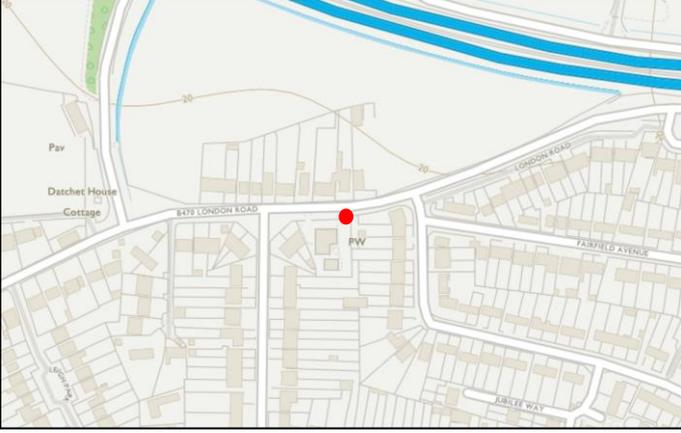


Datchet Local List – Non-Designated Heritage Asset Information Sheet

Name, address, location of asset	Number	
World War I Memorial Crucifix At the roadside, next to Datchet Baptist Church 62 London Road, Datchet SL3 9JR	Is the asset	<input type="checkbox"/> In the Conservation Area <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In Datchet Parish
OS Map and coordinates (Outline asset in red on map and provide OS coordinates)		
Grid Reference SU992772		
		
Significance of asset (NPPF)		
Archaeological Architectural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic Artistic In the setting of a heritage asset		
Type of Asset Please select relevant category		
Monument: Datchet's first WWI Memorial, 1919		
Description/History of asset		
		
<p>Datchet's crucifix memorial is similar in style to the French wayside shrines which would have been familiar to those who fought on the Western Front in WWI. It was donated by the Curling family of Datchet and was dedicated on Empire Day in May 1919. It was Datchet's first WWI memorial, erected a year before the obelisk memorial on The Green. It was positioned on an open site at the entrance to the village. At the time, there was no other development nearby.</p> <p>The oak cross, approximately 4m tall, has concrete supports to side and rear at lower level and cement has been poured around the base. The upright shaft is slightly tapered, the cross-bar has quadrants cut</p>		

from lower outer edge. The copper figure of Christ has a blue-green verdigris patina. The cross and statue are topped by a wooden, pointed-arch canopy/apex with inscription.



The inscription on a separate stone at the base reads:
*I look for the resurrection
of the dead and the life
of the world to come. Amen*



A small plaque on the upright, at low level, reads:
*TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND IN MEMORY OF THE
GREAT WAR 1914-1919.*



The following words are carved into the apex:
*WHO LOVED ME AND
GAVE HIMSELF FOR ME*

Present condition and originality



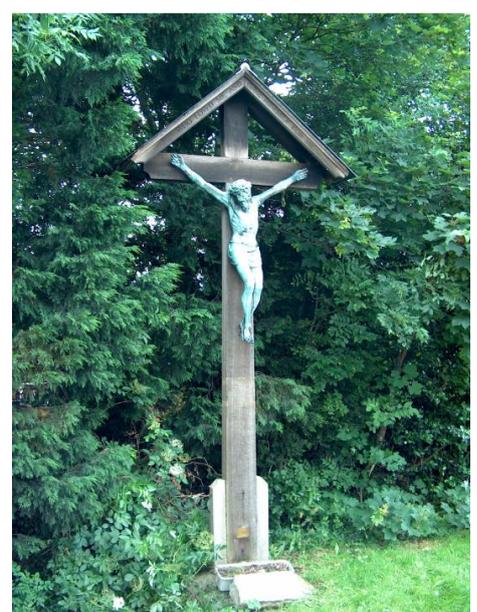
Damage and restoration

In January 2007, the crucifix was badly damaged during a storm. The canopy structure, cross-bar and top section of the main upright, blew off and broke away, tearing the left arm from the corpus. Before Datchet Parish Council could take away the pieces for repair, the lead flashing which had covered the canopy was stolen and the broken arm was taken.

The repair was funded by Datchet Parish Council and supervised by Cllr Ewan Larcombe.

The corpus is hollow, made of a thin layer of copper filled with a whitish material. It was taken to Splash Studios in Wraysbury where artist Mick Charsley carved a replacement left arm in rigid foam material. A replacement right hand (which had previously lost a finger) was also carved. These were then coated in plaster and rubbed back to a smooth surface. Resin steel was used to bond the arm and hand to the body. A company in Hertfordshire sprayed the replacement sections with molten copper, a process used in EMC (ElectroMagnetic Compatability) shielding. The copper finish was then aged to create a similar patina to the rest of the figure. This was achieved by coating it with an acidic flux. The oak cross and canopy were also repaired with a strong supporting bracket at the rear.

The stolen lead was replaced with Foamex, a versatile weatherproof PVC foam sheet which is often used for outside signage. (It was feared that the lead would be stolen again if replaced.) The restoration was completed in June 2008.



No maker's mark was noticed during the restoration.
(Images courtesy of Ewan Larcombe.)

Present condition

With the exception of replacement sections detailed above, the crucifix is believed to be original. It has been on this site, open to the elements, for 102 years and remains in fair condition but should be monitored for signs of deterioration.

Recommendations



The oak cross is in reasonably good condition generally but some deterioration is noticeable in the timber at the base. It is recommended that a stainless steel socket be used to hold the cross, replacing the concrete spurs and cement. Ideally, the monument should be officially inspected at least once a year and should remain on Datchet Parish Council's insurance policy. The trees around the site should be trimmed regularly so that the branches are kept away from the crucifix and so that it can be seen. There are now two planters, one either side of the base, which would benefit from being maintained with seasonal planting. The grass verge where the crucifix stands would also benefit from better maintenance.

Left: At times the memorial is obscured from view by vegetation

Is site in use?		Give details of use
✓ YES		WWI memorial
Criteria Fill in the relevant boxes stating the reasons why the asset meets these criteria. <i>(Please score to indicate how well the asset meets the criteria where 0 is not applicable, and 3 indicates very well.)</i>		
1. Has architectural interest or quality	1	It is an unusual memorial in an English village in that it is more reminiscent of a French wayside shrine.
2. Is a landmark feature	2	It stands by the roadside at what was once the London Road entrance to the village. Since it was erected, the village has expanded further along London Road, and the Baptist Church has been built on the adjacent site.
3. Has a relationship with adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials, or in any other historically significant way	1	Erected in 1919, the crucifix was the first WWI memorial in the village, preceding the stone memorial on The Green which was dedicated the following year.
4. Individually, or as part of a group, illustrates the development of the local area	1	Its location at the former entrance to Datchet indicates the extent of the village in 1919. Since then there has been much expansion to the east.
5. Has significant historic associations with features such as a historic road layout, a park or a landscape feature (designed or natural)	0	
6. Has historic associations with important people or past events	3	It is a WWI memorial erected by a local family, the Curlings. They had three sons in the military and mother and daughter both volunteered with the Red Cross. (See Datchet Village Society website.)
7. Reflects the traditional functional character or former uses of the area	0	

8. Contributes positively to the character or appearance of the area <p style="text-align: right;">1</p>	It is one of a number of village monuments which have been preserved. When it is well-maintained, with surrounding vegetation trimmed back and seasonal plants at its base, it contributes positively to the historic character of the village and is a sober reminder of the lives lost in WWI.
9. Other. Is there another reason it has special local value? <p style="text-align: right;">2</p>	It has special local value because it was erected by residents in memory of local servicemen and women. To this day, there is an annual ceremony in the village on Remembrance Sunday with a procession along London Road to the memorial on The Green. A wreath is also laid at the crucifix.
Have owners been notified? (Give details of date, method, eg letter/email, response and comments)	
Datchet Parish Council notified by email in June 2021	
General feedback from members of the public	
In a 2021 survey when residents were asked to nominate buildings for NDHA status, the historic non-listed building/structures around the Green were among those which received the most nominations.	
Appendices Give details of any supporting documents or sources, eg background history and websites	
There is information about the Curling family and the family's contribution during WWI on the Datchet Village Society website: www.datchetvillagesociety.org.uk/datchet-in-wwi/women-in-wwi/curling-emily-marion-1850-1942/	
There is more information about the Crucifix from local newspaper reports on the Datchet History website: www.DatchetHistory.org.uk <i>Windsor & Eton Express</i> May 1919: 'On Empire Day a large congregation, including many soldiers returned from the front, attended the Dedication of the Crucifix. The procession started from the church with George Hunt carrying the processional cross, followed by the choir, the Vicar and the Bishop of Buckinghamshire. In his address the Bishop said that the memorial was intended as a wayside shrine which would be a familiar sight to those who had served in France but was little known in England.' <i>Datchet Parish Magazine:</i> May 1919 'The entrance to London Road has been lately adorned by the erection of a 'Calvary' through the generosity of Mrs and Miss Curling of Denholme. It serves a two-fold purpose, in reminding passers-by of the great sacrifice and of the sacrifice of so many of Datchet's sons in the Great War.' <i>Windsor & Eton Express:</i> November 1919, first anniversary of Armistice Day 'Mr Kinross, chairman of the Parish Council, had put up notices asking for silence, and at 11 o'clock a maroon [firework signal] exploded from the fire station by George Cleversley announced the start of two minutes silence. A floral tribute was placed at the foot of the war shrine in London Road by the women of Datchet.'	

Images



March 2021
(Alison Crampin)



Planters, November 2015

Date form completed	By whom
8 March 2021	Alison Crampin, with thanks to Cllr Ewan Larcombe for supplementary information about the repair work.