

WATFORD PUBLIC ART AUDIT

2025



Prepared by

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Introduction

This Public Art Audit was undertaken between November 2022 and February 2025 as part of a wider project to develop the public art strategy and associated public art commissioning toolkit.

Only permanent works of art are included, covering a range of categories: sculpture, painting (murals), lighting, and mosaic, created in materials including wood, metal, landscaping and planting. The majority of works are located in external public locations, with several internal works included where there is public accessibility. Street art has not been included in the audit.

Many of the works were created for the specific environment and context in which they are located, while others were acquired as existing works of art, which were then placed in suitable locations. The audit comprises (28) works of art, arranged chronologically from the earliest example, the Watford Peace Memorial of 1928, to projects installed in the recent past, such as the River Colne Waterfields Recreation Mural as part of the River Colne Restoration Programme.

This report excludes listed structures and objects such as war memorials, coal duty markers, water troughs, Turnpike markers and the tombs in St Mary's Churchyard and other burial grounds. These are detailed in the Nationally Listed Buildings in Watford (Watford Borough Council, 2014); Locally Listed Buildings in Watford (Watford Borough Council, updated 2010 with a revised and updated introduction in 2018); and the Proposed Additions to the List of Locally Important Buildings in Watford (Watford Borough Council, February 2019).

While a detailed condition report was not required as part of the brief, observations on the current condition of the works are made, and maintenance is considered to be an essential component of any collection of public art (see section 2). Evidence of vandalism or damage was relatively scarce. It is understood that the council acts quickly to remove graffiti found on

subway/underpass murals, which are treated with an anti-graffiti coating. Some subways are marred by litter and evidence of neglect.

It was noted that only some of the external sculptural works are currently provided with lighting after dusk. However, some work includes illumination as a matter of course (underpass murals, for example) or is designed in (Welcome to Watford scheme at Watford Junction Station). One external work that is intrinsically a light installation (Ghost Train at Bushey Arches) was not operational. It is understood that in some situations such as parks, sensitivity to biodiversity means that lighting may not be appropriate.

Only a few of the works are currently provided with an adequate plaque giving the artist's name and details of the work, including the artist's concept. In the case of site-specific artworks, the lack of signage that links the artworks that form the Colne River Sculpture Trail is a missed opportunity and counter to the original intention of this trail, which was to draw people into the riverside parks and open spaces. Without acknowledgement and recognition of community involvement, consultation or participation in the creation of a public artwork, there is a risk that the initial sense of identity and place-making is lost.

In addition to providing information to visitors and inviting public access and engagement, instructive signage can also provide information for new owners of the site where artwork is located, particularly where time has passed, and good record-keeping is lacking. It was also noted that there needs to be more diversity of artists, a straightforward commissioning process and that the recent focus has been on the more temporary / ephemeral media, primarily murals.



Maintenance, Decommissioning & Relocation

Public art located outdoors is exposed to all weathers, subject to daily wear and tear, and vulnerable to human intervention, such as vandalism or accidental damage.

The location where the work is sited may also be subject to change or even redevelopment. As a result, public art can begin to look tired, out of context or lose its meaning or relevance to the site. Much care and thought may have gone into the original commissioning and positioning of the work, but in some instances circumstances change, and it may be necessary to remove or relocate the work of art, either temporarily or permanently, through a decommissioning or relocation process.

It is good practice that a Maintenance Plan and Risk Assessment accompanies each work of public art, identifying who is responsible for ensuring quality upkeep and any particular recommendations as to care. If the item is vulnerable to vandalism, then a Vandalism & Risk Reduction Plan might form part of the Maintenance Plan. The owner of the work should hold a copy of these plans and assessments. It is recommended that these are reviewed every five years to ensure that the works of art are still relevant in their setting and the original artistic integrity and vision have been maintained.

Decommissioning or relocation is the process of removing an existing work of art from its site; in the case of Watford, this would apply to works commissioned or purchased by the council, or gifted to the town, and in all situations requires careful thought. Decommissioning might be appropriate for one or more of the following reasons:

- the artwork has been determined to be of inferior quality relative to that of other artworks
- the artwork has been determined to be incompatible with the original intent of the artwork or the current intent of the collection
- the artwork has been damaged or has deteriorated to the point where restoration is impractical or unfeasible, or the cost of

restoration is excessive in relation to the appraised value of the artwork

- the artwork endangers public safety
- significant changes in the use, character or actual design of the site require a re-evaluation of the relationship of the artwork to the site
- the artwork requires excessive maintenance or has faults in design or quality, and the council cannot correctly maintain the artwork
- a written request from the artist(s) has been received, that seeks removal of the work
- changes to the environment impact on the integrity of the work, affecting the artist's original intent or moral rights
- it is fraudulent or not an authentic work.

If considering decommissioning or relocation, the process should be overseen or carried out by a review panel. The process undertaken by the panel must be transparent and engage with experts, artists, interested parties and members of the public. Documentation of the process and a visual record of the work in situ should be included. Once a recommendation has been made about the decommissioning or relocation of a council-owned work of art, a final decision will be referred to the Deputy Leader and/or relevant Cabinet Members on a case-by-case basis. A minimum of six months should be allowed from the date that an artwork requires removal or relocation.

Heritage considerations about the work of art to be decommissioned or relocated should be reviewed, such as whether the work is historic or listed, placed within a listed building or situated within a conservation area, the grounds of a listed building or in a registered park or garden. If any of these are relevant, the Conservation Officer should be notified.

To establish whether the artwork to be decommissioned or relocated is of significant artistic, cultural or historical importance the following criteria should be considered:

- are there are many works by this artist (regionally, nationally, internationally)
- is the artwork of good quality and skilled artistry
- is the financial value of the artwork significant
- what were the circumstances in which the artwork was commissioned or made (e.g. whether it commemorates or celebrates a significant event)
- does the artwork celebrate an important Watford figure or event
- has the artwork been adopted as a local landmark by residents.

If relocation of the artwork is viable, other suitable locations should be carefully explored. Whether the proposed site is a public space owned by the council or a 'public' space owned by a private organisation, consideration should be given to the materials that comprise the work of art and the environment of the new location. This might be the character of the public realm, sightlines, exposure to sunlight, footfall, and potential for public interaction. Other considerations include whether the new situation will impact the artistic integrity of the piece, affect the artist's original intent or moral rights; or increase the potential for damage or vandalism. It is good practice to contact the artist and original commissioner to seek guidance on relocation suggestions.

Ideally, the proposed location should be unaffected by redevelopment in the next ten years. Planning consent is likely to be required and these timescales should be considered at the start of the relocation process. For relocation there is a statutory requirement for planning consent, which the council Planning Officer can advise on.

Public and stakeholder consultation should be undertaken for both decommissioning and relocation, and is an integral part of the decision-making process. It is recommended that all artworks are consulted on by uploading them to the CommonPlace online consultation portal (<https://www.commonplace.is/>).

Types of Decommissioning

Decommissioning refers to the process of permanently removing a work of public art from display and should not be undertaken lightly. Possible options include long-term storage, gifting, selling, loaning or destroying the work.

The sale of an artwork may be problematic due to the public nature of the work or the appropriation of funds from the sale of the item. If selling is considered the artist should be informed and potentially offered first refusal. Any sale of the artwork via a third party, whose primary job is within the art market, might be subject to Artists' Resale Rights (see <https://artquest.org.uk/artlaw-article/the-artists-resale-right-regulations-2006/>). A policy decision would be required to confirm if funds raised by sale could be ring-fenced to support maintenance costs for other works in the council's public art collection or to support new commissions. Recipients of gifted items could include the original artist or their family, schools, museum and art collections, or local authorities. Justification will need to be made as to why one of these options is being recommended and/or the decision-making process used to recommend to whom an item is being gifted, lent or sold and on what terms and conditions.

Putting artworks into storage should be a last resort due to the costs incurred in transportation and logistical requirements in reassembling and reinstalling the artwork post storage. It is therefore, essential to obtain for this process and ensure these will be covered before an artwork goes into storage. An estimated time that it will stay in storage before a suitable development or alternative display option can be arranged should also be considered.

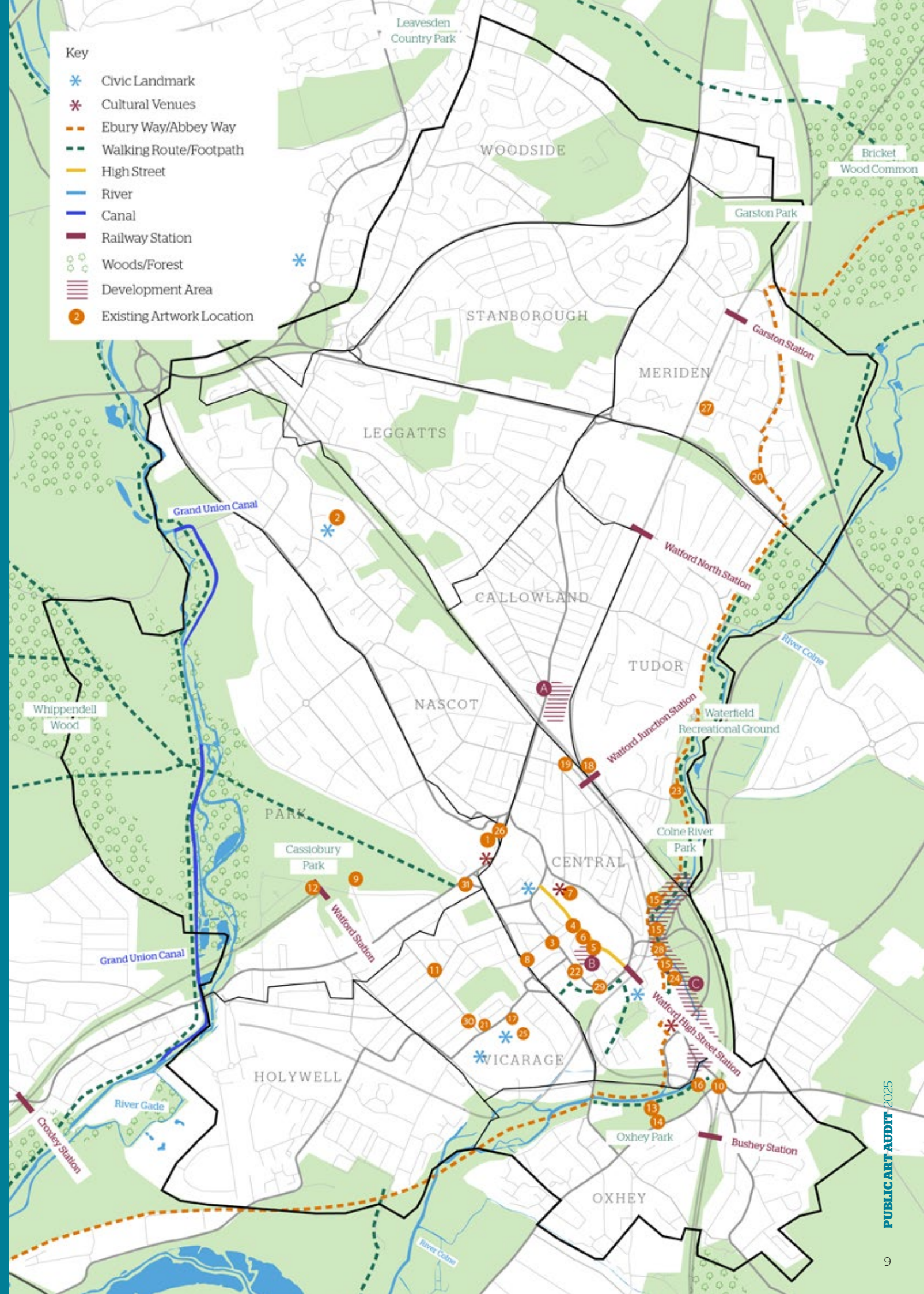
Costs for de-installation, transport, insurance and destruction of an item must be considered, including the cost of quality repair work to the public realm once the item is removed, in addition to any management and legal expenses. It is good practice to contact the artist and commissioner to notify them of the reasons for this decision.

In order to ensure the vision of Watford's Public Art Strategy 2025-2035 is achieved, this guidance has been produced to assist in looking after its public art collection to ensure their quality and presentation are kept at a high standard and remain appropriate.

Existing Artwork Locations

Watford

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Watford Peace Memorial,
Mary Pownall Bromet | Abbey Lossing |
| 2 The Passing of the Wind,
Charles Dyson-Smith | 19 Welcome to Watford, Dallas-Pierce-Quintero,
Fold Engineering, NES Architectural,
Stephen Barrett |
| 3 Man and Woman, Andrew B. Miller | 20 Graham Taylor OBE, MurWalls (Mr Meana) |
| 4 Festival Friendship Columns, Philip Bews
and Diane Gorvin | 21 Graham Taylor OBE, MurWalls, Marc Silver,
Mark Meana and Dave Nash |
| 5 The Hornet, Heather Burrell | 22 Watford FC Subway Mural, MurWalls |
| 6 The Learning Curve, Adrian Moakes | 23 Rediscovering the River Colne, Mark Tanti,
Demografix |
| 7 Lustre, Bill Culbert | 24 River Flower Pillar Murals, Natasha Batten /
Tash Creates |
| 8 Travelodge Mural, Terence Holness-Wright
& Paul Longman | 25 Sir Elton John, MurWalls |
| 9 The Owl Tree, artist tbc. | 26 Sir Elton John, MurWalls, Marc Silver |
| 10 Ghost Train, Tony Stallard | 27 Cow Lane Subway Mural, Demografix
and Aimi Rix |
| 11 Printing Industry, MJM Mosaics | 28 River Colne Waterfields Recreation Mural,
MurWalls |
| 12 Labyrinth, Watford 8/270, Mark Wallinger | 29 Watford FC 1999 Promotion Mural |
| 13 & 14 Conker and Horse Chestnut Leaf Seat,
David Gross | 30 West Watford Community Centre Mural |
| 15 Colne River Sculpture Trail, Luke Perry | 31 The Overpass Suite |
| 16 Heron, Artes Mundi | |
| 17 Graham Taylor OBE, Douglas Jennings | |
| 18 The Beehive / Urban Ecosystem, | |



Public Art Audit Entries

This audit does not take into account decommissioned artwork or artwork that have been removed from the public spaces of Watford. While every effort has been made to be as comprehensive as possible, the omission of any other artworks is completely unintentional and only due to a lack of information being publicly available at the time this research was undertaken.



Artist:
Mary Pownall Bromet
(bronze figures)

Fabrication:
Morris Singer & Co. Ltd

Medium:
Bronze, Portland Stone

Date:
1928

Location:
The Parade, adjacent to
Watford Town Hall,
WD17 3RL

Previous location:
see below

Grid Reference:
TQ1052996890

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

Watford Peace Memorial

Brief Description and History

Watford Peace Memorial was commissioned to commemorate the citizens of Watford who lost their lives in World War One. It consists of a trio of bronze male nude figures: two seated, *To the Fallen* and *To the Wounded*, flanking a central standing figure, Victory. Each figure is set on a separate raised pedestal arranged along a simple, semi-circular low wall of Portland stone, which is centrally inscribed with the dates of the War and a carved wreath in relief either side. The Memorial is set on a stepped base within an area of paving. It was originally situated in front of the nearby Peace Memorial Hospital, now Peace Hospice Care, which had opened in 1925 funded by public subscription to commemorate the war. The artist of the bronze sculptural group is Mary Pownall Bromet.

Mary Pownall Bromet (1862 1937) was a prominent local sculptor who had studied in Frankfurt, Rome and Paris where she was taught by Auguste Rodin. She exhibited widely and was influential in her day, known for her expressive work; she was President of the Society of Women Artists and an Associate Member of the Royal Society of British Sculptors. She had come to live in Oxhey, Hertfordshire following her marriage to Alfred Bromet in 1902/03. The three figures on the Peace Memorial had originated as plaster sculptures created between 1914 and 1918, collectively titled *The Spirit of War*, which she offered to the new Peace Memorial Hospital. Following a public appeal the figures were cast in bronze at the Morris Singer foundry at a cost of c. £800; each figure is inscribed with the artist's name. The Watford Peace Memorial was unveiled on 18 July (some sources give the date as 13 June) 1928 by the Earl of Clarendon. After World War Two, the memorial was rededicated to the dead of that war and the dates 1939 1945 were added below the dates '1914 1918' on the wall below the figure of 'Victory', with a stone tablet at the base.

The Memorial was moved to the current location outside Watford Town Hall in 1971 in order to accommodate a road widening scheme. The Memorial is the focus of Watford's annual Remembrance Service. Within the same paved area is a simple Portland stone memorial 'In Remembrance of Citizens of the Borough who have given their Lives in Conflicts since 1945', and a tree dedicated to Anne Frank is located nearby. The Memorial was listed Grade II* in 1983 (list entry no: 1348116). It is a rare example of a war memorial sculpted by a female artist, and also one depicting male nude figures.

Sources of information:

Historic England list entry: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1348116?section=official-list-entry>
<https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/2950>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Conservation work was undertaken in 2013/14 with a grant of £5,167 from the War Memorials Trust awarded towards the total cost. As it was noted that Mary Pownall Bromet's intention was for the bronze to develop a natural patina, excessive re-patination was not undertaken.



Photographs:
date taken
14 November 2022

For further information on condition/maintenance see:

Freestanding heritage assets in Watford Management Plan, Watford Borough Council, 2014
Orbis Conservation Condition Report and Treatment Proposal, June 2019.

Current condition (14 November 2022): some staining on Portland stone pedestals beneath bronze figures; some cracks in Portland stone plinth/ pedestals; some chipping to stone at base of Memorial.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. It remains an important focus of Watford's annual Remembrance Service and has good public access.

Artist:
Charles Dyson-Smith

Medium:
Bronze, on stone plinth

Date:
1962

Location:
Cheslyn House and Gardens, Nascot Wood Road, WD17 4SL

Previous location:
see below

Grid Reference:
TQ0967398615

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

**The Passing of the Wind
(also known as Dancing Woman)**

Brief Description and History

This sculpture by Charles Dyson-Smith, *The Passing of the Wind* (also known as Dancing Woman or Dancing Lady), is a three-quarters life-size figure of a female nude dancing. It was presented to Watford in 1962 by William Percy King, a prominent London solicitor and long-standing local resident who lived in Nascot Wood Road. King had been given the plaster original of the sculpture, which he had cast in bronze and then donated it to the town, which he described as “marvellously well run ... very few towns have all the amenities we have and I’m very grateful”. The sculpture was unveiled in March 1963 at its original location at the south-east end of Hempstead Road as part of a water feature near Watford Library. In September 2011 the sculpture suffered vandalism and one of the hands was stolen. Following its repair and restoration, the sculpture was not returned to the location in the town centre but relocated to Cheslyn Gardens in 2012, set on a new stone plinth. Fixed to the plinth is an engraved plaque recording that ‘The statue was presented in 1962 by W. P. King, a Life Long Resident of the Town’ followed by a quotation derived from Charles Lamb: ‘Place of kind engendure – a man would give something to have been born in such places.’ In 2019 it was proposed that the sculpture be added to Watford’s List of Locally Important Buildings.

Charles William Dyson-Smith (1891-1960) studied at the Royal Academy Schools in London in 1921-25, having been awarded the Landseer Scholarship for Sculpture in 1921. He became an Associate Member of the Royal Society of British Sculptors (RSBS) in 1936, becoming a Fellow in 1938, and was a member of the RSBS Council in 1943-45. He was appointed Sculptor to King George V and during World War II he was an official war artist to the Admiralty. His style is described as epitomising ‘the Art Deco movement sweeping across Europe during the 1930s’. Another sculpture by Dyson-Smith, *Mourning Widows* (1945) is in the collection at Watford Museum.

Cheslyn House was owned by Henry and Daisy Colbeck, who created the gardens, planting a collection of unusual and exotic plants they had collected from their travels around the world. Cheslyn House and Gardens have been managed by Watford Borough Council since 1965 and are open to the public.

‘Extract from Charles Lamb ‘The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple’ in Essays of Elia (first published 1820)’

Sources of information:

Proposed additions to the List of Locally Important Buildings in Watford, February 2019, Appendix 4, p30
sladmore.com/artists/charles-dyson-smith-2/#a
<http://www.speel.me.uk/herts/watfordcheslyn.htm>
<https://www.thebestof.co.uk/local/watford/community-hub/blog/view/the-dancing-woman-sculpture-finds-a-new-home>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Restoration work was undertaken in late 2012 prior to the sculpture being installed in its new location in Cheslyn Gardens (details in the Proposed Additions to the List of Locally Important Buildings in Watford (Watford Borough Council, February 2019. Artwork is referenced as Dancing Woman Sculpture.)



Photographs:
date taken
6 February 2023

For further information on condition/maintenance see:

Freestanding heritage assets in Watford Management Plan, Watford Borough Council, 2014
Orbis Conservation Condition Report and Treatment Proposal, June 2019.

Current condition (6 February 2023): good, although there is some marking to the stone plinth and to the bronze.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. It has good public access, being adjacent to a path.

Audit Ref. No.

03

Artist:
Andrew B. Miller

Medium:
Limestone on brick plinth

Date:
1967

Location:
Landscaped area near
St Mary's Churchyard,
WD18 OBU

Previous location:
see below

Grid Reference:
TQ1097496282

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

Man and Woman

Brief Description and History

Andrew B. Miller was a former pupil of Kingsfield School, Oxhey. His sculpture *Man and Woman* was presented to Watford Corporation in 1967. It was collected directly from the Royal Academy, London, where it was exhibited, valued at £600. It was installed on a gentle mound in the new landscaped area overlooked by the 1960s circular multi-storey car park on Church Street. David Crozier, writing in the Watford Observer (6 October 1967), refers to the work as Watford's "second public statue [...] a striking modern sculpture in white Portland stone."

The sculpture today stands on a rectangular low plinth of blue-fired clay bricks enclosed by a concrete surround, with a plaque identifying the work and artist set into the bricks.

Sources of information:

<https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk/news/11498474.october-6-1967/>
<https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/man-and-woman-313643>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Conservation work was undertaken on behalf of Watford Borough Council by Veolia in November 2013. At that time the brick plinth was reduced in size with a concrete kerb placed around it. The condition report by Orbis (see below) identified the condition as rather poor, with surface dirt, green colouration, lichen growth and corrosion to the name plaque, still in evidence in 2022.

For further information on condition/maintenance see:

Freestanding heritage assets in Watford Management Plan, Watford Borough Council, 2014
Orbis Conservation Condition Report and Treatment Proposal, June 2019.

Current condition (14 November 2022): poor, green colouration to stone, some graffiti.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; however, relocation might be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. Improvements could be made to public access, which is currently poor, with no path providing accessibility to the sculpture across the grass slope.

Photographs:
date taken
14 November 2022



Audit Ref. No.

04

Artist:
Philip Bews and Diane Gorvin

Medium:
Bronze, copper, stainless steel; York stone plinth

Fabrication:
Castle Fine Arts

Date:
1999

Location:
St Mary's Square,
off High Street,
Watford WD18 OEG

Previous location:
see below

Grid Reference:
TQ1105296348

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

Festival Friendships Columns

Brief Description and History

The *Festival Friendships Columns* were commissioned by Watford Borough Council, celebrating Watford's town twinning and the festivals common to several of the five connected towns of Mainz (Germany); Nanterre (France); Novgorod (Russia); Pesaro (Italy) and Wilmington (USA).

The sculpture is composed of four 6m high columns, each comprising a tower of three stainless steel tubes, which support two cast bronze masks 1m high, which were cast by Castle Fine Arts Foundry. Wrapping round the masks and upper half of the columns are copper ribbons, some patinated green. The poles of the column pass through a domed bronze base and are fixed to a York stone pier. The domed base has a relief map of the Northern Hemisphere showing the location of the twin towns, and each pier is inscribed with the title of an appropriate festival (relating to the mask above it) carved into the vertical face of the York stone coping:

Watford Harlequin / Pesaro Festa del Porto

Wilmington First Night / Mainz Fastnacht

Watford Millennium / Nanterre Parade

Watford Rainbow Festival / Novgorod Sadko

The commission was awarded to sculptors Philip Bews and Diane Gorvin who have collaborated on making sculpture for the public realm since 1986. They have worked throughout the UK and internationally, using a wide range of materials: wood; stone; cast glass; bronze; stainless steel. They have created over 100 site-specific art projects, in each case designed in response to the context of the site.

Philip Bews trained and qualified as a landscape architect, practicing for eight years before retraining and gaining a first class BA honours for Sculpture. Diane Gorvin has a sculpture diploma in Environmental Design and was Town Artist for Runcorn and Warrington Development Corporation for five years. They moved to the Forest of Dean in 1997 after living in the north-west for 15 years.

Sources of information:

<http://www.bewsgorvin.co.uk/sculpture-festival-friendships.html>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

There is no record of conservation work, although overgrown branches from an adjacent tree that was noted in the Orbis report in 2019 (see below) appear to have been removed.

For further information on condition/maintenance see:

Freestanding heritage assets in Watford Management Plan, Watford Borough Council, 2014

Orbis Conservation Condition Report and Treatment Proposal, June 2019.

Current condition (14 November 2022): fairly good, although some chipping has occurred to the York stone plinths.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. It has good public access.



Photographs:

date taken
14 November 2022

Audit Ref. No.

05

Artist:
Heather Burrell

Medium:
Steel, bronze

Date:
2000

Location:
Junction High Street/King
Street, adjacent 130 High
Street, WD18 OBU

Grid Reference:
TQ1118996250

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

The Hornet

Brief Description and History

The sculpture celebrates Watford Football Club whose players have been known as 'The Hornets' since 1960 after changing to a yellow and black kit the previous year, and the new nickname chosen following a competition held among fans. The history of the club can be traced back to 1881 when Henry Grover approached the Earl of Essex for permission to play football in Cassiobury Park. Heather Burrell was commissioned by Watford Borough Council, and her sculpture *The Hornet* consists of a central steel column set on a cast bronze base in the form of a hive, with a cast bronze sculpture of a hornet at the top.

Heather Burrell works largely in steel and other metals from her workshop in south-east London. "My material of choice is the durable and versatile medium of steel. My motifs are inspired by the inherent beauty of natural forms, which I create through combining precision laser cut elements with hand forged blacksmithing techniques. Traditional and modern themes are explored; nature and technology are fused into a space-defining structure designed to become the cherished focal point of a community." Heather Burrell has undertaken numerous public commissions, for both sculptures and architectural schemes.

Sources of information:

<https://www.heatherburrell.co.uk>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

There is no record of conservation work taking place.

For further information on condition/maintenance see:

Freestanding heritage assets in Watford Management Plan, Watford Borough Council, 2014
Orbis Conservation Condition Report and Treatment Proposal, June 2019.

Current condition (14 November 2022): fairly good.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. It has good public access although the sculpture has some visibility issues in this busy location. The artwork is a well-liked local landmark.



Photographs:
date taken
14 February 2023

Audit Ref. No.

06

Artist:
Adrian Moakes

Fabrication:
Adrian & Paul Moakes,
Lodge Foundry

Medium:
Galvanised steel, stainless
steel, brass, aluminium,
copper, bronze

Date:
2001

Location:
High Street & Sensory
Garden, St Mary's
Churchyard, WD17 2BE

Grid Reference:
TQ111896296

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

The Learning Curve

Brief Description and History

The Learning Curve was one of a series of commissions for Watford Borough Council's Town Centre Enhancement Programme, funded by the National Lottery. The c.5 metre high sculpture consists of 37 tactile, pictorial panels that depict natural and handmade subjects from the immediate environment, which were developed by the artist, Adrian Moakes, working with art students at West Hertfordshire College. It was installed by A & P Moakes and Carillon, and was unveiled on 7 June 2001.

The panels originally had more colour (see photograph) but this has faded over time, although some restoration has been undertaken by Adrian Moakes.

Adrian Moakes has long experience in creating unique public artworks through undertaking local research, consultation and design workshops. He is known for encouraging communities to participate in the creation of site-specific sculptures that will enhance and invigorate their environment.

Sources of information:

<https://www.adrianmoakes.com/learning-curve-2001#:~:text=The%20Learning%20Curve%20%2D%202001&text=One%20of%20a%20series%20of,the%20source%20of%20each%20image>.
Spiral (The Learning Curve) | Art UK

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Conservation work was undertaken in 2007. The artist repainted and polished the sculpture, replacing a stainless steel panel damaged by skateboarders.

For further information on condition/maintenance see:

Freestanding heritage assets in Watford Management Plan, Watford Borough Council, 2014.
Orbis Conservation Condition Report and Treatment Proposal, June 2019.

Current condition (14 November 2022): surface colour is no longer much in evidence.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. It has good public access and also provides an element of seating.



Photographs:

dates taken
14 November 2022
& 14 February 2023

Audit Ref. No.

07

Artist:

Bill Culbert

Medium:

Neon

Date:

2004

Location:

Watford Palace Theatre,
20 Clarendon Road,
WD17 1JZ

Grid Reference:

TQ1099296689

Owner:

Watford Palace Theatre

Lustre

Brief Description and History

The Grade II-listed Watford Palace Theatre opened in 1908, designed by architect H. M. Theobald, originally a Music Hall called the Watford Palace of Varieties. It became a Civic Theatre in 1964 when Watford Corporation took over the management, forming Watford Civic Theatre Trust Ltd. The theatre has undergone a number of renovations, with a new wing added in 1984 as part of an office redevelopment on the adjacent site. Major renovations took place in 2002/4 with architects Burrell Foley Fischer commissioned to undertake the redevelopment. In the original theatre building, the stage house was completely rebuilt to provide a more generously proportioned partner to the 660-seat auditorium, which itself was remodelled to 'close in' the wide side elevations and extended recess of the gallery. As part of the project artist Bill Culbert was commissioned to create a light work for the ceiling of the auditorium to replace the chandelier. His suspended work *Lustre* in undulating golden yellow neon was installed in 2004.

Bill Culbert (1935 2019) was one of the world's leading light artists. He had more than 100 solo exhibitions worldwide during his 60-year career. Having represented New Zealand at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013, Culbert was notable for his inventive use of light and shadow in painting, photography, sculpture and installation work, as well as his use of found and recycled materials. From suitcases pierced with fluorescent tubes, repurposed furniture, vast arrays of reclaimed plastic containers, Culbert's poetic work invites us to revalue familiar objects and refocus our perceptions. Bill Culbert undertook numerous public art commissions, for both interior and exterior spaces.

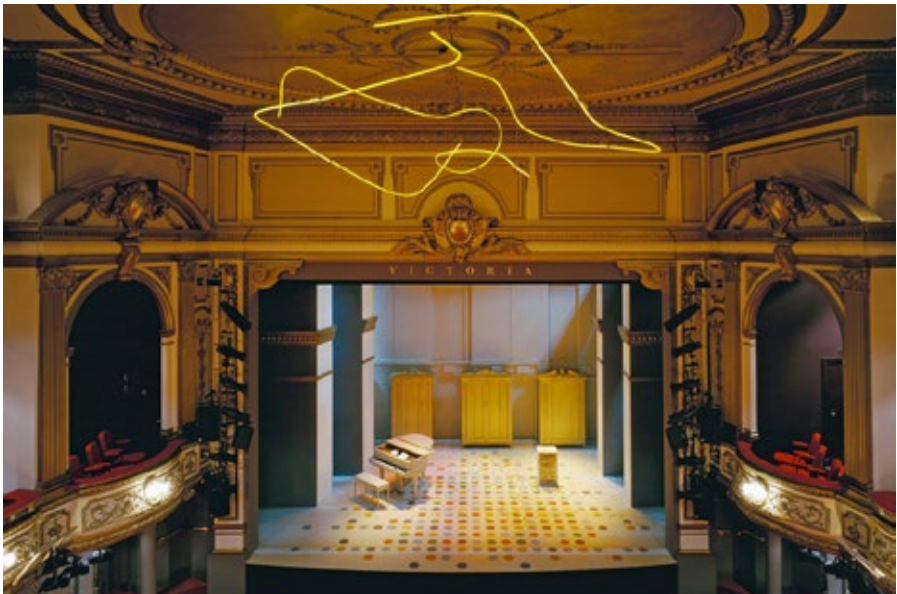
Sources of information:

Palace Theatre, Watford — Burrell Foley Fischer LLP (bff-architects.com)
Top image courtesy Watford Palace Theatre

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (14 November 2023): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. It has good visibility from within the auditorium.



Photographs:

date taken

14 February 2023

Audit Ref. No.

08

Artist:
Terence Holness-Wright
& Paul Longman

Medium:
Paint

Date:
2006

Location:
Travelodge,
23 25 Market Street,
WD18 0PD

Grid Reference:
TQ1092596331

Owner:
Unknown

Travelodge Mural

Brief Description and History

This mural panel on the external wall of the Travelodge hotel in Market Street was created to mark the opening of the newly-built 93-bed Watford Central Travelodge in 2006. Travelodge offered Year Nine pupils at Stanborough Secondary School the opportunity to take part in a school art project to celebrate the new hotel.

The brief was to design a piece of public art representing what Watford meant to them, and the winning entry would be displayed publicly. The design by Terence Holness-Wright and Paul Longman, both aged 14, was selected by the Mayor of Watford, Councillor Dorothy Thornhill. It was installed on the hotel's external wall on Market Street and was unveiled on 21 December 2006 when the hotel was officially opened by the Mayor of Watford and Marlon King, striker for Watford Football Club. Paul Longman and Terence Holness-Wright won a weekend break for their families in any UK Travelodge of their choice.

The mural panel is displayed behind Perspex; the inscription with the artists' names in the bottom right-hand corner is obscured. Responsibility for this work is not acknowledged by Travelodge Watford Central, who assume it is in the ownership of Watford Borough Council.

Sources of information:

<https://www.travelodge.co.uk/press-centre/press-releases/MARLON-KING-STAR-STRIKER-WATFORD-FC-AND-MAYOR-WATFORD-COUNCILLOR-DOROTHY>

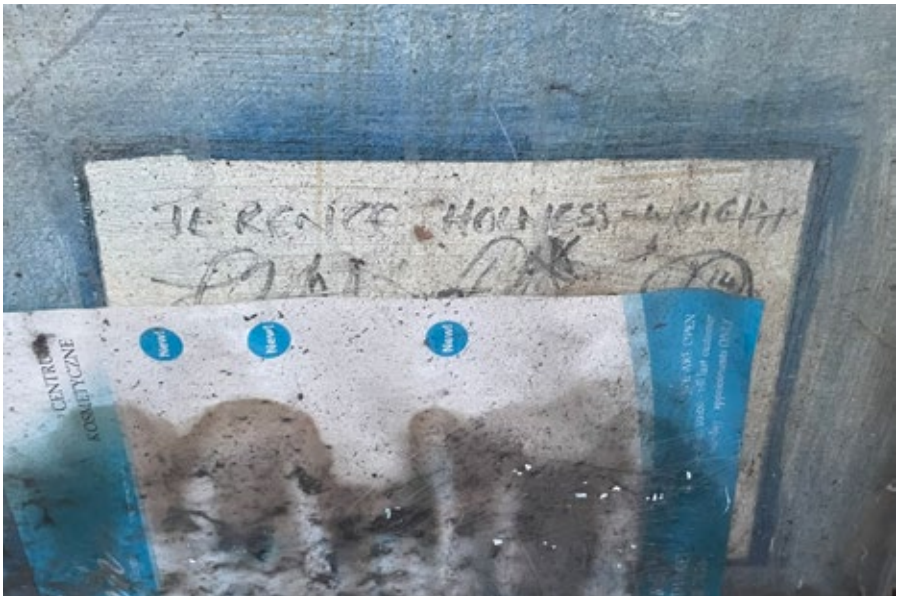
Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (14 February 2023): poor.

Restoration of this mural panel should be considered if it is to be publicly displayed to advantage.



Photographs:
date taken
14 February 2023



Audit Ref. No.

09

Artist:
(tbc)

Medium:
Oak tree, carved
and painted

Date:
2007/8 (tbc)

Location:
Cassiobury Park,
near Cha café and
playground/bandstand

Grid Reference:
TQ0984596805

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

The Owl Tree

Brief Description and History

The Owl Tree is a sculpture carved into an old oak tree that is estimated to be at least 400 years old. The tree had been in decline for some years, while inside it still remained of value for vertebrates and fungi. The carving was undertaken under the auspices of Friends of Cassiobury Park. It includes a bear appearing to enter and exit the tree at its base. Other creatures carved into the surface are different species of birds, a deer, foliage and a bearded face. It is situated near the Cha Café and Playground in Cassiobury Park.

Cassiobury Park is Watford's main public park, which came into being in 1909 when the Urban District Council purchased part of the estate of the Earls of Essex around Cassiobury House. The Earls of Essex had occupied Cassiobury for over 250 years, but when the 6th Earl died in 1892, it was clear that little maintenance had been carried out on the house in the previous fifty years, as a consequence of which many of the family paintings and other valuables were sold to provide funds. By 1900 the house had ceased to be used as a permanent residence, and in 1908 parts of the estate were sold off. The Urban District Council paid £24,500 for 65 acres in 1909, to add to some land that had been purchased in 1908, and added a further 25.5 acres, costing £7,000, in 1912, to create a 'people's park and pleasure ground'. More land was purchased in 1923 and 1930, the West Herts Golf Course was bought in 1932 and Whippendell Wood in 1935. Cassiobury House was demolished in 1927. The 190 acre park contains a range of facilities for recreation as well as woodland and a nature reserve managed by Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.

The Friends of Cassiobury Park were established in 1973 and work with Watford Borough Council's parks service to maintain and protect the park.

Sources of information:

Cassiobury Park (arcgis.com)
About Us - Friends of Cassiobury Park
Cassiobury Park-Leaflet (friendsofcassioburypark.org.uk)

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (14 February 2023): fairly good, although there is some deterioration of the painted surface due to weathering.



Photographs:
date taken
14 February 2023

Audit Ref. No.

10

Artist:
Tony Stallard

Medium:
Light installation of
cross-fading LED, steel,
landscaping & planting

Date:
2009

Location:
Bushey Arches,
convergence of
Pinner Road/Chalk Hill/
Eastbury Road/
Lower High Street,
Watford WD17 2JD

Grid Reference:
TQ0984596805

Owner:
Watford Borough Council/
Network Rail

Ghost Train

Brief Description and History

Bushey Arches is a major rail, road and pedestrian transport interchange, at the site of the Grade II listed brick railway viaduct designed by Robert Stephenson in 1834. By the 21st century this area was in a poor state due to heavy traffic particularly at peak times, with thousands of vehicles using the roads per hour, and the main line trains running above, as a result of which it was an unpleasant environment for local residents and other pedestrians passing under the arches. A project to improve the area was designated by Watford Borough Council as a site for public art in response to residents' complaints. Watford's Green Heart Partnership (GHP) Team, Hertfordshire Highways and Hertfordshire Constabulary came together to address this, working with the Perception AREA creative team to turn Bushey Arches into a visually interesting space that celebrated the heritage of the site as a key transport interchange.

The initial stage of the project aimed to capture the perceptions of the community about Bushey Arches and its environmental issues. GHP appointed filmmaker Rayna Nadeem to work in the area throughout May and June 2006, engaging with people who lived, worked and passed through the Arches. Her DVD 'Underneath the Arches' was used to inform the project team about the next stage: to regenerate the site into a high impact visual gateway that would positively engage communities with their environment. Inspired and informed by this public engagement, the GHP team then selected established artist Tony Stallard to bring change to the site through a lighting installation and hard and soft landscaping. The team also worked with external consultants, including landscape architect Noel Kingsbury, to find solutions to planting and maintenance of soft landscaping on this problematic site.

Tony Stallard worked with the team to develop a lighting scheme to illuminate the archway under Bridge LEC1/59A, Span 2 with a colourful, slowly changing light installation, using low maintenance, energy efficient LED lights. *Ghost Train* was completed in 2009. Stallard describes *Ghost Train* as "a quasi-monument celebrating Robert Stephenson who built and designed the junction at Bushey Arches. The work sets up a fake train track and tunnels underneath the actual tracks in simulation of the railway above." At present the lighting element is not operational, although the sculptural elements of two tunnels facing each other remain, together with paving that suggests railway tracks running across the ground between them.

The aim of the project was to regenerate a busy, polluted area into a gateway feature and progresses Watford's ambitions to be a 'greener' more sustainable town by raising awareness of heritage and important environmental issues amongst residents and to reflect in a playful manner the heritage of Stephenson's bridge and his engineering works for this Victorian gateway into London to allow an iconic contemporary landmark.

Tony Stallard is known for his large-scale site-specific light sculptures created for the public realm, often made in collaboration with architects and engineers, as well as with communities. Recent commissions include light sculptures in Belfast; the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham; Florida in USA; and Calgary in Canada.



Photographs:
date taken
14 February 2023

Sources of information:

http://www.public-art-directory.com/tony-stallard-ghost-train-2009-bushey-arches-watford-junction-england_artist-78.html
<https://www.tonystallard.co.uk/ghost-train>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (14 February 2023): lighting is not operational at this time. The planting element of the scheme adjacent to the arch was not well-maintained.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its relevance to the site, however due to the non-functioning of the lighting it is not currently fulfilling its function. There is no pedestrian access to the area beneath the arches.

Audit Ref. No.

11

Artist:
MJM Mosaics

Medium:
Mosaic tiles

Date:
2009

Location:
Harwoods Road,
at corner with
Whippendell Road,
WD18 7BG

Grid Reference:
TQ102960 / TQ1023396073

Owner:
Martin Grant Homes

Printing Industry (pair of mosaic panels)

Brief Description and History

This pair of mosaic panels celebrating Watford's historic printing industry was unveiled in January 2009. The work was commissioned by Martin Grant Homes, the developers of the new building on the corner of Whippendell Road and Harwoods Road, West Watford, which comprises flats above a Tesco supermarket. The mosaic panels are installed on the Harwoods Road side of the building.

The mosaics were designed by Michael Hardy, an artist based in St Albans, Marilyn Andretti and Jeremy Nichols, who had together formed MJM Mosaics. Work had begun on the mosaic commission in 2008. The design used a range of letter and number fonts in reference to the importance of Watford's former printing industry. The colour palette uses spring colours for one of the panels and autumn colours for the other. The mosaic took 6 months to complete in the artists' studio, where it was built section by section before transportation to Watford for installation. The panels measure 14 square meters and consist of over 60,000 tiles.

The mosaics have street furniture positioned in front of them, partially obscuring the image that to the left an unsightly metal box, to the right 2 bicycle racks.

Sources of information:

<https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk/news/4067988.new-mosaic-brightens-up-west-watford/>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (6 February 2023): there is evidence of damage to tiles at the bottom of both panels, plus cracking.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. It has good public access.



Photographs:
date taken
14 February 2023



Audit Ref. No.

12

Artist:
Mark Wallinger

Medium:
Vitreous enamel

Date:
2013

Location:
Watford Station waiting room, Cassiobury Park Avenue, Watford

Grid Reference:
TQ0957196585

Owner:
TfL

Labyrinth, Watford 8/270

Brief Description and History

Watford Underground Station was built in 1925, the terminus of the Metropolitan Line and part of the London Underground network. *Labyrinth* by artist Mark Wallinger is a multi-part artwork to be installed at every station on the London Underground, which was created to celebrate 150 years of the Tube and was commissioned by Art on the Underground. Wallinger has created 270 individual artworks, one for each station on the network, each one bearing its own unique circular labyrinth, but with a graphic language common to all. Rendered in bold black, white and red graphics, the artworks are produced in vitreous enamel, the material used for signs throughout London Underground, including the Tube's roundel logo, whose circular nature the labyrinth design also echoes. Positioned at the entrance of each labyrinth is a red X. This simple mark, drawing on the language of maps, is a cue to enter the pathway. The tactile quality of the artwork's surface invites the viewer to trace the route with a finger, and to understand the labyrinth as a single meandering path into the centre and back out again – a route reminiscent of the Tube traveller's journey.

Each of Wallinger's *Labyrinth* artworks bears a different number, written in the artist's hand. For the collector or the trainspotter in us, there's something appealing in this cryptic element of the work. Although the numbers resonate with the tradition of editioned artworks, such as prints made in series, in fact they relate to the ordering system that allocates each artwork to its particular station. This numbering scheme brings an internal logic to this large collection of artworks that is directly connected to a real, albeit highly unusual, Tube journey. They refer to the order of stations visited in the Guinness World Record 'Tube Challenge' 2009, the record for the fastest time taken to pass through every single station on the London Underground network. In Watford Station, Wallinger's *Labyrinth*, Watford 8/270 is located in the waiting room on the platform that serves all Metropolitan Line trains using the station.

Mark Wallinger is an internationally renowned contemporary artist known for his engagement with ideas of power, authority, artifice and illusion. Having previously been nominated for the Turner Prize in 1995, he won in 2007 for his installation *State Britain*. His work *Ecce Homo* was the first work to occupy the empty fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square, London. He represented Britain at the Venice Biennale in 2001. In 2018, *Writ in Water* was created for the National Trust to celebrate Magna Carta at Runnymede.

Sources of information:

<https://artinpublic.art/works/23/labyrinth>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (14 February 2023): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. It has good public access.



Photographs:
date taken
14 February 2023



Artist:
David Gross

Medium:
Oak, finished in
Sadolin Clear Coat

Date:
2014

Location:
Oxhey Park, Eastbury
Road, Watford WD18 0HZ:
top of Grand Steps

Grid Reference:
TQ1148695303

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

Conker / Oxhey Conker

Brief Description and History

In 2014 this sculpture depicting a giant conker, or Horse Chestnut seed was purchased by Watford Borough Council, together with a seat and carved posts by the same artist, David Gross. In his words: "The sculpture was made to grace the top of a grand stairway, in Oxhey Park, Watford, within an avenue of Horse Chestnuts."

David Gross works with wind-felled trees, wood from managed forests, and salvaged timbers with holes and markings that hint at its history. When working wood, he is simultaneously looking for new ways of using it, while researching how it was used historically. Marks and holes from previous use and natural flaws and splits are exploited for expressive purposes. He enjoys using wood to make sculptures from observation and study, and in recent years he has made several sculptural studies of natural subjects such as insects, leaves, seeds and faces.

To give his subjects the impact and attention to detail that they deserve, David enlarges them as much as possible, and, in order to free himself from the limits of the size and structure of a tree, he will often have to use some heavy duty joinery and construction. There is a point in the production of each sculpture when the object starts to attain its own identity. This is when his focus shifts from observation to a more open-ended experimentation in new directions arising from the juxtaposition of rudimentary wood technology and complex anatomy. This interaction itself becomes meaningful as, for instance, when a carving of a face becomes a fragile membrane, bearing scars and weather beaten, a cracked and pinned-together skin, struggling to protect that which lies behind. Although all his sculptures are strong and durable, vulnerability and fragility are implied.

Sources of information:

http://www.artparks.co.uk/artpark_sculpture.php?sculpture=6508&sculptor=david_gross

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (14 November 2022): general weathering to wood.

This sculpture was not included in Orbis Conservation Condition Report and Treatment Proposal, June 2019.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. Public access is restrictive for wheelchair users.



Photographs:

dates taken
14 November 2022
& 14 February 2023

Artist:
David Gross

Medium:
Oak, finished in
Sadolin Clear Coat

Date:
2014

Location:
Oxhey Park, Eastbury
Road, Watford WD18 OHZ:
top of Grand Steps

Grid Reference:
511492 195295/
TQ1149295295

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

Horse Chestnut Leaf Seat

Brief Description and History

In 2014 this carved sculptural seat in the shape of a folded horse chestnut leaf was purchased by Watford Borough Council, together with a sculpture, *Conker*, and carved posts by the same artist, David Gross. In his words: "The seat was built to view the *Conker*. It combines two of Oxhey Park's main attractions: the Horse Chestnuts and Stephenson's arched Viaduct."

David Gross works with wind-felled trees, wood from managed forests, and salvaged timbers with holes and markings that hint at its history. When working wood, he is simultaneously looking for new ways of using it, while researching how it was used historically. Marks and holes from previous use and natural flaws and splits are exploited for expressive purposes. He enjoys using wood to make sculptures from observation and study, and in recent years he has made several sculptural studies of natural subjects such as insects, leaves, seeds and faces. To give his subjects the impact and attention to detail that they deserve, David enlarges them as much as possible, and, in order to free himself from the limits of the size and structure of a tree, he will often have to use some heavy duty joinery and construction. There is a point in the production of each sculpture when the object starts to attain its own identity. This is when his focus shifts from observation to a more open-ended experimentation in new directions arising from the juxtaposition of rudimentary wood technology and complex anatomy. This interaction itself becomes meaningful as, for instance, when a carving of a face becomes a fragile membrane, bearing scars and weather beaten, a cracked and pinned-together skin, struggling to protect that which lies behind. Although all his sculptures are strong and durable, vulnerability and fragility are implied.

Sources of information:

http://www.artparks.co.uk/artpark_sculpture.php?sculpture=6509&sculptor=david_gross

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (14 November 2022): some weathering to wood.

This sculpture was not included in Orbis Conservation Condition Report and Treatment Proposal, June 2019.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. It has good public access via the park's footpaths.



Photographs:

date taken
14 November 2022

Audit Ref. No.

15

Artist:
Luke Perry/Ironbridge
Heritage Stronghold

Medium:
Steel, galvanised
and painted, on steel
plinths/columns

Date:
2014

Location:
Colne River Corridor: from
Water Lane to Knutsford
Playing Fields

Grid Reference:
TQ1155796253
Water Lane: Fisherman

TQ1148796489
Waterfields Recreation
Ground: Edwardian Diver

TQ1148696549
Waterfields Recreation
Ground: Natural
Environment

TQ1161197045
Radlett Road Playing Fields:
Land Girl

TQ1168297563
Car park near Knutsford
Playing Fields: Heron

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

Colne River Sculpture Trail

Brief Description and History
The Colne River Sculpture Trail is a series of five sculptures, each c. 5 metres high, by Luke Perry at Industrial Heritage Stronghold, which were commissioned by Watford Borough Council to celebrate the town's cultural heritage. Sited along the Colne River Corridor from Water Lane in the south to Knutsford Playing Fields in the north, the steel sculptures are themed around the natural history and heritage of the area. The sites were selected by Watford Council in order to draw attention to the particular history of the area, as well as to encourage people into the parks.

Two of the sculptures are inspired by nature: the *Heron* and *Natural Environment*, the latter represented by a group of flying fish and a duck. The remaining three sculptures were inspired by Watford's cultural and social history. In order to develop his ideas the artist engaged with local people and worked in collaboration with staff at Watford Museum, who assisted with research. The project was initiated in December 2012 and completed in June 2014, when the Sculpture Trail was unveiled at Waterfields Recreation Ground on 9 June.



Photographs:
dates taken
6 & 14 February 2023

Natural Environment,
Waterfields Recreation
Ground



Heron, car park near
Knutsford Playing Fields



Audit Ref. No.

15

Artist:

Luke Perry/Ironbridge
Heritage Stronghold

Medium:

Steel, galvanised
and painted, on steel
plinths/columns

Date:

2014

Location:

Colne River Corridor: from
Water Lane to Knutsford
Playing Fields

Grid Reference:

TQ1155796253
Water Lane: Fisherman

TQ1148796489
Waterfields Recreation
Ground: Edwardian Diver

TQ1148696549
Waterfields Recreation
Ground: Natural
Environment

TQ1161197045
Radlett Road Playing Fields:
Land Girl

TQ1168297563
Car park near Knutsford
Playing Fields: Heron

Owner:

Watford Borough Council

Colne River Sculpture Trail (cont)

The three historically-inspired sculptures are:

Fisherman, located in Water Lane. The inspiration behind this figure of a man fishing out of a window recalls the history of flooding in this area, making reference the many local stories of people climbing to the tops of their houses with their goods and livestock in order to escape the flood water, and getting into boats through upstairs windows. This is referred to in the integral text panel set around the base of the steel column plinth.

Edwardian Diver, located in Waterfields Recreation Ground. The inspiration behind this figure of a man in an old-fashioned bathing costume preparing to dive was the open air lido that used to be here, which had a diving board and was the main swimming facility for Watford people and home to Watford Swimming Club. The inscription on the text panel refers to the open air lido and its history.

Land Girl, located in Radlett Road Playing Fields. This sculpture of a land girl resting one foot on her spade, a bucket under her arm, was inspired by the history of Land Girls and the 'Dig for Victory' campaign that was prominent in the Watford area in the Second World War. The figure is sited on an area of land that had been reserved for farming and agriculture during the War.

The sculptures each have a small plaque giving the artist's name and date on the steel column.

Luke Perry uses his expertise in both art and engineering to create large-scale sculptures. The industrial heritage of the Midlands being a particular interest of his, in 2006 he established Industrial Heritage Stronghold (IHS), a non-profit company, working with a team of artists to create public artworks that celebrate the heritage, diversity and character of communities, particularly those that are hitherto uncelebrated. Their public artworks are created directly with the communities they are designed for, through engagement, workshops and projects led by the artists. IHS has undertaken sculpture trails in town centres, nature reserves and waterways that combine interpretation and sculpture like that in Watford. For the Dudley Canal Trust, 33 sculptures were created along the 5-mile Dudley Canal network in a local history project that involved hundreds of local residents and school children.

Sources of information:

<https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk/news/19024986.watfords-history-50-objects-swimmers-sculpture-waterfields-park/>
<https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk/leisure/localexhibitions/11265914.the-colne-river-sculpture-trail-celebrates-watfords-cultural-and-social-heritage/>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (6 February 2023): reasonably good, some graffiti on *Fisherman* plaque.

There is no reason anticipated that these works should be decommissioned due to their condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current locations/sites. All but one sculpture (*Land Girl*) have fairly good public access, being near paths or public roads.



Photographs:

dates taken
6 & 14 February 2023

Fisherman, Water Lane.

Edwardian Diver,
Waterfields Recreation
Ground

Land Girl, Radlett Road
Playing Fields

Audit Ref. No.

16

Artist:
Artes Mundi

Medium:
Lacquered Tin

Date:
May 2015

Location:
North bank of the Colne,
Oxhey Park: by Watford
Arches Retail Park,
Dalton Way, Watford Heath,
WD17 2SD

Grid Reference:
TQ1170495488

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

Heron

Brief Description and History

This metal statue of a heron was installed on the north bank of the River Colne in Oxhey Park in May 2015 by Community Connection Projects CIC. It was funded by Watford Borough Council, and was likely to have been a purchased piece rather than a commission. It was undertaken to commemorate a grey heron that had been found in this location with 2 broken legs. Although the RSPCA attended sadly the bird had to be put to sleep.

In this location the River Colne flows under the Grade II listed railway viaduct designed by by Robert Stephenson in 1834.

Sources of information:

http://www.artparks.co.uk/artpark_sculpture.php?sculpture=6508&sculptor=david_gross

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (14 February 2023): good, the sculpture is maintained by Community Connection Projects CIC.



Photographs:
date taken
14 February 2023



Audit Ref. No.

17

Artist:
Douglas Jennings

Medium:
Bronze

Date:
2018

Location:
Outside the Hornets Shop,
Vicarage Road Stadium,
junction of Vicarage Road
and Occupation Road,
Watford WD18 OER

Grid Reference:
TQ1067895876

Owner:
Watford Football Club

Graham Taylor OBE

Brief Description and History

The statue celebrates Watford Football Club's former Manager, Graham Taylor OBE. It was commissioned by the club to recognise his "unparalleled achievements as Watford's greatest ever manager". Sculptor Douglas Jennings was commissioned in 2017 following the club's announcement of a sculpture to celebrate Taylor's footballing career in February shortly after his death on 12 January. The sculpture depicts Taylor leaning forward seated on a bench; It was unveiled on 4 August 2018 by Rose Taylor in the presence of hundreds of supporters and players, with speeches by, among others, the Club's Chairman and CEO Scott Duxbury.

Graham Taylor OBE (1944 2017) was manager of Watford Football Club between 1977 and 1987, returning as caretaker manager in 1996 and was again manager from 1997 2001; from 1990 to 1993 he was England Manager. The Matchday in tribute to Taylor has taken place annually on the nearest matchday to the anniversary of his death.

Inscribed around the sculpture's black stone plinth are the following words:
GRAHAM TAYLOR OBE. 1944 2017.
Watford's greatest ever manager. "Football is a simple game. It's a game for the man on the terraces; it's a game to excite people."
Football's youngest manager at 28, Graham guided Lincoln City to the Fourth Division title in 1975 76 before his unprecedented feats with Watford. A First Division runners-up spot was secured with Aston Villa, leading to the call to manage England. More success came back at Watford, in between spells in charge of Wolves and, lastly, Aston Villa.
Watford FC Honours: 1977 78 Fourth Division Champions | 1978 79 Third Division Runners-Up | 1981 82 Second Division Runners-Up | 1982-83 First Division Runners-Up | 1983 84 FA Cup Runners-Up | 1997 98 Third Division Champions | 1998 99 Second Division Play-Off Winners.

The following inscription is on the back of the bench on which the bronze figure is seated:
"Watford holds a special place in the hearts of myself and my family and always will. The kindness and love shown by supporters over the years will never be forgotten."

Douglas Jennings (b. 1966) is a British sculptor based in London, known for his figurative sculptures and public commissions. He has developed a reputation for producing public works with a high level of detail and naturalistic style. His public commissions include sculptures of footballers George Cohen and Johnny Haynes, both commissioned by Fulham Football Club, as well as important public figures and public memorials. His statue to commemorate HRH Queen Elizabeth II as the country's longest reigning monarch was unveiled in Gravesham in July 2018.

Graham Taylor OBE is also commemorated in a mural created by MurWalls opposite the club's Vicarage Road Stadium and a bench dedicated to him by Sir Elton John, together with 4 newly-planted trees, is located in Cassiobury Park. A mural of Sir Elton John is also found at Vicarage Road Stadium.



Photographs:
dates taken
4 August 2022 and
6 February 2023)

Sources of information:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-39004573>
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-45029694>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vE4Yg9Erekc>

Condition and Anticipated Life:
Current condition (6 February 2023): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. It has good public access. This is a well visited and well regarded artwork in the town, with fans travelling specifically to be photographed beside the artwork.

Artist:
Abbey Lossing

Medium:
Wood, paint

Date:
2020

Location:
Watford Junction Station,
Platform 9/10

Grid Reference:
TQ1101897348

Owner:
Bee Friendly Trust

The Beehive / Urban Ecosystem

Brief Description and History

The Beehive or Urban Ecosystem is a painted sculpture in the form of a beehive made by illustrator and animator Abbey Lossing that was originally on display in Mercer Walk in The Yards Covent Garden in central London. It was part of a programme of art installations and activities to mark the launch of a campaign, 'The Yards and The Bees', to welcome visitors back to Covent Garden in June 2020. The programme celebrated the importance of bees, including The Yards' own colony of over 240,000 bees in hives on the rooftops of the buildings, with wild flowers also planted throughout the area to encourage pollination. As part of the initiative The Yards supported the work of the Bee Friendly Trust, which was founded in 2015 to give honey bees and other pollinators the habitats they need to thrive and to inspire individuals and communities to nurture and sustain these habitats for the future.

Abbey Lossing's sculpture was created to illustrate an urban ecosystem, each layer of the hive dedicated to one part of the system, from the depths of the London Underground to the sky above the city, with an aim to highlight the integral role that bees play, even in big cities. At the end of the exhibition in The Yards, *The Beehive* was one of a number of artworks donated to the Bee Friendly Trust, and it is now part of the wildlife space at Watford Junction Station, which also includes planters and a nature trail. An informative plaque is located near *The Beehive*.

The Bee Friendly Trust is working with railway authorities, community rail partnerships and local groups across the UK to install bee-friendly flowering planters, fruit tree orchards and micro wildlife gardens on railway station platforms. The project at Watford Junction was undertaken in partnership with London Northwestern Railway, Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership and Engie Energy & Services.

Abbey Lossing is an illustrator based in Austin, Texas.

Sources of information:

<https://beefriendlytrust.org/railway-station-projects/>
<https://www.averpr.com/news-1/2020/7/27/the-yards-covent-garden-reopens-with-a-hive-of-art-to-discover>
<https://www.abbeylossing.com/about>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (6 February 2023): good, with some wear and tear to the plaque.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance; relocation might only be considered if there is significant change to the current location/site. It has good public access.



Photographs:
date taken
6 February 2023

Artist:
Dallas-Pierce-Quintero,
Fold Engineering, NES
Architectural,
Stephen Barrett

Medium:
Letters: painted wood,
lighting; planters:
weathered steel; hard
landscaping/planting

Date:
2019/20

Location:
Watford Junction Station
forecourt, WD17 1EU

Grid Reference:
TQ1098097303

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

Welcome to Watford

Brief Description and History

The Welcome to Watford scheme for the forecourt of Watford Junction station was commissioned by Watford Borough Council, working with Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Network Rail, London Northwestern Railway, West Midlands Trains and local stakeholders. It is part of the delivery of major investment at Watford Junction within the Watford Cultural Strategy 2018 2025. It was part-funded by Hertfordshire LEP under its wider Local Growth Fund investment towards the regeneration of Clarendon Road. The design brief was to create a welcoming 'gateway' for visitors arriving at the busy station. The completed project consists of a series of colourful large-scale letters spelling out 'WATFORD', which make reference to Watford's printing heritage, and which double-up as seating. Text inscribed on the horizontal slats of the letter 'W' refers to aspects of what the town offers and lighting is also built into all the letters to provide illumination at night. The design is completed by new paving and hard landscaping of the station forecourt, together with a series of planters with evergreen and deciduous planting to provide year-round interest, screening from traffic, as well as additional seating.

The scheme was designed by Dallas-Pierce-Quintero, who worked in collaboration with Fold Engineering, NES Architectural and graphic designer Stephen Barrett. Dallas-Pierce-Quintero is an architecture, art and place-shaping studio with an interdisciplinary team that designs, commissions and delivers permanent and temporary site-specific works that cross over between public art and architecture. "Our aim was to transform what was a nondescript place for passing through, into a welcoming and friendly environment, encouraging visitors to stay longer and return again. The project signposts Watford's other offers, aiming to attract new businesses and improve footfall for the town's existing retail, culture and leisure. The positioning of the letters and in-ground wayfinding help to support intuitive wayfinding, directing visitors to the town centre and encouraging walking and cycling over less sustainable modes of transport."

The completed scheme was unveiled in November 2020 by Elected Mayor of Watford Peter Taylor.

As the project brief was to create an installation that could be relocated should this become necessary due to future station development, the letters and planters are fabricated to be easily removable and adjustable as to gradients of a new site. It is not clear if the in-ground wayfinding was incorporated into the final proposal.

Sources of information:

<http://www.d-p-q.uk/projects/welcome-to-watford/>
Watford Junction station forecourt transformation completed | Watford Observer

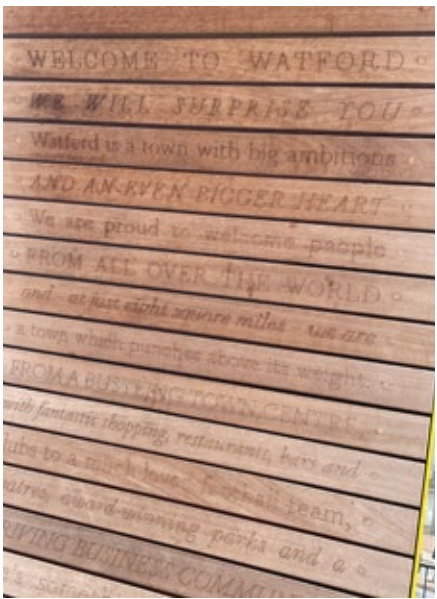
Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (February 2023): there is some evidence of wear and tear to the letters.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. However relocation is built into the project design, enabling the letters and planters to be moved if there is significant change to the current location/site. It has good public access.



Photographs:
date taken
14 February 2023



Artist:
MurWalls (Mr Meana)

Medium:
Spray Paint

Date:
2021

Location:
Meriden Community
Centre, Garsmouth Way,
Watford WD25 9ET

Grid Reference:
TQ1196399097

Owner:
Watford FC Community
Sports & Education Trust

Graham Taylor OBE

Brief Description and History

Graham Taylor OBE (1944 2017) was manager of Watford Football Club between 1977 and 1987, then caretaker manager in 1996 and again manager from 1997 2001; from 1990 to 1993 he was England Manager. Taylor was first appointed as Watford manager by Elton John, who had taken ownership of the club the year before and became chairman; the two formed a close working partnership. During his time at Watford, Taylor led the club to five promotions, into Europe and to an FA Cup final in 1983 84. The Matchday in tribute to Graham Taylor has taken place on the nearest matchday to the anniversary of his death on 12 January 2017. Both Graham Taylor OBE and Sir Elton John have been honoured by Stands in their names in the Vicarage Road Stadium.

In June 2021, MurWalls gifted this interior mural depicting Graham Taylor OBE to the Meriden Community Centre, which Taylor had officially re-opened in November 2016 following its major refurbishment. The centre has been run by Watford FC Community Sports & Education Trust since December 2012, when it took over from Watford Borough Council while plans to refurbish the centre internally and externally were being planned. The mural honours Taylor's community legacy and was painted by Mark Meana of MurWalls. The image and quotation were selected in consultation with the Community Sports & Education Trust, of which the Taylor family are patrons, and Taylor's widow Rita officiated at the opening of the mural.

MurWalls was founded in 2019 by Marc Silver, a graphic designer working in publishing turned street artist with a background of creative and commercial experience. Silver brought together a team of talented street artists and together they have undertaken numerous murals using graffiti techniques and spray paint for private and public spaces. The focus of their work is on sport and sporting personalities, particularly football, and their murals are found throughout the country.

At the unveiling event in June 2021 Marc Silver said: "Watford FC have always been a club that look after their community and Graham was always at the forefront of this mentality. The club embraced his forward-thinking concepts, and his legacy is truly alive today." According to Steve Williams, Head of Facilities and Inclusion at the Trust, "Graham Taylor is always within our minds at the Trust, and at the Meriden Community Centre where he was our guest at the official reopening in 2016. The mural provides us all with a physical reminder of his legacy, as well as having been a great supporter of our work."

Members of the public are able to view this mural as well as take part in a range of activities, and make use of their facilities, by contacting the Meriden Community Centre, Garsmouth Way, Watford WD25 9ET.

Another mural commemorating Graham Taylor created by MurWalls is found on the gable wall of no.119 Vicarage Road, opposite Vicarage Road Stadium.



Photograph:
date taken
June 2021, Rita Taylor at
the unveiling of the artwork
in Meriden Community
Centre reception (photo:
Watford FC website)



Photograph:
date taken
6 February 2023
Meriden Community
Centre

Sources of information:

<https://historyofsoccer.info/graham-taylor>
<https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk/sport/20245827.murwalls-founder-watford-murals-football-street-art/>
<https://www.watfordfc.com/news/trust/news-graham-taylor-mural-installed-at-meriden-community-centre>
<https://www.watfordfccsetrust.com/facility/meriden-community-centre/>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (6 February 2023): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. It has good public access.

Artist:
MurWalls, Marc Silver with
Mark Meana and Dave
Nash

Medium:
Spray Paint

Date:
2021

Location:
Vicarage Road, near
junction of Banbury Street,
WD18 OGN

Grid Reference:
TQ1056295820

Owner:
Watford Football Club/
Cornerstone Church

Graham Taylor OBE

Brief Description and History

The mural commemorating Watford Football Club's former manager Graham Taylor OBE was created by MurWalls, and is painted on the gable wall of no.119 Vicarage Road, a house owned by Cornerstone Church Watford, opposite Vicarage Road Stadium. Marc Silver, founder and CEO of MurWalls, approached the church and Watford Football Club about the mural. Pastor Richard Evans from Cornerstone was delighted to be able to house the artwork on the church property: "what a fantastic idea to celebrate Graham Taylor and his success and also bless and serve our town. As a church we're always looking at innovative and creative ways to communicate with the community."

The mural was painted by Marc Silver and street artists Mark Meana and Dave Nash over a couple of days in August 2021, during the week leading up to Graham Taylor Matchday, when the Hornets were due to host another of Graham Taylor's former clubs, Aston Villa. MurWalls were keen to choose an iconic image to sum up Taylor's legacy and the chosen picture depicts him in his trademark shirt and tracksuit, and his famous smile. The image was digitally mocked up on the wall before being painted in spray paint. The quote selected to accompany the portrait was chosen in consultation with the Club: "Make sure your footsteps are left at the club for others to follow".

Earlier, in June 2021, MurWalls had created an interior mural to Graham Taylor OBE for the Meriden Community Centre, which Taylor had officially re-opened in November 2016 following major refurbishment.

Graham Taylor OBE (1944 2017) was manager of Watford Football Club between 1977 and 1987, as caretaker manager in 1996 and again manager from 1997 2001; from 1990 to 1993 he was England Manager. Taylor was first appointed as Watford manager by Sir Elton John, who had taken ownership of the club the year before and became chairman; the two formed a close working partnership. During his time at Watford, Taylor led the club to five promotions, into Europe and to an FA Cup final in 1983 84. The Matchday in tribute to Graham Taylor has taken place on the nearest matchday to the anniversary of his death on 12 January 2017. Both Graham Taylor OBE and Sir Elton John have been honoured by Stands in their names in the Vicarage Road Stadium.

MurWalls was founded in 2019 by Marc Silver, a graphic designer working in publishing turned street artist with a background of creative and commercial experience. Silver brought together a team of talented street artists and together they have undertaken numerous murals using graffiti techniques and spray paint for private and public spaces. The focus of their work is on sport and sporting personalities, particularly football, and their murals are found throughout the country, including in Liverpool and London.



Photographs:
date taken
6 February 2023

Sources of information:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vE4Yg9Erekc>
<https://historyofsoccer.info/graham-taylor>
<https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk/sport/20245827.murwalls-founder-watford-murals-football-street-art/>
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-58199572>

Condition and Anticipated Life:
Current condition (6 February 2023): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. It has good public access.

Artist:

MurWalls

Medium:

Spray Paint

Date:

2022

Location:

George Street, under Exchange Road, Vicarage Road, WD18 OBS

Grid Reference:

TQ1102396208

Owner:

Watford Borough Council/
Hertfordshire County Council

Watford FC Subway Mural

Brief Description and History

The mural was painted by MurWalls on the walls of an existing pedestrian subway running under Exchange Road from George Street to Vicarage Road, and was part of a scheme to improve subways across Hertfordshire in order to encourage walking and reduce car use. MurWalls had already painted underpasses for Hertfordshire County Council in Hemel Hempstead and Elstree and when this underpass in Watford was put forward, MurWalls suggested the theme of football given its proximity to Watford Football Club's Vicarage Road Stadium. The project became a collaboration between the County Council, Watford FC and Watford Borough Council.

The new mural reflects the history of Watford Football Club, and was created as part of centenary celebrations for the club and the borough of Watford in 2022. It was unveiled on 27 January 2022 at an event attended by former club captain Nigel Gibbs and star player Tommy Mooney, club and council representatives including co-funders Hertfordshire County Council and Watford Borough Council. In the words of Nigel Gibbs: "Watford Football Club has a long and proud tradition of serving its community and has established a reputation as the 'Original Family Club', something I felt keenly having followed in the footsteps of my father Dennis, who served the club as a scout and youth coach. The mural showcases the club and town's sense of community by improving the subway, as well as highlighting those players who had an ever-lasting effect on both."

Phil Bibby, Executive Member for Highways and Transport, Hertfordshire County Council said of the project: "The murals are a fantastic addition to Watford and will hopefully encourage more people to walk, especially to and from West Watford and the Stadium. Our aim is to offer all residents a cleaner, greener, healthier Hertfordshire. Providing attractive places to walk encourages more active travel, protects the environment and helps reduce traffic congestion." The project was funded through S106 money and a Neighbourhood Grant.

Portraits of Watford FC's famous players depicted in the underpass include Cliff Holton, who scored a record 48 goals in the 1959/60 season, Nigel Gibbs, Tommy Mooney, Tony Coton, Luther Blissett, and Troy Deeney, together with an image of Elton John and Graham Taylor. The mural is protected by anti-graffiti coating. New frames were also installed throughout the tiled section of the subway, which illustrates the history and community involvement of the club; these will be updated as the club moves forward.

MurWalls was founded in 2019 by Marc Silver, a graphic designer working in publishing turned street artist with a background of creative and commercial experience. Silver brought together a team of talented street artists and together they have undertaken numerous murals using graffiti techniques and spray paint for private and public spaces. The focus of their work is on sport and sporting personalities, particularly football, and their murals are found throughout the country, including in Liverpool and London.



Photographs:

dates taken
4 November 2022
& 6 February 2023

Sources of information:

<https://www.watnews.uk/watford-unveils-subway-mural-as-hornets-celebrates-100-years/>

<https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk/sport/20245827.murwalls-founder-watford-murals-football-street-art/>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (6 February 2023): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. It has good public access, with ramps and lighting.

Artist:
Mark Tanti, Demograffix

Medium:
Spray paint

Date:
2022

Location:
Under bridge of Colonial Way, adjacent Knutsford Playing Fields

Grid Reference:
TQ1179797521

Owner:
Watford Borough Council/
Herts County Council

Rediscovering the River Colne

Brief Description and History

The mural was created by a group of young people guided by local artist Mark Tanti as part of the Rediscovering the River Colne Programme, which over the next 10 years aims to connect local people with the river system and seek their help in restoring it back to health. The project is a collaboration between Hertfordshire County Council, Watford Borough Council and community charity Groundwork East. On 27 February 2022 thirteen young people participated in the project to create the mural under the bridge alongside the Colne by Knutsford Playing Fields. The mural painting session was led by Mark Tanti from Demograffix who guided the participants in using spray paints with stencils, initially on canvases before moving to painting on the under bridge wall.

The imagery depicts the River Colne and local wildlife. Among the participants were local art students. Anthony Boucher, Director of Highways Operations at Hertfordshire County Council said, "As a County Council we are pleased to support this project, improving the environment and walking routes along the river fits in with our plans for a cleaner, greener and healthier Hertfordshire. Working with young people and giving them the opportunity to be really involved is so important and the improvements along the river can be enjoyed by everyone."

Demograffix is a graffiti art and mural business set up by Mark Tanti in 2007, following completion of his degree in Public and Community Arts at Greenwich University. Now based in Norwich, Demograffix has many years' experience in painting public murals for, among other, local councils, hotels, festivals and live events, and has run graffiti arts workshops for young people and run community art projects.

In December 2021, Watford Borough Council in conjunction with Groundwork East launched an art competition for local people of all ages and abilities. Themed on the River Colne and its surroundings, Watford residents were asked to get creative with a range of ideas, from a sketch of passers-by along the riverbank, digital artwork of the river and its surrounding landscape, or a sculpture of river wildlife such as a heron or vole. Artwork could be created in any form or style, as long as it related to the river and its surroundings. All entries to the competition were displayed at a public exhibition at Watford Museum throughout February 2022, alongside a display about the history of the River Colne.

Sources of information:

<https://www.rivercolnewatford.co.uk/post/river-colne-mural-painting-held-at-knutsford-playing-fields>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (6 February 2023): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. It has good public access.



Photographs:
dates taken
4 November 2022
& 6 February 2023

Audit Ref. No.

24

Artist:

Natasha Batten /
Tash Creates

Medium:

Albany Masonry Paint

Date:

February 2022

Location:

Pillars under roadway by
Tesco Extra, Waterfields
Way, WD17 2JZ

Grid Reference:

TQ1160496177

Owner:

Watford Borough Council

River Flower Pillar Murals

Brief Description and History

Natasha Batten's work locally was recognised for its colour and vibrancy, and Community Connection Projects CIC approached her with an invitation to paint murals on the pillars under the roadway by Tesco Extra, Waterfields Way. The pillars were often targeted with graffiti, and were otherwise drab and grey. Tasha was enthusiastic about the project and funding was raised through local councillors, Watford Borough Council and Community Connection Projects. They were completed in February 2022. Plans for new murals on the two remaining pillars in the river are planned for Spring 2023.

Natasha Batten is a self-taught artist based in Watford, whose main focus is mural painting. She uses creativity as a tool to connect with communities, locally and further afield, and aims to empower people from all abilities and backgrounds to express themselves.

Sources of information:

<https://natashabatten.pb.gallery/aboutme>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (14 February 2023): good, graffiti protection planned.



Photographs:

date taken
14 February 2023



Audit Ref. No.

25

Artist:

MurWalls

Medium:

Spray Paint

Date:

2022

Location:

Watford Football Club,
Vicarage Road Stadium,
Watford WD18 0ER

Grid Reference:

TQ1087395988

Owner:

Watford Football Club

Sir Elton John

Brief Description and History

This mural of Sir Elton John was painted by MurWalls in commemoration of Elton John's longstanding connection with Watford Football Club, of which he is Honorary Life-President. Unveiled in June 2022, the 30-foot mural took three days to paint and depicts Elton John wearing Watford's yellow and black kit. It is situated adjacent to the Sir Elton John Stand. The MurWalls team liaised directly with Elton John's team at Rocket Entertainment, and David Furnish gave his stamp of approval for the Vicarage Road artwork with a public like on Instagram. Elton John's final 'Farewell Yellow Brick Road' shows took place at the Vicarage Road Stadium on 3 and 4 July 2022: "My relationship with the club, with the fans, the players and the staff over the years have meant the world to me. Through the good times and the bad, Watford have been a huge part of my life. I love the club so dearly, and have had some of the best days of my life in those stands."

This work complements MurWalls' portrait of Sir Elton John on the wall of Watford Central Library undertaken shortly afterwards (see WPA Audit Ref. No 27). Marc Silver, MurWalls founder has said 'I'm a huge fan of Elton John, having experienced him in concert in Las Vegas 18 years ago. Elton's long standing love affair with Watford and the local people's love for him needed to be recognised and it's been our absolute pleasure to be part of it'.

MurWalls was founded in 2019 by Marc Silver, a graphic designer working in publishing turned street artist with a background of creative and commercial experience. Silver brought together a team of talented street artists and together they have undertaken numerous murals using graffiti techniques and spray paint for private and public spaces. Their work focuses on sport and sporting personalities, particularly football, and their murals are found throughout the country, including in Liverpool and London.

A film on YouTube by MurWalls and Red Five Films shows the creation of the mural at Vicarage Road. Other murals by MurWalls in Watford include the Graham Taylor OBE Mural and Watford FC Vicarage Road Underpass.

Sources of information:

<https://www.watford.gov.uk/news/article/195/murwalls-and-council-recognise-elton-s-fond-farewell-with-street-art-installation>
and <https://www.hertfordshiremercury.co.uk/news/hertfordshire-news/second-amazing-mural-marking-elton-7281688>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmnHXa9BQsl&t=24s>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QlqvaolxW4E>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (6 February 2023): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. It has good public access.

Photographs:

date taken
6 February 2023



Audit Ref. No.

26

Artist:
MurWalls (Marc Silver)

Medium:
Spray Paint

Date:
2022

Location:
Watford Central Library,
Hempstead Road,
WD17 3EU

Grid Reference:
TQ1055396921

Owner:
Watford Borough Council

Sir Elton John

Brief Description and History

This portrait of Sir Elton John was painted by MurWalls founder Marc Silver who gifted it to the town in commemoration of Elton John's final tour in 2022 and his longstanding connection with Watford and its football club. The mural was officially unveiled by Elected Mayor of Watford Peter Taylor on 1 July 2022, who said of the project: "I am really excited that the town is honouring a true Watford legend with this amazing mural, which I know people are going to love and will become a 'must visit' attraction for fans from all over the world. Thank you to MurWalls and their incredible team of artists for gifting it to the town. Sir Elton John has contributed so much, not only globally, but also to the fabric of this community, especially his work with Watford Football Club. This mural is our way of showing Sir Elton that he will forever be a part of Watford and marks our gratitude for how he continues to put our town on the map." In the words of Marc Silver: "Elton's long standing love affair with Watford and the local people's love for him needed to be recognised and it's been our absolute pleasure to be part of it."

The mural complements MurWalls' earlier portrait of Sir Elton John, a 30-foot mural at Vicarage Road Stadium, where the singer performed the last dates on his final 'Farewell Yellow Brick Road' tour on 3 and 4 July 2022 (see WPA Audit Ref. No 26).

MurWalls was founded in 2019 by Marc Silver, a street artist with a background of creative and commercial experience, who brought together a team of professional artists. They have undertaken numerous murals using graffiti techniques and spray paint for private and public spaces. The focus of their work is on sporting personalities, particularly footballers, and their murals are found throughout the country, including in Liverpool and London. A film on YouTube shows the creation of the mural at Watford Library.

Sources of information:

<https://www.watford.gov.uk/news/article/195/murwalls-and-council-recognise-elton-s-fond-farewell-with-street-art-installation>
<https://www.hertfordshiremercury.co.uk/news/hertfordshire-news/second-amazing-mural-marking-elton-7281688>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBqsuicnygc>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (14 November 2022): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. It has good public access.



Photographs:

date taken
14 November 2022



Audit Ref. No.

27

Artist:

Demograffix and Aimi Rix

Medium:

Spray Paint

Date:

2022

Location:

Near No.1 end of Cow Lane,
leading to York Way

Grid Reference:

TQ1175699379

Owner:

Watford Borough Council

Cow Lane Subway Mural

Brief Description and History

The mural in the Cow Lane Underpass was commissioned by Watford Borough Council as part of a subway refurbishment scheme in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council. The local councillor Stephen Cavinder worked closely on the scheme: "The aim of the project was to give a fresh feel to a very tired looking area. With the tag line of 'Cleaner, Greener, Healthier Hertfordshire', the artwork was targeted at children making their way to and from school." The Cow Pass Underpass is near the Meriden Estate and took over a year from planning to completion and suffered vandalism during the process. The commission was undertaken by mural/graffiti artists Mark Tanti of Demograffix and Aimi Rix, who painted the subway walls with brightly coloured rural scenes, showing green fields and blue skies, wildlife and flowers. It also incorporates a memorial to local teenager Daniel Rush who had lived on the Meriden Estate but had tragically died after being attacked on 24 February 2003.

Demograffix is a graffiti art and mural business set up by Mark Tanti in 2007, following completion of his degree in Public and Community Arts at Greenwich University. Now based in Norwich, Demograffix has many years' experience in painting public murals for among others local councils, hotels, festivals and live events, and has run graffiti arts workshops for young people and run community art projects.

Luton-based Aimi Rix has been working as a community artist for a number of years, specialising in bespoke murals and working on educational projects in schools.

Sources of information:

<https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk/news/20292564.watford-cow-lane-subway-renovation-honours-daniel-rush/>
<https://www.facebook.com/aimirixartist/mentions>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (6 February 2023): fair.

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. It has good public access.



Photographs:

date taken
6 February 2023

Artist:

MurWalls

Medium:

Spray Paint

Date:

2022

Location:

Waterfields Recreation Ground, near south entrance beneath bridge

Grid Reference:

TQ1153296296

Owner:

Watford Borough Council

River Colne Waterfields Recreation Mural

Brief Description and History

This mural by MurWalls installed under the bridge along the banks of the River Colne in Waterfields Recreation Ground was created as part of Watford Borough Council's 10- year Rediscovering the River Colne Programme, which aims to improve the river and riverbank so that fish, birds, plants, animals and insects can thrive again and local people can access and enjoy the natural space. In 2022 a public consultation was held to discuss the mural and suggest what theme would be best suited for the location. It was decided that 'nature' would be chosen and MurWalls was commissioned to carry out the work. The mural was painted in September 2022 and depicts what the River Colne will look like once the improvement works have been completed, showing lush green river banks, clean water and flourishing wildlife including fish, birds, insects and plant life.

MurWalls was founded in 2019 by Marc Silver, a graphic designer working in publishing turned street artist with a background of creative and commercial experience. Silver brought together a team of street artists and together they have undertaken numerous murals using graffiti techniques and spray paint for private and public spaces.

Phase 1 of the River Colne improvements focus on the northern sites, and will include Knutsford Playing Fields, Timberlake Allotments, Radlett Road Recreation Area and Waterfields Recreation Ground. Works are being carried out by the Council's appointed delivery partner Groundwork.

Near the mural are a number of sculptures that form part of the Colne River Sculpture Trail (see WPA Audit Ref. No 15).

Sources of information:

<https://www.watford.gov.uk/news/article/253/beautiful-new-mural-installed-as-part-of-river-colne-restoration-project>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (6 February 2023): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. It has good public access on public path.



Photographs:

dates taken
4 November 2022
& 6 February 2023



Artist:

MurWalls

Medium:

Spray Paint

Date:

2024

Location:

Exchange Road underpass, between The Crescent and Watford High Street, heading towards Vicarage Road, WD18 0AG

Grid Reference:

TQ1123696040

Owner:

Watford Borough Council/
Hertfordshire County Council

Watford FC 1999 Promotion Mural

Brief Description and History

The mural was painted by MurWalls on the walls of an existing pedestrian subway running under Exchange Road, on the route towards Vicarage Road. It was part of Hertfordshire County Council's scheme to improve subways across Hertfordshire in order to encourage walking and cycling and reduce car use. MurWalls had already painted underpasses for Hertfordshire County Council in Hemel Hempstead, Elstree and Watford, where their mural celebrating a centenary of Watford Football Club's Vicarage Road Stadium was unveiled in 2022 (see Audit Ref. 22). Like the earlier mural, the new mural takes the theme of football, given its proximity to the Vicarage Road Stadium, and was commissioned and funded by Hertfordshire County Council.

The mural commemorates the 25th anniversary of the celebrated play-off between Watford FC and Bolton Wanderers at Wembley Stadium in 1999, which led to the club's first ever promotion to the Premier League. It was unveiled on 28 September 2024, before the Watford FC championship home game against Sunderland. The unveiling was attended by 4 former players who had played a crucial part in that season's success: Rob Page, who captained the team, Nick Wright, whose goal gave Watford the lead, goalkeeper Alec Chamberlain who had triumphed in the penalty shoot-out in the play-off semi-final against Birmingham City that led to Watford's place in the final, and Steve Palmer, who was voted Player of the Season. All four signed the mural, which also features Manager Graham Taylor lifting the trophy aloft. In addition to portraits of the action and players, a QR code painted on the wall provides a link to a film about the event in Wembley as well as the creation of the mural. An audio description has also been created for the visually impaired, made with assistance of the David Katz Foundation. The unveiling was undertaken by Richard Roberts, Leader of Hertfordshire County Council; Terry Douris, Chairman of Watford Council; and Peter Taylor, Elected Mayor of Watford.

In the words of Richard Roberts: "We are committed to improving our subways so that they provide an environment that encourages more walking, wheeling and cycling. This great mural of a famous day in Watford Football Club's history is another example of us working in partnership with the local community."

Peter Taylor said of the project: "Watford Football Club has a proud tradition of serving the community as the 'Original Family Club', and it's fantastic to see another mural reflecting their impact. Graham Taylor, who brought the club back to the top division, played a huge part in that and it's great to see him featured with the trophy in an iconic image from the game. The mural is a great way to brighten the area, and I'm sure fans will enjoy it for years to come."

MurWalls was founded in 2019 by Marc Silver, a graphic designer working in publishing turned street artist with a background of creative and commercial experience. Silver brought together a team of street artists and together they have undertaken numerous murals using graffiti techniques and spray paint for private and public spaces. The focus of their work is on sport and sporting personalities, particularly football, and their murals are found throughout the country, including in Liverpool and London. The mural is protected by anti-graffiti coating.



Photographs:

date taken
2 February 2025

Sources of information:

<https://www.watford.gov.uk/news/article/661/new-watford-football-club-mural-hits-the-back-of-the-net>
<https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk/sport/24592801.watford-fc-1999-promotion-mural-painted/>
<https://www.watfordfc.com/news/2024/september/27/news-wembley-heroes-to-attend-mural-unveiling/>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (2 February 2025): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. It has good public access, with ramps and lighting.

Audit Ref. No.

30

Artist:

Community Centre Art Group, to be completed with artist Paul Sweeney

Medium:

Spray Paint

Date:

2024/25 (in progress)

Location:

15 Harwoods Road (junction with Holywell Road), WD18 7RB

Grid Reference:

TQ1042995827

Owner:

West Watford Community Association

West Watford Community Association Mural

Brief Description and History

West Watford Community Association launched a Public Art Mural project in 2024, using £4,222 of funding successfully raised from Watford Borough Council's Neighbourhood Grant (CIL), with the aim of enhancing the visibility and accessibility of the centre through new signage and a vibrant external mural. Community consultation took place directly with user groups, with residents in the locality (by leafleting) in order to encourage input and suggest themes and further involvement throughout the project.

Local suppliers and artists were contacted for advice and the Community Association appointed volunteer resident artists, Roger Kattenhorn, Heulwen Jones and Richard Westwood, who along with other volunteers collaborated on the design, based on themes suggested by the community. Artist Paul Sweeney has been approached to extend the design to the full height of the building. Based in North London, Paul is a traditional sign writer and mural painter with over 25 years' experience, who works on a variety of projects from hand-painted signs to large-scale exterior murals through his company Signs and Artwork, working with 3 experienced assistants. West Herts College Visual Arts Department agreed to partner in the design and delivery of extending the mural to the full width of the building; however, the timelines for students and project needs did not align. It is anticipated that the mural will be completed by the end of March 2025.

West Watford Community Centre was formed in 1973 by a group of local volunteers and is now run by a charity, West Watford Community Association. The vision of the charity is for "a caring, listening and responsive organisation working in partnership with WBC and other service providers to foster a cohesive and inclusive local community which tackles loneliness and isolation, and is recognised as a focal point for delivering good value activities which stimulate creativity, learning and wellbeing in the local community."

Elected Mayor of Watford, Peter Taylor, praised the dedication and support of the Community Centre's volunteers: "the Association positively impacts the lives of local residents every day. We are therefore delighted to support the efforts to enhance the visibility and accessibility of their community centre", adding "Centres like these play a crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging and unity within our neighbourhoods."

Sources of information:

<https://www.watford.gov.uk/news/article/649/west-watford-community-centre-set-to-shine-bright-with-4-222-council-neighbourhood-grant> <https://www.westwatfordhistorygroup.org/2024/09/community-centre-murals.html> <https://www.signsandartwork.com/>

Condition and Anticipated Life:

Current condition (2 February 2025): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. It has good public access.



Photographs:

date taken
2 February 2025

Artist:
Fran Kershaw,
George Moorhouse,
Chloe Lawrence

Medium:
Multi-media

Date:
2024

Location:
Cassiobury Park
Underpass, WD17 3XE

Grid Reference:
TQ1043196685

Owner:
Watford Borough Council
/ Hertfordshire County
Council

The Overpass Suite

Brief Description and History

The Overpass Suite is a multi-media project combining visual arts and sound, located in the short pedestrian underpass beneath the busy Rickmansworth Road near the southern entrance of Cassiobury Park. The installation consists of six enamel wall panels, derived from a series of paintings of the underpass made by artist Fran Kershaw in 2021, as part of her '100 views of Watford' series. Local composer George Moorhouse made contact with Kershaw in 2022, with a proposal to create musical compositions inspired by her paintings. Keen to collaborate with Moorhouse, she subsequently lent him a number of paintings for a period of nine months, and the result was a series of short musical preludes, which feed off the urban landscape depicted, and the atmosphere and shifting movement he experienced in their presence. Moorhouse and Kershaw then considered how this collaboration might be offered publicly, and approached local graphic designer Chloe Lawrence. She designed and created robust panels that could be displayed in the underpass that was the subject of the paintings. Each has a QR code that enables the visitor to link to Moorhouse's six compositions. In addition, an explanatory text panel provides information about the collaboration between these three creators.

Fran Kershaw, who has lived and practiced as an artist in Watford for over 20 years, is known for celebrating her everyday surroundings, capturing the architectural and urban landscape that she observes around her in bold colour and strong line. She draws particular inspiration from the 19th century printmaker Utagawa Hiroshige, whose woodblock prints celebrated everyday life and landscape in his native Japan, and the work of American Pop Artist Andy Warhol. She has shown her paintings at various venues in Watford, including the Palace Theatre in 2022 and most recently at Cheslyn House and Gardens in August-September 2024. Bringing her love of Watford's built environment to the wider public is an important aim for Kershaw.

George Moorhouse studied Music at West Herts College, Watford, where he continues to live. He is an accomplished pianist/keyboard player and drummer as well as a talented composer. Regarding his collaboration with Fran Kershaw, Moorhouse has commented: "Growing up I always felt deeply inspired by the work of Claude Debussy, he often composed pieces directly linked to images, paintings, and postcards. I was fascinated with the idea of converting the visual landscape into a musical landscape."

Chloe Lawrence studied for a BA in Graphic Design at the University of Hertfordshire, graduating with a 1st class degree. She works as a freelance graphic designer, and is currently Junior Graphic Designer at My Local News Ltd. Prior to collaborating on The Overpass Suite, she had already undertaken graphic design work for Fran Kershaw, including creating posters and other collateral for her exhibitions.

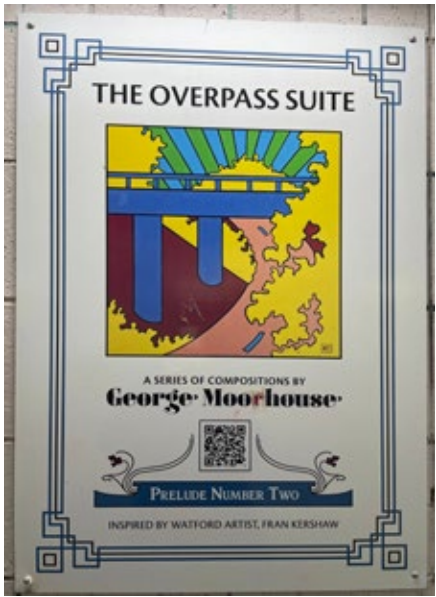
The installation opened in the underpass on 8 June 2024 and will be in place until at least June 2026.

Below are links to a number of George Moorhouse's preludes, downloaded from the QR codes:

<https://studev.wixstudio.com/cassioverpasssuite/prelude1>
<https://studev.wixstudio.com/cassioverpasssuite/prelude2>
<https://studev.wixstudio.com/cassioverpasssuite/prelude3>



Photographs:
date taken
14 February 2023



Sources of information:
<https://www.watfordobserver.co.uk/leisure/24410382.overpass-suite-new-multimedia-art-installation-watford/>

Condition and Anticipated Life:
Current condition (2 February 2025): good

There is no reason anticipated that this work should be decommissioned due to its condition or relevance. It has good public access, with ramps and lighting.

