

Protecting our local heritage

One of a neighbourhood plan's many benefits is the opportunity to create a local list of heritage assets, says Alison Crampin

Local listing is very different from Historic England's Grade I/II listing for buildings of national importance. When a building is locally listed it means that its value to the community will be taken into account, helping to inform planning decisions in a way that conserves and enhances local character and identity.

Local listing requires community involvement so a few months ago Datchet's Neighbourhood Plan (DNP) team asked residents and specialists to nominate buildings and monuments not already designated by Historic England which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of Datchet. This might be for architectural, historic, archaeological or artistic reasons, or for their association with important people or past events.

Since then, the DNP team has been liaising with owners and gathering evidence about these local 'non-designated heritage assets' to ensure they meet the criteria outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework. This is a time-consuming process which involves researching the histories of the buildings and structures and we are indebted to local historian Janet Kennish and Datchet Village Society for their assistance.

As the process of researching and assessing notable buildings throughout the parish will take many months, the intention of the DNP team currently is to include some village-centre heritage assets in the Plan and, beyond that, continue to develop a village-wide Local List with RBWM support.

Local vs national listing

There are some 40 buildings and structures in Datchet which are Grade II listed on Historic England's National Heritage List, see www.datchetneighbourhoodplan.org/conservation-area-listed-buildings.html National listing means there will be extra control over what changes can be made to a building's interior and exterior. Local listing does not carry the same

restrictions; it does not change any development rights which are currently permitted but it does raise the profile of an asset to developers and councils when planning applications are submitted, particularly for demolition.

Local heritage assets

Here are summaries of the village-centre buildings and monuments which are being considered. The full assessments, illustrated with historic photographs, can be found at: www.datchetneighbourhoodplan.org/non-designated-heritage-assets.html

The Drinking Fountain



The drinking fountain was the first public monument to be erected in the centre of the village, in 1886. It originally stood at the top of the High Street and was topped by a lamp. It was the philanthropic gift of Lady Georgiana Needham of Datchet House, following the principles of the Metropolitan Free Drinking Fountain Association. A typical Victorian monument, it bears biblical quotations on the subject of water while providing bowls for dogs and horses as well as villagers. It is made from prestigious pink and mottled Aberdeen granite, a monumental stone which was fashionable at the time and favoured by the wealthy for family gravestones.

The 1930s' Garage



In 1935, this new, purpose-built garage was recorded in Kelly's Local Directory as Frank Jarrett Ltd, Motor Garage. It is positioned just outside the Conservation Area and is an unusual survival and striking landmark at the west end of the village centre. It closes the long view from the eastern end as Montagu House does from west to east. Built in dark-red mixed bricks, with a pitched tiled roof, it is the design of the façade which reflects the popular Art Deco look of 'modernism' which is shown in the streamlined arrangement of rectilinear panels and pilasters for display. On the southern forecourt there used to be a row of petrol pumps.

Hall Cottage



This picturesque cottage is a survivor from two previous uses of this site. From medieval times the land was owned by Eton College and there was a farmstead here. This was replaced by a large house, The Hall, in the 1870s. Hall Cottage is believed to have been originally a farm building which then served as the lodge to The Hall. (In the 1960s, The Hall was replaced by the maisonettes of Hall Court.) The pretty Gothic arched windows were inserted by a local builder and more in this style can be seen around the village. The decorative brick work on the front boundary wall echoes that of the Manor Houses.

Horse/cattle trough



This 19th-century trough was originally sited on Windsor Road. It is made of granite and stands on a base of granite setts, and is kept full of flowers by Datchet Parish Council. The inscription states “Presented by the Metropolitan Drinking Fountain & Cattle Trough Association”. At some point, date as yet unknown, the trough was moved from Windsor Road and, along with the drinking fountain, was taken to Churchmead School for safe-keeping. They were returned to North Green around 1990 when the Greens were refurbished, prior to Datchet winning the 1992 Best-Kept Village competition.

James’s Cottages



James’s Cottages are a terrace of three Victorian red-brick cottages. They occupy a prominent location on the southern section of London Road, adjoining the listed Church Cottage and facing St Mary’s Church, with views to The Green. They were built in 1853 for the Hale-Pearce family who were artisans in various trades for several generations. The cottages are already included in RBWM’s list of notable non-listed buildings in Datchet.

Jubilee Cross



This free-standing Hamstone monument was made by Messrs Doulton and given as a gift to the village by a local resident, Mrs Mary Anne Crake of The Lawn, to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. It was unveiled in June 1897. Mrs Crake persuaded the newly-formed Datchet Parish Council that a cross of a medieval type would be an appropriate commemoration. She was following the philanthropic lead of two other wealthy Victorian ladies in the village: Lady Georgiana Needham who donated the drinking fountain, and the Dowager Duchess of Buccleuch who gave the Jubilee Oak planted in honour of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887.

Montagu House



Montagu House, formerly the Datchet Working Men's Club, was built on land provided by the Duke of Buccleuch in 1881 on a long lease and at a nominal rent. It was designed by the architect Stephen Mogg Wyborn of Windsor and funded by public subscription. It was intended to contribute to the welfare of the working classes; to provide a place where educational and improving leisure activities were available. To celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1887, Lady Needham of Datchet House provided the funding for the porch. She also gave generously, with a group of benefactors including the Duchess of Buccleuch, for another room to be added at the back in 1889. This room became the village hall and it played a central role in the life of the village until recent times. The ground floor has now been converted to a branch library, with a police outpost upstairs, giving the original building a new community purpose.

The Manor Hotel



Historically, the Manor Hotel was part of a range of buildings owned by the Lords of the Manor. The Manor Houses and Manor Cottages to the east of the hotel have surviving 16th- to 17th-century timber frames and, unlike the Manor Hotel, are Grade II listed by Historic England. It is probable that the Manor Hotel building, in line with the whole manorial row,

had similar origins although it is thought that nothing of any age remains inside. The building is known to have been a public house at least by the 1750s. From the 1850s, after the Waterloo-Windsor railway line opened, Datchet's popularity as a summer resort grew and a period of expansion followed. The Manor House was dramatically re-modelled by the Lords of the Manor, the Buccleuch and Montagu families, to attract prosperous tenants in the 1870s. The whole front of the building was redesigned with applied mock-Tudor timber-framing, the emerging fashionable style. The Manor Hotel received similar treatment. In Datchet, the mock-Tudor style is now everywhere, either applied to genuine old buildings or as a style choice in more recent developments.

North Green and Patrixbourne



This pair of very large houses dominates the western end of the village centre as the Manor Houses do at the eastern end. They are also superficially like them in the variety of gable heights and mock-Tudor applied timbering. However, the Manor Houses date from the 1600s while Patrixbourne and North Green were built in the late 1880s/early 1900s. The style is a revival of picturesque Tudor and Jacobean features which is typical of houses in the late Victorian period. During the early 20th century, the 'Datchet Yacht Club' was run privately as a social club from here. Although it was kept very quiet at the time, King George V used to play billiards here while Queen Mary gossiped with her friends; Datchet was used to behaving discreetly when royalty paid visits.

The Pharmacy



The Pharmacy stands out from the other properties facing the Green because its façade is such a fine example of mock-Tudor/Jacobean architecture. It makes an exceptional addition to Datchet's Conservation Area. The building was part of a group of cottages on a site which once belonged to Eton College. The pharmacy was originally called Tring Cottage. (Rose and Chestnut cottages to the west still survive.) It was purchased by the village pharmacist, Arthur Willcocks, who spared no expense on the 1904 refurbishment of his new shop façade. This is evident in the quality of the decorative detail which has lasted well to this day.

St Mary's School



The village primary school was founded by Rev Isaac Gossett who set up a charity to raise funds to build the school and provide free education for the poorer children in Datchet. It was built on land given by the Lord of the Manor, Hon. Walter Francis Montagu Douglas Scott, 5th Duke of Buccleuch and 7th Duke of Queensberry, and opened in 1843. The section of heritage value is the long, narrow series of Victorian brick-built buildings extending back from The Green. The original structure dates from 1843 with later additions. Elements of Gothic revival design reflect the religious drivers behind much 19th-century education. These include steeply pitched slate roofs, pointed arches on front-facing roof gables, decorative bargeboards, tall windows, and a bell tower (later removed).

WWI Crucifix



The crucifix memorial on London Road 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 (now Grade II listed) 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. Since then, the village has expanded and the Baptist Church has been built nearby.

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