

Yews in the Churchyard of St Thomas the Apostle, Old Bedhampton

The oldest parts of St Thomas Church - the Chancel Arch and the lower parts of the South and West Walls are dated circa 1140 and although there are no accurate records of the original dedication this is traditionally put at 1132AD.

The Church was extended in the 14th Century, and again in the late 19th Century, when the North Aisle and Vestry were added.

Two impressive yews grow close to the church

Measured on 5th August by Hugh Milner with additional measuring and photography by Peter Norton on 18th August 2011.



TREE ONE growing 28' (8.54m) from the chancel, the Southern Yew, male, vertical stem, healthy, little pruning, some filling of cavities. Three main fastigate boughs from break of crown at 2.5m height.

There are six nails around the stem but not at an even height, even allowing for a small slope away from the church. Starting with nail number 1 nearest the chancel and proceeding clockwise around the trunk, heights are:

- 1 = 3' 2" (0.97m)
- 2 = 3' 8" (1.12m)
- 3 = 3' 10" (1.17m)
- 4 = 3' 8.5" (1.13m)
- 5 = 3' 2.5" (0.98m)
- 6 = 3' 0" (0.92m)

Girth (minimum) at 5' 5"	(1.65m)	= 20' 1.5"	(6.14m) (tape horizontal)
Girth at 3' 11"	(1.19m)	= 20' 7.5"	(6.29m) (tape horizontal)
Girth at nail height		= 20' 11.5"	(6.39m) (tape fluctuating)
Girth at ground level, church side		= 24' 9"	(7.74m) (tape horizontal)

A calculated tree height of 16.25m was recorded when measured with a Suunto Clinometer.



TREE TWO growing 8' 4" (2.54m) from the chancel wall, the Eastern Yew, female, c.35degree lean away from church, apical dominance but heavily pruned in the past, including three of the six top limbs (partial pollarding, presumably to take weight off lean), many interesting rot cavities, filled to 2m height but deep unfilled cavities above, one successful aerial root at this height bridging a cavity, may have been hollow before broken paving and cement inserted, masses of fruit, reduction of upper foliage only, small broken-paving plinth surrounds base averaging c. 1' in height, cracked, showing butt expansion has occurred, evidence of increase in lean by lifting of plinth nearest chancel. A GPO pole, dated 1964 has been inserted as a prop, seems to remain effective, looks in good condition, will be ineffective if there is no thrust plate at pole's base in ground, see plinth lift above, investigate for plate.

There are five nails, roughly at right angles to stem, starting with nail number 1 nearest the chancel, heights are:

- 1 = 2' 4" (0.71m)
- 2 = 3' 0" (0.91m)
- 3 = 1' 6" (0.45m)
- 4 = 0' 4" (0.11m)
- 5 = 0' 5" (0.12m)

The following girths were taken at right angles to the stem, not horizontal:

Girth (minimum)	at 4' 6.5"	(1.38m) on high side	= 20' 0"	(6.10m)
Girth	at 3' 9"	(1.14m) on high side	= 21' 11"	(6.69m)
Girth at nails	at 3' 0"	(0.91m) on high side	= 22' 1.5"	(6.74m)
Girth at ground level			= 23' 9"	(7.24m)

A calculated tree height of 10.60m was recorded when measured with a Suunto Clinometer.





Report details by Hugh Milner 5/8/2011, amended 26/8/2011.