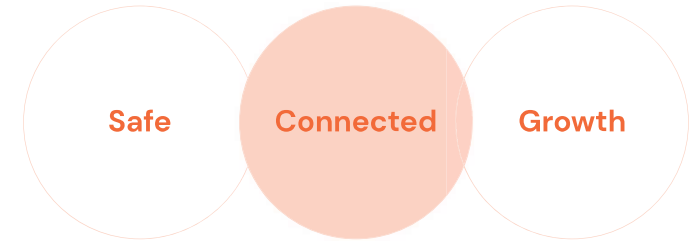


Action	Who to involve	First Actions	
S1	Slow traffic through the village with traffic calming options.	Community Committee, MDC.	Raise traffic calming options identified in the Colyton Village Beautification Plan with MDC.
S2	Improve Taonui Road and Colyton Road by extending lime walking and cycleway paths, including ensuring greater accessibility between the hall, school, and housing areas.	Community Committee, local landowners, MDC.	Revise <i>Colyton Village Beautification Plan</i> to include connection from back of school to Taonui. Pitch plan to MDC. Start with planting.
S3	Review the speed limits through Colyton Village to ensure they reflect the safety needs around the school and our community areas.	Community Committee, MDC.	Advocate MDC to review speed limits for Colyton Village.
S4	Ensure safe movement for everyone is considered in future planning decisions.	Colyton Community Committee, MDC, local residents.	Advocate for safety to be embedded in planning for roads, pathways and public spaces.
S5	Strengthen community connections to support neighbourhood safety and emergency preparedness.	Colyton Community Committee, Neighbourhood Support, Civil Defence.	Foster neighbourly connections, share emergency contacts, and promote simple preparedness actions across the community.
S6	Enhance safety and wellbeing of older residents through neighbourly support.	Colyton Community Committee, Neighbourhood Support.	Encourage 'know your neighbours' initiatives and promote community awareness of looking out for one another.

# Connected Actions

## Strengthen community connection and shared identity

Key documents: *Colyton Village Beautification Plan, Colyton Walkway and Cycle Path Plan*

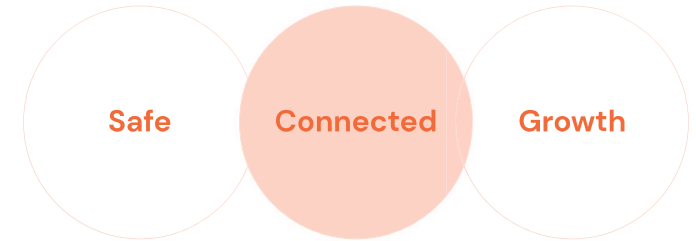


Action	Who to involve	First Actions
C1	Strengthen relationships and communication between key community groups (Colyton School, Hall Committee, Lions Club, Community Committee) to support shared planning, better coordination, and village-wide initiatives.	Community Committee, Colyton School, Hall Committee, Lions Club, local volunteers & residents.
C2	Build on existing school and local business events to strengthen community connections and promote the Colyton Community Committee.	Community Committee, Colyton School, Hall Committee, Lions Club, local volunteers.
C3	Strengthen communication across Colyton by maintaining a community contact network (e.g. email, Facebook, text alerts, letter drops), and consider creating a welcome pack for new residents.	Community Committee, local residents.  Update contact list and explore a welcome pack and communication options.  Create a web page for the village and notice board of what's happening in our village and district.
C4	Implement <i>Colyton Village Beautification Plan</i> , efforts to include visible entry points, tree planting, signage, and landscaping that reinforce village identity and pride.	Community Committee, MDC Parks & Reserves, Lions Club, and local residents, volunteers and businesses.  Extend <i>Colyton Village Beautification Plan</i> to include connection between back of school and Taonui Rd. Finalise Plan. Pitch Plan to MDC.

# Connected Actions

## Strengthen community connection and shared identity

Key documents: *Colyton Village Beautification Plan, Colyton Walkway and Cycle Path Plan*

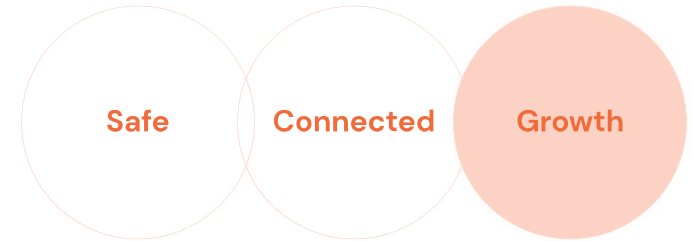


	Action	Who to involve	First Actions
C4a	Enhancements around the church and war memorial to create more welcoming areas for gatherings.	St Andrew's Church, Hall Committee, Colyton Community Committee, local RSA, MDC Parks & Reserves.	Review beautification plan for church grounds and war memorial; meet with church and RSA reps to prioritise shared improvements (e.g. wall removal, hedge planting, seating, safer ANZAC area).
C4b	Public art and storytelling elements (like student-decorated posts at the school and hall playground) help build a sense of shared place.	Local artists or craftspeople, Colyton School, Community Committee, MDC Parks & Reserves.	Progress the beautification plan's proposal for the Taonui Road reserve entrance.
C5	Implement the <i>Colyton Walkway and Cycle Path Plan</i> to improve movement by extending footpath and cycleway extensions.	Community Committee, MDC, Horizons Regional Council, Hiwinui Community Committee.	Advocate to MDC and Horizons Regional Council to prioritise Stage 1 and Stage 2 paths (Colyton to Menzies Ford, Colyton to Spur Road).
C5a	Coordinate local support and in-kind contributions – much of Stage 1 relies on donated materials and labour.	Community Committee, local landowners.	Support local contractors and volunteers and work with the landowners.

# Growth Actions

Support thoughtful development that maintains Colyton’s character and infrastructure balance

Key documents: *Colyton Village Structure Plan, Colyton Village Beautification Plan, Colyton Walkway & Cycle Path Plan*



Action	Who to involve	First Actions
G1	Community Committee, InspireNet, Starlink, Spark/ One NZ, Chorus, Local MPs, MDC Infrastructure.	Lobby for cellphone tower. Survey residents on digital access issues and compile a case to present to service providers. Identify safe location for cellphone towers.
G2	Community Committee, MDC, local landowners.	Engage with local residents to hear their voice on the issue. Work with MDC on structure plan for Colyton area.
G3	Community Committee, local business owners, MDC Economic Development, Feilding & District Promotion, CEDA.	Meet with local business owners to listen, gather insights, and identify shared opportunities for support or visibility.
G3a	Community Committee, local business owners, MDC Economic Development, Feilding & District Promotion, CEDA.	Work with local community, business owners and landowners to explore destination ideas and identify unique local offering.

# Colyton Community Plan

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