

Chichester Arms, Bishops Tawton – nomination as an Asset of Community Value (ACV)

Note: References to the “Act” are to the Localism Act 2011.

References to the “Regulations” are to the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012.

On **1st December 2025** a nomination was received under the provisions of the Regulations to list as a community asset the Chichester Arms, Bishops Tawton. The nomination was in the name of Bishops Tawton Parish Council.

Conclusion:	Based on the available evidence the <u>Chichester Arms, Bishops Tawton</u> <u>will be added to North Devon Council's list of Assets of Community</u> <u>Value.</u>
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Consideration 1: Has the nomination been made by an appropriate body?

89(2)(b)(i) of the Act provides for a Parish or Town Council to nominate land in the Parish/Town Council's area (Bishops Tawton); this is expanded upon in regulation 5 of the Regulations.

This criteria is therefore met.

Consideration 2: Is the nomination complete, including the necessary matters specified in para 6 of the Regulations?

Para 6 requires a description of the land, information on the owners and occupiers, reasons for believing there is a community value, and evidence that nominator is eligible. This has all been provided and so the nomination is deemed valid.

Consideration 3: Does the Chichester Arms qualify as being of “community value”?

s88(1) of the Act specifies that land is of community value “*if in the opinion of the authority –*

(a) an actual current use of the building or other land that is not an ancillary use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the community; and

(b) it is realistic to think that there can continue to be” such use

Section 88(2) goes on to state that even if there is no current community use of the asset, for instance because the asset is currently closed, an asset might still be deemed to be of community value if the authority is of the opinion that

“(a) there is a time in the recent past when an actual use of the building or other land that was not an ancillary use furthered the social wellbeing or interests of the local community, and

(b) it is realistic to think that there is a time in the next five years when there could be non-ancillary use of the building That would further (whether or not in the same way as before) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community”

Section 88(6) defines “social interests” as including cultural, recreational and sporting interests but there is no definition of social wellbeing or any definition that limits the breadth of the meaning of social interests. There is also no definition of what constitutes the “local community” but various appeals have given some guidance.

Background:

As the nomination states:

“The Chichester Arms is the last public house in the village where residents can gather & socialise. It provides a safe space to further the wellbeing of the community. Bishops Tawton lost a public house in early 2016 to housing.

The Chichester Arms had a good reputation for restaurant daytime and evening meals, as well as a busy Sunday Roast menu which would be shameful to lose.

Until recently it housed the community defibrillator as a known central hub for this community-funded asset.

The pub has had skittle teams, it held funeral wakes, weddings, birthday and anniversary parties to name but a few. There was a street party organised that the pub helped with by providing food and the use of their facilities so that funding could be raised to help replace play equipment in the village park”.

The pub closed in October 2025. The pub’s website noted this as a temporary closure due to ‘the insolvency of the company that operated the business’ and that ‘(we) are working closely and constructively with the landlords to ensure this closure is only temporary’.

Following the receipt of the nomination, on 3rd December 2025 an email was sent to the Ward Members and a letter sent to the licensee/tenant, and to the company who own the public house in accordance with the information provided on the nomination form. These requested any comments prior to the 26th January 2026. To date no responses have been received from any parties.

Bishops Tawton is within the district ward of Landkey. Bishops Tawton has a population of around 1276 (as of the 2001 Census). Amenities in the village include just one shop (next door to the Chichester Arms) which opens two days a week, Gospel Hall, plus the Church of St John the Baptist.

As mentioned before, there is no statutory definition of what furthers the social wellbeing or interests. It has been left to local authorities to determine this in the light of local circumstances. In the case of North Devon, the adopted policy states that:-

“A property that enhances the social interest and social wellbeing of the local community is one that in its absence would deprive the local community of a building or property which is essential to the special character of the local area and provides a place to meet and socialise, place to shop, recreational, sporting or cultural facility or a place used to provide a community service.

In my view, the primary use of the land covered by the nomination does achieve these purposes.

Social media posts, prior to the temporary closure, refer to Conker Tournaments, Skittles Matches, Takeaway services, the watching of Lionesses Rugby matches, various menu options and themed menu-evenings – such as Beer & Burger nights. This is alongside posts about the customers and locals – with reference to their holidays., travels, work, families, and their dogs!

Future Use:

The nominee has suggested the following uses to further utilise the use of the pub as a community asset:

Coffee Mornings, afternoon teas, making use of the facilities, an area where essential groceries could be purchased, the use of a room for the selling of homemade crafts and produce.

As, confirmed by the nominee, Bishops Tawton has lost The Post office, Butcher, Little Shop, and The Three Pigeons Pub, so the Chichester Arms is considered a community hub which could continue to provide hub facilities in the village. There may also be the possibility of it becoming a pub/restaurant, as we are not privy to the financial information of the leaseholder, and whether the business is viable to reopen.

As such, it is considered that the **Chichester Arms** does further the social wellbeing or social interests of the area and should therefore be included in the list of Assets of Community Value.