

Reference: ACVN 578326206

## Assets of Community Value Nomination

**Name of your organisation:** Shenfield & Hutton (morning) WI

**organisationAddress:**

Address
[REDACTED]

**Name of contact:** [REDACTED]

**Phone number:** [REDACTED]

**Email address:** [REDACTED]

**Are you an incorporated organisation?:** No

**What type of organisation are you?:** Charity

**Registration number(s):** 291804

**If your organisation carries out activities for profit, please describe below how you use the surplus that is generated:** Shenfield & Hutton (morning) WI is a charity everything it does must be compatible with that special legal status.

As a charity, it is active in the Shenfield & Hutton community and raises money for other charities.

It does not carry out activities for profit.

**If you are an unincorporated organisation please, describe below what provisions are made for community benefit in your constitution:** Shenfield & Hutton (morning) WI is a charity – it is not an unincorporated organisation.

**Please describe how your organisation has a local connection to the area where the asset has been identified:** Shenfield & Hutton (morning) WI is a branch of the national Women's Institute (WI). The national WI is the largest voluntary women's organisation in the UK.

The branch operates in the Shenfield & Hutton area and has 130 members living locally.

**Please provide information below which supports your nomination having regard to the test set out above:** Shenfield library is a community library. The library was built in the 1960's and was located on Hutton Rd, Shenfield, Brentwood CM13 1BD (for ease of reference called the 'old library'). Rebuilding of the library was started in the Summer of 2022. Library services continued from a temporary facility at Bishops Hill Adult Community Learning Centre, Rayleigh Road, Hutton, Brentwood, CM13 1BD (for ease of reference called the 'temporary library'). A newly built library is planned to open on the Hutton Road site in mid 2024 (for ease of reference called the 'new library').

**Do you have any further information on the numbers of people that currently use the facilities, and the various clubs etc. that are based there so we can determine how well the asset is currently used?:** Prior to the rebuilding, the old library had a footfall of about 300 people per week (75,000 visits pa) who used the premises as:

- Reading and book lending service. Usage was one of the highest in Essex. The library had 4,000 active users, supported 30 book clubs, had a summer reading challenge in which 35 staff and volunteers taught 900 children to read, provided books on prescription (mental health) and magazines/newspapers.
- Community centre which promoted family & community wellbeing and supported a safe & cohesive community. Examples include weekly baby massage; baby & toddler rhyme time twice a week; meditation group (three times a month); knit & natter (fortnightly); monthly art displays from local groups; coffee and crime (monthly); online/computer access; information about local clubs/societies; safe space for children to do homework; home tutoring and exam venue for excluded pupils; public consultation documents such as highways; Council recycling bags; hearing aid batteries.

The temporary library has allowed services to continue albeit at a lower level in part due to its location and restrictions on its usage. The Friends of Shenfield Library (FOSL) enhances the social and community aspects of the library. This includes supporting Essex Library initiatives such as Mental Health awareness on 18th February (through scrabble, friendship bracelets etc), Local History day on 27th May (through adding a talk by a local historian) and Young Adult love your library on 7th October (through lucky dip, pokemon cards etc). FOSL has also organised a number of events in the temporary library with permission of Essex Libraries, for example, a book reading by Stuart Cloke for young children on 21 January and an interview with the novelist Virginia Heath on 15 March. However, there are restrictions on the use of the temporary library in the evening so FOSL has organised events in other local venues such as a piano recital at St Peters in Hutton on 30th September and an author presentation on 14th November in the Shenfield Parish Hall.

It is expected that the new library will open in mid 2024 and services will regain their former level.

**How do you think the Asset further the social wellbeing of the local community?:**Please see answer above

**What would be the impact if the function of the asset were to cease?:**Shenfield would lose a valued community centre and footfall to the local Shenfield shops would be expected to be lower.

**How well is it regarded by the local community? Has there been any consultation, or do you have any evidence of support from the community for this nomination?:** During a review by Essex Council, there was a serious threat that the library would be closed. As a result, a petition with over 8,000 signatures was submitted to Essex County Council (the largest petition received by Essex County Council since records began), a question about the potential closure of the library was raised in the House of Commons by our MP Alex Burghart and several marches in support of the library were held in Shenfield (including one in which local families held hands round the library).

**Description of the nominated land including its proposed boundaries:**A plan of the old library is attached. The new library is currently being built. A plan submitted for Brentwood Council planning permission is to be attached.

**Name and address of current occupants of land:**Essex County Council

**Names and addresses (or last known address) of all those holding a freehold or leasehold interest in the land:** Essex County Council, County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford CM1 1QH.

**Site map plan:** Old Shenfield library plan.pdf

**Other documents:** Shenfield Library Decision letter 080319.docx, Shenfield and Hutton (morning) WI Email.pdf